



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George M. Borrello

## Senator Borrello Calls on Governor Cuomo to Donate Book Proceeds to Elder Advocacy Organizations

GEORGE M. BORRELLO February 11, 2021

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ALBANY – Senator George Borrello today called on the Governor to donate the proceeds of his recent book, “American Crisis,” to elder advocacy organizations in the state as a step towards repairing public trust in the wake of reports of the administration’s deliberate undercounting of COVID-related nursing home deaths.

Citing the widespread public concern resulting from the Attorney General's January 28 report which found that the administration undercounted COVID-19 deaths in nursing homes by up to 50 percent, Senator Borrello noted that:

"New Yorkers, particularly our older residents, have been left feeling confused and misled by this turn of events. While decisions made months ago cannot be undone, I believe that a small step towards bridging the gulf of public mistrust that now exists would be for you to donate the proceeds of your recent book, "American Crisis," to elder advocacy organization, the Center for Elder Law and Justice in Western New York (CELJ) and other elder-focused non-profits across the state. Philanthropy dedicated to helping our senior citizens would recognize their importance to our state and the tragic reality that they have suffered disproportionately during the pandemic."

The Attorney General's report confirmed suspicions that nursing home deaths were being undercounted. After months of repeated requests to the Health Department and Cuomo administration for the data from legislators of both parties, news organizations, watchdog groups and families, the Health Department released, - within hours of the AG's report - figures showing that 4,067 of COVID fatalities in hospitals were actually nursing home residents. On Sunday, the [Empire Center for Public Policy](#), which won a court order mandating the release of the figures, reported that the inclusion of deaths of residents from assisted living and adult care facilities added approximately 1,500, for a total of almost 5,800 deaths that were improperly categorized as hospital deaths and approximately 15,000 fatalities of nursing home residents overall.

Senator Borrello concluded his letter by stating, "I am hopeful that you will consider and act on my suggestion. The terrible toll of COVID on this group of New Yorkers has been exacerbated by a state government that has appeared indifferent to their concerns. A commitment of funds from your book on the crisis would be an important conciliatory

overture.”

Released in October, the book chronicles the Governor’s leadership of the pandemic response in New York. While financial details of the book deal have not been provided, the Governor said when it was released that he would donate a portion of the proceeds to COVID relief. Specific information on how much, when or to which organizations he would donate has not been disclosed.

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