

Washington Update

April 24, 2009

1. CONTACT CONGRESS!

It is time to build on the impressive achievements of the Ethiopian-American community in the last session of Congress, when the House of Representatives passed legislation promoting Ethiopian human rights, democracy and economic prosperity. This time we need to get both houses of Congress to pass legislation.

There are many, many competing priorities in Congress. The ONLY way we will succeed is by making our voices heard. Members of Congress respond to their constituents. The Meles regime is paying DLA Piper hundreds of thousands of dollars to lobby Congress to block legislation. We do not need expensive lobbyists, but we do need to get organized, and we need to act. EVERY Ethiopian in America who cares about democracy and human rights in Ethiopia should contact members of the Africa subcommittee of the Foreign Affairs Committee. Write a simple letter explaining in your own words why it is important for Congress to enact legislation on human rights and democracy in Ethiopia. EVERY Ethiopian in America should call the numbers below and ask the members of Congress to introduce and pass legislation promoting human rights and democracy in Ethiopia. Mention the State Department's 2008 human rights report that describes horrible abuses by the Ethiopian government. Try to make AT LEAST one telephone call EVERY DAY. Members of Congress report that on some issues their telephones are jammed with people calling to advocate for or against legislation. The members listed below need to know that there are tens of thousands of people in America who care about Ethiopian human rights and democracy. Tell them that the U.S. must make its actions match its ideals when it comes to Ethiopia. Call and keep calling!

Rep. Donald Payne: (202)-225-3436

Diane Watson: 202-225-7084

Barbara Lee: 225-2661

Brad Miller: 225-3032

Gregory Meeks: 202/225-3461

Sheila Jackson Lee: (202) 225-3816

Lynn Woolsey: 202-225-5161

Chris Smith: 202-225-3765

Jeff Flake: (202) 225-2635

John Boozman: (202) 225-4301

Jeff Fortenberry: 202-225-4806

2. The All-Ethiopia Unity Party newspaper Andenet is being distributed in the following U.S. cities: Atlanta, Washington DC metro area, Los Angeles, San Jose, Las Vegas, Oakland, Boston, and Seattle. The response has been very positive. Please contact the website, www.kaeup.org, for a subscription. Consider making financial contributions to make it possible to continue providing information about the struggle for peaceful, democratic change in Ethiopia. Information about the bank account and credit card payments is available on the website.

Mesfin Mekonen