

Most budget bills OK'd plus a pay raise for state legislators

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ALBANY — The state Legislature passed the remainder of the 1979-80 state budget, but an impasse over Medicaid funding of abortions continued to hold up approval of the \$7.5-billion local-assistance budget.

The Senate and Assembly approved the state-purposes portion of the \$12.7-billion budget, which provides virtually the same amount of funding recommended by Gov. Carey for the Staten Island Developmental Center, South Beach Psychiatric Center and the Arthur Kill Correctional Center.

Both houses also voted themselves pay raises effective in 1981 and retroactive increases for state commissioners and judges.

Approval of the state-purposes budget came after several hours of debate and rejection of more than 20 amendments ranging from attempts to restore money to endorse anti-redlining laws to a proposal to block a hike in state college tuition.

The legislative action frees funds to pay state employees and continue state operations. Because of uncertainty about the budget, which the Constitution says should be passed by April 1, 87,000 employees in state institutions will be paid in script tomorrow.

Legislative leaders said they would begin discussions today on how to resolve the conflict over Medicaid-funded abortions. The amendment, sponsored by Sen. James Donovan, R-Chadwicks, passed the Senate by four votes but was defeated in the Assembly by five votes.

"Now that we've gotten the budget out of the way, I think we will get together and try to resolve the issue," said Sen. John J. Marchi, chairman of

the Senate Finance Committee.

Staten Island Assemblywoman Elizabeth Connelly, a leader of anti-abortion lawmakers, said she believed there was little sentiment to block the local-assistance budget for a prolonged period. Continued delay could threaten distribution of local school aid and welfare funds scheduled to go out April 16.

But Donovan said last night that the "only logical solution" was for the Assembly to pass his abortion amendment, an action that even Mrs. Connelly and other abortion foes says is impossible this year.

Gov. Carey, in an afternoon press conference, charged Donovan with holding the local-assistance budget "ransom" and warned the delay could cost the state more in its spring borrowing than the \$10 million anti-abortion forces predict in savings from their amendment.

The state, purposes budget, approved by large margins in both houses, provides \$41.8 million for the Staten Island Developmental Center, an increase of \$200,000 over that recommended by Carey. The additional funds will pay for several hundred workers added to the Willowbrook institution's staff last year following a court finding that staffing levels were below ratios mandated by a 1975 court decree.

The center's budget is slightly below last years, reflecting a continued drop in the institution's resident population. It is now houses about 1,550, compared to more than 5,000 five years ago.

South Beach Psychiatric Center receives \$16.4 million under the spending plan, the same as proposed by Carey and a slight increase over last year. Arthur Kill Correctional Facility is allocated \$8.43 million, about the same as recommended by the governor and a

slight decrease from last year.

Marchi, Mrs. Connelly and newly elected Assemblyman Paul Viggiano voted for the budget. South Shore Assemblyman Guy V. Molinari opposed its adoption, saying he did not believe the Legislature cut enough from Carey's spending plan.

The lawmakers trimmed \$100 million from Carey's budget for state agencies.

Under the pay raise approved by both houses, lawmakers would enjoy an eventual increase of 40 percent — or 7 percent a year, compounded for five years — from their current \$23,500 a year salary. In 1983 their salaries would be \$32,960. The Constitution prohibits legislators from raising their own salaries in the current term, so the increases would not take effect until after the next elections beginning in 1981.

The expense allowance paid to legislators on "official business" would be increased immediately from \$40 a day to \$55 daily. The basic pay for cabinet officers would increase from \$47,800 to \$51,146 retroactive to last Oct. 1 and to \$54,500 on Oct. 1, 1979. Some higher paid commissioners would have their salaries increase to \$57,500. The salaries of other appointees would range from \$40,350 to \$61,685, with increases averaging 7 percent a year.

State and local judges would receive raises of 7 percent a year for three years beginning last Oct. 1. The increases for judges and executives were recently recommended by a commission appointed by Gov. Carey and legislative leaders.

Marchi, Mrs. Connelly and Viggiano voted for the pay-raise package.

"I've been on the job two weeks now, and I can assure you this is a full-time job," said Viggiano, a Democrat, who represents a portion of Staten Island's East Shore and lower Manhattan.