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**STATEMENT FROM THE ART CHANG FOR NYC MAYOR CAMPAIGN ON SEXUAL ASSAULT ALLEGATIONS AGAINST COMPTROLLER SCOTT STRINGER**

**New York, NY -- This statement was written by Art Chang, Candidate for NYC Mayor, and the women who run his campaign.**

“We stand with Jean Kim and believe her description of sexual assault perpetrated by Scott Stringer. When women come forward with allegations of sexual assault against powerful men, they do so at risk to themselves, their reputations, their careers, and their mental and physical health. We applaud Ms. Kim’s bravery in risking all of this to inform the people of New York City about a man who controls one of the largest financial organizations in the nation and who is seeking to become its chief executive.

In addition to condemning the actions described by Ms. Kim, we also condemn how Mr. Stringer responded to these allegations. The stories of survivors are not political bargaining chips to be traded at a podium decorated with campaign posters. Ms. Kim’s story was difficult for us to hear, especially for the survivors among us, and was infinitely more difficult for her to tell. Mr. Stringer’s quick attempt to squash her opinions, silence her allegations, and discredit her character proves that he does not stand up for women, does not appreciate the gravity of sexual assault, and has an alarming lack of empathy and self-awareness.

We condemn Mr. Stringer’s response to Ms. Kim’s statement, which follows the tired and broken playbook that men use in responding to similar allegations. Stringer:

1. Converted the allegation into political theater. Within two hours of Kim telling her story publicly, he held his own press conference, immediately slandering her name, and wielding his power to discredit and silence her.
2. Used another woman to defend him. Weaponizing women against each other is how men continue to hold power, and also perpetuates the old trope that having a wife or daughters means that you must be a decent man. We also can’t ignore that this involved a White woman discrediting the words of a woman of color to protect her White husband.
3. Appropriated. He said he needed to “speak his truth,” taking the language of liberation of women and people of color and appropriating them for himself.
4. Reframed the reality. Why do men so often think things are consensual when women disagree? Why do men assume consent when the power dynamics are so skewed? Stringer freely admitted that at the time of the incident, she was a campaign volunteer 11 years younger than him. Stringer’s lack of awareness surrounding that power dynamic is unacceptable and disqualifies him from a position of leadership.

We further condemn Mr. Stringer's hypocrisy. "We must have zero tolerance for sexual harassment, and we must end the pervasive culture of abuse in positions of power," he said when Governor Cuomo was accused of sexual misconduct. Mr. Stringer should listen to his own recommendations to the Governor.

As a Korean-American candidate, I must acknowledge Ms. Kim's identity, particularly during a time of anti-Asian hate. We cannot ignore the fact that our society fetishizes and objectifies AAPI women. While reporting these crimes is difficult for all women, this objectification makes it especially punishing for AAPI women and all women of color. She deserved to be in a work environment free from this kind of violence, and she deserved respect when she reported the misconduct.

We call on Mr. Stringer to abandon his campaign for Mayor. His ambition is not more important than the trauma that Ms. Kim and all survivors carry and will have to revisit every day that he continues in this race.

Additionally, Mr. Stringer's conduct has shown that he is not qualified to continue to manage the multi-billion dollar purse of one of the wealthiest cities in the world. How can we trust him to continue in his role where he signs the check on things like payouts to victims of police misconduct? In what other situations has Stringer exhibited this lack of good judgement? Mr. Stringer should resign as Comptroller of the City of New York."

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