

# Proposed budget hikes hailed

By DAN JANISON  
Advance Albany Bureau

ALBANY — Staten Island lawmakers have praised Gov. Mario M. Cuomo's proposed boosts in state funding for select environment and mental health programs.

The hikes were proposed Tuesday in Cuomo's \$38 billion-plus state budget, and come alongside tax cuts and fiscal reform. The mix has led some observers to say the governor has embarked on a "something for everyone" budget strategy.

As is yearly practice, all five Island lawmakers will be seeking funds to continue what administration officials call "member" items, or special spending for local programs.

Gerald McLaughlin, a spokesman for Senate Finance Committee Chairman John J. Marchi, R-Staten Island, predicted some items found in past budgets but missing in Tuesday's proposal would be restored.

One is the budget line for the Snug Harbor Cultural Center in Livingston, where last year's \$375,000 is not included in Cuomo's plans.

There are several other items not specified in the governor's budget but assumed cut. Bids to include those items will come forward from all over the state as the March 31 fiscal year deadline approaches.

But one day after the document's release, as lawmakers continued looking at the numbers and asking for analyses of what they mean, attention was focused on spending increases.

Assemblyman Eric Vitaliano, D-Dongan Hills, said he was glad to see more sought for enforcement of solid waste management laws — particularly those affecting the Fresh Kills landfill, which some charge has been operating in violation of certain state provisions.

Vitaliano said he is "generally inclined" to support Cuomo's \$7 million request for planning for a new College of Staten Island campus.

He said he is still concerned about the eventual impact on St. George and Sunnyside, where CSI is now based, but sees time enough for that problem to be handled since moving would be at least seven years off.

Assembly Mental Health Committee Chairwoman Elizabeth A. Connelly, D-West Brighton, said she is concerned about the implications of a proposed shift in the way some programs would be funded under the Cuomo plan.

Rather than funding specific mental health programs, mental health aid for New York

state Sanitation Commission, which monitors and investigates air pollution in the tri-state area. He said he planned to push legislation beefing up the commission's enforcement powers.

"Now that the governor has finally taken a stand on protecting our environment and increased funding for the ISC, I am determined to push for enactment of my bill to put 'teeth' into the powers of the commission," Straniere said.

Whole portions of the 750-page budget document were still being sifted by lawmakers here as legislative committees met yesterday and today.

As a member of the Environmental Conservation Committee, Mrs. Connelly yesterday questioned Cuomo's environmental commissioner, Henry Williams, about various aspects of the governor's program in that field.

"He was upbeat," she reported, but said he could not offer solutions to the kind of air pollution crisis that occurred Monday, when fumes from an industrial accident in New Jersey wafted over Staten Island.

On the issue of air quality problems, Assemblyman Robert A. Straniere noted the proposed increase in funding for the Inter-

City would be "consolidated revenues — one lump sum to the localities," she said.

Last year, record education aid increases were approved, she noted, and yet the Island school board had to make reductions because Mayor Edward Koch used the money to replace, rather than supplement, school programs.

Mrs. Connelly said that when state Office of Mental Health Director Steven Katz appears soon before her committee, she will ask him: "Will we lose control of this money? Could the funds be diverted to other programs?"