

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION
Statement of Position
As announced by the State Board, February 1993, revised June 2015

The League of Women Voters of New York State does not support or oppose the holding of a constitutional convention.

The League of Women Voters of New York State recognizes that a constitutional convention is an acceptable (legal) method of amending the New York State Constitution and that the provision requiring periodic mandatory submission of the question of calling a convention is a proper procedure.

The impetus for a convention between the mandated twenty-year referenda should come from the public. However we feel that certain principles are essential throughout the process:

- Education and involvement of the public must be an integral part of each phase of the process.
- Planning should be given adequate time and sufficient funding.
- Nonpartisanship is essential.

The League believes that specific conditions should be incorporated in the policies and procedures established for constitutional conventions:

- Pre-Convention Commission: A preparatory commission should be appointed with adequate time to study the issues, establish the agenda and procedures and prepare position papers for the convention. Such a commission should provide ongoing information to the public and solicit its participation.
 - Convention delegates: The League supports the following reforms as positive factors in deciding on support for a constitutional convention. Delegates should be elected by a fair nonpartisan process that complies with federal voting rights provisions and eases ballot access to encourage participation by racial and other minorities. Public financing should be provided for candidates and their positions on issues and convention goals should be widely publicized to enable voters to cast informed votes at their election. Statewide office holders, state or federal legislators, and state judges should not serve as delegates. Revised June 2015.
- Convention process: Procedures must be put in place to reduce partisanship, by assuring that committees and committee chairmanship are beyond party control.

Reasonable time limits must be placed on the length of the convention and its costs.