

# Delay is sought in state's mailing of layoff notices

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ALBANY — A state plan to send layoff notices to 7,000 employees next week was decried yesterday as "psychological warfare" by Senate Finance Committee Chairman John J. Marchi.

Marchi, a Ward Hill Republican, joined with Assembly Way and Means Committee Chairman Arthur Kremer, D-Nassau, in urging Cuomo to delay mailing the notices until the Legislature can review the governor's proposed \$31.52 billion budget.

"What role do we have if the notices go out before the budget is adopted?" Marchi asked.

Earlier, Kremer released a copy of a letter he said was being sent jointly with Marchi to protest the sending of the notices.

But Marchi complained that he had not been consulted about the letter's contents, and sent out his own letter containing a similar objection to the mailing of layoff notices.

Marchi and others have suggested that they might try to avert at least some of the 8,400 layoffs planned by Cuomo.

Joseph Slakas, spokesman for Cuomo, said the notices must go out to the 7,000 workers slated to lose their jobs on April 1 to meet civil service requirements. Slakas said there was no attempt to usurp legislative review.

Kremer said early layoff notices would amount to "artificial heat" that could interfere with lawmakers' deliberations on the budget.

"I don't think we ought to be besieged by employees who have received layoff notices," Kremer said.

Among the institutions expected to be hit hardest by the layoffs are Staten Island Developmental Center and South Beach Psychiatric Center. South Beach expects to lay off about 70 workers early in April, most in outpatient programs. Staten Island Developmental Center is slated to lose 333 employees between April 1 of this year and March 31, 1984, according to the budget proposal.

Meanwhile, William Morris, acting mental health commissioner, testified yesterday that the state's poor economic climate is causing more New Yorkers to seek psychological help.

But he conceded that there will be reduction in services because of Cuomo's plan to reduce his office's payroll by 2,445 employees.

Morris said his plan to meet those proposed cuts will not be made on an "across the board, spread-it-like-peanut-butter-type basis."

His plan, Morris told a joint hearing of the Finance and Ways and Means committees, would involve a 28 percent cut in research personnel, a 14 percent reduction in administration, a 17 percent cut in outpatient workers and a 4 percent decrease in direct-care workers at state centers.

Morris said the cutbacks in direct-care staff would push the state back to 1981 staff-patient ratios after improvements were made last year. And, he said, the cuts might cost some centers their accreditation and federal funding. South Beach lost its federal funding last October and is now trying to win it back.

"There's no question that these reductions hurt and there are risks," Morris said.