

# Navy to look at Willowbrook for office site

Top naval officials reportedly have agreed to tour the Staten Island Developmental Center, Willowbrook, the site proposed by Congressman John M. Murphy for the Navy's billion-dollar-a-year resale office.

State Sen. John J. Marchi of Ward Hill, who supports the relocation proposal, said former Borough President Robert Connor, now a deputy assistant secretary of the Navy, agreed to arrange the tour in a telephone conversation. A date for the tour will probably be set by the middle of next week, Marchi said.

Naval officials are expected to be joined by high-ranking Carey administration officials, who, according to Marchi, are anxious to see the facility move to Staten Island from its current Brooklyn location.

Connor, who was unavailable for comment yesterday, had proposed that the resale office, which employs 740 full-time workers, including about 70 Islanders, be moved to Fort Wadsworth. The military post is scheduled to be vacated next year by the Army.

But Murphy rejected Connor's proposal, arguing that it would hobble plans to integrate Fort Wadsworth into the Gateway National Recreation Area system. He said there was plenty of space at the 382-acre state institution, which is being

phased out in compliance with a federal court order.

Marchi, a Republican-Conservative legislator, said he has met with Carey administration officials, and they agree with him that the city cannot afford to lose the nearly 800 jobs generated by the resale office.

Michael Woods, first deputy commissioner of the state Commerce Department, said the Carey administration has given "top priority" to keeping the facility in New York City. In addition to the Staten Island Developmental Center site, sites in Queens and Brooklyn are being considered, he said.

"This is very important to us," Woods said. "Eight hundred jobs is a lot, particularly on Staten Island."

Cora Hoffman, an aide to outgoing state Mental Retardation Commissioner Thomas A. Coughlin, said her agency would have no objections to moving the resale office to the Willowbrook institution for the retarded, provided the buildings required to house the facility are not needed for residents.

"I think we can work something out," she said.

The resale office, currently housed in cramped quarters on Third Ave. in Brooklyn, provides goods for stores on naval bases and aboard ships. The office has an annual payroll of \$15 million.