



February 11, 2025

Letitia James
Attorney General, State of New York
NYS Capitol
Albany NY 12224-0341

Thomas P. DiNapoli
Comptroller, State of New York
Office of the State Comptroller
110 State Street, Albany, NY 12236

Re: Request for Attorney General to ensure taxpayer funded legal defense of state employees is not used for bullying and tormenting victims of sexual harassment

Dear Attorney General James and Comptroller DiNapoli,

We write today to ask Attorney General James to publish new guidelines for the ethical and appropriate use of taxpayer funds used to defend state employees from legal claims. We support using public funds and understand the dangers of frivolous lawsuits and partisan “lawfare.”

Unfortunately, some recipients of taxpayer funded legal defense may not be ethical or responsible. We are deeply concerned by the well-documented accusations made by Harassment Free New York in their February 11, 2025 [letter to Comptroller DiNapoli](#). Harassment Free presents credible evidence that the defense counsel retained by Andrew Cuomo – paid \$16.5 million in taxpayer funds – has sought to intimidate and humiliate two of the women accusing him of sexual harassment.

An exhaustively documented [August 3, 2021 report](#) by Attorney General James found that Mr. Cuomo had sexually harassed at least 11 women while he was governor. Yet, Mr. Cuomo has been reimbursed \$16.5 million taxpayer dollars for legal fees he incurred from subpoenaing gynecological and therapy records of his accusers and issuing dozens of non-party subpoenas. According to Harassment Free, a federal magistrate noted in March 2024 that “...this case is proving to be extremely costly, including for witnesses from whom Defendant Cuomo has sought extensive discovery who are not parties to this litigation.”

Something seems to be very wrong here and we are looking to you, Attorney General James, to fix it.

Sincerely,

John Kaehny
Executive Director
Reinvent Albany