

Congresswoman Louise M. Slaughter issued the following statement, after learning the House-Senate Conference Committee of the Homeland Security Appropriations Bill had added a provision exempting controversial detainee abuse photos from FOIA laws. Last June, Rep. Slaughter led the effort to stop the White House and some members of Congress from passing a law that would make any detainee photos taken in recent years “exempt” from the Freedom of Information Act. But the measure had support in the Senate and was added in conference this week.

“I’m disappointed that this anti-Democratic provision would be added to the conference report late in the process, even after the House flatly rejected it,” Slaughter said. “I find it offensive that anyone in Congress would want to undermine FOIA laws, which are a pillar of our First Amendment principals. It’s especially unfortunate given that this Administration promised that openness and transparency would be the norm. We should never do anything to circumvent FOIA and we should understand that this country would gain more by coming to terms with the past than we would by covering it up.”