

of Sig and Barbara Shapiro and the next generation leadership of Samuel's granddaughter, Marjorie. Shapiro & Co. sponsors a logistics class at the University of Baltimore Business School, consults with nonprofit organizations pro bono, matches its employees' charitable contributions and helps its employees' children pay for college. With annual retreats and crab feasts, birthday celebrations, and a company cookbook, the people at Shapiro & Co. enjoy the time they spend together. It is little wonder that Shapiro is consistently ranked one of the top places to work in Baltimore.

Over the last century, Shapiro & Co. has managed not only to adapt to new challenges but to flourish. Its offices now reach from New York to Georgia, but Shapiro continues to value the same old-fashioned customer service established at Sam's roll-top desk in 1915. I thank Shapiro & Co. for 100 years of dedication to its customers, care for its employees, and leadership in its community, and I look forward to the 100 years to come.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 3175, THE  
ASSURING CONTRACTING EQUITY  
ACT

**HON. SUZANNE BONAMICI**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 23, 2015*

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to introduce H.R. 3175, the Assuring Contracting Equity Act.

This legislation promotes economic development for many of the small businesses and communities that were hit the hardest by our country's recession and are still struggling to recover.

As I tour small businesses in my district, I am constantly reminded of the critical contribution they make to our communities. But too often our small businesses can't access or are unable to take advantage of federal contracting opportunities. By raising the contracting goal, the government will need to be more proactive in its outreach to small businesses. More contracts will help small businesses grow and hire more workers, empowering them to continue to give back to our communities.

The Assuring Contracting Equity Act will expand opportunities for small businesses to secure contracts with the federal government; particularly businesses owned by women, veterans, and minorities. The bill also provides increased access to government contracts for small businesses located in economically distressed areas known as Historically Underutilized Business Zones, or HUBZones.

In addition, the ACE Act improves accountability and transparency by requiring the Small Business Administration to report the percentage of all federal contracting dollars that are awarded to small businesses as well as direct agencies to prioritize large contractors that maximize subcontracts to small businesses.

In my district and across the country, small business owners are striving to succeed. The Assuring Contracting Equity Act could redirect an additional \$10 billion in business every year to the nation's smallest companies, giving entrepreneurs the potential to expand their businesses and continue creating jobs and growing our economy.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Assuring Contracting Equity Act to provide a greater opportunity for success to the small businesses that deserve it the most.

THE UNFOLDING CRISIS IN  
BURUNDI

**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 23, 2015*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, a hearing that I convened yesterday was extremely timely, as events are unfolding in real time in Burundi—a small nation that is often overlooked by the international community, including those of us here in Congress.

Many are familiar with the horrific genocidal violence that gripped Rwanda in the 1990s, as Hutu and Tutsi butchered each other in paroxysms of ethnic hatred.

Few know, however, that Burundi also went through a protracted Tutsi versus Hutu ethnic struggle that also amounted to genocide in the 1990s.

Few know that Burundi, without much fanfare and without the largess that the international community showered upon Rwanda, overcame its divisive civil war and, following a peace brokered by Nelson Mandela solemnized in the Arusha Accords of 2000, has sought to heal the wounds of the past and rebuild a nation.

Today, however, this peace is under the threat of unraveling. The sitting President of Burundi, Pierre Nkurunziza, in apparent defiance of the term limits set forth in the Arusha Accords and memorialized in the Constitution, is seeking a third term. While the constitutional issue is complex and unsettled, the rising political violence and tension—not to mention the roughly 160,000 people displaced and seeking refuge in neighboring countries—is easy to understand, and serves as a canary in the coal mine.

Now there is a window of opportunity for action, where immediate and sustained attention can prevent the situation from escalating out of control.

As in the case of the Central African Republic, over which we held two critical hearings in the last Congress, timely attention and targeted intervention can stop an incipient conflict from metastasizing. Burundi is now approaching a tipping point, though it has yet to topple over.

There is still time, and we in Congress have a role to play in sounding the alarm and prodding the administration to take action, followed by oversight. We also need to avoid the temptation to be penny wise and pound foolish. As several of our witnesses explain, by spending a small amount to further democracy and governance efforts in fragile states such as Burundi, we can avoid much greater cost down the road—and I mean not simply the dollar-and-cents expense of humanitarian interventions, but more importantly, in terms of blood lost and lives shattered.

In Burundi, the administration must do more. While often-lonely voices such as that of Samantha Power have called attention to the need for atrocity prevention, too often the administration policy has been one of, if not malign neglect, then certainly non-benign neglect.

We saw this, for example, in the foot-dragging that accompanied the appointment of a Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region. In January of this year, then-Special Envoy Russ Feingold announced that he was stepping down. I called on the administration to find a replacement as soon as possible, as the circle of violence was beginning to widen in Burundi.

In May, for example, I stated that a failure to do so signaled a “disengagement when lives are at stake.” I was afraid that we would see a repeat of the administration's inaction with respect to the Middle East, where to date it has yet to appoint a Special Envoy to Promote Religious Freedom of Religious Minorities in the Near East and South Central Asia, despite Congress having created that position last August—almost one year ago.

At the beginning of this month, however, the administration finally appointed a Special Envoy.

In 2012, the administration, to much fanfare, created an Atrocities Prevention Board, following a Presidential Study directive which stated that “Preventing mass atrocities and genocide is a core national security interest and a core moral responsibility of the United States.” The APB is supposed to provide early warning of mass atrocities, and mobilize inter-agency resources to stop such atrocities.

In Burundi, we can still make a difference.

TRIBUTE TO FORMER OHIO  
CONGRESSMAN LOUIS STOKES

**HON. MARCIA L. FUDGE**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 23, 2015*

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in tribute to my friend, mentor and predecessor, former Congressman Louis Stokes. Earlier this week the world learned of his cancer diagnosis.

When the Congressman first told me about his condition, I didn't know quite what to say. He had still been out, attending events and doing things. He never stops. It is easy to think he is immortal. Because he is a fighter. For more than 30 years, he tirelessly fought for the people of Ohio, and he is still fighting today. The first African American elected to Congress from Ohio, Congressman Stokes is the epitome of a public servant.

While in Washington, he was a trailblazer. He was the first African American to serve on the powerful House Appropriations Committee, and was a founder of the CBC Health Braintrust. He constantly fought to combat pervasive health disparities plaguing the African-American community and served as a voice for people of color and all of our nation's most vulnerable.

Congressman Stokes once said, “I'm going to keep on denouncing the inequities of this system, but I'm going to work within it. To go outside the system would be to deny myself—to deny my own existence.” His work has affected thousands. There is no one in Washington that does not know the name Louis Stokes, and no one who was not touched in some way by his work and his kindness.

He is always a gentleman, someone who made you feel good about being represented by him or just being in his company. When he speaks, people listen. Congressman Stokes