



League of Women Voters of Chautauqua County

Should NYS Have a Constitutional Convention?	
Proponents say...	Opponents say...
<p>1. The Legislature will never pass effective laws to prevent political corruption: only a convention can do that. We need changes to the way the Legislature is run and the way the budget is developed (3 men in a room!), and the Legislature will not enact them.</p>	<p>1. A convention must open the whole Constitution for revision, possibly endangering protections for labor, the environment, reproductive health, and public education (funding for religious schools).</p>
<p>2. The judicial system of 9 types of courts in NYS is unworkable; the convention can consolidate courts and require merit selection of judges.</p>	<p>2. The judicial system can be reformed by the Legislature's passing amendments to the Constitution on which the public then votes.</p>
<p>3. Because any changes made by a constitutional convention (CC) must be voted on by the public, undesired revisions can be voted down, as they have been in the past.</p>	<p>3. There must be 3 delegates to the CC from each senatorial district and 15 at large. Anyone may collect signatures on a petition to be a candidate but candidates have usually been backed by political parties or office holders: in the past, many have been sitting legislators or party workers. Such people will not provide the changes we need.</p>
<p>4. The convention may cost about \$336 million, but changes it makes are likely to save the State money in the long run by modernizing procedures and streamlining offices, etc. The public can push to prevent "double dipping" whereby legislators who have their regular salaries also get delegate salaries.</p>	<p>4. The lowest estimate of convention costs is still money better used for other purposes. The Legislative route to Constitutional change (amendment + public vote) is much less costly.</p>