I want to extend my deepest condolences to the family, friends, and staff of Representative Donald Payne.

His loss is keenly felt. He was a passionate and unyielding champion for education reform and the underserved across our world. His compassion and tireless work on the Africa subcommittee was obvious to all those who worked with him. He spoke out on behalf of those who had no voice, helped empower those who had had no power, and brought attention to the most worthy of humanitarian causes.

I will miss his invaluable advice and support as part of the Ethiopia Caucus, a relationship which gave me the opportunity to see his remarkable work firsthand. His dedication to the country and the region is a terrible loss. He was an unwavering advocate for social justice, one who never shifted nor looked back. It is also important to note his deep involvement in Afro-Colombian issues, intervening on behalf of countless activists to ensure that justice was served.

Congress has lost a trusted friend and America has lost a respected statesman.