

# HOCHUL: 'I AM PREPARED'

'The promise I make to all New Yorkers, right here and right now, I will fight like hell for you every single day, like I've always done and always will.'

On Wednesday afternoon, Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul addressed New Yorkers on her transition to assume the governorship and the state's future.

"Good afternoon and thank you for being here. I spoke with Gov. Cuomo yesterday, and he pledged his full support for a smooth transition. And I thanked him for his service to our state. Regarding his decision to step down, I believe it is appropriate and in the best interest of the state of New York. And while it was not expected, it is a day for which I am prepared.

"I've already spoken with Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Speaker Carl Heastie, labor, business, faith leaders, other state elected officials, as well as our tri-state governors. I look forward to working with each and every one of them and all of you to build on the progress that we've already started.

"Over the next two weeks, I will continue meetings with current and potential cabinet officials. I'll build out my senior staff. And I'll do what I've always done. I will travel the state to meet New Yorkers, to listen to them, to assure them that I've got their backs. And I will take their concerns and bring them back to our State Capitol, and work with our partners in every level of government to come to solutions. People will soon learn that my style is to listen first, then take decisive action.

"So, in 13 days, I will officially become the 57th governor of the state of New York. And shortly thereafter, I look forward to delivering an address to all New Yorkers to lay out my vision for the



Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul addresses the media. (Images courtesy of the Office of Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul.)

great state of New York. But make no mistake, our work has already begun, and I know this year-and-a-half has been so challenging for families and businesses across our state. And sometimes it doesn't feel like it's getting easier. The Delta variant is still raging, and it's going to take all of us to defeat it. Our children are head-

ing back to school soon. There's a lot of anxiety from the moms and dads I speak to, and the teachers as well. It's going to take all of us working together to keep our children safe, our teachers safe, and anyone who works in a school safe. Small businesses are just starting to bounce back into an uncertain world. We need to reas-

sure them that they'll be OK. And our workers are once again debating whether they should even go back to their jobs, or go back to their offices, go back to their factories. Is it safe enough?

"But I know New Yorkers. They are hardwired to persevere and to prevail. And the promise I make to all New Yorkers, right here and

right now, I will fight like hell for you every single day, like I've always done and always will."

Hochul said Cuomo will be responsible for making the decisions of a governor until his resignation date.

She said her work environment would not be hostile, and she's looking forward to finding a new lieutenant governor.

New York State Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt said, "With Gov. Cuomo resigning in disgrace, our next governor, Kathy Hochul, will soon be facing enormous challenges. She deserves the opportunity to confront these challenges with a clean slate, and with the support of individuals who are not besmirched and compromised by ties to this dark, corrupt chapter in our state's history.

"With this in mind, I am calling for the immediate resignation of state agency officials with direct ties to the soon-to-be former governor and the many scandals that have plagued state government."

He added, "Make no mistake: the cover-up of nursing home deaths, the gross misuse of state resources for the writing of a book that personally enriched the governor, and the cover-up – and enabling – of the governor's sexual harassment of young women, would not and could not have happened without these Cuomo appointees and other loyalists who are still employed by the people of New York they have missserved.

"To ensure a fresh start for New Yorkers, these individuals should resign immediately or be removed from the state payroll by the incoming governor."

## Elected leaders excited for Kathy Hochul to take over as governor

On Tuesday, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced he would resign from office, effective Aug. 24. One week earlier, New York Attorney General Letitia James issued a report from appointed independent investigators – led by Joon H. Kim and Anne L. Clark – detailing multiple allegations of sexual harassment by Cuomo. He has vigorously denied these allegations.

Following Cuomo's press conference, Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul stated, "I agree with Gov. Cuomo's decision to step down. It is the right thing to do and in the best interest of New Yorkers.

"As someone who has served at all levels of government and is next in the line of succession, I am prepared to lead as New York state's 57th governor."

A strong advocate for Western New York, where she was first elected to office, Hochul is set to become the state's first woman governor.

New York State Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt said, "Today marks one small step toward restoring honor, decency and accountability to New York state government. I hope today also brings some measure of justice to the brave women who had the courage to come forward against a powerful and vindictive political figure.

"Over the past year, Andrew Cuomo's credibility completely fell apart. Now, following his



Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul joined Village of Lewiston officials in officially opening the new, multimillion-dollar waterfront on Sept. 9, 2020. (Photo by Mark Williams Jr.)

overdue resignation, it will never be repaired. The governor's pervasive harassment and coverups cast a dark cloud over our State Capitol and took us away from the important work facing this state.

"Andrew Cuomo broke the law, lied about it, and shamelessly smeared the women who came forward. His resignation is welcome, but it stops short of the justice his victims and the people of New York deserve. The FBI, the state attorney general, and

other proper authorities must also be allowed to continue their work investigating all of the possible crimes related to our state's nursing homes crisis and the governor's questionable book deal. The Legislature must examine the Cuomo administration's many failings in public forums as soon as possible so that these abuses of power will never happen under another administration.

"We must also acknowledge the fact that the Democrats in the

Legislature failed to hold Andrew Cuomo or his administration accountable, despite our repeated calls to do so.

"Well, after the numerous credible allegations were made against Andrew Cuomo, Democrats in both the Senate and Assembly stood by him, normalizing his behavior and enabling him to cling to power. I hope those in the Legislature – and other powerful figures around the state – reflect on their own actions in response to Andrew Cuomo's disturbing be-

havior. The vocal support and the deafening silence of many helped keep Andrew Cuomo in power far longer than he deserved.

"In 14 days, we will have our first female governor. I'd like to congratulate Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul, a fellow Western New Yorker, on becoming the first woman to assume leadership of this state. My fellow senators and I look forward to working with Gov. Hochul as we continue to tackle the issues of rising crime, our state's

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