

NEWS BRIEFS

Carey to Sign Decree On Willowbrook

Gov.-elect Hugh Carey said yesterday that he plans to sign before he takes office a consent decree that would, in effect, be a concession by the state that patients at Willowbrook State Hospital were denied their civil rights.

Carey does not become governor until Jan. 1. However, he explained that he would be responsible for changes or improvements at Willowbrook.

He said he wanted to sign the extraordinary legal agreement to avoid a long and costly trial that the state would face as a result of legal actions seeking to close Willowbrook.

"I don't think a long trial is in the best interests of Willowbrook or the state or the people who brought the suits," he said. "It's wiser to admit conditions need improvement and to avoid a costly trial and use that money for the benefit of the patients."

—Thomas Poster