



1. *The Economic Hostage Situation in Congress*
2. *Step Down: Sexual Harassment Claims Against Cuomo*

Step Down: Sexual Harassment Claims Against Cuomo

By TIFFANY LOPES
STAFF WRITER

Over the past several weeks, Governor Andrew Cuomo has been accused of sexual harassment by multiple women, most of whom are current or former state employees. The allegations add to the growing list of scandals involving Cuomo and his administration, including understating the nursing home death toll from the COVID-19 pandemic by nearly half. The claims should increase awareness

The claims should increase awareness of the insidious problem of sexual exploitation that plagues our nation, a systemic one in which government has failed to properly hold assailants accountable.

of the insidious problem of sexual exploitation that plagues our nation, a systemic one in which government has failed to properly hold assailants accountable.

The first woman to accuse Cuomo of sexual harassment was Lindsey Boylan, an administration aide from 2015 to 2018, who first spoke out on Twitter last December. In February, Boylan published an article detailing numerous instances in which Cuomo allegedly made sexual advances in the workplace. Among these, she said he had gone “out of his way to touch me on my lower back, arms and legs,” told her they should play strip poker during a flight, and gave her an unsolicited kiss at his Manhattan office.

Charlotte Bennett, a 25-year-old former aide to the governor and a Hamilton College alumna, is the second woman to accuse the governor of sexual harassment. She reported that Cuomo, 63, inquired about her sex life

and whether she was sexually interested in or experienced with older men. In another instance, he allegedly asked whether she thought age differences mattered in romantic relationships, a comment which she regarded as sexually insinuating. Bennett reported the interactions to Cuomo’s chief of staff and provided an in-depth statement to a special counsel, and was later transferred to a different job. She left her position last November.

Anna Ruch is the third woman to accuse Cuomo of inappropriate sexual behavior, in her case at a wedding they both attended in September 2019. During a conversation between them about a toast he had just made, she says, he unsolicitedly put his hand on her bare lower back, called her “aggressive” after she removed it, placed his hands on her cheeks, attempted to kiss her, and kept drawing closer as she continuously pulled away.

The fourth and fifth women to publicly accuse the governor of sexual harassment are Karen Hinton and Ana Liss. Hinton, a paid consultant to Cuomo when he was the federal Housing and Urban Development secretary, alleges that he gave her an unsolicited intimate embrace at a hotel room in 2000, repeating the

If Cuomo has any semblance of honesty left, he'll resign with dignity before the state Assembly's impeachment investigation potentially forces him to.

motion a second time, which she again resisted. Liss, a former aide, said he made her uncomfortable after kissing her on the hand and asking intimate details about her romantic life.

The *Times Union* of Albany reported that one of Cuomo’s

The Economic Hostage Situation in Congress

By PHIL GOW
GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

Our legislative process calls for relatively slow development, so as not to risk fracturing the core of our democratic republic by attempts at rapid, unsustainable reform. Unfortunately, this healthy slowness seems to have disappeared as Democrats have taken control of the legislative and executive branches under the auspices of a worldwide pandemic.

COVID-19 relief policy is the most significant legislative battlefield early in this new session of Congress. It may not only determine the future political balance of power but also gravely threaten the economic underpinnings of the United States. The power of COVID-19 relief policy to shape the coming years is not yet fully recognized. After unconscionable numbers of Americans have been forced indoors and away from their jobs, stymieing economic growth, the Democratic leadership has increased its national influence by foisting upon the nation the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

The details of this act are unacceptable, at odds with our country’s fundamental principles. To begin with, it includes blatant reverse discrimination, promising over \$1 billion to subsidize farmers based on their ethnicity. Meanwhile, social justice initiatives, city bailouts, and flawed public works projects are set for billions of federal tax dollars. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office found that one-third of its funds are not to be spent until fiscal year 2022, and another \$140 billion is not to be used until fiscal 2024, more than two years from now.

So much for “emergency” relief.

continued on back

continued on back

current aides, who remains anonymous, accused him of groping her in the Executive Mansion, after inviting her there to help him with a technical issue. On March 19, Alyssa McGrath, another current aide to the governor, confirmed her prior knowledge of the anonymous allegation before it was made public. She also alleged that Cuomo had gawked at her body and made sexually suggestive comments to her and the other aide.

The most recent allegation to surface publicly is by Jessica Bakeman, a former Albany reporter who described multiple instances in which she said Cuomo

was physically inappropriate or publicly demeaning toward her.

Governor Cuomo's response to the multiple allegations has been embarrassing and inadequate. Although he has issued statements acknowledging and apologizing for any discomfort that his actions may have brought his victims, he still adamantly denies the allegations. On February 28, state Attorney General Letitia James announced that her office would begin a formal investigation into the sexual harassment claims that have been made so far. These brave survivors deserve not only to have their stories told, and heard, but even more importantly

to have Cuomo held accountable. This issue is not one which can be met with silence or indifference; women have to, and continue to, overcome barriers of entry into politics, and the persistent issue of sexual misconduct at the hands of political leaders is a recurrent one which has gone improperly addressed for far too long. If Cuomo has any semblance of honesty left, he'll resign with dignity before the state Assembly's impeachment investigation potentially forces him to.

And even in terms of spending levels alone, this package is an absurdity. Nonetheless, Americans who recognize the waste will have to overlook all of this in order to pocket much-needed relief checks.

strategy may win re-election for some, it leaves the American people in a far worse position by rewarding flawed programs rather than making them or policy more productive.

Now for a crash course on a

luck landing that entry-level position at Morgan Stanley right out of college.

We likely have not seen the last COVID-19 relief bill enter the halls of Congress. Lockdowns still dominate the country one year

COVID-19 relief policy is the most significant legislative battlefield early in this new session of Congress. It may not only determine the future political balance of power but also gravely threaten the economic underpinnings of the United States.

While I was working in Washington two years ago, I briefly met Senator Rick Scott. He had just delivered remarks at the Heritage Foundation; at one point discussing how he funded public initiatives while governor of Florida. If a state project produced returns on investment, he continued its funding; otherwise, he attempted to adjust the program or cut it altogether. This core principle of financial management is missing not only in the politically unilateral American Rescue Plan Act, but also in many other appropriations bills. Instead, a mentality of throwing money at problems when legislating, and looking good because of it, dominates Washington. While this

word economists rarely wish to hear: inflation. With most Americans gaining at least \$1,400 in their bank accounts, many are set to spend immediately. This will prompt price increases for various commodities, while devaluing the power of the dollar, on which the entire U.S. economy is based.

Make no mistake: this freshly minted money will produce dire consequences for the country because what comes up must come down. When products eventually become out of reach for many Americans—thereby prompting a decrease in demand—their prices will fall. The potential end result: recession. Therefore, it is not an overreaction to say that Congress may have purchased our next 2008. If so, good

into the pandemic, and vaccines have not restored our maskless way of life. But a new method of legislating has emerged: disguising bills as “COVID-19 relief” while taking billions out the back door.

Our country is in an economic hostage situation, where \$1,400 checks are provided in return for one political party's further authority over our industry and communities.

ENQUIRY

Vol. VIII
A publication of the AHI Undergraduate Fellows

Casimir Zablotzki
Editor-in-Chief

Philip Chivily
Walker Cummins
Associate Editors

STAFF WRITERS

Carter Briglia
Sophie Christensen
Tiffany Lopes
John Madigan
Nikki Matsuoka
Federico Alejandro Romero

The opinions expressed in these articles are the views of their authors and do not represent the views of Enquiry or the Alexander Hamilton Institute.

Enquiry accepts articles of 500 to 800 words at czablots@hamilton.edu. Please be aware that we do not accept anonymous submissions.

CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

1. *Step Down: Sexual Harassment Claims Against Cuomo*
#StepDown
2. *The Economic Hostage Situation in Congress*
#EconomicHostageSituation