

Assemblyman Kearns requests federal investigations of Gov. Cuomo's Buffalo Psychiatric Center

Staggering numbers of deaths within less than three years triggers calls for federal investigations and emergency actions to save the further loss of lives

DELMAR, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES, April 12, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On the same day that

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I find these numbers shocking, and I believe there needs to be a unbiased, neutral and objective investigation,” he said. “I believe that the state can't investigate itself. There are people dying.”

Assemblyman Michael P. Kearns

Governor Cuomo visited Buffalo, Assemblyman Michael Kearns has publicly brought to light that the Buffalo Psychiatric Center has had a staggering 76 deaths within less than three years. These numbers are according to State records obtained through Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) and are being disputed by the governors spokesperson. There are many serious questions that need to be answered surrounding these massive numbers of deaths and it will take federal investigations to get to the bottom of this and to know the truth. Why are there so many deaths? Were these deaths ever reported to the local police? Was the Erie County District Attorney ever notified of any of these deaths? Was the Erie County Medical Examiner ever notified of any of these deaths and were there any autopsies even done? Were there any

criminal investigations or prosecutions? Why is the State claiming a far less number of deaths when their own documents reveal otherwise? Past exposure of horrific practices and knowledge of major cover-ups within the State of New York's Mental Health Care system as a whole point to the vital need for swift federal investigations. Obviously, Governor Cuomo and his spokespeople are in a panic and will say practically anything publicly to spin this extremely damaging news. The last thing Governor Cuomo wants is the feds investigating these deaths or the fact that the State is not notifying most medical examiners or coroners throughout New York State of thousands of deaths occurring in agencies or facilities under the governor's authority which is illegal.

Buffalo News broke the story which came out yesterday originally titled, “Kearns asks for Justice Department investigation into deaths at Buffalo Psychiatric Center” which has since been changed to “Lawmakers battle over future of children's psych center” <http://buffalonews.com/2017/04/11/new-wny-childrens-psychiatric-center-buffalo-will-bigger-services-cuomo-says/> . The link has even changed to much better name for the governor. The facts are the facts, according to State documents, the Buffalo Psychiatric Center which Governor Cuomo wants to bring children to, has major problems. This Psychiatric Center is one of the top facilities in the State, out of thousands, regarding numbers of deaths. What Governor Cuomo is attempting to do is literal insanity, who in their right mind would even think about putting children in this type of facility? Governor Cuomo has dug in his heels and he is adamant about bringing children ranging from 4-18 years of age with mental health problems into this extremely dangerous facility? What possibly could be his reasoning, this is ludicrous. When people are told that the governor is trying to shut down the well known, respected and awarded children's facility called the Western New York Children's Psychiatric Center so that the Buffalo Psychiatric Center will handle the children now, they are not only shocked, but appalled. Putting

children in with adults or even on the same grounds is a recipe for disaster, especially knowing what has just come to light surrounding so many deaths.

Assemblyman Kearns simply and eloquently is quoted in the Buffalo News piece saying that the appropriate federal authorities must investigate and that the State cannot be trusted.

“Assemblyman Michael P. Kearns Tuesday asked for a federal investigation into deaths at the Buffalo Psychiatric Center.

Documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Law show an “astounding 76 deaths” at the center from June 30, 2013, to March 31, 2016, said Kearns, a Buffalo Democrat. But there is no information on the causes of the deaths, he added.

“I find these numbers shocking, and I believe there needs to be a unbiased, neutral and objective investigation,” he said. “I believe that the state can’t investigate itself. There are people dying.”

It is important to add to this press release that two major developments have surfaced within the last 5 weeks surrounding another State agency under Governor Cuomo’s

control that fields all the calls of deaths occurring within all mental health facilities throughout New York State. First, a scathing State Comptroller Report https://www.buzzfeed.com/benhattem/scathing-report-says-ny-agency-is-failing-people-with-disabi?utm_term=.icq8Dp57x#.vyEjalV3e and second a story in which a judge ruled that Governor Cuomo’s appointed, not elected, “special prosecutor” was operating unconstitutionally <http://www.spotlightnews.com/towns/bethlehem/2017/03/30/judge-dismisses-justice-centers-case-against-teacher-accused-of-having-sex-with-student/> .

The State agency Governor Cuomo renamed to be called the Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs (Justice Center) was also relocated to give an appearance of reform following an award winning New York Times investigative series titled, “Abused and Used” which was a runner up for a Pulitzer Prize [http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/nyregion/abused-and-used-series-page.html?_r=1&";](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/nyregion/abused-and-used-series-page.html?_r=1&) . Instead of moving to fix major systemic problems leading to all sorts of preventable injuries, crimes and deaths, Governor Cuomo chose to try to continue to hide what is going on behind closed doors. This State agency was deceptively renamed to be called the Justice Center, but it is not a Justice Center, it is primarily a call center that regularly funnels reported physical and sexual assault crimes and deaths back to both State and private facilities for internal investigations to easily be covered-up. To stay focused on the deaths there are 11-13 people with disabilities dying within New York State’s extremely dangerous system on average every day. Yes, you read this correctly; every single day an extremely large number of deaths of people with disabilities are occurring and a large percentage are individuals dying extremely young that have no terminal illness. There are reasons why so many people are dying prematurely and the number one known trend leading to what is internally documented and called “untimely” deaths is bypassing and simply not calling 911 which keeps outside emergency first responder medical and police authorities out of the picture and not notified. In most cases the disabled and those struggling with mental illness have no chance.

Here are a few links regarding deaths from the New York Times “Abused and Used” investigative



Jonathan Carey "Champion for the Disabled" Born September 12,1993 Killed by caregivers on February 15,2007

reporting series, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/06/nyregion/boys-death-highlights-crisis-in-homes-for-disabled.html> , <https://www.nytimes.com/video/nyregion/100000000849083/a-failure-to-protect.html> , <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/06/nyregion/at-state-homes-simple-tasks-and-fatal-results.html> . These will help you understand the scope of what is going on throughout New York State.

The disabled are without question being treated differently and unequally, they are being discriminated against and denied their basic civil and constitutional rights. How does a person with a disability survive or have equal rights if 911 and local authorities are purposefully bypassed? How does this group of people during their time of need have the same equal privilege to swift emergency help when they are a victim of a crime or in medical distress if no one calls 911? How does this specific group of people whom are extremely vulnerable have "equal protection of laws" if local law enforcement are rarely called and in most cases there is no criminal investigation or notification to County elected District Attorney's or Medical Examiners?

Thousands of deaths of people with disabilities are occurring annually within New York State run or overseen facilities and most have been directed to be internally investigated by the providers themselves and kept from County Medical Examiners by the Justice Center <https://www.justicecenter.ny.gov/sites/default/files/documents/JusticeCenterDeathReportingClarification12-17-15.pdf> . This Justice Center Memorandum by Jay Kiyonaga, the Executive Deputy Director of Cuomo's Justice Center clearly directs providers to investigate deaths occurring in their own facilities (see number 4). This is how deaths, extremely large numbers of deaths, are being covered up in Erie County and throughout New York State. I will end this press release by informing the general public that Michael J. Hillery, who works for Erie County, denied our FOIL request for the numbers of reports of deaths reported to the Erie County Medical Examiner from Governor Cuomo's Justice Center. Swift federal investigations of both the Buffalo Psychiatric Center and Governor Cuomo are vital for justice and to protect our most vulnerable disabled.

Michael Carey
Mr.
5188529377
email us here

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