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H.B. 2032 Relating to the Employees' Retirement System

Conference Room 329, 8:30 a.m.

January 28, 2008

Testimony of Invisible Children Hawaii Club

Honolulu, Hawaii

Good morning Chair Rida Cabanilla and Vice Chair Karen Awana and Representatives Belatti, Bertram, Green, Mizuno, Rhoads, Shimabukuro, Tokioka, and Ward,

The purpose of the bill "A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM" is to voice Hawaii's opposition to the humanitarian crisis presently occurring in Northern Uganda by prohibiting the Employees' Retirement System (ERS) from investing in securities of companies that have active business operations with Uganda.

The citizens of Northern Uganda have faced atrocities for more than twenty years due to the armed conflict between the Government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army, an armed rebel BACKED by the Ugandan government. The United Nations Humanitarian Assistant Chief Jan Egeland has described the guerilla war in northern Uganda as "the world's greatest neglected humanitarian crisis."

Of the 300,000 child soldiers in the world today, 30,000 of these are in Uganda and they make up 80% of the Lord's Resistance Army. Statistics show that 77% of child abductees had seen someone murdered, 39% had been forced to kill someone with their own hands, and 35% of female soldiers had been sexually abused. Most other children had also been beaten brutally and forced to burn down towns and houses and abduct other children.

Currently an estimated 1.7 million people still remain internally displaced in northern Uganda as a result of the conflict between the government and the Lord's Resistance Army. The effects of the war are seen most prevalently in the lives of the children of Northern Uganda. These children face issues of malnutrition, lack of food and water supplies, and other physiological as well as psychological problems from living

and fighting in such a long-lasting conflict.