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Good afternoon.

Thanks to each of you for attending and Happy New Year!

My special thanks to Judge Figueroa for traveling from Georgia to swear me in.

The trust and honor the voters of Dunkirk have placed in me has not been taken lightly, I am extremely grateful and humbled, and I will not let you down.

History has been made this day for Dunkirk and the State of New York. Some of you may not know that I am the First Hispanic Mayor in the history of New York State. This honor comes with a great deal of responsibility and I am proud to represent you, the citizens of Dunkirk as well as my fellow Hispanic brethren.

I have not taken either of these honors lightly. Today, I stand in front of you as a very humble and grateful man!

Our city has much to be proud of, but we also face many challenges.

The most concern of many today is the uncertainty of NRG. I assure you that I am actively working on this situation alongside all other elected officials from the County to the State and at the Federal level. This situation is at the top of our lists of priorities, and I pledge to do everything possible to retain the facility in Dunkirk. NRG is not only a positive community citizen, but has also been a good employer, a good neighbor and a large portion of our tax base. I promise you that I will not give up this fight easily.

There are other challenges facing our city as well: Crime, Crumbling Housing, Empty Storefronts and more. Although these may seem insurmountable, they are not, and I welcome the opportunity to work on these.

However, today is not about the problems, today is a day of new beginnings, a day of optimism, a day of pride for all of us.

I share the sentiments of many of those I've spoken with along the way. We have a beautiful City along the shores of our gorgeous lake. Dunkirk is a city that continues to seek opportunities for improvement, and that is what you will see from my administration.

Change is coming to the City of Dunkirk! I promise you, change is coming in the way your government operates.

During my campaign, I promised fresh ideas and accountability and that's what you're going to see. I have surrounded myself with qualified and professional managers that are aware of our goals. It can't be business as usual and they are each on board and we are ready to go to work for you.

The system of doing your business in City Hall needs improvement and we intend to improve it.

Our new Development Director has already begun work on existing and future grants and plans for the development of our lakefront and Central Avenue.

Our DPW Director will bring that department up to the level it deserves to be; he as well as all department heads will be meeting with me on a weekly basis to identify areas needing improvement, and establishing and implementing plans for meeting our goals. These meetings will be conducted with one thing in mind, how do we improve our City?

I, as well as my department heads, will be seen regularly throughout the City. I will always have an open door policy, and our department heads will always be approachable.

We have a new Common Council coming on board, and I look forward to working with them. They are all good people and they, like me, were chosen to do a very important job on behalf of our city. My pledge to them is to always keep them informed on issues being addressed in City Hall and to gather their input whenever possible. The Mayor cannot run the City in a vacuum; the members of the council are critical to the process and to the City's growth and fiscal accountability.

Yes, change is coming!

You are going to see it. From City Hall to each and every ward. From one end of the City line to the next.

Our efforts will not be restricted to the confines of our city, however. We will do whatever and go wherever necessary to reach our goals and see positive growth and economic advancement. Our primary litmus test will be: Is it going to help our City?

Some changes you'll see immediately. Others will take time.

Believe me when I say that the duties bestowed upon me will never be taken lightly. I will be working exhaustively to get Dunkirk moving into a bright and shining future.

I believe in this City.

I believe in the good people who live here.

I believe that by working together for the common good, we will make a difference.

I want each and every citizen of Dunkirk to be able to say with pride, "I live, work and raise my family in Dunkirk.

Thank you all from the bottom of my heart, I won't let you down.

I hope to see all of you at the celebration at the Clarion.

God Bless you and God Bless Dunkirk.