



PRESS RELEASE

American Ethiopian Community Protest in Washington DC

The protest was to demonstrate diaspora opposition to HR6600 and S3199 currently going through Congress.

Washington D.C. – Hundreds of American Ethiopian residents from D.C., Virginia, Maryland and beyond protested on Capitol Hill on Monday 28th March. Supported by the American Ethiopian Public Affairs Committee (AEPAC), the protestors called on Members of Congress to oppose new legislation currently moving through the House that would devastate Ethiopia's economy, provide support to an internationally recognized terrorist group called the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and put the lives of millions of people in East Africa at risk.

Simultaneous to the protest, a mobile billboard drove around D.C. raising awareness of the harmful impact of the bills and how it provides support to the TPLF.

On November 4, 2020, TPLF forces attacked a government military base in the northern Ethiopian region of Tigray, kicking off what has become a destructive and heart-breaking conflict. Over the past year, the TPLF has continued its violent military campaign into the neighboring Afar and Amhara regions, upending the lives of millions of Ethiopians.

The fourteen-month conflict has started to ease following a counter-offensive by government forces which aborted the TPLF's march on Addis Ababa and their occupation of Afar and Amhara.

Following the TPLF's defeat and withdrawal to Tigray, the Ethiopian Government has taken significant steps toward peace including halting armed operations at the borders of Tigray, offering amnesty for several TPLF and other opposition political party leaders and creating a national dialogue to help secure lasting peace for the country.

The bills sponsored by Congressman Malinowski (HR6600) and Senator Bob Menendez (S3199) would deploy a wide-ranging sanctions against Ethiopia including blocking the country from critical aid and investment from the IMF, World Bank and the U.S. itself, has been met with anger from the Ethiopian diaspora.

Since its introduction those advocating for the bill have faced overwhelming opposition from the American Ethiopian community across the country.

The aim of this week's protest was to highlight the progress that has been made in Ethiopia, including the announcement last week of a [humanitarian ceasefire](#), and challenge the need for the bills. Moreover, Ethiopian community leaders want to increase awareness of the impact the bills, if they become law, would have on the poorest in the country.

Chairman of AEPAC, Mesfin Tegenu said:

“These bills are nothing short of an attack on Ethiopia and its people. As Ethiopia starts on its journey to peace after more than a year of conflict, Representative Malinowski, Senator Menendez and others want to cripple Ethiopia’s economy and fuel tensions. Many of the actions the bill requests of Ethiopia from an amnesty for prisoners to the formation of a national dialogue are already in progress. The one-million strong American Ethiopian community will have our voices heard. We will do all we can to oppose this bill and we call on friends of Ethiopia to support our campaign.”

ENDS

Notes to Editors

- HR6600 can be found here: <https://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA00/20220208/114384/BILLS-117HR--ih.pdf>
- S3199 can be found here: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/3199>

About AEPAC

The American-Ethiopian Public Affairs Committee is dedicated to promoting a positive, synergetic relationship between the United States and Ethiopia. AEPAC’s core mission is to strengthen and enhance the century-old relationship between the United States and Ethiopia. AEPAC strives to build a strong partnership based on the common interests and mutual benefits of the two countries.

More information on our work can be found here: <https://aepact.org/> | [@AmericaEthiopia](#)