

2001 ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION 28

February 13, 2001 – Introduced by Representatives POCAN, BERCEAU, BLACK, BOCK, BOYLE, COLON, KRUG, LA FAVE, J. LEHMAN, MILLER, PLOUFF, RYBA, SINICKI and YOUNG, cosponsored by Senators BURKE, PLACHE and RISSER. Referred to Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs.

1 **Relating to:** memorializing Congress to close the Western Hemisphere Institute for
2 Security Cooperation, formerly known as the United States Army School of the
3 Americas.

4 Whereas, the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, formerly
5 known as the United States Army School of the Americas, was established in
6 Panama in 1946 and is presently located in Fort Benning, Georgia; and

7 Whereas, the School of the Americas has trained over 60,000 troops from Latin
8 America and the Caribbean since its inception in 1946 and currently trains 900 to
9 2,000 such soldiers per year at Fort Benning, Georgia, at an annual cost to the
10 American taxpayers of nearly \$20,000,000; and

11 Whereas, it has been admitted that training manuals used for years by the
12 School of the Americas have advocated execution, false imprisonment, physical
13 abuse, and other forms of torture; and

14 Whereas, many School of the Americas graduates have been involved in a wide
15 range of human rights abuses; and

1 Whereas, 2 of the 3 Salvadoran officers cited as being responsible for the 1980
2 assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero were School of the Americas graduates,
3 including death squad founder and leader Robert D’Aubuisson; and

4 Whereas, 10 of the 12 officers cited as being involved in the massacre of 900
5 civilians at El Mozote in El Salvador graduated from the School of the Americas; and

6 Whereas, 19 of the 26 officers cited in the November 1989 murder of 6 Jesuit
7 priests, their housekeeper, and her daughter in San Salvador, El Salvador, were
8 School of the Americas graduates; and

9 Whereas, over one-half of the human rights violations and torture that
10 occurred in Colombia by military officials in the past decade were performed by
11 officials trained by the School of the Americas; and

12 Whereas, Guatemalan Colonel Julio Roberto Alpirez, a CIA agent who was
13 implicated in the killings of U.S. citizens Michael Devine and Efraim Bamaca,
14 husband of U.S. lawyer Jennifer Harbury, is a School of the Americas graduate; and

15 Whereas, the editorial boards of the Atlanta Constitution, Bangor Daily News,
16 Boston Globe, Capital Times, Cleveland Plain Dealer, Des Moines Register, New
17 York Times, San Antonio Express–News, and Syracuse Post–Standard, among
18 others, have called for the closure of the School of the Americas; and

19 Whereas, the Washington Post, in its November 26, 1997, edition, stated, “over
20 these years [the School of the Americas] is a school of horrors, a school of assassins,
21 operating in our back yard with U.S. taxpayer money”; and

22 Whereas, the California chapter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars has passed a
23 resolution urging the closure of the School of the Americas, and the national
24 organization is deliberating the same resolution; and

1 Whereas, there is growing opposition to the School of the Americas in the U.S.
2 house of representatives; and

3 Whereas, in May 2000 the U.S. house of representatives came within 10 votes
4 (204–214) of passing an amendment to the 2001 Defense Authorization Bill that
5 would have closed the School of Americas and halt the opening of the Western
6 Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation; and

7 Whereas, among Wisconsin's 2000 delegation to Congress there was near
8 unanimous support of an amendment to the 2001 Defense Authorization Bill that
9 would have closed the School of Americas, with 3 Republicans and 5 Democrats
10 voting in favor of the amendment; now, therefore, be it

11 ***Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That*** the Wisconsin
12 Legislature urges the President and the Congress of the United States to support the
13 closure of the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, formerly
14 known as the School of the Americas; and, be it further

15 ***Resolved, That*** the assembly chief clerk shall provide copies of this joint
16 resolution to President Bush and to each member of this state's congressional
17 delegation.

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(END)