

Pushback Against Cuomo And His Moreland Commission

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Senate Republican Leader Dean Skelos took to the airwaves this morning to warn Gov. Andrew Cuomo that the Legislature has the ability to investigate the the executive branch.

“A legislative body can also do things we feel are appropriate,” Skelos told Susan Arbetter on The Capitol Pressroom.” “If this is just aimed at the Legislature, I think that would be inappropriate. Certainly, the governor runs for office. He’s raised close to \$30 million in his campaign committee. ... Everybody should be cautious here when they move forward.”

Good government groups and even Democratic Party loyalists like Bill Samuels have said they think whatever investigative body Cuomo creates should be allowed to look at all fundraising — including Cuomo's. Advocates point out that Cuomo is the master of the current fundraising system and any investigation should look into the major donors that have benefited him.

As [we reported last week](#) , Cuomo's father Mario clashed with the Legislature when he tried to empanel a similar investigative body. The Legislature initially refused to fund the commission, and eventually got some say into what the commission actually investigated.

Skelos previously warned Cuomo that the Legislature could look into his dealings and he reiterated it on The Capitol Pressroom.

“I’m not saying that we are going to do it, but certainly if he’s looking into the BOE and campaign filings and stuff like that, and again, I think that’s questionable, the Senate, we can do the same thing. We have an Elections Committee,” Skelos said.

Cuomo has repeatedly promised to invoke a Moreland Act Commission since even before taking office. His most recent promise came at the end of session in June, and he has said that

an announcement would be made shortly. So far, though, he has yet to make a move that will certainly alienate the Legislature and could gum up his ability to legislate.

Republican senators have been pushing back against Cuomo's agenda for months now, but some Democratic senators have recently been emphasizing their independence from Cuomo and insisting the Legislature should be judged on the agenda it sets for itself — not the one set by Gov. Andrew Cuomo.

"The governor has taken over the legislative agenda and set our success and failure on whether take up his agenda items," Sen. Kevin Parker said. "The reality is he is not a legislator. We have failed a bit when it comes to our end because we should be out there early in the session announcing what our priorities are. We are not obligated to do what the Governor wants us to do."

Cuomo has said he is uninterested in having the Legislature return to take up some of his agenda items this year. "I don't think we need a special session because we don't have any other business," Cuomo told reporters on Wednesday. "They only left 20 minutes ago."

Cuomo appears to be spending as much time as possible away from Albany.

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