

Shielding CIA Files

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The House overwhelmingly approved a bill yesterday that allows the CIA to shield a vast number of its files from the Freedom of Information Act. The vote was 369 to 36.

NOTES FROM THE HILL

A similar measure has already been approved by the Senate. Differences between the two versions will have to be resolved in a House-Senate conference committee.

Opponents of the measure, which had the support of the national leadership of the American Civil Liberties Union as well as the CIA, had argued that it was worded in such a way that illegal activities could be hidden.

In debate earlier this week, House Intelligence Committee Chairman Edward P. Boland (D-Mass.) said that if the bill were enacted the CIA had agreed to speed "the flow of properly releaseable information."

The measure would enable the CIA to refuse to search the "operation files" in the agency's directorates of operations and science and technology and the office of security.