

Who Is NY State Sen. John Sampson?

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Who is state Sen. John Sampson? This morning, everyone knows Sampson as the man who [turned himself in to the Federal Bureau of Investigation](#) to face multiple charges for embezzling money he was in charge of as a lawyer to fund his ill-fated run for Brooklyn District Attorney.

But Sampson has long been a player in Albany, and rumors of corruption have swirled around him for years.

Elected to his seat in 1996, Sampson has worked as an attorney for Alter & Barbaro, Esqs., since 1994. For a while Sampson was the answer for all the Senate Democrats' problems and became one of the most powerful men in Albany.

In 2009, during the Senate coup, the Democratic conference elevated Sampson to conference leader (a position that had previously not existed) in a bid to return Sens. Hiram Monserrate and Pedro Espada to the fold.

Sampson's time as a leader of a majority conference was brief; Democrats lost their majority in 2010.

Sampson later faced scandal relating to bid-rigging at the Aqueduct Casino. [Reports and rumors](#) have swirled around Albany for years about Sampson's involvement in securing Aqueduct Entertainment Group win a lucrative contract to run the Aqueduct Casino. The Inspector General rescinded the bid, alleging favoritism and Genting eventually won the contract.

Sampson [promised an investigation](#) into the bidding process in 2010 but the report has still not

been made public.

In December 2011, Sampson as Senate Minority Leader named Ravi Batra to serve as his pick on the Joint Commission on Public Ethics. Sampson was required to fill out a form disclosing his relationship with Batra. Sampson failed to note that he was ["of council" to Batra's law firm](#) . Batra was already known as a controversial figure and his appointment drew the concern of many of Sampson's colleagues.

Late last year, Senate Democrats replaced Sampson as Minority Leader with Sen. Andrea Stewart-Cousins. Some saw the move as an effort to put a clean new face on the Democratic Conference in the hope that the Independent Democratic Conference and Gov. Andrew Cuomo would take them more seriously.

Today Sampson was stripped of all his committees and his seniority by Stewart-Cousins.

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