

legislature "has not in any way diminished its commitment to the retarded."  
"I think this is going to bring all the issues to a head," she said.

The West Brighton Democrat said she is concerned by the review panel's practice of barring the news media and the public from its monthly meetings.  
"Somebody has to undertake accountability and responsibility to the public," Mrs. Connelly said.

Of the seven panel members, five reside outside New York state, and they are entitled to submit vouchers for travel expenses — in one case, from Georgia. "We have qualified people in New York," Mrs. Connelly protested. "Why should they be chosen from all over the country?"

Murray B. Schneps, a panel member and a lawyer, said that while panel de-

liberations are closed, "all documents and papers afterwards are available."

The Office of Mental Retardation, Schneps contended, "does not have the capacity to do many of the things required under the consent decree. It has had to draw on the talent, the knowledge and the resources of the review panel." One of the panel's duties is to conduct an annual audit, in conjunction with the state, of the Staten Island Developmental Center.

Panel members have consultant status and are paid a \$200 fee for every day, or seven hours, of work accomplished. The state budget allocation for the panel has also covered a backup of five professional staff, one administrative assistant and three secretaries, all on full-time salaries. The salaries are set along civil service guidelines.

Schneps noted that three panel members are attorneys whose fees break down to about \$29 an hour, adding: "The state hires lawyers who routinely charge \$100 an hour."

Panel funding was excised from the budget "without prejudice," meaning that the amount can be reviewed for the supplemental budget enacted before the Legislature adjourns in June or July.

"This gives time for the panel and mental retardation to provide a stronger rationale for the amount of money paid to people and for the amount of work actually done," Jerry McLaughlin, an aide to State Sen. John J. Marchi, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, explained yesterday. "The Legislature wants to make sure it gets its money's worth."

The funding issue was taken to federal

court yesterday by Christopher Hansen, an American Civil Liberties Union lawyer involved in the consent decree.

Hansen obtained Judge Bartels' signature on two so-called "show cause" orders. In addition to the potential contempt order against the governor, Ingrone and other mental retardation officials, Hansen filed an order seeking to include state Comptroller Edward V. Regan as a party to the consent decree. Regan's department processes vouchers and payroll for the panel and its supporting staff.

In Hansen's opinion, "the Legislature isn't, can't be and won't be made a defendant."

"It is clear the governor has to spend the money to meet the constitutional rights of the people," Hansen said. "But the Legislature is not relevant."

## Special Olympics set by group

Plans for citywide Special Olympics were made at a meeting last night of the Staten Island Special Olympics committee at the Staten Island Developmental Center, Willowbrook.

The event will be May 2, 3 and 4 at the developmental center. It was announced that volunteers are needed for a variety of functions at the games. The committee will meet every Wednesday night until the game.

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1972