

Carey signs bills on homes for retarded

Gov. Carey signed into law yesterday three bills, including two sponsored by Island Assemblywoman Elizabeth Connelly, designed to give local communities greater say in the siting of residential treatment facilities for the mentally retarded.

Mrs. Connelly's bill, co-sponsored with Assemblyman James McCabe, a Democrat from Johnson City, N.Y., mandates the establishment of a registry listing all community residential facilities operating in the state.

Another bill introduced by Mrs. Connelly requires local governments, including New York City, to provide for development of residential facilities in an annual plan submitted to obtain state aid for mental hygiene services.

A bill introduced by Sen. William Conklin, a Brooklyn Republican, prohibits the issuance of an operating certificate for any new facility for the retarded unless localities are given the opportunity to suggest other suitable sites. The commissioners of mental health and mental retardation could overrule any site if they found it would alter the character of the neighborhood.

In signing the bills, Carey called them "the most important mental health legislation of this session of the legislature."