

## Senate Dems Who Failed to Lead in Cuomo's Eyes Are The Ones Back in Control

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There is a bit of a logic problem with the op-ed [Gov. Andrew Cuomo's published today after it was announced that there would be a power-sharing agreement to run the State Senate.](#)

Cuomo says in the op-ed that "the Democratic Conference was in power for two years and squandered the opportunity, failing to pass any meaningful reform legislation despite repeated promises."

But, as it happens, the people in charge of the Democratic conference when it was in the majority are currently members of the Independent Democratic Conference: Sen. Malcolm Smith was majority leader and Sen. Jeff Klein was deputy majority leader during the two years Cuomo recalls as "squandered."

And the man that the IDC struck a "power sharing" agreement with, Sen. Dean Skelos, helped plan and initiate the coup that paralyzed the chamber in 2009.

Furthermore, even after the Senate coup was resolved and Sens. Pedro Espada and Hiram Monserrate rejoined the Democratic conference fold, Smith retained the Senate presidency and Klein kept his title as deputy majority leader.

In fairness, Smith and Klein both had to contend with the Four Amigos – Sens. Carl Krueger, Ruben Diaz, Espada and Monserrate – and a number of other Democrats who refused to coalesce around certain policy issues and used the tight majority to leverage their votes.

But Klein was also using the situation to boost his power in the conference at the time.

Klein only left the Senate Democrats when he lost his position as head of the Senate Democratic Campaign Committee after a disastrous election performance that saw Democrats lose their slim majority.

Meanwhile, Senate Democrats have issued a statement saying they meet the litmus test that Cuomo issued in his op-ed. Democratic Senate spokesman Mike Murphy issued this statement:

This past session and through recent elections, the Senate Democratic Conference laid out a progressive agenda New Yorkers responded to and have overwhelmingly demanded through their votes on Election Day. The Governor has now presented a similar agenda including many issues the new Republican Coalition has opposed. Senate Democrats will continue to lead the fight on this progressive agenda, and we will hold the Senate Republican Coalition accountable until New Yorkers get the progressive change they deserve.

*Sens. Malcolm Smith and Jeff Klein meant with Rep. Nancy Pelosi. Photo from Sen. Smith's Office.*

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