



Written by [James Murphy](#) on May 27, 2021

Cuomo: “New Yorkers Don’t Feel Safe” Due to “Major Crime Problem”

Embattled New York Governor Andrew Cuomo let the public know how he really feels about the rampant crime problem in his state’s biggest city on Wednesday. In a nearly 10-minute diatribe during a press conference in his Manhattan office, Cuomo explained that the city will never fully recover from the damage done to it from the COVID-19 pandemic unless people can feel safe again.

The press conference can be seen [here](#) (relevant portion begins at 41:15).

“Of all the things we have to do when we’re talking in New York City specifically, crime, crime, crime are the top three,” Cuomo said.



AP Images

Thus far in 2021, crime is up 30 percent overall citywide, with violent crimes leading the way. Figures for April of 2021 [show](#) a 35.6-percent increase in felony assaults over the same month in 2020. Murder is up nearly 16 percent, and rape incidents have skyrocketed 52.8 percent. Shooting incidents increased a jaw-dropping 166 percent over the same period. Ironically, burglary is down 26 percent.

Cuomo mentioned state investment in infrastructure projects and small businesses, but said that such investments won’t lead to economic recovery in the city unless people feel safe again.

“We have a major crime problem in New York City. Everything we just talked about, with the economy coming back, you know what the first step is? People have to feel safe,” the New York governor said. “We’re building new projects, we’re stimulating small business — what comes before that is public safety, otherwise none of it works.”

Cuomo also referenced a recent Metropolitan Transport Authority [report](#) about increased crime on the city’s subway system, saying that the number of officers in subway stations and on trains was “de minimis.”

“New Yorkers don’t feel safe and they don’t feel safe because the crime rate is up. It’s not that they’re being neurotic or overly sensitive — they’re right,” Cuomo said.

Cuomo believes that a large part of the crime problem in New York City has to do with the relationship that citizens have with the police. In Cuomo’s mind, citizens no longer trust the police to use the force necessary to stop crime.

“The answer is you have to reform the policing, public safety function in a way that restores trust with the community,” Cuomo said. “It is a relationship issue.”

The beleaguered New York governor also couldn’t resist a veiled shot at political rival and current New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, who made the decision to cut \$1 billion from the NYPD’s budget amid



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pressure from Black Lives Matter activists in 2020.

“Defund the police is not the answer in my opinion,” Cuomo said. “Defund the police basically means abolish the police. That’s going to help? Gun violence going up, all crimes going up — your answer is abolish the police?”

Spokesman for de Blasio, Bill Neidhardt commented on Cuomo’s public safety rant, saying, “It’s funny, you never hear Andrew Cuomo offering anything close to a solution.”

Neidhardt also suggested that Cuomo might be stressing the crime problem in New York City to distract from his more personal problems: “It’s almost like he’s trying to distract from what is way more than three issues worthy of resignation.”

And Cuomo does indeed have other problems that he’s facing. His well-documented mishandling of nursing homes during the COVID-19 pandemic may have led to the death of thousands of residents. In addition, several allegations of sexual misconduct and allegations of bullying staff have dogged Cuomo.

“Yeah, well people have criticisms, yeah. And I take every criticism seriously and evaluate every criticism,” Cuomo told a *New York Post* reporter. “Now some criticisms are politically motivated — I’m a progressive Democrat, some conservative Republicans find that objectionable.”

The recent rise in crime in New York City brings back horrific memories of the 1970s and 1980s, when crime was rampant in New York City. Tired of not being safe on their streets, New Yorkers elected Republican Rudy Giuliani in 1994, who enacted reforms that made the city much safer. Current mayor Bill de Blasio — under whose watch crime has soared again, possibly as a result of his “bail reform” that allows known criminals to be out on the street instead of behind bars — has already announced that he will not seek reelection. The question is, is there another Giuliani among the stated candidates?



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