

Funding for aliens cut

United Press International

WASHINGTON — Senate-House negotiators have agreed on legislation that would kill a program of federal assistance to the states to help them pay for educating children of aliens, particularly in border areas. Most of the funds in the current program go to Texas to help the state meet the cost of

educating children of legal and illegal immigrants from Mexico. Sen. Robert Stafford, R-Vt., assured House negotiators who fought to save the program that his Senate education subcommittee would take a separate look at the program during the current legislative session. The House added the alien education program and a package of other education and so-

cial service projects to a two-year authorization for the vocational rehabilitation program. The two provisions were dropped in conference Wednesday after Stafford and Sen. Orrin Hatch R-Utah, chairman of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, insisted that they could not be attached to the bill.



Challenger, astronauts set for shuttle's test mission

United Press International

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — A "picture book" countdown rolled flawlessly Thursday toward Friday's launch of the shuttle Challenger and five astronauts on a mission to test the Buck Rogers-style backpacks that space construction workers will need to build a space station. Forecasters predicted "super weather" for the scheduled launch time of 8 a.m. Mission commander Vance Brand and copilot Robert "Hoot" Gibson made practice landings in jets modified to fly like the shuttle and later joined mission specialist Robert Stewart for fancy flying in T-38 jet trainers.

The other mission specialists — Bruce McCandless and Ronald McNair — reviewed the flight plan for the eight-day mission. The crew was to be awakened at 3:45 a.m. Friday to get ready to board the shuttle. "They're all fine. They're in good spirits," said Glynn Lunney, shuttle program manager at the Johnson Space Center in Houston. "We're looking forward to a really good flight with this crew." Challenger will have six other passengers — white rats named Debra, Alfred, Alice, Ben, Kawasaki and Willard. Three have been injected with an arthritis-causing serum in an experiment to see if weightlessness

provides relief from severe arthritis. The highlight of the 10th shuttle mission will be the untethered spacewalks that McCandless and Stewart will make with the \$10 million jetpacks. Lt. Gen. James Abrahamson, the head of the space shuttle program, said Thursday the shuttle project engineers praised the ground crew being able to stay on schedule despite earlier problems with the shuttle's auxiliary power units, which are crucial for launch and landing. "Some of things we're demonstrating will be part of that and the is one of them." The countdown was smooth that NASA spokesman James Mizell said everything proceeding "like a picture book!" "We're looking real good tomorrow," said Gene Thomas, shuttle project engineer, who praised the ground crew being able to stay on schedule despite earlier problems with the shuttle's auxiliary power units, which are crucial for launch and landing. "Two of the turbines caught fire during the landing of Columbia on the last shuttle mission. Workers replaced all the APUs on Challenger with units from the new third shuttle, Discovery. Challenger also will be trying an additional backup computer because of computer problems that delayed the shuttle landing for several hours." During the space walk, McCandless and Stewart will don the 350-pound backpacks and fly up to 300 feet away from the shuttle to test the jetpacks. "It's an unprecedented feat. The tance is about the same as an astronaut George Nelson have to fly in April to reach the station." Challenger's flight is scheduled to end Feb. 11 with its first landing at Cape Canaveral.

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