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Senator Rachel May's Statement on Cuomo Administration Falsifying Public Health Reports

The latest NYT report on machinations within the Cuomo Administration to hide the truth about nursing home deaths has angered me beyond measure. If true, everyone involved in lying to the public and to the Legislature must resign immediately. And that includes the Governor. Even though he is not named in this specific article, it was done in his name. It stemmed from his overweening need to burnish his public image, and it was made possible, if not inevitable, by the culture he created of secrecy and fear of retribution that has been amply documented in recent days.

I am especially angry that the devastating tragedy that unfolded in our nursing homes over the past year has been twisted up in lies and political scandal. The controversy over how deaths were counted has made it much harder for us to focus on the cause of the deaths and the best path forward to protecting vulnerable nursing home residents. Excellent investigative reporting by Tim Knauss in syracuse.com this week confirms that it was, above all, staffing shortages and a general lack of infection control and communication at nursing homes that led to the high mortality rate. It seems to me the real culprit is the Governor's pursuit of extreme austerity measures in the Medicaid budget over the past decade. The next administration must turn immediately to addressing the crisis in long-term care that plagues this state.

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