



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara again calls for Senate Investigations Committee to issue subpoenas to push for answers, accountability in NY's COVID-19 nursing home deaths

THOMAS F. O'MARA April 28, 2021

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

According to the New York Times article posted online, “Mr. Cuomo’s most senior aides engaged in a sustained effort to prevent the state’s own health officials, including the commissioner, Howard Zucker, from releasing the true death toll to the public or sharing it with lawmakers.”

Albany, N.Y., April 28—Following a report in the **New York Times late this afternoon** that Governor Andrew Cuomo and top aides repeatedly obstructed the release of accurate

information on the number of COVID-19 deaths of seniors in nursing homes, State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats), Ranking Member of the Senate Investigations and Government Operations Committee, today renewed his call for the committee to subpoena members of the Cuomo administration, including top state health officials, in order to obtain documents, emails, phone records, and all other information surrounding the state's handling of the COVID-19 crisis in New York's nursing homes and long-term care facilities.

According to the New York Times article posted online, "Mr. Cuomo's most senior aides engaged in a sustained effort to prevent the state's own health officials, including the commissioner, Howard Zucker, from releasing the true death toll to the public or sharing it with lawmakers."

In a statement, O'Mara said, "It continues to remain clear to me and to my Republican colleagues in the Senate and Assembly that this Legislature has a responsibility to fully understand what has happened and why. We need to do this 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. The failure of the Senate Investigations Committee to issue subpoenas completely abandons legislative responsibility. It continues to make the Senate Democrats complicit in this tragedy."

O'Mara has called on and made three formal motions to the Chair of the Senate Investigations and Government Operations Committee, Senator James Skoufis (D-Hudson Valley), to allow the full committee to vote on moving forward with subpoenas.

Skoufis has rejected O'Mara's motions. At a meeting of the committee in late February, when O'Mara first made a motion to issue subpoenas, his microphone was muted by the Senate Democratic Majority in an attempt to cut off any further comments.