

Cuomo Resigns. Years of work are paying off. We can do this.

An Editorial by John Gilmore

New York's Governor Andrew Cuomo resigned yesterday. The certainty of impeachment and conviction for more than a dozen alleged cases of sexual harassment of state employees, members of his own staff, and others became too much, and he threw in the towel.

We have fought Cuomo for ten years. He has been on the wrong side of every issue the Autism Action Network works on. I am delighted to see him go. And I believe we can rightly claim partial credit for pushing him out the door. In addition to fighting his annual attempts to cut developmental disability budgets and his predictable efforts to do whatever the drug companies (especially New York's own Pfizer) want him to do, our community launched the first of many Cuomo's Gotta Go rallies more than a year ago. You have been calling offices, writing letters, showing up at legislators' events, sending emails, commenting on social media, getting friends and family involved, going to demonstration after demonstration, networking with groups working on other issues. And all of that makes a difference. We made a big difference in turning the legislators against Cuomo and the awful things he has forced them to do over the years. Many were looking for a way to be rid of him and the sexual harassment charges made that possible.

Last May Cuomo had an astronomical 85% voter approval rating propelled by his nationally televised daily briefings, the de facto Democratic response to President Trump's briefings. It won him an Emmy. Last summer serious discussion was going on among the chattering classes on how Cuomo could replace Biden at the top of the ticket. Biden and Kamala Harris must have loved that. The term "Cuomosexual" was coined. Now he is dirt.

The harassment charges are just one of a slate of alleged crimes hanging over Cuomo. The worst was his mass negligent homicide last spring when Cuomo decided to place people with active Covid infections in nursing homes. He claims he did it to prevent hospitals from overcrowding, even though there were thousands of empty beds available. All CDC safety guidelines were ignored. Sixteen-thousand people died, including my mother. Only a few governors made the same decision and all of those states had astronomically higher death rates in their nursing homes than the states that kept the Covid cases out. Then Cuomo lied about how many

people died, and had his staff write a book about what a great job he did handling Covid and got paid \$5.1 million.

Many powerful people are just as culpable as Cuomo in the nursing home mass murders, like Governor Wolf in Pennsylvania, Whitmer in Michigan, Newsom in California, and Murphy in New Jersey, as well as the leaders of the giant hospital corporations Cuomo helped create that control almost every hospital in New York. But our political leaders, a craven bunch, do not have the courage to take them on, or to indict the Democratic Governors of five big states. The sexual harassment charges only impact Cuomo. There is no collateral damage to other powerful people. They allow a nice neat surgical strike. And they worked.

The two Governors, Andrew Cuomo and Gavin Newsom of California, most visibly associated with a heavy-handed, punitive, even dictatorial approach to the Covid event are both in crisis. Cuomo is already gone. Newsom is facing a recall election that the polls indicate he will lose. Those facts can't be lost on other Governors or the President. And those facts should not be lost on us.

Not well known outside of political circles is the fact that Cuomo has long been widely hated in Albany, especially among his own Democratic party. Friends of ours in the legislature said that fewer than ten percent of the legislature supported him even before the sexual harassment charges and slaughter in the nursing homes came to light.

Cuomo is a micromanager. He gets what he wants through threats and intimidation. He is notoriously vindictive. One of the key reasons he is leaving is his leadership style left him with no friends at all in Albany.

No one in our community will miss Cuomo. He was a disaster on autism issues, a disaster on developmental disability issues, and a disaster on vaccine rights issues.

Over the course of his ten years in office he cut the budget of the primary state agency serving adults with developmental disabilities by more than 50%, despite a near doubling in the disabled adult population and a doubling of the overall state budget.

He shut down most of the support programs for college students with autism.

The courts in 2017 found unconstitutional his redesign of a state agency that investigates and prosecutes crimes committed against developmentally disabled people in residential facilities, but he has done nothing to correct the problems. Consequently, New York has not had a system to investigate and prosecute crimes against our most vulnerable people for 4 years. He

could have done it quite easily.

Our Early Intervention Program for children with developmental delays under three has ceased to function in some counties because the fees paid to are so low.

In November of 2018 the Democrats got control of the New York Senate. A bill to eliminate the religious exemption had sat in both houses not going anywhere because the Republicans who controlled the Senate up till then would not back the bill. We knew the bill would begin moving. We fought as hard as we could. By the middle of June, we thought we had fought it to a standstill. Multiple legislative insiders were telling us that they did not have the votes to move the bill. Then Cuomo got involved. In his usual manner, arms were twisted, threats were made. We won the first vote in the Assembly Health Committee, even though they included a vote against the exemption from an Assemblymember who was not even present, a blatant violation of Assembly rules. Then the leadership forced the junior member of the committee to change his vote. It was obvious the fix was in. Even with the direct arm twisting by Cuomo the bill only won by 14 votes on the Assembly floor, which is unheard of in New York, if a bill is passed it usually gets an overwhelming Soviet-style vote of something like 145-3 or 148-2.

The bill was passed on June 13. On June 28 all children who were not up to date on their shots were thrown out of school. Most students were already on summer break so the first group of students denied an education were special needs kids on year round programs. When similar bills were passed in other states families were given years to comply or adjust. In Cuomo's New York they got days.

We know for a fact that many of the legislators feel deeply ashamed for going against their consciences under intense pressure for Cuomo. They do not appreciate the position he put them in.

When Cuomo could not get what he wanted through legislation he would often simply rewrite regulations to suit his needs. For years Cuomo and the pro-pharma faction tried unsuccessfully to pass a bill allowing minors of any age to be given vaccines and drugs licensed to prevent sexually transmitted infections without parental knowledge or consent. The goal was primarily to get around parents who were not allowing their children to get Merck's Gardasil injection. They couldn't get a law passed so they simply wrote completely illegal regulations to achieve the same goal.

After the repeal of the religious exemption in June of 2019 he had his lead henchman Howard Zucker, the head of the Department of Health, rewrite the medical exemptions regulations so only people who had already experienced and documented a life-threatening anaphylactic shock could get an exemption, and only then from the specific vaccine that caused the shock. In cases where multiple doses are given at the same time, such as is

the norm with the pediatric schedule, exemptions are automatically refused because the specific vaccine cannot be identified. The whole point of the medical exemption was to allow physicians to prevent injury to their patients, Cuomo turned it into an almost impossible to get exemption to prevent RE-injury.

Early in his tenure I had the chance to meet Cuomo at a small bill signing ceremony. I had not voted for him in any of his campaigns, but despite political differences I could not help but find him personally likable and charming in the setting we were in. But personal charm is a common characteristic of sociopaths.

Cuomo will be replaced by Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul, who is virtually unknown to the overwhelming number of New Yorkers. Only political junkies had any idea that we had a Lieutenant Governor or who filled the seat. Hochul comes from a suburb of Buffalo where she served four terms as the Erie County (Buffalo) Clerk. She won a seat in Congress in a special election but was not re-elected.

The job of the Lieutenant Governor is to not draw attention to themselves while quietly waiting for the Governor to die, resign or get impeached. A job Hochul has done well since 2015. Many people fear she will be worse than Cuomo. She appears to be a fairly conventional upstate New York Democrat. When she ran for Congress in 2011 she had the support of the National Rifle Association but then supported all of Cuomo's gun control initiatives. At times in her political career she has had the endorsement of the Conservative Party. But she was also endorsed by Emily's List a group that helps elect pro-abortion women candidates. We have no idea where she is on autism, developmental disability, or vaccine rights issues.

Cuomo will be gone in 13 days. He has many crimes to answer for, and hopefully justice will be swift in coming. Partial justice has already been served with his resignation. Justice is coming for Gavin Newsom. And please take a moment to congratulate yourself the role you played in getting us this far. And please keep it up!

If you support the work of the Autism Action Network please make it possible for us to continue our work by donating [here](#) at our one fundraising event of the year we do in conjunction with the Autism Community Walk scheduled for October 17, at Belmont Lake State Park in Babylon, NY.

Please share this message with friends and family, and please share on social networks while we still can.