



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Sanders Jr.

Senator Sanders' Statement On Governor Cuomo's Uncensored Use Of The N-Word

JAMES SANDERS JR. October 18, 2019

State Senator James Sanders Jr. said:

"Yesterday New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo used the uncensored version of the n-word during a live radio interview. He was quoting a New York Times article, titled "How Italians Became 'White'" that was published on Saturday, which described derogatory slurs that that were historically used against Italians, and that included variations of the n-word like "white n-word" and "n-word wop."

The New York Times, which is supposed to be the paper of record, was sloppy for using the uncensored n-word and the Governor was insensitive and wrong for repeating it. He knows better and he should have done better.

The racially charged n-word is deeply entrenched in hatred and cannot be separated from a history that includes murder, rape, hanging and being burned alive. It has a power so strong that even when white people wanted to hurt each other they used this word, as the NY Times article pointed out. However, neither the NY Times nor the Governor had to use the full version of the n-word for people to clearly know what they were talking about. This choice was a failure by the New York Times, compounded by the Governor.

We as people, of all races, should be mindful of the words we use to describe each other, and that includes having a good understanding of our nation's history and where these words come from, before we start throwing them around without thinking. I urge the Governor to see this as a teachable moment and to apologize. I understand what he was trying to say but as leaders we have to lead by example."