

SCHAKOWSKY DECRIES GOP TACTICS TO KEEP CONTROVERSIAL ARMY SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS FUNDED

CHICAGO, IL -- U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today decried Republican tactics that will result in taxpayers continuing to fund the controversial United States Army School of the Americas (SOA). She expressed her anger and disbelief during a rally with Chicago activists.

Earlier this year, the House of Representatives, in a bipartisan vote, approved an amendment to the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill by Representative Joe Moakley (D-MA) to prohibit funding for SOA. The House voted 230-197 to eliminate \$2 million in training funds. The Senate did not include similar language in its version of the bill.

During negotiations to craft a final version of the bill, House Republican negotiators dropped the Moakley amendment from the bill. The House conferees voted 8-7 to recede to the Senate position. As a result, funding for SOA will continue.

"A few Republican members have blatantly disregarded the will of the majority of the House of Representatives. They have decided to continue to fund a school that trains terrorists and human rights abusers at the expense of the American taxpayers," Schakowsky said.

Schakowsky, an active member of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, attended a news conference organized by the Illinois SOA Watch and the Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America.

"We have heard the horrific stories of rape, disappearance, torture and death conducted by graduates of the School of the Americas. We will not stop, we will not stand idly by, and we will not rest until this institution of violence and hate is shut down forever," added Schakowsky, who is a cosponsor of H.R. 732, a bill to close SOA.

Schakowsky visited El Salvador after the murder of six Jesuit priests and two women. Graduates of SOA were linked to the 1989 murders.