

# New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo resigns in sex scandal

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Andrew Cuomo resigned as New York state governor Tuesday, effective in two weeks, as the result of a filthy and flimsy sex scandal. Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul will take over the office, becoming the state's first female governor.

The three-times elected governor of the fourth most populous state in the US, Cuomo has been forced out of office on the basis of allegations detailed in a 165-page report issued August 3 by Attorney General Letitia James. Not one of the complaints has been legally tested or validated.

In a public statement, Cuomo argued that the “most serious allegations made against me had no credible, factual basis.” In a brief reference to what might lie behind the drive to remove him, the governor suggested that “in a highly political matter like this, there are many agendas and there are many motivations at play. If anyone thought otherwise, they would be naïve, and New Yorkers are not naïve.”

“I’m a fighter,” he proclaimed, “and my instinct is to fight through this controversy because I truly believe it is politically motivated.” Cuomo described the James report as “unfair” and “untruthful,” further asserting that if he could “communicate the facts through the frenzy, New Yorkers would understand.” However, he remarked, the situation, “by its current trajectory, will generate months of political and legal controversy. That is what is going to happen. That is how the political wind is blowing. It will consume government. It will cost the taxpayers millions of dollars. It will brutalize people.”

Given the circumstances, the governor said, “the best way I can help now is if I step aside and let government get back to governing ... This transition [to a Hochul administration] must be seamless.”

As usual, a Democratic Party politician allows himself, masochistically, to be eradicated rather than alert the population to the anti-democratic implications and dangers of such an action. In the end, Cuomo was no doubt convinced to resign on the grounds that this was the most favorable course of action available to the section of the ruling elite associated with the Democrats. They want to put this crisis behind them, while at the same time encouraging the feminist and identity politics base. The Democratic Party has become dependent upon an affluent constituency that demands ritual sacrifices.

Once again, a transparently manufactured and insubstantial sex scandal has been used to settle scores and promote an undisclosed political agenda. Democratic officials in New York and

Washington have responded enthusiastically to Cuomo's departure, so beholden are they to their upper-middle class base. The driving out of New York's governor solidifies the image and role of the Democrats as the #MeToo party.

This is another generous political gift to Donald Trump and the Republican Party, who warm their hands over these dirty affairs and posture as the party of “ordinary Americans” disgusted by such carryings-on.

From Joe Biden on down, the Democrats are incapable of acting against a single one of the conspirators in the Trump administration and Congress who organized a coup attempt on January 6 aimed at establishing a dictatorship in the U.S. However, the opportunity to burnish their credentials in the “fight against sexual harassment” and, in the process, divert the public from the resurgence of the pandemic and other social disasters is an opportunity not be passed up.

The James report detailing the claims by the various women proved to be the nail in Cuomo's political coffin. A ludicrous document, repetitiously and “scrupulously” documenting a series of alleged micro-aggressions, which Cuomo denies committing, it unleashed a torrent of attacks on the governor from fellow Democrats, including in the New York state legislature, which he was finally unable to withstand.

The rush to judgment here, the demand by the *New York Times* and the rest of the media that Cuomo resign before any serious investigation of the misdemeanors, had a certain logic. Better remove him before anyone looks too closely at the allegations!

One of the few voices of sanity in the sea of self-righteous hysteria, Jim Zirin, a former federal prosecutor in the Southern District of New York, commented in the *New York Daily News*: “As a lawyer and former federal prosecutor, I am alarmed by the total lack of due process here. James based her devastating conclusions in part on interviews with 179 unnamed witnesses, of whom just 41 were under oath...”

A minimal concern for due process in such a case, Zirin continued, would mean “notice and hearing, confrontation with accusers who are willing to come forward, opportunity for cross-examination, and a disinterested investigation by someone other than James, who may be herself a candidate for governor.”

Zirin noted that the report “has 11 accusers. Of those named, two did not work for the State of New York at the time of the alleged misconduct. There are none who reported Cuomo's transgressions to the relevant New York State agency dealing with sexual

harassment complaints. Yes, I know, they say they feared retaliation. But this is an area that might be probed in cross-examination.”

Cuomo’s lawyer, Rita Glavin, began publicly subjecting the complainants and their complaints to scrutiny at two press conferences last week. She presented significant facts about one of the most prominent accusers, Lindsey Boylan, a former official in the Cuomo administration.

The information suggests that Boylan, after she resigned her post at Empire State Development because of complaints about her systematic bullying of subordinates, felt that Cuomo had taken an action injuring her future political hopes. Boylan sent texts to the governor’s senior aides that warned, among other things, “I will find a way to respond. Life is long. And so is my memory. And so are my resources.” Later, she came out with her claims of sexual harassment.

Boylan became more and more unhinged as time passed. In March 2021, she tweeted, “Resign you disgusting monster, @NYGovCuomo.” That same month, the *New Yorker* carried an interview with Boylan conducted by none other than Ronan Farrow, one of the arch-scoundrels of the #MeToo sexual witch-hunt, conveying her inflammatory accusations.

At a last-ditch press conference Tuesday, not long before Cuomo announced his resignation, Glavin noted that following the issuing of James’ report, “dozens of people” called for Cuomo’s resignation, but that he “had no opportunity to respond... The investigators acted as the prosecutors, judge, and jury of Gov. Cuomo. Nobody vetted the report.” This is the reality of American politics at present.

Cuomo’s attempts to defend himself fell on deaf ears, or worse, were denounced for daring to call into question the veracity of his accusers, whose fragile psychological states might be further damaged by his comments. Maureen Dowd of the *New York Times*, in one of her characteristically unhinged and stupid outbursts, suggested that Melissa DeRosa, “Cuomo’s imperious top adviser,” and others among his female advisers or defenders were “Quislings,” in reference to Norwegian collaborators with the Nazis during World War II.

Other questions arise. Prominent among the governor’s accusers is Trooper #1, who, the James report notes, “described a series of interactions—both comments and physical touching—that she found to be inappropriate and offensive.” Who is this anonymous state policewoman?

Following the release of the attorney general’s report, the New York State Troopers Police Benevolent Association (NYSTPBA) issued a statement expressing indignation over the allegations. “I’m outraged and disgusted that one of my members, who was tasked with guarding the governor and ensuring his safety, could not enjoy the same sense of security in her work environment that he [Cuomo] was provided,” NYSTPBA president Thomas H. Mungeer told the media.

The NYSTPBA, like all police unions, is a right-wing outfit that defends every police killer whose crimes happen to come to light. In 2020, the New York state cops’ organization endorsed Donald Trump for re-election. The same Mungeer told the ultra-right *New York Post* at the time that Trump “has our back. President Trump

has supported us when so many people have turned against us.”

Mungeer explained to the *Post* that “he sent a letter to the governor in June complaining that Cuomo offered ‘zero support’ by not addressing attacks directed at troopers during the early protests following [George] Floyd’s death.”

Cuomo undoubtedly has made enemies within the Democratic Party, but extreme right-wing elements may be at work as well.

Hochul, a former congresswoman, is meanwhile getting on with business. CNBC reported last week, prior to Cuomo’s resignation, that a “group of New York’s most influential political donors in the business world” was encouraging her to run for governor. “Hochul’s conversations with financiers in recent weeks have focused in part on her political future,” the business news channel reported.

“Weeks prior to the release of James’ report, John Yurtchuk, the chairman and owner of Buffalo-based tech company Calspan Corp., got a call from Hochul, he said in an interview on Monday.” The wealthy Yurtchuk explained that he told Hochul, “‘You’d be a great governor. I’m just letting you know,’ so she knows where her supporters might lie. I’d step up for her.”

Cuomo is a veteran and, up to now, trusted political agent of the ruling elite. We have no special concern for his personal fate, but we are concerned with the fate of democratic rights, threatened on all sides by a rotting political and economic system. We are not indifferent as to the means by which Cuomo is removed or by whom.

The transfer of power in a palace coup through a degrading scandal drags political life as a whole further to the right, encouraging every reactionary political element. At the same time, the big questions of disease and poverty, the fascist threat, the danger of war, are deliberately pushed into the background and cheap, vicious middle class moralizing and gossip-mongering come to the fore.

The electoral process in the US, on the verge of collapse, is increasingly circumvented by various means--sex scandals, voter suppression, phony recounts, armed attacks and more. Only a break with the two-party system and the building of a mass socialist movement offers a way out of the present impasse.



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