

NYS CON-CON: CAMPAIGN FINANCE-POLLS-RESULTS

NOTE: THIS REPORT ON CAMPAIGN FINANCING ONLY REFLECTS THE MONIES DONATED TO THESE PACS. IT DOES NOT REFLECT THE AMOUNT OF MONIES BEING SPENT ON THE OPPOSITION OR SUPPORT CAMPAIGNS DIRECTLY BY INDIVIDUAL UNIONS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS.

Campaign finance



See also: [Campaign finance requirements for New York ballot measures](#)

As of October 20, 2017, there were six [political action committees](#), the Committee for a Constitutional Convention, NY People's Convention PAC, New York State Bar Association for a Constitutional Convention, League of Women Voters of NYS Committee for Constitutional Convention, Citizens Union of the City of New York, and Restrict & Regulate in NY State 2019 registered in support of the constitutional convention question. The committees reported \$760,740 in contributions and \$778,734 in expenditures (expenditures exceeded contributions because Citizens Union started with funds from prior election cycles and had a negative balance as of October 20, 2017).^[2]

The top contributor in support of the question was Democratic fundraiser [Bill Samuels](#), who contributed \$100,725 in cash and \$61,772 in in-kind services.^[2]

As of October 20, 2017, there were three committees, New Yorkers Against Corruption, Say No to a Constitutional Convention (SNCC), and the Committee to Defend Forever Wild registered in opposition to the constitutional convention question. The committees reported \$1,426,324 in contributions and \$709,430 in expenditures.^[2]

The top contributor in opposition to the question was the SEIU 1199, which contributed \$250,000.^[2]

Total campaign contributions ^[40] <i>as of October 20, 2017</i> ^[41]	
 Support:	\$760,739.69
 Opposition:	\$1,426,323.96

Support

The contribution and expenditure totals for committees in support of the ballot question were current as of October 20, 2017.^[2]

Committees in opposition to the Constitutional Convention Question				Committees in support of the Constitutional Convention Question	
<i>Updated as of October 20, 2017</i>					
Supporting committees	Cash contributions	In-kind services	Cash expenditures	Totals in support	
Committee for a Constitutional Convention	\$95,256.20	\$1,185.06	\$82,851.64	Total raised:	\$760,739.69
NY People's Convention PAC	\$239,750.00	\$111,640.69	\$239,492.03	Total spent:	\$778,734.27
Restrict & Regulate in NY State 2019	\$36,744.60 ^[42]	\$229,714.28	\$34,379.51		
New York State Bar Association for a Constitutional Convention	\$5,000.00 ^[43]	\$24,764.00	\$3,331.02		
League of Women Voters of NYS Committee for Constitutional Convention	\$1,269.86 ^[44]	\$0.00	\$1,269.86		
Citizens Union of the City of New York	\$15,415.00	\$0.00	\$50,106.18 ^[45]		
Total	\$393,435.66	\$367,304.03	\$411,430.24		

Donors

The following were the top six donors who contributed to the support committees as of October 20, 2017:^[2]

Donor	Cash	In-kind	Total
William C. Samuels	\$238,225.00	\$111,640.69	\$349,865.69
Jerome W. Dewald	\$28,999.00 ^[42]	\$229,714.28	\$258,713.28
New York State Bar Association	\$5,000.00	\$24,764.00	\$29,764.00
Friends of Evan Davis	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00
Joanne Witty	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00
Amercanex	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00

Opposition

The contribution and expenditure totals for committees in opposition the ballot question were current as of October 20, 2017.^[2]

Committees in opposition to the Constitutional Convention Question				Totals in opposition	
<i>Updated as of October 20, 2017</i>				Total raised:	\$1,426,323.96
Opposing committees	Cash contributions	In-kind services	Cash expenditures	Total spent:	\$709,430.27
New Yorkers Against Corruption	\$1,344,596.96	\$65,400.00	\$627,703.27		
Say No to a Constitutional Convention	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		
Committee to Defend Forever Wild	\$0.00	\$16,327.00	\$0.00		
Total	\$1,344,596.96	\$81,727.00	\$627,703.27		

Donors

The following were the top six donors who contributed to the opposition committees as of October 20, 2017:^[2]

Donor	Cash	In-kind	Total
SEIU 1199	\$250,000.00	\$0.00	\$250,000.00
New York State United Teachers	\$100,000.00	\$22,000.00	\$122,000.00
New York State Pipe Trades Association	\$120,000.00	\$0.00	\$120,000.00
Public Employees Association	\$100,000.00	\$0.00	\$100,000.00
Uniformed Fire Officers Association COPE FUND	\$100,000.00	\$0.00	\$100,000.00
NYS Laborers PAC-State Fund	\$65,900.00	\$0.00	\$65,900.00

Reporting dates

New York ballot measure committees file a total of five campaign finance reports in 2017. The filing dates for reports are as follows:^[46]

2017 campaign finance reporting dates [hide]		
Date	Report	Period
1/17/2017	January Periodic	7/11/2016 - 1/13/2017
7/17/2017	July Periodic	1/14/2017 - 7/13/2017
10/06/2017	32-days pre-election report	7/14/2017 - 10/02/2017
10/27/2017	11-days pre-election report	10/03/2017 - 10/23/2017
12/04/2017	27-days post-election report	10/24/2017 - 11/30/2017
1/16/2018	January Periodic	7/14/2017 - 1/12/2018

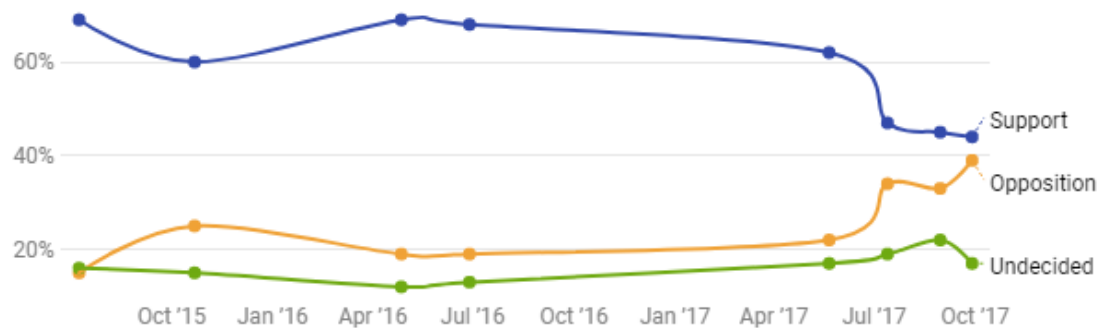
Siena College polls

Siena College polled registered voters in New York on their support for holding a state constitutional convention. In 2015 and 2016, Siena College found that support for a constitutional convention among respondents was between 60 percent and 69 percent. This level of support continued in 2017, with Siena College's mid-May poll indicating that support was 62 percent. Support for holding a constitutional convention dropped 15 percentage points to 47 percent in Siena College's poll in mid-July. In a late August 2017 poll, support dropped further to 45 percent. In late September 2017, support decreased to 44 percent and opposition increased to 39 percent.

Between 2015 and May 2017, Siena College polled respondents with the following question: "Do you support or oppose having a New York State Constitutional Convention in which delegates propose changes to the State Constitution for voters to approve or reject?" In Siena College's July 2017, August 2017, and September 2017 polls, respondents answered the following question: "Specifically, the November ballot question on a

Constitutional Convention will ask, "Shall there be a convention to revise the constitution and amend the same?" Will you vote "yes" to have a Constitutional Convention or "no" to not have a Constitutional Convention?"

Siena College polls on New York Proposal 1: Constitutional Convention, 2015-2017



Source: [Siena College Poll](#)

BALLOTPEDIA

Poll results

New York Constitutional Convention Question (2017) [hide]					
Poll	Support	Oppose	Undecided	Margin of Error	Sample Size
Siena College 🗳️ 9/25/2017-9/28/2017	44.0%	39.0%	17.0%	+/-4.0	789
Siena College 🗳️ 8/26/2017-8/30/2017	45.0%	33.0%	22.0%	+/-4.2	771
Siena College 🗳️ 7/9/2017-7/13/2017	47.0%	34.0%	19.0%	+/-4.0	793
Quinnipiac University 🗳️ 7/5/2017-7/10/2017	55.0%	30.0%	15.0%	+/-3.9	1,137
Siena College 🗳️ 5/15/2017-5/21/2017	62.0%	22.0%	17.0%	+/-4.0	770
Siena College 🗳️ 6/22/2016 - 6/28/2016	68.0%	19.0%	13.0%	+/-4.0	803
Siena College 🗳️ 4/24/2016 - 4/27/2016	69.0%	19.0%	12.0%	+/-4.1	802
Siena College 🗳️ 10/18/2015 - 10/22/2015	60.0%	25.0%	15.0%	+/-4.0	806
Siena College 🗳️ 7/6/2015 - 7/9/2015	69.0%	15.0%	16.0%	+/-3.9	802
Siena College 🗳️ 6/7/2010 - 6/9/2010	58.0%	26.0%	16.0%	+/-6.8	808
Marist Poll 🗳️ 9/8/2009 - 9/10/2009	42.0%	48.0%	10.0%	+/-3.5	805
Siena College 🗳️ 8/17/2009 - 8/20/2009	63.0%	25.0%	12.0%	+/-3.9	621

Quinnipiac University 🔗 8/10/2009 - 8/13/2009	64.0%	24.0%	11.0%	+/-2.4	1,667
Quinnipiac University 🔗 6/9/2004 - 6/14/2004	52.0%	34.0%	14.0%	+/-2.6	1,466
AVERAGES	57%	28.07%	14.93%	+/-3.95	917.14

Note: A "0%" finding means the candidate was not a part of the poll. The polls above may not reflect all polls that have been conducted in this race. Those displayed are a random sampling chosen by Ballotpedia staff. If you would like to nominate another poll for inclusion in the table, send an email to editor@ballotpedia.org. [📧](#)

Background

New Yorkers voted on 12 constitutional convention questions during the 239 years between 1777 and 2016, with the first in 1821 and the most recent in 1997. Of those 12, seven resulted in constitutional conventions being held and four led to new constitutions. Prior to 1900, four of five (80 percent) questions were approved. Between 1900 and 2000, three of seven (43 percent) questions were approved, representing a lower rate of approval compared to the previous century.^[1]

The table below provides an overview of the 12 constitutional convention questions that were asked between 1777 and 2017. The column labeled *origin* provides information on whether the question was referred to the ballot by the [New York Legislature](#) or automatically by the [state constitution](#). The columns titled *pre-convention constitution* and *post-convention constitution* communicate which constitution was active before and after a constitutional convention was held and resulting amendments voted on. New York has had five different state constitutions since 1777.^[57]

Year	Percent Yes	Percent No	Outcome	Origin	Pre-Convention Constitution	Post-Convention Constitution
1821	75.80%	24.20%	✔	Legislature	1777 constitution	1821 constitution (ratified)
1845	86.30%	13.70%	✔	Legislature	1821 constitution	1846 constitution (ratified)
1858	48.85%	51.15%	✘	Legislature	1846 constitution	No convention
1866	57.92%	42.08%	✔	Automatic	1846 constitution	1846 constitution (no changes)
1886	94.92%	5.08%	✔	Automatic	1846 constitution	1894 constitution (ratified)
1914	50.22%	49.78%	✔	Legislature	1894 constitution	1894 constitution (no changes)
1916	43.49%	56.51%	✘	Automatic	1894 constitution	No convention
1936	54.29%	45.71%	✔	Automatic	1894 constitution	1938 constitution (ratified)
1957	47.60%	52.40%	✘	Automatic	1938 constitution	No convention
1965	53.38%	46.62%	✔	Legislature	1938 constitution	1938 constitution (no changes)
1977	40.32%	59.68%	✘	Automatic	1938 constitution	No convention
1997	37.05%	62.95%	✘	Automatic	1938 constitution	No convention
2017	—	—	—	Automatic	1938 constitution	—
Average	57.51%	42.49%				

Sources: [New York Department of State](#), "Votes Cast For and Against Proposed Constitutional Conventions and Also Proposed Constitutional Amendments," accessed February 1, 2017 [📄](#)

Snider, J.H. "Does the World Really Belong to the Living? The Decline of the Constitutional Convention in New York and Other US States, 1776–2015." *American Political Thought* 6, 3. (2017); pages 256-293. [🔗](#)

Bailly, R.M. & Fein, S.N. (2016). *Making a Modern Constitution: The Prospects for Constitutional Reform in New York*. Albany, NY: New York State Bar Association. (page 85) [🔗](#)

SOURCE: [https://ballotpedia.org/New_York_Proposal_1_Constitutional_Convention_Question_\(2017\)](https://ballotpedia.org/New_York_Proposal_1_Constitutional_Convention_Question_(2017))