

Government of Ethiopia on its shortcomings in observing democratic principles and human rights in that country.

In June 2005, following a contentious election in which then-Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and his party seemed to suffer unexpected losses in the legislature, demonstrators, led by college students, took to the streets to protest a delayed release of election results. The government's reaction was to deploy snipers who shot and killed protesters and to jail hundreds of others. An increasingly violent response to protests took place in November of that year. The death toll resulting from both protests was 193, but the numbers arrested has never been confirmed.

In the summer of 2005, I travelled to Ethiopia to assess the situation and met with Prime Minister Meles, members of his government, political opposition leaders, including one of our witnesses today—Berhanu Nega—civil society representatives, the religious community and the diplomatic community. What I found was a government leader who was arrogant in his certainty that he could arrest his political opposition whenever he wanted. I also found a political opposition convinced that they had won a majority in the legislative elections that year.

Unfortunately, the government's view won the day. Mr. Nega and other political leaders and human rights officials were arrested and held in jail for more than a year on charges that had to continually be changed due to the repeated failure to convict them. Some of them who managed to be released from jail, found themselves forced to live outside their home country, such as Mr. Nega.

The political space for opposition parties continues to be constricted. The imprisonment and prosecution of political leaders has dissolved parties and caused reformulations that also weren't able to continue. Mr. Nega founded Ginbot 7, a new political party in Ethiopia, but two years ago, it was declared a terrorist organization by the Meles government, and not only was it unable to operate openly, but Ethiopian journalists were prevented from reporting on the party or its statements.

Similarly, the Government of Ethiopia, according to the State Department's human rights report, continued to imprison more than 400 opposition leaders, activists, and local journalists by the end of 2012, many on vague national security-related charges.

As of 2011, the Ethiopian government had completed long-term cheap land leases on more than 3.6 million hectares (equivalent to the size of the Netherlands), mainly to large-scale foreign agricultural investors, and an additional 2.1 million hectares of land has since been made available for such leases to foreigners. An estimated 1.5 million Ethiopians in four regions have been displaced, many of them subject to a supposedly voluntary program known as "villagization." Others displaced due to these land leases or because of major dam projects now reside in refugee camps in Kenya.

Despite an unacceptable political and human rights environment in Ethiopia, we hold out hope that the post-Meles government may yet change the direction the government has taken for so long. Earlier this month, thousands of Ethiopians protested political repression in the capital city of Addis Ababa. Under the late Prime Minister Meles, such a show of defiance likely would have been met with offi-

cial violence and mass arrests, but the government of current Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn did not react in that way. This is an encouraging sign that the current Ethiopian government may consider changing its course and allowing its citizens to effectively express themselves—including at the ballot box.

Our witnesses last week included the former U.S. ambassador to Ethiopia, the U.S. official in charge of our significant aid portfolio to Ethiopia, the former elected mayor of Addis Ababa, a member of the first U.S. delegation to meet with the current government and a longtime Ethiopian activist on human rights issues.

RECOGNIZING CLARINETIST
ARIANNA BEYER, WINNER OF
THE 2013 UNITED STATES NAVY
BAND HIGH SCHOOL CONCERTO
COMPETITION

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2013

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to congratulate clarinetist Arianna Beyer on competing in and winning the 2013 United States Navy Band High School Concerto Competition. This annual competition identifies the best high school musical talent in the nation and allows the finalists to travel to Washington, D.C. to compete for a chance to perform a prepared solo piece with the world-renowned United States Navy Band.

For 12 years now, the United States Navy Band has hosted this national competition. After each student submits an audio recording, the United States Navy Band evaluates each submission and selects the finalists to come to Washington, D.C. to perform at the competition. This competition is not only used as a method of motivating and rewarding inspiring musicians, but also to stimulate America's future leaders. In order to win this competition, Ms. Beyer sacrificed a vast amount of her time and dedicated herself to this goal. Her relentless pursuit of maximizing her potential has allowed her to gain tremendous recognition as a clarinetist at a young age. Ms. Beyer continues to go above and beyond all expectations in her musical endeavors.

Her accomplishments do not end with winning the United States Navy Band High School Concerto Competition. She has excelled in the classroom and as a leader in her community. Arianna continues to give back by mentoring peers in both music and academic curriculums. In addition, Arianna is a 2013 Emerson Scholar and has received a full merit scholarship to attend Interlochen Center for the Arts in Michigan this upcoming summer. In the fall of 2013, she will begin her dual degree studies at the Eastman School of Music and the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Rochester.

On behalf of the citizens of Central Florida, I am pleased to recognize and applaud Arianna for her hard work, dedication and achievement. She is most deserving of this prestigious honor as the winner of the 2013 United States Navy Band High School Concerto Competition. May her character and passion inspire others to follow in her footsteps. I wish her great success as she applies her dedication toward even higher pursuits.

RECOGNIZING THE VOLUNTEERS
FOR PROJECT MEND-A-HOUSE

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2013

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the volunteers for Project Mend-A-House.

A joint effort between private citizens and the Prince William County government, Project Mend-A-House was created in 1984. At the time, Lily Blackwell was a volunteer delivering meals to seniors who were confined to their homes due to disabilities. Her call to action began with the observation that a number of seniors along her delivery route could no longer perform necessary home repairs. Basic home repair and some structural improvements were needed to ensure that these disabled seniors remained safe and independent. Ms. Blackwell partnered with Toni Clemons-Porter and Lin Wagener of the Prince William Area Agency on Aging to create the foundation of an organization that has now provided humanitarian assistance for a quarter of a century.

Project Mend-A-House completes home repairs and safety modifications to facilitate independent living for seniors, the disabled and low-income residents. Over the years, projects have ranged from fixing termite damage in an older home to making entire houses more accessible with wheelchair ramps, hand rails, shower seats and transfer benches. The work is truly a community effort. Local corporate partners provide monetary support, volunteers and building materials. Civic associations and faith based groups contribute hundreds of volunteer hours to Project Mend-A-House each year. Project Mend-A-House puts everyone to work regardless of skill level to improve the quality of life for our disabled, elderly and low income neighbors.

It is my honor to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the names of the volunteers for Project Mend-A-House:

Lee Bertand, Edie Clark, Don McCubbin, Steven Donovan, Rich Feickert, Kristen Hull, Tajr Hull, Dave Kaiser, Bob Leiker, Terry Lopez, Chris Maddocks, Sally Okuly, Marty Raines, Barbara Reese, David Seigrist, Dave Rogers, Matt Schaffer, Gail Straker, Guy Straker, Therese Swetnam, Terry Swirchak, Sarah Tamai.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in commending the volunteers of Project Mend-A-House for their service and in thanking them for their dedication to our community.

CELEBRATING THE 2013 STANLEY
CUP CHAMPION BLACKHAWKS

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2013

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Chicago Blackhawks on winning the 2013 Stanley Cup. As the team lifted the historic Stanley Cup in the air, it was as if they were lifting the City of Chicago itself.

From beginning to end, the Blackhawks were the best team in the National Hockey

League. They had the best start in NHL history, setting the record for most consecutive points scored to start a season. Entering the playoffs they were the overall number one seed. The team faced and defeated the Minnesota Wild, Detroit Red Wings, and the Los Angeles Kings to win the Clarence S. Campbell Bowl as Western Conference champions.

Lead by Coach Joel Quenneville, the Blackhawks faced the Boston Bruins in the Stanley Cup Finals. It was truly a team effort to overcome the physicality and aggressiveness of the Bruins. After a hard-fought series, it came down to 2 goals scored in 17 seconds late in the third period, by Bryan Bickell and Dave Bolland, to overcome a one goal deficit to win the Stanley Cup. Patrick Kane became only the 4th American player to win the Conn Smythe Trophy as NHL Playoff MVP.

As a lifelong Chicagoan I take great pride in congratulating the Blackhawks on another thrilling season. I thank them for bringing the Stanley Cup back to the Madhouse on Madison.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF LT.
COL. FRANK BLACKBURN

HON. RICHARD L. HANNA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2013

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of a great American, Lt. Col. Frank Blackburn, of Rome, NY, who will be buried with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery on Thursday, 27 June, 2013. Lt. Col. Blackburn was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force in December 1953 after completing flight training school in Texas. He graduated from Syracuse University.

Lt. Col. Blackburn had a distinguished flying career with the Air Force. He was stationed in Korea following the war with the 405th Fighter-Bomber Wing at Langley, VA; with the 353rd Tactical Fighter Squadron in Myrtle Beach, SC; as a missile crew commander in Sembach, Germany; and with the 37th Tactical Fighter wing in Vietnam from 1968 to 1969, as a forward air controller. He rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and retired from the service in 1972. While in the Air Force, Frank piloted many of the nation's earliest and most important jet aircraft, including the F-84, F-86 Sabre and the F100 Super Sabre.

Lt. Col. Blackburn earned numerous commendations, including: the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, Korean Service Medal, United Nations Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Air Force Longevity Service Award with three Oak Leaf Clusters, Distinguished Unit Citation, Air Force Expeditionary Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Small Arms Expert Marksman Ribbon, Vietnam Service Medal with one Bronze Service Star, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, Presidential Unit Citation, and Air Force Medal.

He followed this career with 25 years of service at PAR Technology Corp. in Rome, NY where his responsibilities included operations, purchasing, and security. He and his wife, Donna Logan Blackburn raised five chil-

dren: Wendy, James, Debra, David and Andrea. Lt. Col. Blackburn served as a council member, elder and Sunday School teacher at St. John Lutheran Church in Rome and he was a member of the Retired Officers Association and a past member of the Rome Kiwanis Club.

Mr. Speaker, Lt. Col. Blackburn was a 20-year career U.S. Air Force officer, a dedicated husband, father, grandfather and member of his community. Let us honor him as a true American patriot. May his memory never be forgotten.

TRIBUTE TO KAREN REGNO

HON. BILL FLORES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2013

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I submit this statement on behalf of the office of the Chief of Legislative Liaison.

Karen Regno has faithfully worked for the better interests of our country for nearly 22 years in the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, the Patent and Trademark Office, and even for a short time as a Fellow in a Congressional office in Washington, D.C.

Originally from Waco, Texas, Karen brings a well-rounded knowledge of the nongovernmental world as well, as evidence by her 14 years working for Bell South and then later AT&T. She took her education seriously during this time and earned her undergraduate degree in Business from the University of Maryland, an MBA from Kennesaw State University, a Masters Certificate in Project Management from George Washington University, and a certification as a Project Management Professional.

Karen returned to civil service in May of 2009, and has served as the Congressional Affairs Contact Officer for the office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology since that time. She takes the utmost care to ensure that the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology provides timely and accurate responses to all Congressional inquiries and requests. As a Member of Congress, I cannot emphasize enough how valuable this capability and dedication to the job is to the efficient and effective running of our government.

Service to our country runs in her family. Her Father, Bryan, served in the Marines during World War II in Guam, Iwo Jima, Guadalcanal, and the Philippines; her older brother, Rob, served in the Army during Vietnam; her father-in-law, Jim, served in the Army; her son-in-law, Todd, is a Colonel in the Army currently serving in Stuttgart, Germany; and her daughter Keli, is an Assistant District Attorney in Texas. She has not only seen the examples of those who came before her, but has also been an example to those who have come after about the importance of serving our country.

We, the office of the Chief of Legislative Liaison, wish her the best of luck as she steps into this next adventure as she travels, goes to as many baseball games as possible, and spends time with her grandkids.

RECOGNIZING THE TIRELESS SERVICE AND EARNEST DEDICATION OF THE DARDEN FOUNDATION AND SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2013

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize the tireless service and earnest dedication of the Darden Foundation, the charitable arm of Darden Restaurants, Inc., on their awarding of over \$200,000 during the month of April 2013 to Florida nonprofit organizations through their Restaurant Community Grants program. The altruistic aspiration to improve Florida through their philanthropic support of charitable organizations is to be admired.

The value of service for Darden Restaurants was defined over 40 years ago by Darden's founder, Bill Darden, who established a culture that rewards caring for and responding to people. Darden's Restaurant Community Grants program is a local initiative which strives to make an impact in the communities Darden and its restaurant brands serve by engaging and supporting nonprofit community organizations. The Darden Foundation focuses its efforts on three key program areas: access to postsecondary education, preservation of natural resources and elimination of hunger. Every restaurant in the Darden family of brands is empowered with the opportunity to help award a \$1,000 grant to exceptional nonprofit organizations that align with Darden's three areas of focus.

In addition, it is my pleasure to recognize Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida, which has partnered with Darden in a joint effort to combat hunger. For nearly three decades, Second Harvest has fought hunger by collecting, storing and distributing donated food items to over 500 partnering agencies throughout six Central Florida counties. In partnership with Darden, Second Harvest's Food Rescue Program picks up prepared food items from various Central Florida Darden restaurants and delivers the food items to surrounding nonprofit agencies who serve meals to people in need. Darden has also united with Second Harvest's "Building Solutions to Hunger" campaign with a leadership gift of \$750,000 to assist Second Harvest's construction of a new facility that will be better equipped to meet the needs of the Central Florida community.

On behalf of the citizens of Central Florida, it is my pleasure to recognize the selfless work of the Darden Foundation and Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida. May their example of continuous service and generosity inspire many to follow in their footsteps.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DOUG LAMBORN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 26, 2013

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained due to a family medical situation