

Legislator calls for 'bill of rights' for retarded

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ALBANY — As more of the retarded and developmentally disabled are moved from large state institutions to group homes, more laws are needed to protect their rights, legislators and others have said.

Yesterday, state Senate Mental Health Committee Chairman Frank Padavan, R-Queens, took a step in that direction by calling for legislation to create a "bill of rights" for those in group homes.

Assemblywoman Elizabeth A. Connelly, D-West Brighton, who

heads the mental health committee in her chamber, is pushing for the bill there.

The rights specified in the bill would need to be enforced by the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, according to Padavan.

Legislation to address the matter of clients "aging out" of the institutional and group home system has also been introduced.

Meanwhile, in a report released last weekend, the advisory Commission on Quality Care for the Retarded and Developmentally Disabled suggested that more money be allo-

cated to families who have had the retarded at home with them over the years.

"I'm glad someone is beginning to recognize that these people have borne a heavy burden," Mrs. Connelly said. "People deserve the support — they aren't any different from those who have institutionalized clients. The burden for these families is just enormous."

For years, the state's efforts were concentrated on phasing

out bigger institutions such as the Staten Island Developmental Center, Willowbrook, as ordered by the courts. Those court decisions have, to a large degree, set legislative priorities.

The outcome of high-level budget talks now under way will determine whether there will be more aid to families caring for the retarded.

Talks aimed at modifying Gov. Mario M. Cuomo's \$35.4-billion state budget request for 1984-85 are slated to resume today.

According to a published report, Cuomo told legislators Friday that he could not boost staffing to serve the retarded, and at mental health facilities and the state's public universities, because he had to keep the current budget in balance.

However, Frank Mauro, chief fiscal aide to Assembly Speaker Stanley Fink, D-Brooklyn, said at least \$30 million more can be found in the state's current revenue projections.