



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on February 22, 2021

New York Lawmakers Call for Cuomo's Impeachment Over Nursing-home Deaths

Some New York state legislators are calling for Governor Andrew Cuomo to be impeached over his admitted concealment of data on COVID-19 deaths in nursing homes.

Last March, Cuomo, a Democrat, issued an executive order requiring nursing homes to accept COVID-19 patients. He reversed the order in May but, at roughly the same time, began [excluding](#) from the nursing-home COVID-19 death count any residents who died after being transferred to hospitals.

In January, New York Attorney General Letitia James reported that the Cuomo administration had [undercounted nursing-home coronavirus deaths by as much as 50 percent](#). Then, two weeks ago, Cuomo's top aide, Melissa DeRosa, told fellow Empire State Democrats that the administration had [withheld some of the data last summer for fear it would be "used against us"](#) in a federal investigation.

DeRosa's comments led various New York lawmakers to call for [stripping Cuomo of the emergency powers](#) the legislature granted him to combat the pandemic. "The allegations have also prompted the FBI and federal prosecutors in Brooklyn to launch a criminal investigation into the Cuomo administration's handling of the nursing home issue," reported [Yahoo News](#).

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Now Assemblyman Ron Kim, a Democrat from Queens, says it's time to open impeachment proceedings against Cuomo. After DeRosa's confession, Kim, who lost an uncle to COVID-19 in a nursing home, was among the first state officials to accuse Cuomo of withholding evidence. For his trouble, he [claims](#) he was subjected to a threatening telephone call from Cuomo that left his wife "shaking for two hours" — a charge the governor vehemently denies.

According to Yahoo News, Kim believes that impeachment sentiment is on the rise in the legislature:

"It will take a little time to build that consensus, but every day we are inching toward the impeachment process," [Kim] said in an interview with the Yahoo News podcast "Skullduggery." He estimated that, along with "virtually all" Republicans, between 25 and 30 Democratic legislators currently support an impeachment inquiry into Cuomo — a number he suggested is growing steadily.



AP Images



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In a [Newsweek op-ed](#), Kim maintained that Cuomo’s allegedly threatening phone call was representative of “a long pattern of abusive tactics that the governor deploys when the public gets too close to learning the truth.”

“I witnessed a crime, and on top of that, 15,000 nursing home residents died under his watch,” he wrote. “Restoring faith in government for those families is my top and only priority, not the governor’s PR image.”

Kim also accused Cuomo of “quietly and at the last minute” inserting a clause into a budget bill granting healthcare providers [immunity from COVID-19 lawsuits](#) “on behalf of his top campaign donor.” “If the corporate immunity was omitted from the budget, how many lives would have been saved?” he asked.

Kim’s colleagues on the GOP side of the aisle, meanwhile, introduced “a resolution to create an impeachment commission consisting of eight bipartisan members of the Legislature,” penned [Newsweek](#). “The panel would have 60 days to conduct its work and submit its findings and recommendations to the state legislature.”

“The Cuomo Administration’s nursing home cover-up is one of the most alarming scandals we’ve seen in state government,” Assembly Minority Leader Will Barclay said in a statement. “It is incumbent upon the Legislature to undertake a comprehensive, bipartisan review of the Cuomo Administration’s policies, decisions and actions on this matter and render a decision on what steps must be taken to hold the governor accountable.”

Republicans, of course, would like nothing more than to evict Cuomo, but they face an [uphill battle](#) in the Democrat-dominated legislature. If Kim is right about the increasing support for impeachment, though, it just might happen.

Kim, for his part, isn’t necessarily calling for Cuomo’s ouster, but he believes impeachment may be the only way to bring all the facts to light. He told the Rochester [Democrat and Chronicle](#) “he continues to get calls from colleagues to pursue it.”

“There is a tremendous distrust in what they’ve done, and the potential coverup,” Kim said of the Cuomo administration. “So let’s put them on a public trial and go through all the evidence one by one. That’s the only way to rebuild a proper check and balance and to rebuild the public’s trust.”



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