

Willowbrook gets \$3M for 900 additional employes

Advance Albany Bureau

ALBANY — An additional 900 employes will be added to the payroll of the Willowbrook Developmental Center under a \$3 million appropriation included in the state's supplemental budget, State Sen. John J. Marchi announced last night.

Marchi, chairman of the powerful Senate Finance Committee, said the money will assure adequate levels of care and rehabilitation for mentally retarded persons in the Staten Island facility. Minimum levels of care for the retarded were established under a court order approved 14 months ago.

"We're providing the means to expand the staff to court-ordered levels and raise the quality of life and treatment for the residents," Marchi said.

He added that the resident population will decline at Willowbrook under the special appropriation while the facility's

staffing levels will increase.

"Specifically the resident population at Willowbrook will drop from the current 2,600 to a level of 1,900 during the year 1976," Marchi said.

"At the same time, the same projections show the Willowbrook staff increasing from 3,900 to 4,800," Marchi said.

Marchi, Republican of Ward Hill, said the shift in resident and staff sizes will bring a new ratio of 7-to-1 in staff to patient care levels at the Island institution.

Under a court order ap-

proved last April, the state Department of Mental Hygiene was ordered to reduce the patient population at Willowbrook while increasing the facility's staff. Steps have been taken to implement the court order since then although the staff has never been increased to the degree authorized under the special \$3 million appropriation.

Marchi said the \$3 million will be used to aid both Willowbrook and 24 other Mental Hygiene facilities which must be approved under terms of the Willowbrook court order.