



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara, legislative colleagues continue push for answers, accountability in NY nursing home deaths: Draft subpoena, urge immediate action (WATCH HERE)

THOMAS F. O'MARA February 3, 2021

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



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Albany, N.Y., February 3—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) and members of the Senate and Assembly Republican conferences today continued their push for the start of a

full investigation into the state's handling of the COVID-19 crisis in New York's nursing homes.

During a virtual press conference with legislators and advocates earlier today, O'Mara said, "There's one thing that we have highlighted and that we are clear on this week, We will not be muted!" [Watch Senator O'Mara's remarks at today's press conference [HERE](#).]

On Monday during a meeting of the Senate Investigations Committee, on which he serves as the Ranking Member, O'Mara moved a motion for a vote by the committee to immediately issue subpoenas to the Cuomo administration to compel testimony and obtain documents, emails, phone records and all other information related to the administration's handling of the pandemic in nursing homes. During a heated exchange with the committee's chair, Senator James Skoufis of the Hudson Valley, who strenuously objected to the move, O'Mara's microphone was muted by the Senate Democratic Majority in an attempt to cut off ongoing debate.

O'Mara said, "We will not stop in this effort. COVID-19's terrible toll on the elderly makes it all the more vital that we fully understand what has happened, as straightforwardly as it takes, and with as much toughness as it demands. It is time for the Senate Democrat Majority to stop protecting Governor Cuomo. Their failure to immediately issue subpoenas and demand testimony from the Cuomo administration completely abandons legislative responsibility. It makes the Senate Democrats complicit in this tragedy."

O'Mara and his colleagues were joined during today's news conference by family members who lost loved ones to COVID-19 in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Participants included famed FOX News Meteorologist and victim's advocate Janice Dean, who lost both of her in-laws to the virus. Also participating were Cindy Lizzi, and her brothers Ted and Phil Minissale of the Albany area, who lost their mother to COVID-19 in a nursing home and who took part in the investigation that led to last week's bombshell report by New York Attorney

General Letitia James that, among other findings, found that the Cuomo administration had underreported nursing home deaths by as much as 50%.

Dean, who has become a leading voice for justice for grieving New York families, said, “Our families have been waiting for almost a year for answers as to why our loved ones were put in harm's way without warning and why our governor has done everything he can to cover up his deadly mistakes. We deserve answers for our families and to ensure this never happens again to anyone else’s family.”

In a joint statement, Cindy Lizzi, and Ted and Phil Minissale said, “Our family has suffered tremendous loss, and since our mother Agnes passed away, we have waited for the truth to come out. So many families have gone through this – losing a loved one because questionable decisions were made that put patients in danger and impacted people’s lives. People need to own their mistakes, and there needs to be accountability for the families, like ours, who have lost so much.”

View today's full news conference [HERE](#).