

- On November 7, 2017, voters will be asked the following question on the general election ballot: “Shall there be a convention to revise the constitution and amend the same?”
  - Article XIX, § 2 of the New York Constitution requires that this question be placed on the ballot every 20 years.
- The NY Constitution has been in place, as amended, since 1894 and has not been revised pursuant to the Convention process since 1938.
- If the Convention is approved (by a majority of voters in November), WBASNY and its membership may have an opportunity to exert influence on the ultimate product of the Convention in ways that are consistent with WBASNY’s mission.
  - The Convention will convene on April 2, 2019 at the Capitol in Albany.
  - Between November 2017 and the date of the Convention, 204 delegates will be elected by voters in the November 2018 election:
    - 15 of those delegates (denominated delegates-at-large) will be elected by statewide vote.
    - The remaining 189 delegates will be elected at the local level, with 3 delegates being elected in each of NY’s 63 State Senate Districts.
    - Candidates for election as a Convention Delegate will be nominated by the traditional political process, with each party nominating candidates for the general election via primary election, and the normal petitioning process being the vehicle for securing a space on the primary election ballot.
- Once convened in April 2019, the Convention will continue “until the business of such [C]onvention shall have been completed.”
- Amendments to the Constitution, or entire new Constitution itself, may only be submitted to the voters upon the approval of a majority of the delegates elected to the Convention, i.e., 103 delegates.
- Any proposed constitution or constitutional amendment which has been adopted by the Convention shall be submitted to the voters at an election to take place no less than six weeks after the adjournment of the Convention.
- If voters approve, the constitution or constitutional amendment takes effect on the first day of the following January.

For some groups, a Constitutional Convention would provide an opportunity to lobby for and ultimately enshrine in our State Constitution additional rights and protections, including rights and protections for women. For others, this same Convention would be an opportunity to lobby for and enshrine in our State Constitution the rollback of certain rights and protections, including those that affect women. For those who are interested in learning more about the issue, you may want to visit the following websites:

Ballotpedia (Neutral)

- [https://ballotpedia.org/New\\_York\\_Proposal\\_1\\_Constitutional\\_Convention\\_Question\\_\(2017\)](https://ballotpedia.org/New_York_Proposal_1_Constitutional_Convention_Question_(2017))

The Fund for Modern Courts (Neutral) - <http://moderncourts.org/programs-advocacy/constitutional-convention/>

League of Women Voters (Yes) - [http://www.lwvny.org/programs-studies/concon/2017/Press-Con-con\\_032717.pdf](http://www.lwvny.org/programs-studies/concon/2017/Press-Con-con_032717.pdf)

New York Civil Liberties Union (No) - <https://www.nyclu.org/en/issues/voting-rights/new-york-state-constitutional-convention>

New York State Bar Association (Yes) - <http://www.nysba.org/nyconstitution/>

Planned Parenthood (No) - <https://www.newyorkersforchoice.com/>

The New York State Constitutional Convention Clearinghouse (Neutral) - <http://www.newyorkconcon.info>

We urge our members to consider the issues and vote accordingly. That said, should New York voters approve a Constitutional Convention, WBASNY will be actively involved, faithfully and vigilantly advocating in furtherance of WBASNY's Mission.

Thank you so much.

*Joy A. Thompson, Esq.*  
*Corresponding Secretary*  
*Women's Bar Association of the State of New York*