

## McGovern Ft. Benning amendment fails | SOA Watch: Close the School of the Americas

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Latin America is walking away from the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation over concerns about human rights abuses, and U.S. Rep. James P. McGovern, D-Worcester, wants America to follow suit.

But his colleagues in the House do not agree and yesterday voted down his amendment to end funding for the controversial former U.S. Army School of the Americas, 218-188.

Mr. McGovern and U.S. Rep. John R. Lewis, D-Ga., co-sponsored the amendment to the fiscal 2007 foreign operations appropriations act to prohibit funds from the bill being used for WHINSEC, formerly known as the SOA and located in Fort Benning, Ga.

Congress also voted down another McGovern amendment yesterday that would have cut aid to Colombia, the \$30 million Andean Counterdrug Initiative, and redirected the funding to refugee assistance in other parts of the world. The vote on that amendment was 229-174.

Mr. McGovern, Mr. Lewis and other WHINSEC opponents argue that well-documented human rights violators, such as former Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega, have been allowed to attend the school.

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