

**Kenneth Sweder Testimony**  
**March 29, 2007**

Good afternoon. My name is Ken Sweder, and I am the founding co-chair of the Massachusetts Coalition to Save Darfur and a member of the board of the Jewish Community Relations Council.

I want to thank all of you for coming today, for your words, and for your support of this important legislation. The extensive attendance at today's hearing shows how much people care about this issue, how many people are fighting to build a world with less evil, to build a more caring, global world.

We have not always fought. On April 15, almost exactly two weeks from today, our community will gather at Faneuil Hall to mourn a genocide that, much like this genocide, was all too preventable. As we say the prayers over my people, over six million dead Jews, we ask, "how could this have happened?" We wonder how the world could have stood by as Auschwitz flourished, as innocent men, women, and children were slaughtered.

This cannot be the question that our children ask of us when we look back on our actions during this genocide. Each individual here today knows the consequence of silence. Therefore, we urge you to have the courage to act. We urge you to have the courage to do what the world was too cowardly, too ambivalent to do in Germany. We ask this so that we will never have to explain to our children that we knew that innocent humans were being treated inhumanly- raped, stabbed, burned alive, shot, tortured- that we were shown the pictures, that we were told the stories, that we were witnesses to man's inhumanity to man, and that we were apathetic, we were too slow and too late.

We cannot continue to establish memorials and days of mourning for our failure to act. Let us not have to mourn this genocide as we do the last. When the world saw the wreckage of the Holocaust, when we heard the testimony of the Survivors who were tortured by the Nazis and remain forever tortured by memory of their experiences, we promised "Never Again." I urge you to keep this promise to them, to show them that our world is not blind, and that we are not dumb, that we have learned from our lethargy, that we remember their stories and that we understand the lessons. Divestment is our opportunity to declare that our world is a better world than that of seventy years ago. Imposing economic sanctions is a small act of defiance, but it is a tool that we have with a clear capacity to impact the government of Sudan, and we would be remiss if we failed to use this tool to halt the spread of evil in Sudan.

I thank you all for allowing me to speak, and for hearing my plea. On behalf of those who perished in the Holocaust, whose testimony is lost to us forever, I thank you for allowing me to give this testimony today. Thank you for bearing witness.