

Willowbrook to get extra \$4M from state budget

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ALBANY — Gov. Carey and legislative leaders have agreed to beef up allocations for the Staten Island Developmental Center by approximately \$4 million to prevent layoffs at the Willowbrook institution for the retarded.

In other budget negotiation developments, meanwhile, sources said yesterday that the allocation for the state Council on the Arts has been slashed from \$34 million to \$30 million. Carey had requested a \$7 million increase for the council — up from \$27 million.

In still another compromise, leaders from both parties announced a new school aid formula under which New York City would get \$40 million in increased assistance instead of the \$30 million proposed by Carey in January.

A spokesman for Senate Finance Committee Chairman John J. Marchi said he has gotten assurances from the

governor's office that the budget for the Department of Mental Hygiene will contain an addition of "in the neighborhood of \$4 million" to maintain current staff levels at the Island Developmental Center during fiscal year 1978-79.

"There will be sufficient funds in there to make sure no one loses his job at Willowbrook," the spokesman said. "Barring some last minute snag, the money will be there."

The spokesman said Carey's budget officials finally agreed to compromise on the matter Sunday after refusing to yield all last week. As late as Friday, the spokesman explained, "it looked like we'd have to wait for the supplemental budget to get the Willowbrook money."

Marchi demanded the extra \$4 million after Carey announced plans to transfer some 400 developmental center residents into community facilities and cut the work force at the institution by 1,000 in the next year. The state civil service

union lobbied fiercely against the employee reductions.

Carey had vowed to resist Republican pressure to slash the Council on the Arts budget because the agency's programs create jobs. But the sources said he most likely never expected to get the \$7 million increase and proposed it merely as a bargaining chip.

"The council is going to get \$30 million as it is," one source said. "That's probably what Carey wanted in the first place."

The reduction from \$34 million to \$30 million would have no impact on state funding for Sailors Snug Harbor Cultural Center. In previous years, the Livingston center's appropriations have come from a specific line item in the budget.

The new school aid formula would boost assistance for districts across the state by \$230 million, \$81 million more than originally proposed by Carey. According to Marchi and Assemblyman

Arthur Kremer, chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, New York's City's share would rise from \$623 million to \$663 million.

The overall formula would be based on attendance, rather than enrollment as proposed by Carey. The increase would result from the "enrichment" of the separate formulas for the programs to help the handicapped and students with educational disabilities.

Marchi said the huge assistance jump would be financed by reducing allocations of other agencies and by a special reserve fund for "anticipated revenues." He declined to elaborate on the cuts.

It was not immediately clear how much more Staten Island would get under the aid agreement because all of New York City's money goes directly to the Board of Education, which then divides the money among the 32 school districts.

Carey's initial school aid plan, announced when he introduced the first version of the budget two months ago, would have favored the big cities at the expense of some rich suburban districts. It was based on enrollment to give an edge to city schools where attendance is low.

Under the compromise plan, no school district would lose aid this year, Marchi and Kremer said.

According to Assemblywoman Elizabeth Connelly, the \$4 million for Staten Island Developmental Center would not be new funds. The money would simply be "shifted around" from other parts of the Department of Mental Hygiene to insure against layoffs at the institution.

Mrs. Connelly, chairwoman of the Assembly Mental Hygiene Committee, has come under fire from civil service union officials for allegedly opposing the addition of any money to the Island center's budget.