

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 815
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Pensions & Investments
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Since February 2003 more than 50,000 people have been killed in the Darfur region of Sudan. Nomad militias, known as the Janjaweed, have been implicated in these crimes and are armed, paid and supported by the Sudanese Government. Despite international awareness of the pattern of abuses that have been committed in Darfur, a long list of publicly traded companies still invest in Sudan. These companies are sanctioning, and tacitly supporting, a government and allied militias that commit grave human rights abuses, including war crimes, crimes against humanity, and state-sponsored terrorism. Furthermore, former Secretary of State Colin Powell has stated that genocide has been committed, and is likely still occurring in Darfur. This terrible set of events has direct bearing on our state. Some Texas State pension funds have been linked to mutual funds that invest in companies like the Great Nile Petroleum and Oil Corporation (GNPOC). GNPOC's funds are directly linked to the Sudanese government, which in turn funds terror raids. H.B. 815 is a direct response to these human rights abuses in Sudan. It provides that State funds may not be invested in equities or obligations of a private corporation or other private business entity doing business in the Democratic Republic of Sudan.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the opinion of this committee that H.B. 815 does not delegate rulemaking authority to any state agency.

ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subtitle F, Title 10 of the Government Code by adding Chapter 2264.

Sec. 2264.001. Defines which public retirement systems, institutions of higher education, and entities of the state are affected by this change.

Sec. 2264.002. Prohibits state funds from being invested in equities or obligations of private corporations or other private business entities that do business in the Democratic Republic of Sudan.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2005.