

GOP Plays Up Aqueduct Investigation In Final Stretch - NY1

Written by Administrator

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A scathing report on how state officials picked a firm to run a casino at the Aqueduct racetrack is increasingly shaping the final days of the campaign trail. NY1's Josh Robin filed the following report.

Democrats are getting ready to get out the vote.

Republicans will try too, and now they have powerful new ammunition -- an investigation uncovering major misconduct at the highest level of the Democratic-led State Senate. The State Inspector General found officials there leaked confidential information to their favored bidder, mingling with company officials as they weighed the lucrative deal.

Prosecutors are now reading the inspector general's report. The state's Republican chairman calls the case a political game changer.

"You've got the Democratic leadership in the State Senate taking campaign contributions in exchange for fixing contracts for those contributors," said New York State Republican Party Chairman Ed Cox.

Republicans aren't content to paint just the State Senate with the controversy. They're also trying to tie the scandal all the way up the ballot, especially in the races for state Attorney General and governor.

Eric Schneiderman is the Democratic candidate for state Attorney General. He's also Deputy Majority Leader of the State Senate.

"You don't want to have as attorney general, a politician who's part of this corrupt leadership in the State Senate," Cox said.

Schneiderman says he voted against the bill allowing the casino process. He's since returned campaign donations from the senators mentioned in the report and called for reforms.

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Democratic candidate for governor Andrew Cuomo has said he wants the Democrats to keep control of the senate. But he also wants to avoid getting tethered to them.

"How can New Yorkers have confidence in Albany writ large is my point. It's one of the reasons I'm running for governor. It's one of the reasons I've done what I've done as attorney general over the past few years," Cuomo said.

As for now, Democrats are reminding voters they're not all bad.

"Right now, a week before the election, what's at stake is a real plan for jobs, and urban agenda, making sure that there's a broad coalition of people that have a voice and a representative government," said Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer.

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