Mr. Speaker, let me begin

by thanking my friend and colleague,

the chairman of the Financial Services

Committee, Congressman FRANK, for

his tremendous leadership. Not only

did you help us move this bill forward,

but you helped, quite frankly, to make

it a much better bill. So I want to

thank Congressman FRANK, also your

staff, Daniel McGlinchey, Jim Segal

and Katie Lavelle for working with us

over the last few months to craft this

bill.

Also let me just thank and recognize

Congressman LUIS GUTIERREZ, who

chairs the subcommittee, for his support

and assistance.

In addition, I must thank the Sudan

Divestment Task Force and its staff

and especially my staff, Lauren Jenkins

and Christos Tsentos, as well as

Sam Bell and Aysha House-Moshi, formerly

of my staff, who really helped

me and helped the groups around the

country come together to put this bill

together.

And let me thank our ranking member

of the committee for his early leadership,

Congressman BACHUS, as well as

Congressman GARRETT, a cosponsor of

this bill, and also Congressman DON

PAYNE, FRANK WOLF and Senator

BROWNBACK for testifying at the committee

when this bill was heard.

And, lastly, let me just commend and

thank our great Speaker, Speaker

NANCY PELOSI, for her tremendous

leadership, and also our majority leader,

STENY HOYER, for making sure that

our caucus works in a bipartisan fashion

to keep this issue alive.

Thirteen years ago, the world stood

by as nearly 1 million people were

slaughtered in the genocide in Rwanda,

and the best our country could do then

was to apologize for failing to act after

the fact. Many of us swore that another

Rwanda would never again take place

on our watch, but it is happening

again.

Three years ago last week, on July

22, 2004, under the leadership of our

good friend Congressman DON PAYNE,

Congress finally formally declared the

genocide was taking place in Darfur.

Today, the genocide is getting worse. I

have witnessed this horror on three occasions

in Darfur; and let me tell you,

it is getting worse.

Mr. Speaker, many of us in a bipartisan

effort have spoken out repeatedly

on the floor over the last three years in

condemnation of the ongoing genocide

in Darfur. These efforts have only intensified

as we have sought to use each

and every tool at our disposal to bring

this genocide to an end.

In April, we passed a resolution urging

our friends in the League of Arab

States to exert their influence on the

Government of Sudan.

In May, we called on the Defense Department

to examine the rehabilitation

of the Abeche airfield in Chad to

support expanded humanitarian operations

in Darfur.

And in June we passed another resolution

urging the Chinese to leverage

their very unique influence with Sudan

to help end the genocide.

Today, we take another very important

step forward by passing H.R. 180.

This is bipartisan legislation which

would support the growing grass-roots

movement to divest from companies

doing business in Sudan.

Organizations led by young people

like STAND and the Save Darfur Coalition

have been in the forefront of successful

student divestment campaigns

across the country to pressure the

Khartoum regime to end the genocide

in Darfur, and we do owe them a debt

of gratitude.

To date, over 54 universities, 19

States and 9 cities have passed divestment

legislation to pull State and local

funds out of companies that conduct

business with Sudan.

Throughout our country, our constituents

are standing up and demanding

that their hard-earned money not

be used to support a pariah government

that is killing its own people.

My bill would authorize and support

States, local governments, universities,

mutual funds and pension plans

that choose to divest from companies

doing business in Sudan.

At the same time, we would prohibit

the Federal Government from renewing

or signing contracts with multinational

companies doing business

with Sudan. These businesses and industries

are in the mineral and oil and

military equipment industries. We

want them to stop propping up this

genocidal regime.

As we pursue divestment, we must

also continue to support the rapid and

unconditional deployment of the

United Nations and African Union

forces, along with free and unfettered

access for groups providing humanitarian

assistance. And we must continue

to urge all parties to lay down

their arms and come to the table to negotiate

a political solution.

Every day we wait, killings, the

rapes, the starvation, the dislocation,

they all continue.

This genocide is happening on our

watch. But this time, working together

in a bipartisan coalition, we have the

will and determination and the wherewithal

to stop it. It worked with the

racist apartheid regime in South Africa,

and it can work with the genocidal

regime in Sudan.

Not on our watch. Save Darfur, as

the Save Darfur Coalition so passionately

has said; and, today, I hope that

the House of Representatives will say

the same thing by passing H.R. 180.

Again, I want to thank the Financial

Services Committee, and I must thank

again Congressman FRANK for really

making sure that what we intend to do

we will do. And I want to thank Congressman

FRANK again for making this

a much stronger bill. We’ve worked on

this for a couple of years, and I tell you

working together in a bipartisan fashion

we will end this horrific genocide in

Darfur