



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George M. Borrello

## Statement from Senator Borrello on Governor Hochul's State of the State Address

GEORGE M. BORRELLO January 10, 2023

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“As we approach a new legislative session and fresh opportunities to steer New York State in a positive direction, there were proposals in the Governor’s State of the State address that sounded promising and others that raised red flags.

“I was glad to hear Governor Hochul recognize that New York State’s outmigration is a problem we can no longer ignore. Acknowledgement is the first step in fixing any problem. However, the blueprint she outlined

won't stop the exodus. Some crowd-pleasing talking points accompanied a series of proposals that fall short of the change in direction we need.

“Perhaps the biggest disappointment was her lack of emphasis on public safety. Since our bail and parole laws were turned upside down, crime has spiraled in our cities and communities. While the Governor made vague references to ‘room for improvement’ with regard to the bail law, we need more than a lukewarm fix, particularly with poll after poll finding crime is the number one issue for New Yorkers. This so-called ‘reform’ has been such a disaster, we need to repeal it and start over.

“I do agree that strengthening our mental health system should be a priority and was encouraged at the investments the Governor promised in expanding inpatient mental health beds, outpatient services and better continuity of care. Proven programs like assisted outpatient treatment (AOT), a.k.a. Kendra’s Law, are tragically underutilized which is why I support legislation that would expand its impact.

“While we can agree that our state needs more affordable housing, the Governor’s proposal to make local governments responsible for achieving this or risk having the state step in and take over set off alarm bells. Restrictive zoning changes aren’t the only reason affordable housing is in short supply. The state’s overregulated construction industry, high taxes and other state-created obstacles play a role as well and unless changes are made on those issues, we won’t achieve a lasting solution.

“Our small businesses could be devastated by some of the proposals floated in this address, including the idea of tying the minimum wage to inflation and the Cap and Invest proposal. Another glaring omission was any mention of the state finally taking responsibility for its fraud-fueled \$8 billion in unemployment insurance debt, which it has unjustly placed on the shoulders of our employers.”

“I look forward to receiving more detail on these proposals in the Executive Budget. While we all aspire to restore the ‘New York Dream’ the Governor referenced, we need a fundamental shift in direction to achieve that. Nothing I heard today has convinced me that true, significant change is on the agenda.

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