Mr. Speaker, I strongly support

H.R. 180, the Darfur Accountability and

Divestment Act. I am proud to be a cosponsor

of H.R. 180 and a member of the Financial

Services Committee, which passed this bill

last week.

The ongoing genocide in the Darfur region

of Sudan already is believed to have caused

the deaths of almost half a million people.

More than 200,000 people have been killed by

Sudanese government forces and armed militias

since 2003, and another 200,000 people

have died as a result of the deliberate destruction

of homes, crops and water supplies and

the resulting conditions of famine and disease.

More than 2.5 million people have been displaced.

According to a recent United Nations report,

attacks against humanitarian aid workers have

increased 150 percent in the past year. There

are currently 13,000 humanitarian aid workers

in Darfur, providing aid to more than 4 million

people, and violence limits their ability to

reach people in need. In June, approximately

one in six humanitarian convoys leaving the

capitals of Darfur provinces were ambushed

by armed groups. About two-thirds of the population

of Darfur is dependent upon these courageous

aid workers and the aid they bring.

Early in 2006, I visited the Darfur region

with my good friend from California, Speaker

NANCY PELOSI, and I was deeply disturbed by

what I saw. As far as the eyes could see,

there were crowds of displaced people who

had been driven from their homes, living literally

on the ground with little tarps just covering

them. That was over a year ago, and yet

this genocide has been allowed to continue.

The world stood by and watched the genocide

that occurred in Rwanda. The world has

noted over and over again the atrocities of the

Holocaust. Yet we cannot seem to get the

international community to move fast enough

to stop the genocide that is taking place in

Darfur.

The Darfur Accountability and Divestment

Act is a concrete proposal to impose sanctions

on the Government of Sudan and on corporations

that continue to do business with this

genocidal regime. I urge all of my colleagues

to support this bill, and I hope that it will be

enacted and implemented in time to save

lives, allow humanitarian aid to continue, and

force the Government of Sudan to stop this

genocide.