

More Funds Pledged for Mental Care

Albany, Feb. 17 (Special)—Assembly Speaker Perry B. Duryea (R-Suffolk) promised today an additional \$10 million to \$20 million for personnel and service in understaffed state mental hospitals.

In the wake of Duryea's announcement State Mental Hygiene Commissioner Alan D. Miller declared his department could use another \$5 million. The department's expenditures for the current fiscal year, which ends March 31, are estimated at \$58 million plus \$5 million recently provided by Gov. Rockefeller from state funds.

Asks New Approach

Duryea's commitment came after State Sen. William T. Conklin (R-Brooklyn) angrily suggested that responsibility for the care of mentally retarded children be removed from the mental hygiene unit and transferred to a new department. He declared: "The psychiatric and medical models for services for the mentally retarded haven't worked. We must have a new approach."

Conklin's recommendation came at a public hearing of the Joint Legislative Committee on Mental and Physical Handicaps, which is now conducting an investigation of state mental hygiene centers. The problem has been sparked by recent revelations of asserted mistreatment of patients at the Willowbrook State School on Staten Island and in other state facilities.

Also testifying was Dr. William Bronston, a staff psychiatrist at Willowbrook, who charged: "The New York State schools for the retarded are merely waging a holding action until death."