



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on August 11, 2021

Cuomo Quits, Admits Fault, Not Harassment. Denies More Serious Groping Allegations

Though he denied the most serious groping allegations against him when he resigned yesterday, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo admitted that he offended women employees and colleagues with flirting, sexual banter, and inappropriate comments.

But that isn't why he resigned.

Instead, the [governor intoned](#), he resigned because that was best for the people of New York. Though innocent, the long road to proving it would consume too much time, energy, and money. New Yorkers have better things to do, like fight the China Virus.



AP Images
Andrew Cuomo

He resigned for them — the people. It's just a sacrifice he — and they — must accept.

Who says there's nothing left of humble nobility in this world?

The Speech

Cuomo began his farewell address by saying he did not, as the state attorney general's report on his conduct concluded, sexually harass 11 women.

"The reaction was outrage," Cuomo said. "It should have been. However, it was also false."

Cuomo said the claims were unjust and unfair, although injustice and fairness [weren't a worry](#) for the handsy governor when women accused U.S. Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh of masterminding gang-rape parties in high school:

The most serious allegations made against me had no credible factual basis in the report. And there is a difference between alleged improper conduct and concluding sexual harassment. Now, don't get me wrong, this is not to say that there are not 11 women who I truly offended. There are. And for that I deeply, deeply apologize.

I thought a hug and putting my arm around a staff person while taking a picture was friendly, but she found it to be too forward. I kissed a woman on the cheek at a wedding and I thought I was being nice, but she felt that it was too aggressive. I have slipped and called people honey, sweetheart and darling. I meant it to be endearing, but women found it dated and offensive. I said on national TV to a doctor wearing PPE and giving me a Covid nasal swab, "You make that gown look good." I was joking, obviously, otherwise I wouldn't have said it on national TV. But she found it disrespectful. I take full responsibility for my actions.

Cuomo admitted he is "too familiar with people," and has an "insensitive and off-putting" sense of



humor:

I do hug and kiss people casually, women and men. I have done it all my life. It's who I've been since I can remember. In my mind, I've never crossed the line with anyone, but I didn't realize the extent to which the line has been redrawn. There are generational and cultural shifts that I just didn't fully appreciate, and I should have. No excuses.

Cuomo also apologized for touching a woman state trooper, although he said doesn't remember it. He used that apology to brag about the number of women employees in his administration.

Not About the Truth

Proclaiming himself "New York tough" and "New York smart," the governor explained that the moment at hand — accusations that he is a thoroughgoing cad — is "not about the truth" or "thoughtful analysis" or how "we make the system better."

It's all about "politics," [he explained](#):

Our political system today is too often driven by the extremes. Rashness has replaced reasonableness. Loudness has replaced soundness. Twitter has become the public square for policy debate. There is an intelligent discussion to be had on gender-based actions on generational and cultural behavioral differences on setting higher standards and finding reasonable resolutions. But the political environment is too hot and it is too reactionary for that now, and it is unfortunate.

That's exactly what Kavanaugh and his backers said, but Cuomo, again, was unimpressed.

Though Cuomo is a "fighter," he won't put New Yorkers through "months of litigation, time and money that government officials should spend managing Covid, guarding against the Delta variant, reopening upstate, fighting gun violence and saving New York City. All that time would be wasted."

"I cannot be the cause of that," he concluded:

I love New York, and I love you. And everything I have ever done has been motivated by that love. And I would never want to be unhelpful in any way. And I think that given the circumstances, the best way I can help now is if I step aside and let government get back to governing. And, therefore, that's what I'll do because I work for you, and doing the right thing is doing the right thing for you. Because as we say, "It's not about me. It's about we."

And so as of August 24, Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul will replace him.

Like any good employee, Cuomo gave two weeks notice.

AG Report

For the record, "breast" [appears 25 times](#) in the attorney general's report. It appears in connection with more than one woman.

Cuomo asked one executive assistant for hugs each time she left his office. Those hugs became more and more intimate, and eventually led to Cuomo's kissing and touching her, she alleged:



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As Executive Assistant #1 finished her assignment and prepared to leave the Governor's personal office ... the Governor pulled Executive Assistant #1 in for a close hug.

Executive Assistant #1 was conscious that the door to the Governor's office ... was open. ... [She] stepped away from the Governor and said, "You're going to get us in trouble," to which the Governor replied, "I don't care," and slammed the door shut.

Cuomo, she said, was "sexually driven" and ready to give her some of the love he feels for all New Yorkers:

The Governor then returned ... and slid his hand up her blouse, and grabbed her breast, "cupp[ing her] breast" over her bra....

[She] pulled away from the Governor and said, "You're crazy."

That incident amounted to sexual assault, [some observers said](#).



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