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June 18, 2025

The Honorable Kathy Hochul  
Governor of New York State  
State Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul,

We respectfully urge you to veto [S.8413/A.8870](#), which authorizes a \$13.7 million state-backed loan to the City of Dunkirk. While it's being called a rescue plan, this bill would burden local taxpayers with long-term debt and does nothing to address the underlying fiscal problems that brought Dunkirk to this point.

The loan comes with a 7.5% interest rate over 15 years, costing nearly \$10 million in interest alone. Worse, it forces the city to give up its \$1.5 million annual AIM funding for the duration of the loan. That's funding needed for core services. In reality, this deal trades essential aid for more debt, without offering any plan for oversight or long-term reform.

There is mounting bipartisan opposition to this bill. Three out of five Dunkirk City Council members—Nancy Nichols, James Stoyale, and Abigail Zatorski—have publicly opposed it, and Chautauqua County Legislator Bob Bankowski, a Democrat representing District 2 in the city, has now joined them in voicing his concerns. They all support a better path: our legislation ([S.7497/A.8019](#)) to establish a financial control board—one that could issue bonds at lower cost and, more importantly, provide the structure, oversight, and accountability needed to fix what's broken.

In addition, city residents have contacted our offices to express their concern and strong opposition to this loan. Their message is clear: they want accountability and structural reform—not more debt. That bipartisan concern is also reflected in local leadership.

It is also worth noting that this bill was carried by members of the State Legislature from New York City—lawmakers who have never set foot in the City of Dunkirk. The standard practice of obtaining a home rule message from the local legislative body was bypassed in order to force this bill to the floor. That decision disregards the will of the community and sets a troubling precedent for state intervention in local affairs.

The city's financial troubles didn't happen overnight. They're the result of years of mismanagement and a failure to meet basic fiscal responsibilities. A high-interest loan with no strings attached won't fix that. It simply kicks the can down the road while leaving residents—who are already dealing with an 84% property tax increase—to carry the load again.

Governor, your signature on this bill would lock the City of Dunkirk into a deeper financial hole while stripping away tools that could lead to genuine recovery. Vetoing it would send a clear message that New York State will support local governments not with blank checks, but with responsible, accountable solutions.

We ask you to stand with the people of Dunkirk and reject this misguided and risky proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "George M. Borrello". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "George" being the most prominent.

Senator George M. Borrello  
New York State Senate, 57th District

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Andrew M. Molitor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Andrew" being the most prominent.

Assemblyman Andrew M. Molitor  
New York State Assembly, 150th District