

# State hikes S. Beach Center \$\$; cuts Willowbrook

Advance Albany Bureau

**ALBANY** — Staten Island projects and state-run institutions both gained and lost in the Legislature's amended \$10.39-billion budget for the 1975-76 fiscal year, unveiled yesterday.

The biggest gainer in the borough appeared to be the Department of Mental Hygiene's South Beach Psychiatric Center, which received funds to hire 315 new employees.

At the other end of the spectrum, a special \$16.7-million fund which Gov. Carey had proposed to improve conditions at the Willowbrook Developmental Center and other institutions currently the target of lawsuits was slashed to \$7.4 million by legislative leaders.

But the Senate Finance and Assembly Ways and Means committees, in a joint report, said the reduction was made "without prejudice" and only because the eventual cost of expected court rulings has not yet been determined.

Under the proposed budget, expected to be approved today, Willowbrook would receive \$2,989,000 of the \$7.4-million fund, as opposed to the \$7.5 million the institution would have been given if the governor's plan had been approved.

Also included in the Legislature's version of the budget are:

- \$2.1 million for the statewide Youth Opportunity Program, which operates facilities on the Island at the South Beach Psychiatric Center and at Willowbrook.

- \$2.5 million for continued operation of 11 recently opened alcohol treatment centers around the state, including those at the South Beach psychiatric facility and at St. Vincent's Medical Center.

- \$104,000 for an education program at the Richmondtown Restoration, which formerly received state funds from a

citywide program administered by the Board of Education.

- \$46,000 in state aid for the High Rock Nature Conservation Center.

The 315 new positions authorized at the South Beach facility are among 898 at three facilities approved by the Legislature's fiscal committees. The employees would be paid out of a \$485.5-million lump-sum appropriation for the Department of Mental Hygiene's mental health activities, according to the committees' report.

It could not immediately be learned whether any of the new jobs will be for security guards, although the center's director last week asked state officials for \$100,000 to hire 10 additional guards for the Ocean Breeze facility.

The special Mental Hygiene included in the budget, among other items, are:

- \$41.7 million in operating funds for Willowbrook.

- \$11 million in operating funds for the South Beach center.

- \$7.6 million in operating funds for the Arthur Kill Narcotics Rehabilitation Center.

- \$11.2 million for construction of a theater, music, library and instructional building to \$7.4 million for the year beginning April 1, the legislative fiscal committees pointed out that no decisions have been issued in any of the pending cases. As a result, they added, the ultimate cost of the planned improvements cannot be determined.

The committees indicated that additional funds would be made available if needed during the coming fiscal year.

Also reduced at Willowbrook was a \$10,119,000 request for air conditioning and other improvements in some of the institution's buildings. In slashing \$7,016,000 from the request, the committees said the remaining balance should

be sufficient to complete work "for all buildings anticipated to have long-term use."

In addition to the \$3,103,000 provided for the first time this year, Willowbrook also has nearly \$4.5 million in unspent capital improvement funds still remaining from previous years.

Apparently untouched in the final version of the state budget are operating and capital construction funds for a variety of institutions and programs, although some reductions may result from legislative cutbacks in lump-sum items in the spending plan as proposed by Carey in January.

reserve fund proposed by Carey was designed for use in improving conditions at Willowbrook and other developmental centers currently the target of lawsuits brought by parents' groups and others.

Some \$9.4 million of the \$16.7 million requested by the governor was to have been used to improve staffing at the institutions, with the balance going directly to Willowbrook.

In reducing Carey's requestings at Staten Island Community College.

- \$904,000 in supplemental state money for improvement of the Oakwood Beach Sewage Treatment Plant.

- \$500,000 as part of the state's share for construction of the North Richmond Community Mental Health Center, a division of St. Vincent's Medical Center.