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# Slouch

## By Jim Earle



"Don't you see it doesn't matter that you don't need to leave early for spring break. You've got to remember that you have a proud tradition to uphold!"

# Gambling bill to be voted on in House today

**Associated Press** 

AUSTIN — The horse race betting bill that proponents say means big money and opponents say means big crime hits the House floor today

for a crucial vote.

"I'll be shocked if we lose," said Ricky Knox, director of the Texas Horse Racing Association. "I think we're in good shape."

The 1983 version of the pari-mutuel gambling bill was approved in the Senate but killed by two votes in the House.

Supporters say this year's state government budget crunch could lure the votes needed for House pas-

Texas Agriculture Commissioner Jim Hightower issued a report showing that horserace betting could mean \$712 million for the state economy by 2000.

Opponents, including church groups, are not impressed with the dollar-sign comments.

Former Gov. Price Daniel said, "I n opposed to legalization of race ack gambling because I lived through the last period of legalized gambling and I saw the crime and waste which resulted."

House members got some direct lobbying during a prayer last week by Rev. Steven White of the Olive Branch Baptist Church of Axtell.

"Let thy Holy Spirit quicken the consciences of these men so that deconsciences of these men so that decisions concerning pari-mutuel gambling, ecology, abortion, even economics, reflect only the wisdom of thy will," said White.

"May their only special interest lobby be thy word and will, and may morphic and interest properties are all the properties and interest properties are also and interest properties and interest properties are also and interest properties and interest properties and interest properties are also and interest properties and interest properties are also and interest properties are also and interest properties are also and interest properties and interest properties are also are also and interest properties are also and interest p

morality and justice never be weak ened by the dollar sign."

The measure headed to the House floor seems to meet the three

requirements set out by Gov. Mark White. He promised to veto any pari-mutuel bill that does not in-clude a statewide vote, local option votes and tight controls on organized crime.

But as of Tuesday, it was not known if the bill satisfies the Legis-lative Black Caucus, whose 13 House members pulled their support because the measure does not include money dedicated to welfare. Speaker Gib Lewis, a pari-mutuel

betting backer, opposes any additio-nal dedicated funds. He said such appropriations handcuff the budget

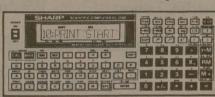
The 12 House members of the black caucus apparently have given up on the welfare fund demand but have negotiated provisions aimed at guaranteeing minority ownership of

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and Sarredio
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# Reforms attacked by poor schools

AUSTIN — Eight low-wealth school districts and the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund said Tuesday in court that state school reforms have not done

enough to finance their schools. The schools and MALDEF, which sued the state, renewed their petition Tuesday in a Travis County dis-

"The plaintiffs in the litigation appreciate the increased funds available to low-wealth districts," said Al Kauffman, MALDEF attorney. "Unfortunately they are not sufficiently distributed or large enough to bring the finance system into line with our own state Constitution. Plaintiffs are continuing to suffer from the fi-nance system and they will continue

to fight to improve it. The eight school districts and 24 parents of school children represented by MALDEF filed suit in May 1984, claiming the state school financing system discriminated against them because much of the financial support for schools was based on local property taxes.

Poor school districts did not get as

much support from taxes as other The school reform bill passed last summer included a new method of allocating state school money with a formula designed to give poorer

schools more state aid. State Commissioner of Education W.N. Kirby told a Senate committee Monday the new formula was based mainly on school district sizes and population densities but also was influenced by wages paid in adjoining

districts and by the number of "dis-enfranchised children" in the dis-

The State Board of Education has asked the Legislature to let it review the formula at the end of this school

year and make changes if necessary.
The petition filed Tuesday said revisions made by the summer special session "were supposed to suffi-ciently compensate for the insidious and comprehensive inequity and unconstitutionality of the system. They did not.

The plaintiffs complain that even with increased taxes and new monies provided in the school reform bill they still have only one-half as much money per year to educate their children as they need.
"House Bill 72 is on the road to-

ward equalization, but it does not produce equity," said a statement by James Vasquez, superintendent of the Edgewood Independent School District in San Antonio, read at a news conference Tuesday.

"It will cost our district \$6 million of the \$6 million new money just to implement our salary schedule," said Superintendent Bill Sybert of the Socorro district in El Paso.

Estela Padilla of Ysleta said, "Our children in low-wealth districts still do not have equal opportunity for an adequate education. They need more teachers, better buildings, more education programs, and the other enrichments that students in the wealth districts have."

The eight school districts in the suit are Brownsville, Edgewood, Eagle Pass, La Vega, Pharr-San Juan-Alamo, San Elizario, Socorro and South San Antonio.

