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Costantino pans Connelly for inaction on health issues

Citing "appalling" conditions in New York's centers for the disabled, Karina Costantino, Republican-Conservative-Right to Life candidate in the 58th Assembly District, criticized incumbent Elizabeth A. Connelly for "inadequately addressing the health and living needs of our state's disabled."

Mrs. Costantino said that al-

though the incumbent, a Democrat, is chairwoman of the state Assembly Mental Health Committee, she has underestimated the seriousness of conditions at the Staten Island Developmental Center.

She said the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services denied funds to SIDC because of conditions there. "We cannot afford the further degeneration of

our centers for the disabled — a condition which has, in part, resulted from legislative inaction," she said.

Mrs. Costantino proposed two programs she said would help the quality of living at state facilities for the disabled. She urged the state to create a permanent inspection unit for the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities. In addition, she proposed creation of a mental hygiene inspector general, who, she said, "would be responsible for overseeing the Office of Mental Health, including 31 psychiatric centers, and the Office of Mental Retardation, which has 20 developmental centers."

She said the cost of such programs would be "more than offset" by the programs' ability to continue obtaining federal funds.