

## Silver Plays Defense, Renews Calls For Lopez to Resign

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The Assembly and Speaker Sheldon Silver took a shellacking in reports today by Staten Island District Attorney Daniel Donovan and the Joint Commission on Public ethics for their handling of sexual harassment charges against Assemblyman Vito Lopez.

Donovan [found](#) that the secretive manner in which initial sexual harassment charges were handled against Lopez only "encouraged" the assemblyman to continue his pattern of harassment. [According to JCOPE's report](#), two staffers who accused Lopez of harassment and filed complaints were moved off Lopez's payroll; Lopez then hired new female staffers and pressured them for intimate relationships.

Silver's office has undoubtedly been fielding a bevy of calls from reporters regarding the findings of both reports.

Silver's spokesman Michael Whyland issued a statement defending his boss saying, "A full review of the facts by both JCOPE and the Special Prosecutor has found that all actions by the Assembly were lawful and there was no basis for an ethics complaint against the Speaker or his staff."

Whyland also used the opportunity to reiterate that Silver has called for Lopez's resignation and still wants him to resign. "Given that the JCOPE investigation has found significant violations of the Public Officers Law by Assemblyman Lopez, Speaker Silver renews his call for him to resign," said Whyland in the statement.

Lopez is already looking for a different job — he is running for City Council.

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