



A Message from Assemblywoman

SEPTEMBER 2017

Sandy Galef

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Dear Constituent,

It was yet another busy session in Albany, with discussions and bills on topics ranging from raising the age of criminal responsibility to healthcare to the ever popular STAR tax credits. The Budget ran late, there was a controversial extraordinary session requested by Governor Cuomo, and a lot of new changes moved forward to improve the lives of New Yorkers.

I feel as though I cannot go to the grocery store without hearing about healthcare, as it is being debated in both the Federal Legislature and the State. Whether it's the Affordable Care Act, its repeal, a "skinny" repeal, single payer, changes to Medicaid and Medicare benefits, or myriad other items, healthcare – and who pays for it – is one of the most discussed topics in the country. As the Congress debates ways to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act, another discussion wages on in our state government over whether a government-run system will cure New York's healthcare woes. Bill A.4738/S.4840 sponsored by Assemblyman Richard Gottfried and Senator Gustavo Rivera would establish the New York Health program, a comprehensive and universal single-payer system for every resident. The bill's intent is to ensure all New Yorkers would be fully covered for all medically necessary services, including primary, preventive, specialists, hospital, mental, dental, vision, prescription drug and medical supply costs. Proponents assert that single-payer will create drastic savings in the long-run by getting rid of insurance-related bureaucracies and negotiating deep discounts on drug prices. However, critics maintain the program would wreak more havoc on an already stressed health system by detrimentally impacting quality of care and access to it.

To take a closer look at the issue, I will be holding an educational forum with a panel of health and policy experts to discuss the pros and cons of the New York Health Act on Tuesday, October 10 at 7PM at the Cortlandt Town Hall located at 1 Heady Street, Cortlandt. The forum will focus on access to healthcare in the state and examine the impacts of a single-payer system on interactions between doctors and their patients. We are honored to have an exceptional panel, and I hope you will join me for this thoughtful discussion.

Sincerely,

Sandy Galef

Assemblywoman Sandy Galef

Invites you to attend

The Great Debate: Single Payer Healthcare?

A Pro & Con Discussion about
Healthcare in New York State

Tuesday, October 10th

7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Cortlandt Town Hall

1 Heady Street, Cortlandt Manor, NY 10567

• Panelists Include •

Assemblyman Richard Gottfried

75th Assembly District

Sponsor of the New York Health Act

Bill Hammond

Director of Health Policy for the Empire Center for Public Policy

Dr. Thomas Lee

Past President, Westchester Medical Society
and Westchester Academy of Medicine

Dr. Betsy Rosenthal

Physicians for a National Health Program, NY Metro Chapter

I encourage you to bring your friends, family, neighbors and anyone else you think would be interested in this complicated issue that affects all of us.

Assemblywoman Galef

invites you to join her for open office hours on

Friday, October 20th, at her District Office,

2 Church Street in Ossining, NY

from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Please **SAVE THE DATE** of

December 5th, 2017 from 6:30-9 p.m. at the
Ossining Public Library for my special screening

of **"She's Beautiful When She's Angry,"** a
wonderful documentary about the women who founded
the modern women's movement from 1966-1971.

Panel Discussion to Follow

PROS AND CONS OF VOTING FOR A NYS CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

Every 20 years, New Yorkers have the opportunity to amend or, as the most drastic measure, completely overhaul the state's founding document. On the November 2017 ballot, voters will be asked to decide whether to call a convention to re-write all or part of the State Constitution. Between now and Tuesday, November 7, as our political system faces a number of challenges, voters will find themselves flooded with campaigns for and against a Constitutional Convention. To get you started, here are some of the pros and cons that you might hear from various groups debating the issue:

PROS

- It would give the people of the State a chance to reform ineffective aspects of the Constitution, such as our current budget process and address institutional challenges facing state government.
- It would give the people an opportunity to revise outdated areas of the Constitution, such as the structure of our public education system, which dates from the late 1890s, the ballot access rules, which often restrict the influence of third parties in state elections, and instill ethics reform measures, and campaign finance reform.
- A convention would be a more effective way to revise the entire constitution than through the legislative process which is done piecemeal through bill amendments.
- It would increase the average citizens' role in the political process, which could produce reforms more beneficial to the people of the state than government interests.

CONS

- Areas of the NYS Constitution that are not in need of reform could be tampered with by overzealous delegates, including eroding codified labor rights, current levels of pension benefits for retirees and environmental protections.
- Financial burden on taxpayers may outweigh the benefits a convention might produce. Estimates on the cost of a convention have varied from \$47 million to around \$100+million.
- Convention decisions could be dominated by political insiders as legislators, judges, party leaders, and other government employees who are eligible to be delegates.
- Some public officials – judges and legislators – who are delegates would receive dual compensation. The constitution prohibits salaries for either position from being reduced while they are in office, just like it provides that convention delegates are paid the same salary as Assembly members.

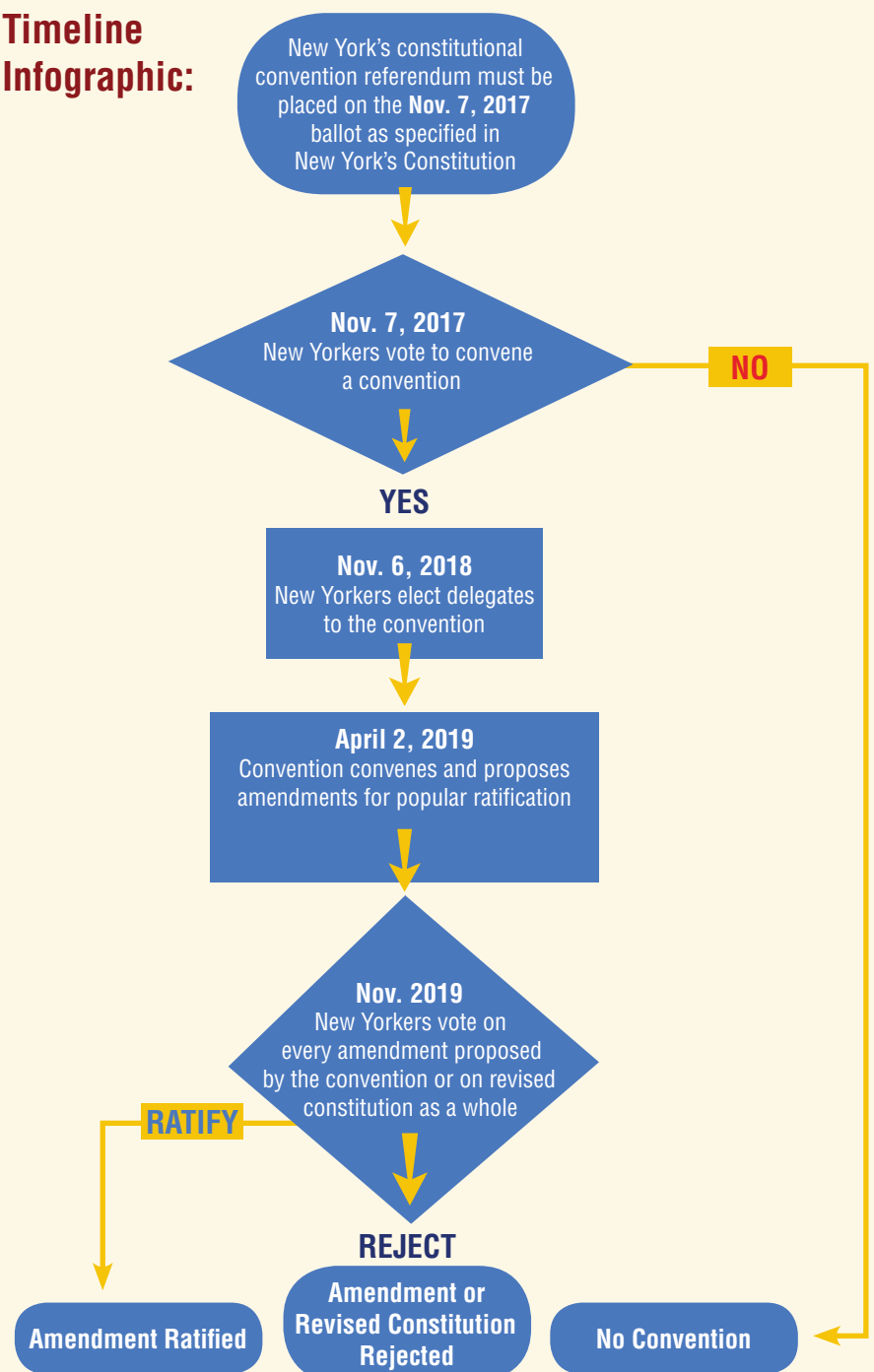
HOW DOES THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION WORK?

The New York Constitution is the supreme law of the land – our state's governing document around which all other laws are made to revolve. New York adopted its first constitution in 1777, ten years before the federal government approved its own. It mandates that every 20 years, voters answer a ballot question that asks, "Shall there be a convention to revise the constitution and amend the same?" New Yorkers have convened a total of nine conventions in years 1801, 1821, 1846, 1867, 1894, 1915, 1938 and lastly, 1967.



The Rockland-Bound side of the new bridge, now named the Mario M. Cuomo Bridge, opened on August 24th. I hope that it will serve our residents in our travels, and am excited to see this improvement to our infrastructure completed.

Timeline Infographic:





I attended a press conference held by Senator Kirsten Gillibrand with my colleagues, Senator Murphy, Assemblyman Byrne, and a number of community leaders who have worked hard to combat the opioid crisis in our communities.



I had the opportunity to participate in a literacy event in the Ossining Public Library that is supported by the JCY-Westchester Community Partners, the Summer Reading Buddies program.

NEWSLETTER SURVEY RESULTS

I want to take a moment to thank those of you who participated in the survey that I sent out in my last newsletter. I received 1,226 responses, and it is contributions like yours that help me in my efforts to understand where my constituents stand on important issues. In this session, two of these ideas became law. The proposal for free tuition for middle class families is being phased in starting this academic year, and you may have already noticed Uber and Lyft in your communities. The results of the survey are as follows:

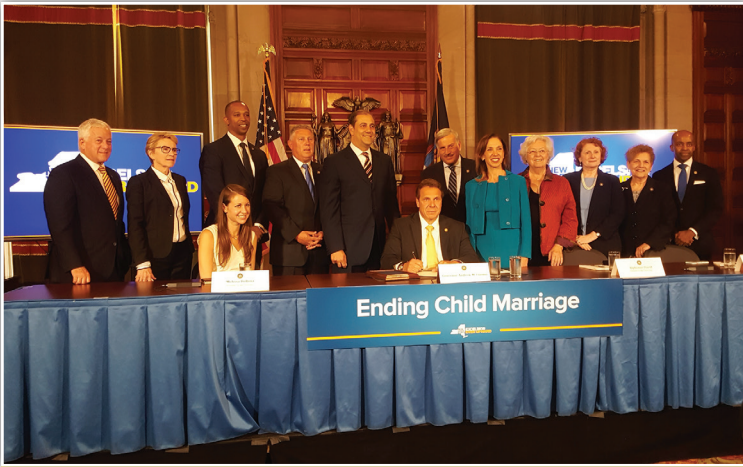
Results: Assemblywoman Sandy Galef's 2017 Survey

	Neither (Question 6 Only)	Yes	No
1. In his State of the State address, Governor Cuomo unveiled a plan to provide students going to New York State Universities and Colleges and City University of New York and coming from families with annual incomes below \$125,000 with free tuition. Do you support Governor Cuomo's proposal for free tuition to SUNY schools for students coming from middle-class families?		54.6%	45.4%
2. There has been a lot of publicity regarding an attempt to allow ridesharing services, such as Lyft and Uber, to spread outside of New York City. Do you support expanding these transportation services statewide?		72.5%	27.5%
3. New York has a very low voter turnout rate. In the 2016 Presidential Election, only 56.2% of eligible voters in the State of New York voted either in person or by absentee ballot, ranking 42nd in the country. Do you support efforts to increase voter participation, such as:			
(a) early voting?		69.0%	31.0%
(b) automatic voter registration?		68.1%	31.9%
(c) same day voter registration?		55.7%	44.3%
(d) compulsory voting with a penalty for not voting, similar to the system in place in Australia?		23.0%	77.0%
4. Some states have laws that terminate parental rights upon conviction of rape, if the child is conceived as a part of the assault. Do you support (generally) the termination of parental rights for those convicted of rape resulting in a child?		88.9%	11.1%
5. New York State is 49th among the states in organ donor registration, and in 2015, over 800 patients on waiting lists died or became too sick to receive a transplant. Living donors can donate certain organs, but living donors frequently face significant financial strain as a result of their donation. There is a proposal before the legislature to provide a donor support program to provide a certain amount of funding for reimbursement of some costs incurred, only to be used when all other forms of funding are not available. Would you support this sort of support for living organ donation in an effort to encourage organ donation in New York State?		80.3%	19.7%
6. Many municipalities (and even some states) have passed laws banning or charging an additional cost for the use of a single-use shopping bag. Would you support measures such as a fee or an outright ban on the use of single-use shopping bags?	41.6%	27.7%	30.6%
7. Currently, seatbelts are required for front seat passengers and children in the back seats of cars, but are not required for adults seated in the back seats. Would you be in favor of a law that would require all passengers in the front and back seats to buckle-up?		70.8%	29.2%

WHAT ELSE IS ON THE BALLOT FOR NOVEMBER 7?

In addition to local election decisions and the Constitutional Convention, voters will also be asked if they support or oppose:

- **New York Forest Preserve Land Bank Constitutional Amendment** – This measure would create a 750-acre “land bank” of state-owned Forest Preserve property in the Adirondack and Catskill Mountains. Municipalities would be allowed to request use of small areas of the land bank for local utility projects like fixing a road or bridge, digging water wells to meet drinking standards, or running electric or broadband lines. Currently, any small utility project that crosses Forest Preserve land requires individual amendments to the constitution, which could take many years and a statewide campaign to reach voters.
- **Public Officer Pension Forfeiture Constitutional Amendment** – This measure would allow judges – following a court hearing – to reduce or revoke the public pension of a public officer convicted of a felony related to his or her official duties. Judges would consider the severity and nature of the crime, and take into account whether taking away a pension would create “undue” hardship for the public officer’s family or other dependents. This would apply to all elected or appointed officials of local and state governments, judges and policy-making employees.



This spring, we passed legislation to end child marriage in New York State. I attended a press event when Governor Cuomo signed the bill, preventing anyone under the age of 17 from getting married in the State of New York.



This year, my summer interns accompanied me on a number of exciting trips, including a tour of West Point. My interns come from around my district, this summer alone had graduates or current students of Ossining, Briarcliff, Hendrick Hudson, Croton, and Haldane High Schools.



Single Payer Healthcare Forum

September 2017

New York State Assembly
Albany, New York 12248

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This year, the New York State Assembly recognized Sock Out Cancer Day. We all wore striped socks, with each color representing a different type of cancer. Here I am in the Assembly with my colleague, Assemblywoman Amy Paulin, and Lisa Hofflich, who works in both of our district offices.



This session I worked hard to push for legislation to benefit individuals, municipalities, and businesses in my district.