

# Staten Island Advance

Saturday, April 16, 1994

## Islander briefed on health plan

### Hails funding for school nurses, programs

By **TERENCE J. KIVLAN**  
ADVANCE WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON — Community School Board member Jerry Cammarata of Rosebank yesterday hailed provisions in President Clinton's health care plan that would provide funding for school nurses and health education programs.

"We have just one nurse for all of District 31," said Cammarata, emerging from a White House briefing here on Clinton's plan given for Italian-American leaders around the country. "That's one nurse for 36,000 students on Staten Island."

The briefers at the closed session included White House Budget Director Leon Panetta and Clinton senior health care policy advisor Walter Zelman.

Cammarata said the education programs were needed to bring about basic changes in "cultural views" toward major health issues facing the country, such as cigarette smoking.

But the Islander, a health administration consultant for 120

hospitals in the New York area, said he had reservations about one of the key components of the president's plan — that calling for universal health care coverage.

Cammarata said he would back the initiative only if it could be achieved without reducing the income of hospitals. "It is important to protect them because they operate the programs in the community," he said.

The state hospital association has warned that the Clinton plan would slash revenues for New York hospitals.

Cammarata also expressed concern about whether the White House bill would do anything to cut the massive overhead cost of the existing health care system. He said bureaucratic "paper pushing" accounted for about 21 percent of all medical care outlays.

The White House bill is currently pending in Congress, where it is expected to under go a complete revamping due to doubts about its cost and effects on the economy.