

H.R. 6600 and S3199 Talking Points

Background

Since the introduction of Congressman Tom Malinowski's Bill, HR6600 the Ethiopia Stabilization, Peace, and Democracy Act, the bill has ordered reported by the House Foreign Relations Committee and awaits scheduling of a full vote on the House floor by Majority Leader Steny Hoyer and Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Senate bill 3199 is scheduled for markup in the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee on March 23.

These bills have a number of serious and devastating measures that would damage long term relations between the United States and Ethiopia, devastate the Ethiopian economy, and cost American jobs.

Talking Points

- This bill would subject the Government of Ethiopia to endless investigations with no concrete method of ending a civil war the U.S. has no direct stake in.
- This bill pushes Ethiopia further into China and Russia's sphere of influence.
- Passage could further destabilize the Ethiopian economy and its government.
- The bill does not consider the current, stable state of the conflict and the Government of Ethiopia's transparency to the international community and overtures of peace and reconciliation offered to the TPLF.
- The overwhelming burden and punishment falls upon the Government of Ethiopia and not upon the TPLF who started this war and continue to commit war crimes despite the Government's efforts.
- Delisting Ethiopia from AGOA has already crippled U.S. businesses that depend on Ethiopian goods, esp. textiles, and this bill would only further push U.S. business investment away from Ethiopia by putting a long-term cloud of sanctions upon the country.
 - Just the threat of potential U.S. sanctions has been seen throughout Africa to dissuade Western investment in such countries.
 - Over 1 million jobs in Ethiopia have been lost directly due to the AGOA decision. Sec 4(b)—Multilateral Sanctions, Sec. 6— Limitation on assistance provided through international financial institutions, and Sec. 7— Limitation on support provided by United States International Development Finance Corporation will further discourage Western and international investment and increase economic recession in Ethiopia.
- The Ethiopian American community has borne the brunt of economic sanctions already due to the delisting, destroying jobs and especially impacting Ethiopian American businesswomen at a time when the economy faces major inflation and uncertainty. This bill only confers greater hardship on U.S. citizens.

Specific to HR 6600

- H.R. 6600 contains overly broad language and a 10-year sunset clause that can be legally applied to encompass any conflict, aside from the current civil war, that may occur within Ethiopia during that time. This amounts to diplomatic blackmail by hovering a Sword of Damocles over the government of Ethiopia long after the civil war ends.

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- Section 5 would force Ethiopia to seek military aid from U.S. adversaries should the TPLF or other potential hostile entities further initiate combat while this legislation is in effect.
- The language also limits the government of Ethiopia's ability to respond to other potential conflicts within Ethiopia, which could include response to international terrorism or foreign adversaries.
- This bill be used to sanction PM Abiy himself
 - Although Sec 4(a)(1) provides "and" requirements, it leaves the decision up to the President. By passing this bill, the U.S. Congress will be seen as endorsing the sanctioning upon the Government of Ethiopia.
 - Any consideration of sanctions must require utmost transparency which we have yet to see in cases like the AGOA delisting.
 - China and Russia will use Section 4 as propaganda to further divide U.S./Ethiopia relations.

Specific to S3199

- Section 7(a)(1) connotes an "or" requirement and could lead to an endorsement of sanctions against Prime Minister Abiy for his role directly leading counter-offensive that pushed the TPLF back to Tigray amidst calls by the U.S. to cease all hostilities and implement a cease-fire immediately in August of 2021.
 - This would further strain U.S./Ethiopian relations and push Ethiopia into the China/Russia sphere
- Again Sec 7(a)(1) is specifically an "or" clause and subsection (F) would require sanctioning of all parties supplying arms used in the conflict, including government agencies and officials from:
 - Israel, Germany, France, Turkey, Ukraine, Hungary, Russia, China, and the *United States*

Key Questions

- How does this bill enhance U.S./Ethiopian relations?
- Considering the negative impact on Ethiopian and U.S. businesses by the AGOA delisting, and the immediate trade deal China offered in its place, how does the suspension of certain development and commercial aid benefit the U.S./Ethiopia relationship and how does this help the U.S. position, vis a vis China, in Africa?
- How does limiting international financing options help stabilize Ethiopia and prevent an economic calamity?
- What assets does America have on the ground to properly assist in the delivery of foreign aid?