

.....  
(Original Signature of Member)

110TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**H. R.** \_\_\_\_\_

To encourage and facilitate the consolidation of peace and security, respect for human rights, democracy, and economic freedom in Ethiopia.

---

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. PAYNE (for himself and [see ATTACHED LIST of cosponsors]) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on

---

**A BILL**

To encourage and facilitate the consolidation of peace and security, respect for human rights, democracy, and economic freedom in Ethiopia.

1        *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2        *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3        **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4        This Act may be cited as the “Ethiopia Democracy  
5        and Accountability Act of 2007”.

6        **SEC. 2. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

7        It is the policy of the United States to—

1           (1) support the advancement of human rights,  
2           democracy, independence of the judiciary, freedom of  
3           the press, peacekeeping capacity building, and eco-  
4           nomic development in the Federal Democratic Re-  
5           public of Ethiopia;

6           (2) seek the unconditional release of all political  
7           prisoners and prisoners of conscience in Ethiopia;

8           (3) foster stability, democracy, and economic  
9           development in the region;

10          (4) collaborate with Ethiopia in the Global War  
11          on Terror; and

12          (5) strengthen United States-Ethiopian rela-  
13          tions based on the policy objectives specified in para-  
14          graphs (1) through (4).

15 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

16          Congress finds the following:

17           (1) The people of Ethiopia have suffered for  
18           decades due to military conflicts, natural disasters,  
19           poverty and diseases, regional instability, and the  
20           brutal dictatorship of the military junta under  
21           Mengistu Haile Mariam. Hundreds of thousands of  
22           civilians were brutally murdered by the Mengistu re-  
23           gime, including women and children. Many more  
24           sacrificed their lives fighting for freedom, respect for  
25           human rights, and to bring an end to the brutal dic-

1 tatorship of the Mengistu regime. Members of that  
2 murderous regime are currently living in Europe, the  
3 United States, and Africa.

4 (2) In May 1991, the brutal dictatorship of the  
5 Mengistu regime came to an abrupt end when the  
6 Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front  
7 (EPRDF) defeated the Mengistu army. In July  
8 1991, the EPRDF and a coalition of other political  
9 groups established a transitional government in  
10 Ethiopia . A number of liberation movements joined  
11 the transitional government in a spirit of a new start  
12 and the building of a democratic Ethiopia . These  
13 groups included the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF),  
14 the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), and  
15 many others.

16 (3) Since the ouster of the Mengistu regime in  
17 1991, the EPRDF-led government instituted a  
18 multiparty system and organized 3 regional and na-  
19 tional elections and a number of local elections. The  
20 1995 and 2000 elections were largely boycotted and  
21 judged to be neither free nor fair. Some opposition  
22 groups participated in the 2000 elections, giving  
23 such groups 12 seats in the 546-seat parliament.

24 (4) The May 2005 pre-election period and the  
25 conduct of the elections in Ethiopia were seen by ob-

1 servers to be transparent, competitive, and relatively  
2 free and fair, although there were a number of prob-  
3 lems reported. More than 90 percent of registered  
4 voters participated and dozens of political parties  
5 took part in the elections. Moreover, some inter-  
6 national groups observed the elections, unprece-  
7 dented access to the mass media was given to the  
8 opposition, and there were televised debates between  
9 the government and the opposition. Some political  
10 parties and armed political groups boycotted the  
11 2005 elections. However, trained local groups were  
12 barred from observing the elections.

13 (5) Despite apparent improvement in the elec-  
14 toral process, preliminary election results announced  
15 by the Government of Ethiopia shortly after the May  
16 15, 2005, elections were seen by observers as ques-  
17 tionable. The opposition accused the Government of  
18 Ethiopia of stealing the elections and called for civil  
19 disobedience, which resulted in the killing of dem-  
20 onstrators and detention of opposition leaders and  
21 thousands of their followers, including 11 elected  
22 members of parliament and the elected mayor of  
23 Addis Ababa.

24 (6) The Coalition for Unity and Democracy  
25 (CUD), the United Ethiopian Democratic Forces

1 (UEDF), and the ruling EPRDF reached an agree-  
2 ment to resolve disputed election results peacefully  
3 with the help of the National Electoral Board  
4 (NEB). The NEB investigated more than 299 com-  
5 plaints and later agreed to hold reruns in 31 con-  
6 stituencies. In late August 2005, the NEB held re-  
7 runs in the 31 constituencies as well as in all 23  
8 constituencies in the Somali region, where elections  
9 had been postponed due to insecurity.

10 (7) Election results show that opposition parties  
11 won 170 seats in the national parliament, a signifi-  
12 cant increase from the 12 seats they won in the last  
13 elections. Opposition parties also won the city coun-  
14 cil in Addis Ababa, giving them control over the cap-  
15 ital. An estimated 150 of the 170 opposition mem-  
16 bers of parliament have taken their seats. In early  
17 May 2006, the Government of Ethiopia appointed a  
18 caretaker government in the capital. Members of  
19 parliament from the CUD walked out of parliament  
20 in protest. The CUD won the city, but the des-  
21 ignated mayor has been in detention since November  
22 2005.

23 (8) Human rights conditions deteriorated sig-  
24 nificantly after the May 15, 2005, elections in Ethi-  
25 opia and overall human rights conditions in the

1 country remain poor. The Department of State, in  
2 its 2005 Country Reports on Human Rights Prac-  
3 tices, noted a myriad of human rights abuses by the  
4 Government of Ethiopia. Moreover, journalists and  
5 editors of the independent press have been and con-  
6 tinue to face harassment and prosecution for alleged  
7 violations of press laws in Ethiopia. Dozens of jour-  
8 nalists have fled the country, and some are currently  
9 in exile fearing prosecution or harassment.

10 (9) In June 2005, more than 35 demonstrators  
11 were killed by Ethiopian Government security per-  
12 sonnel and in November 2005 an estimated 53 peo-  
13 ple were killed, including 7 policemen, according to  
14 Human Rights Watch and several other reports. The  
15 violence against these victims occurred after pro-op-  
16 position groups went to the streets of the capital to  
17 protest government actions in handling the elections  
18 results of May 2005. Tens of thousands of people  
19 suspected of being opposition supporters were de-  
20 tained over the past months, although many of these  
21 detainees were released. Nonetheless, government se-  
22 curity forces continue to abuse opposition leaders,  
23 supporters, and family members.

24 (10) An estimated 112 political leaders, human  
25 rights activists, community leaders, and journalists,

1 including the chairman of the CUD (Hailu Shawel),  
2 the newly elected Mayor of Addis Ababa (Berhanu  
3 Nega), and the founder of the Ethiopian Human  
4 Rights Council (Professor Mesfin Wolde Mariam),  
5 were imprisoned and charged with treason and geno-  
6 cide. These measures were deliberately taken to sti-  
7 fle and criminalize opposition party activity in the  
8 country. The measures also were intended to intimi-  
9 date and silence independent press and civil society,  
10 raising serious question about the Ethiopian Govern-  
11 ment's commitment to democracy and good govern-  
12 ance.

13 (11) According to Department of State's 2006  
14 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices,  
15 "human rights abuses [in Ethiopia] reported during  
16 the year included: limitation on citizens' right to  
17 change their government during the most recent  
18 elections; unlawful killings, and beating, abuse, and  
19 mistreatment of detainees and opposition supporters  
20 by security forces; poor prison conditions; arbitrary  
21 arrest and detention . . .".

22 (12) Whereas the Ethiopian Parliament estab-  
23 lished an 11-member Commission of Inquiry to "in-  
24 vestigate the disorder and report to the House of  
25 People's Representatives in order to take the nec-

1       essary measure". The Commission was tasked to in-  
2       vestigate whether government security forces used  
3       excessive force, caused damage to life and property,  
4       or showed a lack of respect for human rights. The  
5       Commission was mandated to investigate the June  
6       8, 2005, and November 1-10, 2005, violence in dif-  
7       ferent parts of the country.

8               (13) Whereas members of the Commission of  
9       Inquiry visited several regions, reviewed police re-  
10      ports, met with prisoners and government officials,  
11      made 122 radio and TV announcements to the pub-  
12      lic, examined 16,990 documents, and took testi-  
13      monies from 1,300 people.

14             (14) Whereas the Commission of Inquiry con-  
15      cluded that 763 civilians were injured and 193  
16      killed. The Commission also reported that 71 police  
17      officers were injured and 6 killed. Damage to prop-  
18      erty was estimated at \$512,588. The Commission  
19      also reported that more than 30,000 civilians were  
20      detained, some were tortured, and prisoners in Kaliti  
21      were killed.

22             (15) Whereas the Commission of Inquiry re-  
23      ported that security forces fired 1,500 bullets at  
24      prisoners, killing 17 and injuring 53. The Commis-  
25      sion stated that civilians did not use weapons and

1 reported bank robberies by demonstrators did not  
2 take place. The Commission's deliberations were  
3 video-taped and votes were taken on key findings on  
4 July 3, 2006.

5 (17) Whereas shortly after the Commission of  
6 Inquiry reached its decision, the Ethiopian Govern-  
7 ment reportedly began to put pressure on Commis-  
8 sion members to change their report. The Chairman  
9 of the Commission, a former Supreme Court Presi-  
10 dent of the Southern Region of Ethiopia, was told  
11 by a senior advisor of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi  
12 to call for an emergency meeting of the Commission  
13 in order to change the Commission's report.

14 (18) Whereas the Commission of Inquiry was  
15 scheduled to give its report to the Ethiopian Par-  
16 liament on July 7, 2006, but the Parliament was ad-  
17 journed a day early. Several Commission members,  
18 including the Chairman and the Deputy Chair, left  
19 the country with the final report, other documents  
20 relevant to the investigation, and several video tapes  
21 of the Commission deliberations.

22 (19) Whereas in November 2006, the Chairman  
23 of the Commission of Inquiry and another Commis-  
24 sion member presented the Commission's report and  
25 briefed Members of the United State Congress.

1           (20) Whereas in November 2006, at a congress-  
2           sional briefing with members of the Commission of  
3           Inquiry, a young women named Alemzuria submitted  
4           her testimony about what happened to her mother,  
5           Etenesh Yemam. Alemzuria's father was elected in  
6           May 2005 as Council Member of in Addis Ababa.  
7           Subsequently security personnel came to arrest him  
8           at his home and then shot Etenesh Yemam as she  
9           pleaded for her husband's release.

10           (21) Whereas the Commission of Inquiry inves-  
11           tigated the killing of Etenesh Yemam and confirmed  
12           beyond doubt what happened on that dreadful day.

13           **SEC. 4. SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN ETHIOPIA.**

14           The Secretary of State shall—

15           (1) establish a mechanism to provide financial  
16           support to local and national human rights groups  
17           and other relevant civil society organizations to help  
18           strengthen human rights monitoring and regular re-  
19           porting on human rights conditions in Ethiopia;

20           (2) establish a victims support network to pro-  
21           vide legal support for political prisoners and pris-  
22           oners of conscience and to assist local groups or

1 groups from outside Ethiopia that are active in mon-  
2 itoring the status of political prisoners and prisoners  
3 of conscience in Ethiopia;

4 (3) seek to increase the independence of the  
5 Ethiopian judiciary through facilitation of joint dis-  
6 cussions for court personnel, officials from the Ethi-  
7 opian Ministry of Justice, relevant members of the  
8 legislature, and civil society representatives on inter-  
9 national human rights standards;

10 (4) create and support a judicial monitoring  
11 process, consisting of local and international groups,  
12 to monitor judicial proceedings throughout Ethiopia,  
13 with special focus on unwarranted government inter-  
14 vention on strictly judicial matters, and to inves-  
15 tigate and report on actions to strengthen an inde-  
16 pendent judiciary;

17 (5) establish a program to strengthen private  
18 media in Ethiopia, provide support for training pur-  
19 poses, offer technical and other types of support as  
20 necessary, and expand programming by the Voice of  
21 America to Ethiopia; and

22 (6) establish a mechanism to identify and extra-  
23 dite members of the Mengistu Haile Mariam regime  
24 and the current government residing in the United  
25 States who were engaged in gross human rights vio-

1 lations and work with other governments to identify  
2 and extradite such persons, including Mengistu  
3 Haile Mariam.

4 **SEC. 5. SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRATIZATION IN ETHIOPIA.**

5 (a) STRENGTHENING LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND NA-  
6 TIONAL DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES.—The Secretary of  
7 State shall—

8 (1) provide assistance to strengthen local, re-  
9 gional, and national parliaments and governments in  
10 Ethiopia through training in consultation with gov-  
11 ernment authorities, political parties, and civil soci-  
12 ety groups;

13 (2) establish a program focused on reconcili-  
14 ation efforts between the Government of Ethiopia  
15 and peaceful political and civil society groups, in-  
16 cluding in minority communities, in preparation for  
17 negotiation and for participation in the political  
18 process;

19 (3) strengthen training for political parties in  
20 Ethiopia in areas such as organization building and  
21 campaign management; and

22 (4) provide training for civil society groups in  
23 election monitoring in Ethiopia.

24 (b) DEMOCRACY ENHANCEMENT.—

1           (1) ASSISTANCE.—United States technical as-  
2           sistance for democracy promotion in Ethiopia should  
3           be made available to the ruling party as well as op-  
4           position parties in Ethiopia.

5           (2) RESTRICTION.—

6           (A) IN GENERAL.—Nonessential United  
7           States assistance shall not be made available to  
8           the Government of Ethiopia if the Government  
9           of Ethiopia acts to obstruct United States tech-  
10          nical assistance to advance human rights, de-  
11          mocracy, independence of the judiciary, freedom  
12          of the press, economic development and eco-  
13          nomic freedom in Ethiopia.

14          (B) DEFINITION.—In this paragraph, the  
15          term “nonessential United States assistance”  
16          means assistance under any provision of law,  
17          other than humanitarian assistance, assistance  
18          under emergency food programs, assistance to  
19          combat HIV/AIDS, and other health care as-  
20          sistance.

21 **SEC. 6. ENSURING GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR HUMAN**  
22                                   **RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY, AND ECONOMIC DE-**  
23                                   **VELOPMENT IN ETHIOPIA.**

24          (a) LIMITATION ON SECURITY ASSISTANCE; TRAVEL  
25          RESTRICTIONS.—

1 (1) LIMITATION ON SECURITY ASSISTANCE.—

2 (A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in  
3 subparagraph (B), security assistance shall not  
4 be provided to Ethiopia until such time as the  
5 certification described in paragraph (3) is made  
6 in accordance with such paragraph.

7 (B) EXCEPTION.—Subparagraph (A) shall  
8 not apply with respect to peacekeeping or  
9 counter-terrorism assistance. Peacekeeping or  
10 counter-terrorism assistance provided to Ethi-  
11 opia shall not be used for any other security-re-  
12 lated purpose or to provide training to security  
13 personnel or units accused of human rights vio-  
14 lations against civilians.

15 (2) TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS.—Beginning on the  
16 date that is 60 days after the date of the enactment  
17 of this Act and until such time as the certification  
18 described in paragraph (3) is made in accordance  
19 with such paragraph, the President shall deny a visa  
20 and entry into the United States to—

21 (A) any official of the Government of Ethi-  
22 opia who—

23 (i) has been involved in giving orders  
24 to use lethal force against peaceful dem-  
25 onstrators in Ethiopia; or

1 (ii) has been accused of gross human  
2 rights violations;

3 (B) security personnel of the Government  
4 of Ethiopia who were involved in the June or  
5 November 2005 shootings of demonstrators;

6 (C) security personnel responsible for mur-  
7 dering Etenesh Yemam, as described in para-  
8 graphs (20) and (21) of section 3; and

9 (D) security personnel responsible for mur-  
10 dering prisoners at Kaliti prison in the after-  
11 math of the election violence.

12 (3) CERTIFICATION.—The certification de-  
13 scribed in this paragraph is a certification by the  
14 President to Congress that the Government of Ethi-  
15 opia is making credible, quantifiable efforts to en-  
16 sure that—

17 (A) all political prisoners and prisoners of  
18 conscience in Ethiopia have been released, their  
19 civil and political rights restored, and their  
20 property returned;

21 (B) prisoners held without charge or kept  
22 in detention without fair trial in violation of the  
23 Constitution of Ethiopia are released or receive  
24 a fair and speedy trial, and prisoners whose

1 charges have been dismissed or acquitted and  
2 are still being held are released without delay;

3 (C) the Ethiopian judiciary is able to func-  
4 tion independently and allowed to uphold the  
5 Ethiopian Constitution and international  
6 human rights standards;

7 (D) security personnel involved in the un-  
8 lawful killings of demonstrators, Etenesh  
9 Yemam, and Kaliti prisoners are punished;

10 (E) family members, legal counsel, and  
11 others have unfettered access to visit detainees  
12 in Ethiopian prisons;

13 (F) print and broadcast media in Ethiopia  
14 are able to operate free from undue interference  
15 and laws restricting media freedom, including  
16 sections of the Ethiopian Federal Criminal  
17 Code, are revised;

18 (G) licensing of independent radio and tel-  
19 evision in Ethiopia is open and transparent;

20 (H) access in Ethiopia is provided to the  
21 Internet and the ability of citizens to freely  
22 send and receive electronic mail and otherwise  
23 obtain information is guaranteed;

24 (I) the National Election Board (NEB) in-  
25 cludes representatives of political parties with

1 seats in the Ethiopian Parliament and guaran-  
2 tees independence for the NEB in its decision-  
3 making;

4 (J) representatives of international human  
5 rights organizations engaged in human rights  
6 monitoring work in Ethiopia are admitted to  
7 Ethiopia without undue restriction; and

8 (K) Ethiopian human rights organizations  
9 are able to operate in an environment free of  
10 harassment, intimidation, and persecution.

11 (4) WAIVER.—

12 (A) IN GENERAL.—The President may  
13 waive the application of paragraph (1) or (2) on  
14 a case-by-case basis if the President determines  
15 that—

16 (i) the Government of Ethiopia has  
17 met the requirements of paragraph (3);  
18 and

19 (ii) such a waiver is in the national in-  
20 terests of the United States.

21 (B) NOTIFICATION.—Prior to granting a  
22 waiver under the authority of subparagraph  
23 (A), the President shall transmit to Congress a  
24 notification that includes the reasons for the  
25 waiver.

1 (b) TREATMENT OF POLITICAL PRISONERS AND  
2 PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—The President, the Secretary  
4 of State, and other relevant officials of the Govern-  
5 ment of the United States shall call upon the Gov-  
6 ernment of Ethiopia to immediately release all polit-  
7 ical prisoners and prisoners of conscience, especially  
8 prisoners held without charge.

9 (2) TORTURE VICTIM RELIEF.—While it is the  
10 responsibility of the Government of Ethiopia to com-  
11 pensate the victims of unlawful imprisonment and  
12 torture and their families for their suffering and  
13 losses, the President shall provide assistance for the  
14 rehabilitation of victims of torture in Ethiopia at  
15 centers established for such purposes pursuant to  
16 section 130 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961  
17 (22 U.S.C. 2152).

18 (c) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-  
19 gress that the Government of the United States should—

20 (1) encourage the Government of Ethiopia to  
21 enter into discussions with peaceful political groups  
22 in order to bring such groups into full participation  
23 in the political and economic affairs of Ethiopia, in-  
24 cluding their legalization as a political party; and

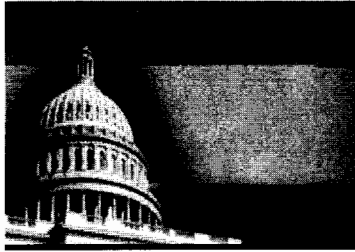


1 dom concerns that potentially threaten the stability of the  
2 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia .

3 **SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appro-  
5 priated to carry out this Act \$20,000,000 for each of the  
6 fiscal years 2008 and 2009.

7 (b) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appropriated pursuant  
8 to the authorization of appropriations under subsection (a)  
9 are authorized to remain available until expended.



## COALITION FOR H.R. 5680

First they ignore you, then they laugh at you,  
then they fight you, then you win.

--Mahatma Gandhi

<http://www.hr5680.org>

E-mail: [passhr5680@hr5680.org](mailto:passhr5680@hr5680.org)

Tel: 323-988-5688 Fax: 323-924-5563

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 21, 2007

ETHIOPIA HUMAN RIGHTS BILL RE-INTRODUCED IN THE HOUSE:  
A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF AN ADVANCE COPY OF THE NEW BILL

THANK YOU, DONALD PAYNE!

THANK YOU, DONALD PAYNE!

The Coalition for H.R. 5680 is informed and believes that Congressman Donald Payne (D-N.J.), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations, introduced the "Ethiopia Democracy and Accountability Act of 2007" in the U.S. House of Representatives on Friday, April 20, 2007.

The official copy of the new bill will be available after the Clerk of the House issues a tracking number for it.

Chairman Payne's bill replaces H.R.5680, also known as the "Ethiopia Freedom, Democracy and Accountability Act of 2006".

Chairman Payne's bill maintains much of the substance of H.R.5680 in terms of legislative findings and provisions. However, Chairman Payne has re-drafted the new bill with **regime accountability** as a centerpiece of the legislation.

Specifically, the new bill:

Emphasizes **current regime accountability** by affirmatively stating that it is the policy of the United States to seek the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners and prisoners of conscience. This emphasis is manifest in light of the evidence the new bill incorporates from the findings of the Inquiry Commission and the U.S. Department of State's 2006 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, Ethiopia. Effectively, the new bill places the release of political prisoners and prisoners of conscience as a top priority, and now appears second in line in the legislative statement of U.S. policy, ahead of the collaboration on the global war on terror. Moreover, using the findings of the Inquiry Commission, the new bill sends a clear message to the ruling regime that excessive use of force against peaceful citizens, lack of respect for human rights, rampant conditions of beatings and physical and mental abuse, mistreatment of detainees and opposition

supporters, poor prison conditions and arbitrary arrests and detentions are condemned by the U.S. Congress.

Underscores **retrospective regime accountability** by demanding the prosecution and punishment of the killers of the unarmed protesters in the period following the May, 2005 elections. It is clear from the plain language of the new bill that the new bill seeks accountability not only for the criminal and lawless acts of the security forces, but also others who may have had material participation and involvement in the commission of these gross abuses of human rights. The bill intends that all persons who have engaged in gross human rights abuses will be brought to justice.

Aims to ensure **prospective regime accountability** by preventing the future recurrence of extrajudicial killings and massacres such as those that took place after the 2005 elections. The new bill adds 10 extraordinary paragraphs meticulously documenting the massive scope of human rights violations in Ethiopia as set forth in the findings of the Inquiry Commission and the U.S. Department of State's 2006 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, Ethiopia. The findings of gross abuses of human rights in the new bill are so detailed that individual victims such as Etenesh Yemam, and her daughter Alemzuria. Etenesh's husband was elected to the Addis Abeba City Council, and she was shot in cold blood as she pleaded with so-called security officers to release him. Justice for the innocent detainees who were massacred in Kality prison is also specifically mentioned. The inclusion of the extensive new findings sends a clear message to the ruling regime in Ethiopia that massacres, extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detentions and other gross violations of human rights will not be tolerated by the United States.

Aims to use **regime accountability as a means of immediately ending gross abuses of human rights and the violence** perpetrated by the regime against opposition elements, dissenters and others. In this regard, the incorporation of the findings of the Inquiry commission and the 2006 U.S. State Department Human Rights report clearly indicates the sense of Congress that future U.S. policy and relations with Ethiopia will depend a great deal on the ruling regime's transparency and accountability on the issue of human rights, and its restraint in the use of indiscriminate violence against citizens.

Sends a clear message to **the ruling regime that it must be transparent and accountable** on its human rights record to its citizens and the international community, and take immediate remedial action to comply with human rights conventions. Consistent with H.R. 5680, the new bill offers a package of financial and technical support to the regime to achieve the objective of human rights accountability by strengthen human rights monitoring, creating a victims support network for political prisoners, increasing the independence and monitoring of the judiciary, and strengthening the private media, among other things.

Doubles the level of financial support to the ruling regime for human rights accountability by providing **\$20 million for each of the fiscal years 2008 and 2009**. (H.R. 5680 provided \$10 million for fiscal years 2007 and 2008.)

## **LIST OF SPECIFIC TEXTUAL CHANGES IN THE NEW BILL**

**Sec. 1:** Short Title: The new bill may be cited as the “Ethiopia Democracy and Accountability Act of 2007.”

**Sec. 3:** Findings: Lists facts on 1) human rights abuses as reported in the U.S. Department of State’s 2006 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, including lack of free elections, unlawful killings, beatings, abuse, mistreatment of detainees and opposition supporters, poor prison conditions, arbitrary arrests and detentions, 2) the findings of the 11-member Commission of Inquiry charged to investigate whether government security forces used excessive force, caused damaged to life and property and showed lack of respect for human rights. The Commission’s findings are reported in great detail in 9 paragraphs.

**Sec. 6 (3) (D):** Specifically requires that the security personnel involved in the unlawful killings of demonstrators, Etenesh Yemam and Kaliti prisoners are punished.

**Sec. 7:** Provides support for economic development assistance to Ethiopia. The Agency for International Development is expected to provide assistance for sustainable development of the Nile and Awash River resources, including technical assistance for irrigation system development and hydroelectric power to prevent future famines. Additionally, support is provided for health care assistance to hospitals and health care centers in rural areas. Prior provisions for assistance in the areas of taxation, debt management, bank supervision, etc, and financing for commercial ventures are omitted in the new bill.

**Sec. 9:** Authorization of Appropriations: The bill provides \$20 million for each of the fiscal years 2008 and 2009.

### **WE SHOULD THANK CHAIRMAN PAYNE**

We should thank Chairman Payne not only for what he has done for Ethiopia in this bill and H.R. 5680, but also for his tireless efforts on behalf of the Africa continent.

All Ethiopian Americans and Ethiopian human rights advocates should recognize that Chairman Payne, by introducing the new bill replacing H.R. 5680, demonstrates his unflagging support and high level of commitment to the cause of human rights in Ethiopia.

It is equally important for us to appreciate that Chairman Payne has been involved in the cause of human rights in Africa for a very long time, in addition to all of his tireless efforts to improve the economic, political and health problems facing the continent.

Among Chairman Payne’s recent efforts on behalf of human rights in the current 110<sup>th</sup> Congress include the Torture Victims Relief Reauthorization Act of 2007. He has previously sponsored and authored numerous bill and resolutions promoting democracy, good governance, human rights, peaceful conflict resolution and sustainable peace throughout the African continent, including the Sudan Peace Act and the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act.

**Express your thanks and appreciation to Chairman Payne!**

Washington Office  
2209 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
Phone (202) 225-3436  
Fax (202) 225-4160

<http://www.house.gov/payne/>

**NEXT STEPS ON THE NEW BILL**

There are a number of issues and questions that supporters and advocates of human rights in Ethiopia will need to address as the new bill begins its journey to the House floor.

A number of issues have been raised by various human rights advocates and groups in the past, and as part of the “next steps” on the new bill, these issues and questions must be addressed.

Among the critical issues raised to improve the effectiveness of grassroots legislative advocacy for human rights in Ethiopia include: 1) the need for increased sophistication in the use legislative advocacy strategies and tactics, 2) learning from past mistakes and avoiding the pitfalls of improvised and haphazard grassroots advocacy, 3) the need to harness available material, technical and human resources to produce specific results that maximize passage of a human rights bill, and 4) the need to develop effective mechanisms to work with congressional members and staff.

We hope such discussions will take place in the near future, and concerted action will be taken to bring this new bill to the House floor as quickly as possible.