

# Marchi says he'll probe halfway homes

State Sen. John J. Marchi, noting the concern over proposed halfway houses and nursing homes, promised yesterday to investigate the matters and hopefully "alleviate . . . an erosion of trust" between the state and local communities.

The heated debates between members of the community and the state Department of Mental Hygiene has shown that the time of "watchful waiting" for mutually satisfactory conditions has passed, he said.

The senator said that local communities should deal "compassionately and humanely with those who need our help but we must be concerned also with the welfare and opinions of our established Staten Island citizens."

Through staff reports and "extensive" coverage in the press, Marchi continued, he is aware of the dissatisfaction of the communities and that his efforts to establish the facts began Monday at a budget hearing.

At the closed door meeting,

the senator said he "was able to question high-ranking department officials on their plans for the coming fiscal year."

He has also scheduled future fact-finding meetings, one with the director of the North Richmond Community Mental Health Center, Marchi explained.

"There will be meetings with other organizations which have always expressed their views on domiciliary care and . . . (department) . . . actions and policies as explained at recent forums," he continued.

In an "atmosphere of reason and trust" the senator explained, there is no problem that can not be surmounted by "people of good will."

"Basic are the facts at issue and open exchange of information among interested parties."

"I shall do my best to establish the facts and help insure that both patients and the public are protected," he concluded.