



Home	Bill Information	California Law	Publications	Other Resources	My Subscriptions	My Favorites
------	------------------	----------------	--------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------

**SCR-101 Latino Veterans Day.** (2021-2022)

SHARE THIS:  

**Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 101**

**CHAPTER 108**

Relative to Latino Veterans Day.

[ Filed with Secretary of State August 01, 2022. ]

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

SCR 101, Archuleta. Latino Veterans Day.

This measure would proclaim September 20, 2022, as Latino Veterans Day.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, The history of California veterans of Latino descent abounds with acts of heroism and exhibits a heritage of valor that has brought honor and earned the gratitude of our country; and

WHEREAS, As early as 1863, the United States government authorized the military commander in California to raise four companies of native Mexican American Californians in order to take advantage of their extraordinary horsemanship; and

WHEREAS, Several thousand Latino volunteers, mostly from the southwestern United States, fought with distinction in the United States Army during the Spanish-American War. Captain Maximiliano Luna and others who comprised a portion of the famous 1st United States Volunteer Cavalry with Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, better known as the "Rough Riders," fought in Cuba; and

WHEREAS, Discrimination, racism, and language barriers meant that many Latinos were relegated to menial jobs or served in segregated units. A number of Mexican American cavalry militias chased bandits and guarded trains and border crossings for the Union during the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, Admiral David G. Farragut, a Latino of great renown and hero of the Civil War, distinguished himself as a military strategist whose concepts and accomplishments served as examples of military excellence. Admiral Farragut was responsible for, among other things, establishing the Mare Island Naval Yard at the City of Vallejo; and

WHEREAS, The bravery of countless Latinos in World Wars I and II and the conflicts of Korea and Vietnam is consistent with the greatest acts of heroism known in our history, as exemplified by the 200th and the 515th Coast Artillery Battalions, which were comprised of a majority of Latinos, many of whom were from California, who fought to the bitter end at Bataan in World War II; and

WHEREAS, During World War II, General Douglas MacArthur called the Arizona National Guard's 158th Infantry Regiment, "the Bushmasters," one of the greatest fighting combat teams ever deployed for battle. The regiment was comprised of many Latino soldiers; and

WHEREAS, During World War II, Marine Corps Private First Class Guy Louis Gabaldon of the City of Bellflower distinguished himself with conspicuous gallantry by capturing 800 enemy soldiers in seven hours; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Salvador J. Lara of the City of Riverside aggressively led his rifle squad in neutralizing multiple enemy strong points in Aprilia, Italy, on May 27 and 28, 1944. Staff Sergeant Lara sustained a severe leg wound during the attack but did not stop to receive first aid and continued to fight until he captured the objective. Staff Sergeant Lara was awarded the Medal of Honor for extraordinary heroism and selflessness above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Ysmael R. Villegas of the City of Riverside destroyed an enemy machine gun nest and saved his squad during the Battle of Luzon on March 1, 1945. On March 20, 1945, Staff Sergeant Villegas led his squad towards the crest of a hill that was defended by an entrenched enemy. On his own initiative, he attacked five enemy foxholes before he was mortally wounded while attacking the sixth. Staff Sergeant Villegas was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions by President Harry Truman; and

WHEREAS, The 65th Infantry Regiment, “the Borinqueneers” from Puerto Rico, served valiantly in both World War II and Korea. Fighting as a segregated unit from 1950 to 1952, the regiment participated in some of the fiercest battles of the Korean War, and its toughness, courage, and loyalty earned the admiration of many who had preciously harbored reservations about Puerto Rican soldiers based on their lack of previous fighting experience and negative stereotypes, including Brigadier General William W. Harris, whose experience eventually led him to regard the regiment as “the best damn soldiers that I had ever seen”; and

WHEREAS, During their service in the Korean War, the 65th Infantry Regiment won four Distinguished Service Crosses and 125 Silver Stars. The Borinqueneers also were awarded the American Presidential and Meritorious Unit Commendations, two Korean Presidential Unit Citations, and the Greek Gold Medal for Bravery. President Barack Obama signed House Resolution No. 1726 to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the Borinqueneers on June 10, 2014; and

WHEREAS, During the Korean War, Marine Corps Private First Class Eugene A. Obregon of the City of Los Angeles armed only with a pistol, unhesitatingly dashed from his covered position to the side of a wounded fellow Marine. Still under enemy fire, while he was bandaging the man’s wounds and hostile troops of approximately platoon strength began advancing toward his position, he placed his own body as a shield in front of the wounded soldier and lay there firing accurately and effectively into the hostile group until he was fatally wounded by enemy fire, earning him the Medal of Honor; and

WHEREAS, During the Vietnam War, First Sergeant Maximo Yabes of the City of Lodi distinguished himself when he used his body as a shield to protect others in a bunker, moved two wounded men to a safer position where they could be given medical treatment, and destroyed an enemy machine gun position before being mortally wounded. He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Jesus S. Duran distinguished himself on April 10, 1969, as a machine gunner on a search and clear operation in Vietnam and was awarded the Medal of Honor. After leaving the military, Sergeant Duran worked as a corrections officer at a juvenile detention center in the City of San Bernardino dedicating numerous hours of personal time to mentor youth and lead them on educational trips; and

WHEREAS, Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm provided another opportunity for Latinos to serve their country. Approximately 20,000 Latino servicemen and women participated in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm; and

WHEREAS, During Operation Iraqi Freedom, Marine Corps Lance Corporal Moses Cardenas from the City of Fullerton distinguished himself by leaving his safe position behind a vehicle and fought his way across 50 meters of fire-swept open desert against five armed insurgents to rescue a fallen Marine. After sustaining a gunshot wound to the neck that knocked him to the ground, he calmly reloaded his squad automatic weapon and continued his assault until he reached the wounded Marine. Throughout this close and fierce fight, he ignored his own severe wounds, remained fixed on his task, and saved the life of a fellow Marine, earning him the Silver Star; and

WHEREAS, Today, Latinos make up approximately 16 percent of America’s fighting force. Since the beginning of this century, Latinos have been among the boots on the ground in antiterrorism operations; and

WHEREAS, Latino veterans, both men and women, have shown and continue to show a superb dedication to the United States, evidenced by the award of over 60 Congressional Medals of Honor; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That September 20, 2022, be proclaimed as Latino Veterans Day; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.