

as an Assistant Counsel; and more recently as a Senior Assistant Counsel. We will miss him.

Mr. Filamor provided frequent and invaluable legal advice and representation to the House Committee on the Judiciary, as well as to Members, officers and other committees of the House more generally. Our staff came to rely on his expertise and guidance in connection with many of their investigative and oversight activities, as well as in connection with the Committee's interactions with the other branches of the Federal Government. Over the years, Mr. Filamor played a significant role in safeguarding the legal and institutional interests of the House of Representatives.

Mr. Filamor served the House with great distinction, and we know he will serve the Department of Justice with that same level of distinction. On behalf of the House Committee on the Judiciary, we thank him for his many years of devoted service, and extend to him our very best wishes for his continued success.

#### RECOGNIZING MILITARY SUICIDES: CONDOLENCE LETTERS

### HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, July 8, 2011*

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to express my gratitude to President Obama for altering U.S. government policy to end the practice of denying condolence letters to the families of soldiers who commit suicide while serving abroad. I strongly support that change, and I applaud President Obama for taking this important step.

The men and women who commit suicide while serving our country on active duty overseas are casualties of war, and I strongly believe that they should be remembered as such. Those soldiers suffer the unseen wounds of war, which, though often ignored, can be devastating. Their sacrifice for our Nation should be honored and celebrated, and their surviving families and friends should know that we appreciate their loved ones' service.

In his statement announcing the policy change, the President emphasized that these men and women suffered the consequences of war, and they did not receive the services and treatment that they needed. As the President emphasized, that needs to change. We need to do far more to help those who bear the burden of our wars, by ensuring that they have the physical and emotional support they need, access to quality mental health services, and assistance to help them and their families cope with the immense stress of war.

By changing this policy, the President has taken an important step towards reducing the stigma surrounding the invisible injuries of war. We need to continue to work to ensure that soldiers know what services are available to them and feel comfortable seeking out the help that they need.

The act of sending a condolence letter recognizes the tragic loss and enormous sacrifice of our military families. The mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, sons and daughters who lose a loved one to either a visible or unseen wound of war should know that we, as a country, mourn their losses. We should honor the sacrifice of all who give their lives in the service of our country.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO A PUERTO RICAN-AMERICAN SUCCESS STORY—COMPOSER, LYRICIST AND ACTOR LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA

### HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, July 8, 2011*

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Mr. Lin-Manuel Miranda for all of his marvelous accomplishments. It is my pleasure to pay tribute to this prodigious composer, lyricist and actor. I want to give thanks to this exceptional constituent for sharing his vision and talents with the world for all to enjoy.

Mr. Miranda is a native New Yorker who grew up in Manhattan's diverse and vivacious Washington Heights neighborhood and is of Puerto Rican descent. He attended Hunter College High School and later graduated from Wesleyan University in 2002. While pursuing higher education he wrote his earliest draft of *In the Heights* in 1999. He also wrote, acted and directed several other musicals while attending Wesleyan. While in school he diligently worked to perfect his craft, so it is of no surprise that Mr. Miranda would later take such large strides toward the road of success.

His claim to fame comes from writing and starring as Usnavi in the Broadway musical *In the Heights*, which opened on Broadway at the Richard Rodgers Theater in 2008. This phenomenal musical composer has won the Tony Award as composer and lyricist. With his creativity and determination he was able to take an idea and catapult it into success. He took a risk and believed in his dream as well as himself. We can all learn from this fine example and believe in ourselves, especially when no one else will. We should all have the courage to live out our dreams, while inspiring others. Les Brown once said "Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars." This is exactly what Mr. Miranda did and now he is taking his dreams and plays to new heights.

With his countless accomplishments, it is impossible to single out Mr. Miranda's greatest achievement, but one could say that *In the Heights* has won critical acclaim. This extraordinary theater piece has been nominated and has won countless awards, such as the 2009 Grammy for Best Musical Show Album, 2008 Tony Award for Best Musical, 2008 Tony Award for Best Original Score, and was a Finalist for the 2009 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, among many other accolades. As a performer, Mr. Miranda has also showcased his talents on many popular television series, including *The Sopranos*, *House*, *Electric Company*, *Modern Family* and *Sesame Street*. Mr. Miranda is also a co-founder of the popular hip hop-improvisational group, *Freestyle Love Supreme* that has toured comedy festivals throughout the world and continues to perform at esteemed venues throughout the country.

The White House has taken notice of this rising star. In 2009 he was invited to perform at the White House Evening of Poetry, Music and the Spoken Word. The University of Yeshiva also took notice of his greatness and bestowed him with an honorary degree. He has also been acknowledged by former mayor of New York City Ed Koch. This young fresh tal-

ent continues to believe in his dream and make positive strides. He is currently working on a musical theatre version of *Bring It On*, which will start its National Tour in the fall of 2011.

Mr. Speaker, for this, I ask that you and my distinguished colleagues in Congress join me in applauding this prolific artist, who is truly an inspiration.

#### INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO UPDATE THE VPPA

### HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, July 8, 2011*

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, today I am joined by my colleagues, Representatives COBLE, SENSENBRENNER and SANCHEZ in introducing a bipartisan bill to update the Video Privacy Protection Act of 1988, VPPA. This bill will ensure that a law related to the handling of video tape rental information is updated to reflect the realities of the 21st Century.

The VPPA was passed by Congress in the wake of Judge Robert Bork's 1987 Supreme Court nomination battle, during which a local Washington, DC, newspaper obtained a list of video tapes the Bork family rented from its neighborhood video tape rental store. This disclosure caused bipartisan outrage, which resulted in the enactment of the VPPA.

The commercial video distribution landscape has changed dramatically since 1988. Back then, the primary consumer consumption of commercial video content occurred through the sale or rental of prerecorded video cassette tapes. This required users to travel to their local video rental store to pick a movie. Afterward, consumers had to travel back to the store to return the rented movie. Movies that consumers rented and enjoyed were recommended to friends primarily through face-to-face conversations. With today's technology, consumers can quickly and efficiently access video programming through a variety of platforms, including through Internet Protocol-based video services—all without leaving their homes.

Our proposed amendment updates the VPPA to allow video tape service providers to facilitate the sharing on social media networks of the movies watched or recommended by users. Specifically, it is narrowly crafted to preserve the VPPA's protections for consumers' privacy while modernizing the law to empower consumers to do more with their video consumption preferences, including sharing names of new or favorite TV shows or movies on social media in a simple way. However, it protects the consumer's control over his information by requiring consumer consent before any of this can occur. And, it makes clear that a consumer can opt-in to the ongoing sharing of his or her favorite movies or TV shows without having to provide consent each and every time a movie is rented. It also makes clear that written, affirmative consent can be provided through the Internet and can be withdrawn at any time.

This amendment does not change the privacy standard adopted by Congress when the VPPA was first enacted. Specifically, it preserves the requirement that the users provide affirmative, written consent.