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[To The Honorable (full name)]
House Office Building / Senate Office Building
United States House of Representatives / United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515]

Dear Representative/Senator [insert last name],

My name is [insert], and I am one of your constituents. I am writing to you today regarding the human rights and humanitarian situation facing the Oromo in Ethiopia. While I appreciate the efforts of the US government to address the conflict in Tigray, which culminated in a peace agreement in November 2022, I regret that the US has failed to pay attention to similar abuses that have been perpetrated against other ethnic groups throughout Ethiopia, particularly the Oromo. I fear that until the concerns of all Ethiopians are addressed, including the Oromo, there will not be lasting peace in the country. On top of this, the humanitarian situation throughout Oromia has grown increasingly dire due to a severe drought that threatens to plunge the region into famine. I hope this letter will serve to raise your awareness of the plight of the Oromo, and inspire you to take action to ensure that their lives are protected.

The Oromo people are concentrated in the Oromia region and comprise the majority (60%) of the Ethiopian population. Despite their size, the Oromos have faced human rights abuses at the hands of successive Ethiopian governments, in part due to the desire to control Oromia, a region rich in natural resources and which surrounds Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa. Although the Oromo initially had high hopes for Prime Minister Abiy, who came to power following protests led by the Oromo youth, his regime has escalated human rights abuses against the Oromo. In late 2018, the Ethiopian government declared a de facto state of emergency in Oromia and installed military command posts in western and southern Oromia. Since that time, there have been credible reports of human rights abuses, including extrajudicial killings, committed by Ethiopian security forces associated with these command posts. Ethiopian security forces have also continued to arrest and detain peaceful protesters and political opponents, especially after the assassination of the Oromo singer and activist Hachalu Hundessa in 2020.

Over the past year, I have become increasingly concerned about the humanitarian situation throughout southern Ethiopia. I have heard numerous reports that farming has been decimated by a severe drought which is reported to be the worst in 40 years, impacting 24 million people and leading to the death of 6.58m livestock throughout the country since 2021—of those, 4.64m were from the Oromia region. On top of this, according to reports, humanitarian aid has not reached many of the worst drought-affected areas due to security concerns. Some of the particularly hard-hit regions include the Bale, Borena, Hararghe, Arsi and Guji zones in Oromia. I am gravely concerned about the US government's failure to take further actions to ensure that humanitarian assistance is provided throughout Oromia, including by conducting monitoring visits to affected areas to determine the scope of need.

I am also concerned about recent attacks against Oromo civilians throughout Ethiopia, which have been perpetrated by a wide variety of actors, including members of the ENDF, Oromia regional security forces, Amhara regional security forces, and Amhara militias (*fano*). During these attacks, it has also become commonplace for the perpetrators to destroy the property of the civilians they attack, thus leaving survivors forcibly displaced. The situation has escalated since the peace agreement was signed between the TPLF and the Ethiopian government in November 2022, as the Ethiopian government has had the

resources to dedicate to its ongoing military campaign against the OLA. Oromo civilians are also routinely subjected to arbitrary arrests and detentions, which are often justified by Ethiopian security forces as being due to their purported, and often tenuous, connections to the OLA. Once detained, they frequently face further human rights violations, including torture and violations of their due process rights. More must be done by the United States government to both raise awareness about these violations and to press for the Ethiopian government to enter into a negotiated peace agreement with the OLA, in order to lay the groundwork for lasting peace throughout the country prior to the adoption of transitional justice measures.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my message. These issues are very important to me, and I believe your office can play a substantial role by raising awareness about the human rights and humanitarian situation for the Oromo. I would also urge you to take concrete measures to ensure that humanitarian assistance is provided to all who need it throughout the country, and to call for the Ethiopian government to seek a peaceful resolution to the conflict in the Oromia region, as it has done with the TPLF in northern Ethiopia.

Yours sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Address]