



Legislation Text

File #: 05159, **Version:** 1

Fiscal Note

No appropriation required.

Title

Requesting that the State of Wisconsin Divest from Sudan.

Body

WHEREAS, the government of Sudan has engaged in a policy of genocide against its own black African population in Darfur through use of its military and through sponsorship of attacks by armed militias known as the Janjaweed; and,

WHEREAS, the Janjaweed and military of the Sudanese government are responsible for razing 90% of Darfur's villages, gang-raping civilians, slaughtering 400,000 victims, displacing 2.5 million more, using forced starvation as a weapon of war, and impeding access of humanitarian aid to the 50% of Darfurians that are now reliant on assistance;

WHEREAS, the Sudanese government and Janjaweed militias have continued their attacks despite the Darfur Peace agreement ; and,

WHEREAS, the targeting of certain ethnic groups has entailed various crimes against humanity, prompting the United Nations to state that the Darfur conflict is the "worst current humanitarian crisis" ; and,

WHEREAS, the Darfur crisis represents the first time the U.S. Congress, State Department, or President have declared a genocide while atrocities are ongoing; and,

WHEREAS, certain international companies operating in Sudan bring significant revenue, cover, and arms to the Sudanese government while providing little benefit to the majority of Sudan's citizens; and,

WHEREAS, Khartoum has funneled the majority of foreign direct investment from these "offending" companies into military expenditures used to perpetuate the genocide while neglecting needed development projects in the Darfur region; and,

WHEREAS, the government of Sudan has a history of remedying egregious behavior in response to economic pressure; and,

WHEREAS, the current Sudan divestment movement now encompasses nearly 100 universities, cities, states, and private pension plans; and,

WHEREAS, the states of Illinois, New Jersey, Oregon, Maine, California, and Connecticut have all passed divestment legislation; and,

WHEREAS, the divestment movement has already gained the attention of the Sudanese government and altered the behavior of some companies operating in Sudan,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Madison calls upon the State of Wisconsin Investment Board to examine the state of Wisconsin's retirement investment funds, endowment funds, and short-term investment pool for Wisconsin's funds that are being invested in offending companies operating in Sudan; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if it is found that funds are being invested in offending companies operating in the Sudan, the state of Wisconsin should divest public securities related to offending companies or the government of Sudan and that, moreover, the State of Wisconsin Investment Board should declare that it, or its investment managers, will not make further investments in offending companies until the Sudanese government stops its military and militia forces from committing genocide.