



STEFAN I. MYCHAJLIW

ERIE COUNTY COMPTROLLER

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COMPTROLLER MYCHAJLIW SPEAKS TO U.S. SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, ALEX AZAR ABOUT A FEDERAL INVESTIGATION OF N.Y.S. NURSING HOME DEATHS

Comptroller Mychajliw spoke directly to Secretary Azar about a request to investigate New York State for sending seniors stricken with COVID-19 into nursing homes

(Buffalo, NY) – Following his visit to the Buffalo General Medical Center and Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, Erie County Comptroller Stefan I. Mychajliw Jr. spoke directly to United States Secretary for Health and Human Services, Alex Azar.

In their conversation, Comptroller Mychajliw told Secretary Azar about his request for the federal government to investigate New York State and Governor Andrew Cuomo for their decision to send seniors stricken with COVID-19 back into nursing homes, around healthy patients.

“Just so you’re aware, we wrote you a letter, requesting a federal investigation when it comes to New York State, and the nursing home deaths. The State should not have sent those seniors into nursing homes. I really appreciate the consideration to investigate this,” said Comptroller Mychajliw to the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services directly outside of Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center.

In his letter to Secretary Azar, dated June 1st, 2020, Comptroller Mychajliw made the argument that New York State cannot investigate itself and New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, therefore a federal investigation was necessary. At this time the Department of Health and Human Services is investigating a rehab and wellness center in Pennsylvania. Comptroller Mychajliw hopes a similar investigation takes place in New York State.

“Right now, 44 percent of the COVID-19 related deaths in Erie County took place in nursing homes. Governor Cuomo’s decision to send seniors with a highly contagious, deadly disease around the elderly who are immune compromised was a death sentence for some. I’m glad I spoke directly to Secretary Azar about the seriousness of this mistake. I would welcome them to investigate New York State so this never, ever happens again,” concluded Comptroller Mychajliw.

The Office of Erie County Comptroller also released an additional report showing New York State lags far behind other states in reporting certain nursing home data to the federal government, which could place federal funds in jeopardy.

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