Shall the proposed amendment be approved?

The proposed amendment would delete from the current provision on absentee residence, or from New York City for residents of that city, on Election Day, and circumstances: (1) those who expect to be absent from the county of their residence, or from New York City for residents of that city, on Election Day, and circumstances: (1) those who expect to be absent from the county of their residence, or from New York City for residents of that city, on Election Day, and circumstances: (1) those who expect to be absent from the county of their

Question as it Will Appear on Ballot:

The proposed amendment would delete the current requirement in Article 2, § 5 that a citizen be registered to vote at least ten days before an election. The proposed amendment would delete that requirement. If this amendment is adopted, the Legislature will be authorized to enact laws permitting a citizen to register to vote less than ten days before the election. Shall the proposed amendment be approved?

PROPOSAL NUMBER THREE

Eliminating Ten-Day-Advance Voter Registration Requirement

Description of Proposal: Section 5 of Article 2 of the New York Constitution now requires that a citizen be registered to vote at least ten days before an election. The proposed amendment would delete that requirement. If this amendment is adopted, the Legislature will be authorized to enact laws permitting a citizen to register to vote less than ten days before the election. Shall the proposed amendment be approved?

PROS:

• More voters will be encouraged to shorten or eliminating the deadline to register to vote.
• This proposal would allow the Legislature to implement same-day voter registration. Twenty states currently allow for same-day voter registration.
• Same-day registration can increase voter turnout and participation by ensuring all eligible voters can cast their ballot.

CONS:

• On election day voter rolls can be updated and corrected allowing eligible voters who have moved, or been removed in error from the official rolls, to update their registration records.
• Should same-day voter registration be implemented after passage of this amendment, election officials may have difficulty determining how many ballots are needed at each poll site.
• Implementing same-day voter registration has the potential to allow for in-person election fraud if a voter illegally registers at multiple sites and votes.

PROPOSAL NUMBER FOUR

Authorizing No-Excuse Absentee Ballot Voting

Description of Proposal: The purpose of this proposal is to eliminate the requirement that a voter provide a reason for voting by absentee ballot. The proposed amendment would do so by deleting the requirement currently in the Constitution that restricts absentee voting to people under one of two specific circumstances: (1) those who expect to be absent from the county of their residence, or from New York City for residents of that city, on Election Day, and (2) those who are unable to appear at their polling place because of illness or physical disability.

Question as it Will Appear on Ballot:

The proposed amendment would delete the requirement that an absentee voter must be unable to appear at the polls by reason of absence from the county or illness or physical disability. Shall the proposed amendment be approved?

PROS:

• Any voter would have the ability to request an absentee ballot for a primary and/or general election thereby increasing voter access to elections.
• Absentee voting was heavily utilized during the COVID-19 pandemic. Removing the cause for requesting an absentee ballot would ensure voters can request to vote by absentee ballot should another pandemic occur.
• Absentee voting was heavily utilized during the COVID-19 pandemic. Removing the cause for requesting an absentee ballot would ensure voters can request to vote by absentee ballot should another pandemic occur.
• Thirty-four states and Washington, D.C., do not require an excuse from those who wish to vote absentee or by mail.
• The civic experience of voting with neighbors at a local school, church, or other polling place no longer exists.

CONS:

• The proposed amendment would provide less protection against potential absentee ballot voter fraud. The number of absentee ballots would increase, but the proposed amendment offers no suggestions for increasing protection against potential fraud.
• There is potential for loss of anonymity with more absentee voting.
• Additional reliance on absentee voting can slow election results and reporting.
• An increase in absentee voting can cost municipalities additional money for printing of ballots, envelopes, and postage.
• The civic experience of voting with neighbors at a local school, church, or other polling place no longer exists.

PROPOSAL NUMBER FIVE

Increasing the Jurisdiction of the New York City Civil Court

Description of Proposal: The purpose of this proposal is to amend Article 6, Section 15 of the New York Constitution to increase the jurisdiction of the New York City Civil Court. The New York City Civil Court is currently limited to hearing and deciding claims for $25,000 or less. The proposed amendment would allow the New York City Civil Court to hear and decide claims for $50,000 or less.

Question as it Will Appear on Ballot:

The proposed amendment would increase the New York City Civil Court’s jurisdiction allowing it to hear and decide claims for up to $50,000 instead of the current jurisdictional limit of $25,000. Shall the proposed amendment be approved?

PROS:

• In 1983, the Constitution was amended to raise the jurisdictional limit of the New York City Civil Court from claims of $10,000 to $25,000, where it has remained. This was done to adjust for inflation, and to help lift a burden off of a backlogged New York State Supreme Court. This proposal will raise the jurisdictional limit of New York City Civil Court to $50,000.
• This proposal will reduce backlogs and delays by relieving some of the burden placed on New York Supreme Court judges who hear civil cases with claims above $25,000.

CONS:

• The Civil Court of the City of New York consists of 3 Parts: General Civil, Housing, and Small Claims. General Civil cases include matters where parties are seeking monetary relief up to $25,000. The Housing Part hears landlord-tenant matters and cases involving maintenance of housing standards. The Small Claims Part hears cases where parties are seeking monetary relief up to $10,000. This proposal may place an additional burden on the New York City Civil Court by increasing the number of cases they may receive.
For whom/what will I be voting on in the 2021 election?

- State ballot proposals and constitutional amendments on voting, redistricting, clean air and water, and NYC Civil Court Jurisdiction
- Local ballot proposals

To vote, you must:
- be a United States citizen
- be 18 years old by the date of the general, primary or other election in which you want to vote (16 and 17 year olds may pre-register)
- live at your present address at least 30 days before the election
- not be in prison for a felony conviction
- not be adjudged mentally incompetent by a court
- not claim the right to vote elsewhere
- be registered to vote

How do I register?
- Online through NYS Department of Motor Vehicles website: voterlookup.elections.ny.gov/MotorVoter (must have a valid NYS driver’s license, Learner Permit or Non-Driver ID)
- In-person at any business day at your county Board of Elections (BOEs) or any state agency participating in the National Voter Registration Act (including State University and City University campuses)
- By mail by completing a voter registration form available at BOEs, libraries, town halls, post offices and the League of Women Voters

How do I vote by absentee ballot?

- Complete and mail absentee ballot application to your county BOE office
- Meet one of the qualifications:
  - Absent from your county or, if a resident of New York City, absent from the five boroughs on Election Day.
  - Unable to appear at the polls due to temporary or permanent illness or disability (temporary illness includes being unable to appear due to risk of contracting or spreading a communicable disease like COVID-19)
  - Unable to appear because you are the custodian of one or more individuals who are ill or physically disabled
  - A resident or patient of a Veterans Health Administration Hospital
  - Detained in jail awaiting Grand Jury action, trial, or disposition of a case but not convicted
  - Confined in prison after conviction for an offense other than a felony

- Complete and mail absentee ballot application to your county BOE office
- Apply for an absentee ballot online at https://absenteeballot.elections.ny.gov/ or voterlookup.elections.ny.gov/ (must have a valid NYS driver’s license, Learner Permit or Non-Driver ID)

- Can vote by absentee ballot if you meet one of the qualifications listed above or for any reason

How do I find ballot and candidate information?

- Go to www.vote411.org for all ballot info

How do I vote absentee ballot?

- Meet one of the qualifications:
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- Complete and mail absentee ballot application to your county BOE office
- Apply for an absentee ballot online at https://absenteeballot.elections.ny.gov/
- Do I need to identification to vote?
  - No! Your signature is your identification to vote.
  - First time voters may be asked for ID, such as a driver’s license, lease or utility bill.

Where do I find ballot and candidate information?

- Go to www.vote411.org, the League’s electronic voter guide

BalloT ProposalS

This Voter Guide will help you evaluate the proposals that will be on the November 2021 ballot.

Proposal Number One

Amending the Apportionment and Redistricting Process

Description of Proposal: The purpose of this proposal is to amend the portions of Article 3 of the New York Constitution that relate to the way district lines for congressional and state legislative offices are determined.

The proposal would do the following:

- Amend and repeal portions of the state constitutional amendment adopted by voters in 2014 that created a redistricting commission.
- Allow the redistricting commission to appoint two co-executive directors by simple majority vote, without consideration as to the party affiliation of the individual being appointed. Furthermore, this amendment would eliminate the alternative process currently in place that allows for the appointment of co-executive directors and co-deputy directors by the legislature should the redistricting commission fail to appoint co-executive directors, and remove the requirement that the two co-executive directors of the redistricting commission be members of different political parties.
- Freeze the number of state senators at the current number of 63. Currently, under the state constitution, the number of senators was originally set at 50 and thereafter increased over time to 63.
- Require that state assembly and senate district lines be based on the total population of the state, and require the state to count all residents, including non-citizens and Native Americans if the federal census fails to include them.
- Provide for incarcerated people to be counted at their place of last residence, instead of at their place of incarceration, for the purpose of redistricting. This practice is already established by state statute for Senate and Assembly districts.
- Revise the procedure for drawing and approving congressional and state legislative districts scheduled to be first applied in 2022. The proposed amendment would allow the redistricting process to proceed in the following ways:
  - Change the redistricting map approval procedures for the redistricting commission and legislature by making changes to the voting thresholds needed to approve a redistricting plan. Under this proposal:
    - Approval by a simple majority of the commission would require at least seven votes, out of the ten commissioners, in favor thereof. There would no longer be a requirement that at least one commissioner appointed by each of the legislative leaders vote in favor of a plan in order to approve it. A plan approved by at least seven commissioners must be approved by a majority of each house of the Legislature to be approved.
    - However, in the event that the redistricting commission votes on but does not have the seven votes needed to approve a plan, the commission is required to send the legislature the redistricting plan or plans that garnered the most votes. The legislature would be able to adopt such plan with a 60% majority. This amendment would repea the requirement that in the event the speaker of the assembly and the temporary president of the senate are members of the same political party, the approval shall require the vote in support of it’s passage by at least two thirds of the members elected in each house. If the commission fails to vote on any plan or plans by the deadline, all plans, including draft plans in the commission’s possession are sent to the legislature, and each house of the legislature can introduce and adopt such a plan with or without amendments.
  - The redistricting commission voting requirements and legislative vote thresholds for approving the commission’s plan would no longer vary depending on the political affiliation of the Temporary President of the Senate and the Speaker of the Assembly.
    - Require the redistricting commission that draws the lines to submit its redistricting plan and implementing legislation to the Legislature two months earlier than required under the current procedure the timeline set forth in the 2014 state constitutional amendment. If the redistricting cycle due to proceed in 2022, the time frame would be condensed to meet election-related deadlines.
    - Remove certain restrictions on how Senate district lines are drawn, including the “block on border” rule that require placing blocks of the border districts in certain counties.
    - Delete certain provisions that the United States Supreme Court has deemed unconstitutional.

Question as it Will Appear on Ballot: This proposed constitutional amendment would freeze the number of state senators at 63, amend the process for the counting of the state’s population, delete certain provisions that violate the United States Constitution, repeal and amend certain state amendments for the development of the co-executive directors of the redistricting commission and amend the manner of drawing district lines for congressional and state legislative offices. Shall the proposed amendment be approved?

Proposal Number Two

Right to Clean Air, Clean Water, and a Healthy Environment

Description of Proposal: The purpose of this proposal is to protect public health and the environment by adding the right of each person to clean air and water and a healthy environment to the Bill of Rights in Article 1 of the New York Constitution.

Question as it Will Appear on Ballot: The proposed amendment to Article 1 of the New York Constitution would establish the right of each person to clean air and water and a healthy environment. Shall the proposed amendment be approved?

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