

Gov outspent Nixon 10-1

Cuomo pumped in \$26.5M to win the Dem primary

BY YANCEY ROY

yancey.roy@newsday.com

ALBANY — Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo outspent rival Cynthia Nixon by a ratio of 10-1 to win the Democratic gubernatorial nomination, records filed Tuesday show.

And that's before you include help Cuomo received from the New York State Democratic Committee, which didn't stay neutral in the race.

Cuomo spent \$26.5 million on the campaign in 2018. Nixon, a former star of "Sex and the City," spent \$2.6 million after joining the race in March.

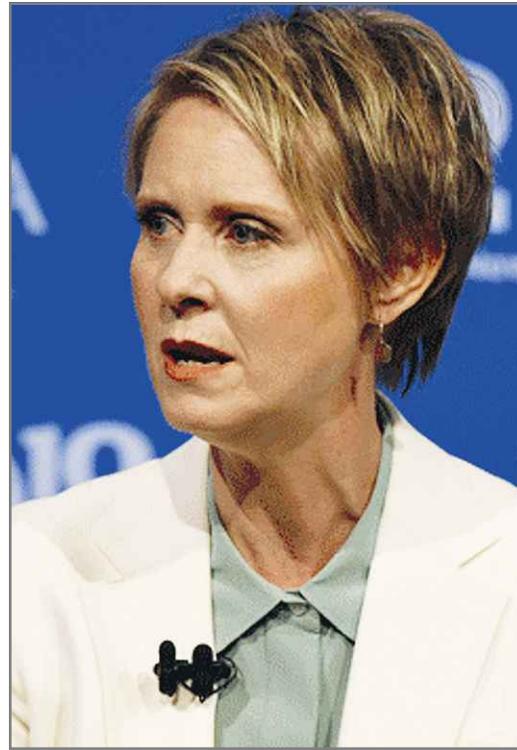
The state Democratic committee spent another \$5 million on Cuomo's behalf, largely on television ads, mailers (including a controversial one that tried to link Nixon to anti-Semitism) and "get out the vote" efforts.

The campaign spending, combined with strong union backing, helped Cuomo beat back criticism from the political left and rout the progressive Nixon in the primary, 66 percent to 34 percent.

The torrent of spending in a primary reflects that Cuomo took the first-time candidate seriously despite downplaying



Cuomo spent almost \$2 million on TV ads alone.



Nixon spent \$2.6M after joining the governor's race

her on the campaign trail, analysts said. It also shows Cuomo reacted to stunning upsets in Democratic primaries around the nation by not holding back on spending.

"The governor rightly perceived this was a very serious challenge and he felt the need to use the resources he'd gathered in this election," said Gerald Benjamin, a dean at the State University at New Paltz.

He said previous "national outcomes" are likely to have prodded Cuomo, referring to the surprising defeats of Rep. Joe Crowley in Queens and Rep. Michael Capuano in Massachusetts at the hands of younger, more progressive challengers.

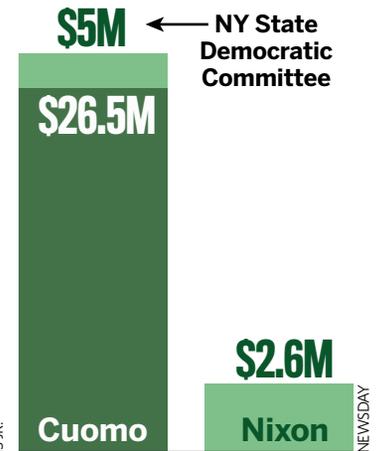
In a state as diverse as New York, "money truly does matter" in elections, said Jeanne Zaino, an Iona College political scientist.

Cuomo's campaign spent a whopping \$5.1 million in the final 11 days of the contest — about \$500,000 per day. Almost \$2 million was spent on television ads.

Cuomo still has \$11.6 million remaining in campaign funds; he faces Republican Marc Molinaro in the November general election.

Cuomo's running mate, Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul, also out-

Expensive primary



spent her rival in the primary, New York City Councilman Jumaane Williams. Records showed Hochul spent about \$2.1 million to Williams' \$311,000. Hochul won a surprisingly tight race, 53 percent to 47 percent.

The one primary race in which the biggest spender lost was attorney general. Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney (D-Phillipstown) spent about \$5.3 million but finished third in the four-way contest.

The winner, Letitia "Tish" James, spent \$1.9 million. But, like Cuomo and Hochul, she, too, was aided by the Democratic committee, which spent about \$860,000 on her behalf. James will face Republican Keith Wofford in November.

Study: Appendicitis surgery often not needed

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — When emergency tests showed the telltale right-sided pain in Heather VanDusen's abdomen was appendicitis, she figured she'd be quickly wheeled into surgery. But doctors offered her the option of antibiotics instead.

A new study from Finland shows her choice is a reasonable alternative for most patients with appendicitis. Five years after treatment with antibiotics, almost two-thirds of patients hadn't had another attack.

It's a substantial change in thinking about how to treat an inflamed appendix. For de-

acades, appendicitis has been considered a medical emergency requiring immediate surgery to remove the appendix because of fears it could burst, which can be life-threatening.

But advances in imaging tests, mainly CT scans, have made it easier to determine if an appendix might burst, or if patients could be safely treated without surgery.

The results suggest that nearly two-thirds of appendicitis patients don't face that risk and may be good candidates for antibiotics instead. "It's a feasible, viable and a safe option," said Dr. Paulina Salminen, the study's lead author and a surgeon at Turku Univer-

sity Hospital in Finland.

Her study in adults is the longest follow-up to date of patients treated with drugs instead of surgery for appendicitis and the results confirm one-year findings reported three years ago.

Research has also shown antibiotics may work for some children with appendicitis.

The Finnish results were published Tuesday in the Journal of the American Medical Association. A journal editorial says "it's a new era of appendicitis treatment."

Appendix removal is the most common emergency surgery worldwide, with about 300,000 performed each year in the

United States alone, said Salminen. The study involved about 500 Finnish adults who had CT scans to rule out severe cases.

Half were treated with antibiotics; the others had surgery.

Among the antibiotics patients, 100 ended up having surgery within five years of treatment — most for a suspected recurrence of appendicitis in the first year. Seven of them did not have appendicitis and probably could have avoided surgery. The results suggest the success rate for antibiotic treatment was almost 64 percent, the authors said.

Dr. Giana Davidson, a University of Washington surgeon, is involved in a similarly designed

multicenter U.S. study that may answer whether similar benefits would be seen for antibiotics versus "keyhole" surgery.

Davidson called the Finnish study "a critical piece to the puzzle but I don't think it answers all of the questions."

Heather VanDusen was treated at the University of Washington in 2016. She said she chose antibiotic treatment partly to avoid surgery scars, and now offers advice to patients for Davidson's study.

"I knew the worst case scenario was ending up back in the hospital so why not try antibiotics first," said VanDusen, who works in university communications.