

MIKE COFFMAN
6TH DISTRICT, COLORADO

ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
MILITARY PERSONNEL
SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

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March 30, 2017

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Program
Room HT-2, The Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Lowey,

I write to you today at the request of many of the Ethiopian-Americans whom I represent in Congress. These constituents have brought to my attention what they view as an ongoing campaign of human rights violations in their homeland of Ethiopia. They are convinced that these serious human rights violations are the result of an organized and concerted effort perpetrated by the Ethiopian government.

My constituents tell me that they have seen clear evidence that the Government of Ethiopia is behind a pattern of human rights abuse including:

- The wanton killing of peaceful protestors,
- The arrest and detention of journalists, students, activists, and political leaders,
- The stifling of political and civil dissent and journalistic freedoms.

In light of these abuses and the United States' stated strategy of strengthening democratic institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa, I believe it is important for you to review the current aid program to Ethiopia to ensure that the aid provided by the U.S. is not subsidizing a government apparently committed to the systematic abuse of its own citizens and reduction of the democratic space within its own borders.

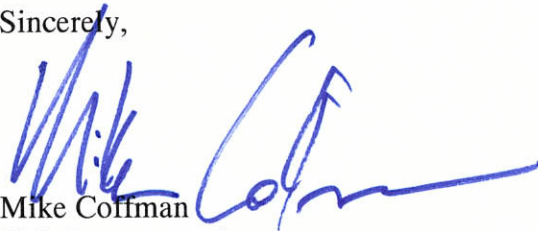
I note that current US aid levels to Ethiopia for FY2017 are set at \$514 million dollars, the majority of which is intended for economic development, humanitarian assistance, health,

education and social services. While the goal of this aid is noble, numerous constituents and experts on the Sub-Saharan region tell me that this assistance may not be reaching those in Ethiopia who need it the most, and may be providing support and legitimacy to this regime.

I respectfully request that the Subcommittee include language ensuring a suspension of the appropriation of FY2018 foreign assistance for Ethiopia pending its government's implementation of real, concrete and measurable humanitarian reforms as outlined in H.Res. 128. I believe that doing so will communicate to the Ethiopian government how seriously the United States views these human rights violations.

Thank you very much for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Mike Coffman
U.S. Representative
6th District, Colorado