Mr. Speaker, I rise

today in support of H.R. 180, the Darfur Accountability

and Divestment Act of 2007 of

which I am a co-sponsor.

Three years ago last week, Congress formally

declared that genocide was taking place

in Darfur. For many years now we have seen

the devastating atrocities taking place in the

Darfur region of Sudan. With the support of

the Sudanese Government, the Janjaweed militia

has ravaged the people of Darfur, raping,

torturing, murdering, and forcing hundreds of

thousand of Darfuris to flee to refugee camps

in neighboring Chad and the Central African

Republic.

It is time that we begin to put in place legislation

that will end this genocide. This legislation

supports state, city, and university efforts

to divest funds from, or restrict investments in,

companies that conduct business operations

in Sudan. This is a positive first step in achieving

this goal.

We saw the same devastation in Rwanda

over a decade ago, and the American people

have made their voices heard on this issue

vowing never again to remain silent when humanity

is threatened.

A few months ago, an event was held in my

congressional district regarding this issue.

During the event it was noted that according

to www.darfurscores.com I was receiving a

grade of ‘‘C’’ in my support of ending the

genocide in Darfur. While it may appear on

the surface that I have not been supportive of

these efforts, it is important that you know I

am in total support of ending the genocide in

Darfur.

I along with many of my Congressional

Black Caucus colleagues including DONALD

PAYNE and BARBARA LEE were some of the

first members of Congress to speak out about

this issue. During the last Congress, we specifically

addressed this issue with President

George W. Bush in a meeting asking him to

take immediate action. Additionally, I have cosponsored

and voted in favor of legislation as

far back as the 108th Congress regarding this

issue. Some of the bills I have supported included

a bill for the appointment of a Presidential

Special Envoy for Sudan and to prohibit

companies that conduct business operations

in Sudan from receiving government

contracts. Most recently, I voted in favor of

legislation calling on the League of Arab

States and each Member State to acknowledge

the Darfur genocide as well as signed

onto a letter to the China government asking

them to use their significant economic influence

with the Government of Sudan to end

these crimes against humanity.

While I understand that there may be some

gaps on paper with regard to my record on

this issue, trust that my support for ending the

genocide in Darfur has been unwavering. It is

my hope that I will be able to work with the

people of the 11th Congressional District and

across this country to continue to let our

voices heard on this issue. I encourage my

constituents to contact me with your ideas and

resources so we can continue to fight this injustice

against humanity.