

Vote NO!

to a NYS Constitutional Convention and protect rights important to women

Voters will be asked on the Nov. 7 ballot to decide if the state should hold a constitutional convention to revise and amend the New York State Constitution. Not only could a convention cost at least \$50 million-\$100 million in taxpayer dollars, the outcome could have far-reaching effects for decades to come.

There is no reason to believe that a constitutional convention would benefit women. Under attack around the country are collective bargaining, pensions and the environment—all of which are of particular interest to women.

What you should know:

- Men are likely to disproportionately make up convention delegates. During the last convention, only 5 percent of the delegates were women (10 of the 186 delegates). And, it's fair to assume that most delegates will be men, since four out of five delegates in 1967 were politicians, attorneys and Albany insiders, and just 58 of the current 213 state legislators are women.
- **Don't risk collective bargaining rights.** Three out of four teaching jobs in public schools in New York state are held by women. Collective bargaining rights of these workers, as well as women in other sectors, could be at risk.
- **Don't risk pensions.** Women workers benefit from New York state pension plans, which are among *the six best in the nation for financial strength*. Without pensions, a significant number of women could be left with unequal post work-life benefits. Women also live longer than men; in the U.S., women on average live 81.2 years compared to 76.4 for men.
- **Don't risk our environment.** Right now, New York state has more than *four million acres of protected state-owned land*. The protection of these "Forever Wild" lands for our families and future generations could be at risk.
- Many advocates for a convention argue that voting rights could be expanded. However, 32 states now have voter identification laws, which often limit the vote among populations more likely to lack a photo ID, including women, the elderly, the poor and minorities.
- A convention is not necessary. The constitution can be amended through the legislative process—like it has been more than 200 times.

Instead of wasting tax dollars on a convention ...

\$100 million could be used to:

- Fund Head Start programs for 12,500 children age 3-5 for a year
- Cover the cost of 625,000 doctors' visits for uninsured patients
- Buy a year's worth of food for 163,333 of our hungriest children
- Feed more than 41,000 senior citizens for a year



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