



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara says it's time for truth from Governor Cuomo: Requests subpoenas from Senate Investigations Committee, Senate GOP calls for resignation of DOH Commissioner Howard Zucker

THOMAS F. O'MARA January 28, 2021

| ISSUE: **COMBATING COVID-19 AND PROTECTING NEW YORKERS; PROTECTING NURSING HOME RESIDENTS**



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Albany, N.Y., January 28—In the wake of today's **scathing report from New York State Attorney General Letitia James that the Cuomo administration has undercounted COVID-19 deaths in nursing homes by as much as 50 percent**, State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats), Ranking

Member of the Senate Investigations Committee, today called on the committee's chair to immediately issue subpoenas to the governor and top Cuomo administration officials to compel their direct testimony before the Legislature.

State Senate Republicans are also calling for the resignation of the state's top health official, state Department of Health Commissioner Howard Zucker.

O'Mara also renewed his past calls for a bipartisan, independent investigation into the COVID-19 nursing homes tragedy in New York, where the Cuomo administration has stated that approximately 8,700 nursing home residents have suffered coronavirus-related deaths.

According to today's report from the attorney general, that number could be more than 13,000.

O'Mara said that the AG's report makes it clear that, at the very least, the Cuomo administration has not been forthcoming on the extent of the crisis in nursing homes.

O'Mara said, "For too long the Cuomo stonewalling on this nursing homes tragedy has been unacceptable, and worse. It needs to end starting today. The governor has for unknown reasons tried to conceal the truth on the devastation of this crisis in our nursing homes, and it has caused great harm. Today's report begins to forcefully expose the lies and the possible cover-up. Now every available action needs to be taken to compel the governor and his administration to tell the truth and be held accountable."

O'Mara called on the Chair of the Senate Investigations Committee, Democratic Senator James Skoufis of the Hudson Valley, to immediately issue subpoenas to the governor, state Health Commissioner Dr. Howard Zucker, and other top administration officials to compel their testimony before the Legislature.

O'Mara and his Senate GOP colleagues, together with legislative colleagues on both sides of the aisle, have been calling for an independent investigation throughout the past year. According to O'Mara, joint, bipartisan Senate-Assembly hearings last August failed to satisfy many state lawmakers that top Cuomo administration officials were fully answering questions on the crisis, including the exact number of nursing home deaths.