

A JOINT LEGISLATIVE EFFORT

E-MAIL: testimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov
Regarding: Senate WAM Hearing
Hearing on: March 28, 2007 @ 9:30 a.m. in room 211
Copies Necessary: 25 copies

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Date: March 23, 2007

To: Senate Committee on Ways & Means
The Honorable Rosalyn Baker, Chair
The Honorable Shan Tsutsui, Vice Chair

From: Kelly M. Rosati, JD (**REPRESENTING BOTH ORGANIZATIONS**)
Executive Director, Hawaii Family Forum
Lobbyist, Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii

Re: **Support for HB 34 SD 1 Employees' Retirement System**

Honorable members, I am Kelly Rosati, **representing both the Hawaii Family Forum and the Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii.** Hawaii Family Forum is a non-profit, pro-family education organization committed to preserving and strengthening families in Hawaii. The Hawaii Catholic Conference is the public policy voice for the Roman Catholic Church in Hawaii, which under the leadership of Bishop Larry Silva, represents over 230,000 Catholics in Hawaii.

Hawaii Family Forum and the Hawaii Catholic Conference (the lobbying arm of the Roman Catholic Church) are among the key participants in the newly-formed Hawaii Coalition for Darfur.

Darfur has been described as the worst humanitarian crisis of the 21st century. Approximately 400,000 people have lost their lives and 2.5 million Sudanese people have been displaced. Millions more are at risk of starvation. Sudan is the largest country in Africa and the destruction in Darfur has been perpetrated by the Sudanese government and its allied Janjaweed militias. The United Nations Security Council resolution calls for replacing an inadequate African Union force with a much larger U.N. force, which would be able to finally bring protection to the civilians in continued danger. However, this resolution has met with strong resistance from Sudanese authorities. Even the most recent hopeful signs of an agreement seem again to be slipping away as resistance continues.

And the people of Darfur continue to die. We can stay silent no more.

Once we truly understand the depth and nature of tragedies like Darfur, we often feel helpless and believe we are inadequate to make any difference. The antidote to those feelings for our organizations: FAITH IN ACTION for the people of Darfur.

Because of our strong desire to action on behalf of the people of Darfur, we urge you to prohibit the employees' retirement system from acquiring securities of companies that have active business operations with Sudan.

We agree with legislative findings in HB 34 SD 1 and with the understanding that mandatory divestment of public funds from certain companies is a measure that should be employed sparingly and judiciously but that a Congressional and presidential declaration of genocide satisfies the appropriately high threshold.

If genocide doesn't qualify, what would? We urge your strong support for HB 34 SD 1.