

\$11 million sought for Willowbrook

Advance Albany Bureau

ALBANY—The state's 1975-76 supplemental budget, submitted to the Legislature by Gov. Carey this week, contains \$11 million to improve conditions at the Willowbrook Developmental Center, an administration spokesman confirmed last night.

The money is part of a special \$16.7-million reserve fund, first proposed by Carey earlier this year, to upgrade patient care at the sprawling institution.

Although the governor sought the full \$16.7 million in the \$10.4-billion executive budget approved last March, the Legislature pared that figure to about \$5.7 million on the ground that the intended use for the money was not fully explained.

Legislative fiscal committees indicated at the time that the cut was made without prejudice, and Senate Finance

Committee Chairman John J. Marchi of Staten Island said last night the Senate and Assembly will make a "full restoration" to the \$16.7-million level originally requested by Carey.

The \$11 million for Willowbrook is part of a \$21-million supplemental budget prepared by the governor in anticipation of the Legislature's adjournment later this week. The Senate and Assembly are expected to add to Carey's spending programs of their own, bringing the total supplemental budget to around \$50 million.

Carey proposed the special Willowbrook fund last January, in response to a lawsuit contending that conditions at the institution deprived patients of their constitutional rights.

That suit was subsequently settled by an out-of-court consent decree, in which the state agreed to drastically reduce Willowbrook's patient population, improve care for the remaining residents, and take further steps to upgrade the quality of care at the facility and others like it around the state.

The governor has since said that the special Willowbrook fund would be used to carry out provisions of the consent decree both at the Island institution and at other developmental centers.

In addition to the \$5.7 million authorized by the Legislature in March for the reserve fund, Willowbrook also received \$41.7 million to cover operating expenses during the 1975-76 fiscal year.

Also included in the executive budget was \$15.9 million for capital improvements at Willowbrook.