



## Statement Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

February 28, 2021

### **NYS Assemblywomen Respond to Sexual Harassment Allegations Against Governor Andrew M. Cuomo**

ALBANY, NY – In response to the news that a second woman has come forward accusing Governor Cuomo of sexual harassment while working in his employ, Assemblymembers Marianne Buttenschon (D-Utica), Sarah Clark (D-Rochester), Carmen De La Rosa (D-Washington Heights), Pat Fahy (D-Albany), Nathalia Fernandez (D-Bronx), Emily Gallagher (D-Brooklyn), Judy Griffin (D-Nassau), Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas (D-Queens), Pam Hunter (D-Syracuse), Chantel Jackson (D-Bronx), Anna Kelles (D-Ithaca), Jen Lunsford (D-Perinton), Marcela Mitaynes (D-Brooklyn), Yuh-line Niou (D-Manhattan), Amy Paulin (D-Westchester), Karines Reyes (D-Bronx), Linda Rosenthal (D-Manhattan), Nily Rozic (D-Queens), Rebecca Seawright (D-Manhattan), Amanda Septimo (D-Bronx), Jo Anne Simon (D-Brooklyn), Gina Sillitti (D-Nassau), Phara Souffrant Forrest (D-Brooklyn), Monica Wallace (D-Lancaster), Carrie Woerner (D-Saratoga), have issued the following joint statement:

Sexual harassment has no place in any environment – not in a bar, not in the street, not in the workplace, and certainly not in our government.

The New York State Legislature made addressing sexual harassment in the workplace a priority. New policies were put in place. Anti-sexual harassment training is mandatory for all. We have unequivocally made clear that sexual harassment in the workplace will not be tolerated and that all allegations of sexual harassment should be taken seriously. We expect nothing less from our Governor. In fact, we expect more.

There is a need for an independent investigation into the recent sexual harassment allegations with unfettered authority to subpoena witnesses, to seek the production of documents, and to bring whatever charges are warranted. The Governor's proposal to appoint someone who is not independently elected, has no subpoena authority, and no prosecutorial authority is inadequate.

No person accused of sexual harassment should choose who investigates those allegations. We are asking that Governor Cuomo immediately make an official referral to Attorney General Letitia James to appoint an independent investigator.

There needs to be a clear and transparent process. We must ensure that the allegations made against the Governor are properly and thoroughly investigated. All women across New York do not have access to the same platforms to share their stories, but it is our duty to ensure that every woman in New York has access to a fair, balanced, responsive investigative process. We owe due respect to the women raising these concerns to treat their accusations seriously.

And, if their allegations prove credible, the Governor must be held accountable.