



SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 20-015

BY SENATOR(S) Rodriguez and Garcia, Bridges, Cooke, Coram, Crowder, Danielson, Donovan, Fenberg, Fields, Foote, Gardner, Ginal, Gonzales, Hansen, Hisey, Holbert, Lee, Lundeen, Moreno, Priola, Rankin, Scott, Smallwood, Sonnenberg, Story, Todd, Williams A., Winter, Woodward, Zenzinger;

also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Buentello and Tipper, Arndt, Baisley, Benavidez, Bird, Bockenfeld, Buckner, Caraveo, Carver, Catlin, Champion, Coleman, Cutter, Esgar, Exum, Froelich, Garnett, Geitner, Gonzales-Gutierrez, Herod, Holtorf, Hooton, Jackson, Jaquez Lewis, Kennedy, Kipp, Kraft-Tharp, Landgraf, Larson, Liston, Lontine, McCluskie, McLachlan, Melton, Michaelson, Jenet, Mullica, Neville, Pelton, Ransom, Rich, Roberts, Singer, Sirota, Snyder, Soper, Sullivan, Titone, Valdez A., Valdez D., Van Winkle, Weissman, Will, Williams D., Wilson, Woodrow, Young, Becker.

CONCERNING RECOGNITION OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF LATINA AND LATINO VETERANS.

WHEREAS, Latina/o individuals have fought in support of the United States and the cause of freedom in every American conflict since the American Revolution, when Colonel Bernardo de Galvez, the Spanish governor of the Louisiana territories, and his men assisted General George Washington and the Continental Army in defeating the British forces that were advancing into the then-southwestern U.S. territories; and

WHEREAS, Despite 150 years of fighting with distinction in support of the United States, it was not until World War II that Latina/o service members became a truly forceful presence; it is estimated that nearly 500,000 Latina/o Americans, often the children of immigrants who entered the United States in previous decades, fought for the cause of freedom in that war, including the 158th Regimental Combat Team and

the 141st Infantry Regiment, which consisted of all Spanish-speaking soldiers; and

WHEREAS, In 1948, Dr. Hector Garcia, of Corpus Christi, Texas, founded the American GI Forum as a means of addressing cases in which Latina/o veterans were being denied services by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs under the GI Bill, including educational, medical, housing, and other basic benefits; Dr. Garcia and the American GI Forum worked diligently to secure equal access to all benefits, and in 1984, Dr. Garcia was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Ronald Reagan; and

WHEREAS, In the Korean War, the all-Puerto Rican 65th Infantry Regiment, also known as "the Borinqueneers", served three years in service in the mountainous terrain of Pusan, Korea, and for their efforts were awarded the Presidential Unit Citation, a Meritorious Unit Commendation, and two Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citations; in 2016, the unit was recognized with a Congressional Gold Medal; and

WHEREAS, The Vietnam War, in which more than 80,000 Latina/o service members served, 13 of whom were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor; many of these Latina/o soldiers were drawn to the military by the opportunity to transcend their working-class roots and by the opportunity afforded them by the GI Bill; and

WHEREAS, In total, 61 Latina/o veterans have been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for their service in the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, More than 156,000 Latina/o service members are currently active duty members of the Armed Forces, and more than 1.2 million Latina/o veterans call the United States home; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Seventy-second General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein:

That we, the members of the General Assembly, recognize and commend the efforts and sacrifice of the millions of Latina/o men and women who have served the cause of freedom in and alongside the Armed Forces of the United States.

Be It Further Resolved, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent to the American GI Forum of Colorado.

Leroy M. Garcia
PRESIDENT OF
THE SENATE

KC Becker
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES

Cindi L. Markwell
SECRETARY OF
THE SENATE

Robin Jones
CHIEF CLERK OF THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES