



Ethiopian Community Services (ECS)

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October 26, 2009

Honorable Congressman Mike Honda
1713 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Honda:

Of the millions forced to flee Ethiopia in the 1980's due to the political change, Santa Clara County has become home to approximately 25,000 Ethiopians. In addition, in the 1990's hundred more recipients of the diversity visa lottery have made San Jose their home largely because of the already existing large population of Ethiopians, opportunity of employment and weather.

To begin meeting some of the needs of these impoverished people, Ethiopian Community Services, Inc. (ECS) was established on April 5, 1991 as a not-for-profit organization. The effort to establish such an organization goes back to the early 1980's. The limited funds granted by the County of Santa Clara enabled ECS to hire a highly qualified and dedicated Executive Director.

ECS is governed by a nine (9) Member Board of Directors. These Board Members are volunteers who do not receive compensation for services render to ECS. They are talented, experienced, and respected community leaders from varied ethnic background.

ECS services include but are not limited to the following:

- A. Counseling
- B. Information and Referral
- C. Interpretation and Translation
- D. Community Orientation
- E. Computer Training
- F. After-School Program

Counseling Activity:

Today, the health care debate in the United States needs no introduction. It has been an ongoing background debate for decades and periodically comes to the fore when an administration seeks to institute reforms.

We the Ethiopian community stands strong in support of the health care reform. With your support, we want to make sure that our voices are heard loud and clear in making this legislation pass to have an impact for a better healthy life for the many Ethiopian Americans residing in the San Jose area.

We call upon you and member of the US Congress to enact a health care reform bill that assures affordable and basic quality health care to the many Americans like our community so that medical bills and expenses won't be the main topic on a family dinner table.

Congressman Honda, the community appreciates your undivided attention to the matter and wishes you the best to succeed.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Daniel W. Selassie". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Daniel W Selassie
Chairman of the Board