



Representative Peter Buckley (HD-5)  
Representative Brian Boquist (HD-23)

**P R E S S   R E L E A S E**

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## House passes bill to divest Sudan-related holdings

Oregon Human Rights & Anti-Genocide Act of 2005 would be only the second in US

SALEM—The Oregon House of Representatives today unanimously passed the Oregon Human Rights and Anti-Genocide Act of 2005 (SB 1089), which divests all public financial holdings in corporations operating in the Sudan and prohibits public financial investment or ties with the Republic of the Sudan.

The carrier and chief sponsor of the bill, Representative Peter Buckley (D-Ashland), spoke of a human rights crisis taking place in the Sudan. “Genocide continues to ravage the country,” Buckley said. “We have a chance to respond to this crisis on behalf of our state, and I believe it is our obligation as legislators and Oregonians to do so.”

Earlier this week, notwithstanding a peace agreement, the government of Sudan continued to wage genocide in Darfur, killing people, burning villages and committing countless rapes. Signaling a return to arms and violence, widespread rioting broke out this week across the Sudan after the death of the newly-installed Vice President John Garang.

Representative Brian Boquist (R-Dallas), co-carrier and co-sponsor of the bill, declared that he has personally witnessed “shameless atrocities” committed in Sudan. “Employing policy in Oregon’s investment practices is a rare step to take, but a necessary step, considering the situation,” Boquist said.

During the 1980s, millions of Americans succeeded in accomplishing a singular achievement—ending South Africa’s apartheid regime by bringing pressure to end public investments in that regime.

“It is now time to focus the same kind of attention and financial pressure on the Republic of Sudan,” Boquist said. “The reallocation of a small percentage of the state’s funds will have little if any impact on the state of Oregon, but it will have a major impact on the Khartoum government’s ability to wage genocide. This is about companies like PetroChina and Russia’s Taftnet. The war of genocide in Sudan is about oil and religious hatred.”

“Today, the people of Oregon say, ‘No more,’” Buckley said. “No longer will the blood of the Sudanese people mark and stain Oregon’s public investments.”

Other chief sponsors of the bill include Senator Avel Gordly (D-Portland), Senator Margaret Carter (D-Portland) and Senator Ben Westlund (R-Tumalo).

If the Governor signs the bill, Oregon will be only the second state to divest from Sudan. New Jersey, Illinois, and Louisiana and have passed divestiture laws; New Jersey’s divestiture began August 1; Illinois’ and Louisiana’s divestiture will begin January 1, 2006.

Oregon’s divestiture takes effect upon passage of the bill. Similar bills have been introduced in 10 other states: Arizona, California, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, and Vermont.

The bill now goes back to the Senate for concurrence, and then to the Governor.

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