Free New York

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SPRING 2026 NEWS

by Andrew Kolstee
LPNY Secretary

Here are the latest updates from the Libertarian Party of New York.

2026 State Committee Elections

The Libertarian Party of New York has opened applications for individuals interested in serving on its State Committee for the 2026-2028 term. The State Committee functions as the governing body of the party in New York, overseeing its direction, operations, and organizational decisions at the state level.

Those wishing to serve are invited to complete registration, which will be reviewed by the Elections Oversight Committee to determine eligibility under party rules. Candidates who meet the requirements will then be submitted to their respective County Affiliates within their Judicial Districts, which are responsible for voting on representatives for each Judicial District.

The deadline to submit applications is April 30, 2026 (unless the State Committee votes to extend; any such action will be announced if voted upon). Individuals considering applying are encouraged to review the party rules in full to understand both the process and the responsibilities involved in serving on the State Committee.

2026 Libertarian National Convention

New York has a full slate of Delegates to the 2026 Libertarian National Convention in Grand Rapids, Michigan. We also have several alternates. If you are interested in becoming a Delegate, there may still be an opportunity to become an alternate in the event that Delegate positions open up. Contact info@lpny.org if you are interested in a Delegate or alternate position.

2026 LPNY State Convention

Save the Date: October 24, 2026 – Mount Kisco, New York.

Plans for the 2026 LPNY State Convention are well underway. Catrina Rocco, Chair of the Conventions Oversight Committee is organizing the event. This will be the gathering where the newly elected 2026–2028 State Committee convenes to elect the Executive Committee. More details will be announced as the date approaches — stay tuned!

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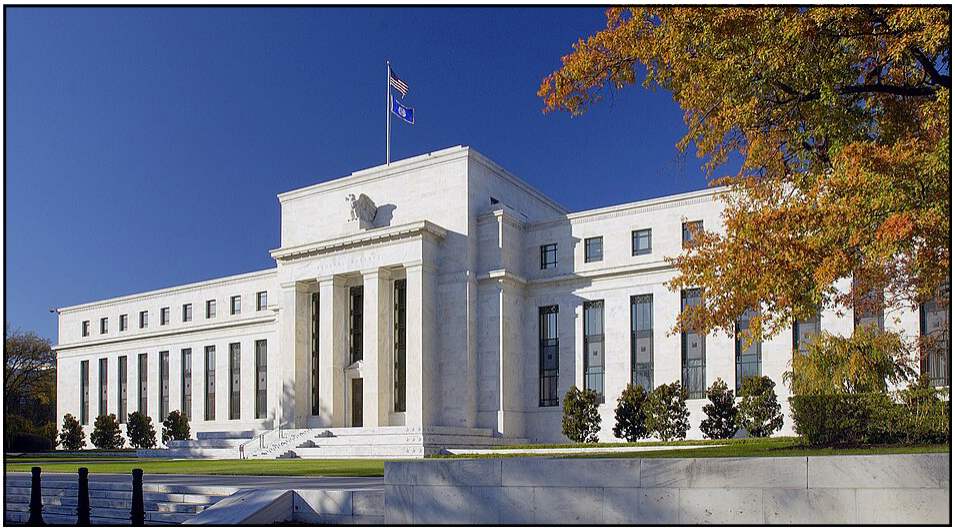
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Ballot Access Bills

There are still no updates on the Senate bill (S01870) or Assembly bill (A02724), which would reduce the thresholds for independent and third-party ballot access. Both remain in committee. Please contact your State Senator and Assemblymember to express your support for these critical reforms. Every voice matters in advancing fair ballot access for all New Yorkers.

THE CASE FOR EQUALIZING ALL 12 FEDERAL RESERVE BANKS

by Richard Purtell
Legislative Affairs Director



Advocates for Federal Reserve reform have long argued that the United States would benefit from equalizing the power, influence, and structural weight of all 12 regional Federal Reserve Banks. While the Federal Reserve System was designed in 1913 to balance regional economic interests, the modern economy looks nothing like the one that existed a century ago. Today, equalizing the Reserve Banks could strengthen democratic accountability, improve monetary policy responsiveness, and create a more resilient financial system.

The first major benefit is **greater regional representation in national monetary policy**. At present, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York holds unique authority, including permanent voting rights on the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) and responsibility for implementing monetary policy operations. Supporters of equalization argue that this structure over weighs the financial interests of one region—Wall Street—at the expense of the broader national economy. Equalizing the Reserve Banks would distribute influence more evenly, ensuring that economic conditions in the Midwest, South, Mountain West, and rural regions carry the same weight as those in New York. In an economy as diverse as the United States, this broader representation could lead to more balanced policy decisions.

A second benefit is **increased transparency and accountability**. The current system gives some Reserve Banks more visibility and operational authority than others, which can create opacity around decision making. Equalization would standardize governance structures, reduce disparities in institutional power, and make it easier for the public and Congress to understand how decisions are made. When each Reserve Bank operates under the same rules, with comparable responsibilities and influence, oversight becomes clearer and more consistent.

Third, equalization could **enhance financial stability**. Concentrating operational authority in a single Reserve Bank—particularly one located in the nation's financial capital—can create systemic vulnerabilities. By distributing responsibilities more evenly across all 12 Banks, the Federal Reserve System could reduce single point of failure risks. A more decentralized operational structure would also allow the Fed to tap into a wider range of regional expertise, improving its ability to detect emerging risks in different parts of the country.

Finally, equalization would **strengthen public trust**. Many Americans view the Federal Reserve as distant or overly aligned with financial elites. A more balanced structure—one that visibly treats all regions equally—could help rebuild confidence in the institution. When people see their region represented fairly, they are more likely to view the system as legitimate.

In short, equalizing the 12 Federal Reserve Banks offers a path toward a more democratic, transparent, resilient, and modern central banking system—one better suited to the economic realities of today and tomorrow.

NEW YORK STATE'S DELEGATION TO 2026 LIBERTARIAN NATIONAL CONVENTION

New York has 33 Delegate spots. The Alternate Delegates will be voted on at the next meeting, once their eligibility is confirmed. If any Delegates withdraw, the Alternate Delegates will be promoted to Delegate.

DELEGATES

1. Duane Whitmer
2. Andrew Kolstee
3. Chance Haywood (CR)
4. Mark Axinn
5. Justin Carman
6. Pietro Geraci
7. Paul Grindle
8. Christopher Skelly
9. Catrina Rocco
10. Rose Leatherman (PR)
11. Christian Padgett (PAR)
12. Steven Becker (CAR)
13. Blay Tarnoff
14. Jonathan Gunther
15. Charles Dorgan
16. Susan Overeem-Cummings
17. Mark Braiman
18. Vincent O'Neill
19. Juan Ayala
20. Mark Weinblatt
21. Patrick Corrigan
22. Theresa Corrigan
23. Nicole Hewson
24. Jack Terran
25. James Condon
26. James Ostrowski
27. James Fitch
28. Gary Triestman
29. Daniel Donnelly
30. Thomas Quiter
31. Jeffrey Monheit
32. Martin Mutka
33. Joseph Terwilliger

ALTERNATES

1. Paul Schaffenberger
2. Vita Vivek
3. Robert Fritton
4. Brandon Larsen

CR = Credentials Representative
CAR = Credentials Alternate Representative
PR = Platform Representaitve
PAR = Platform Alternate Representative

Support the LPNY!

LPNY.org/donate

THREE PATHS TO BALLOT ACCESS IN NEW YORK

by James Harris
Suffolk County 2nd Vice-Chair

Getting on the New York State ballot requires approximately 60,000 signatures collected in April and May. There are three basic approaches to achieving this goal: Plans A, B, and C.

Plan A – The Advocate

This is our present approach. We have an advocate traveling across New York State, campaigning alongside Libertarians and others. He is raising awareness and funds for the campaign. Thank you to Larry Sharpe for taking on this role.

Plan B – Bootstrapping

This is the grassroots plan. Most Libertarians reading this can identify one to four registered voters willing to sign our petition in April. The key is to find them now.

Secure their commitment now. Once someone signs, they are far more likely to sign again in future years. Each year, add one or two more.

Plan C – Chance

At each meeting, everyone contributes one dollar and buys a lottery ticket. If we win, we advertise our way onto the ballot or fund an advocate to do it for us.

Conclusion

There are thousands of Libertarians who want to be part of a successful action. This is something we can all take pride in.

HELP US GET A3312 PASSED

This bill, if passed would lower the ballot access thresholds back to the previous standards: the number of votes needed to get ballot access to 50,000 (from 130,000 or 2%), and lower the petition signature requirement for a statewide office to 15,000 (from 45,000). Contact your representatives in the New York State Legislature and ask them to this bill! Contact Legislative Affairs Director Rich Purtell at rpurtell@lpny.org to get involved with pushing this bill.

Don’t see your county listed?

We are looking for Libertarians to organize new County Affiliates!

Contact us for more details!

affiliates@lpny.org

COUNTY AFFILIATE NEWS

CHAUTAUQUA

NEXT MEETING:
Tues., May 12, 2026 @ 7:00 PM
on Zoom
(second Tuesdays)

CONTACT:
Andrew Kolstee, Chair
akolstee@lpny.org

LEARN MORE:
www.chautauquaLP.org
fb.com/chautauquaLP

CHEMUNG

CONTACT:
Nick Grasso, Chair
ngrasso89@yahoo.com

LEARN MORE:
lpchemung.org

COLUMBIA

NEXT MEETING:
Wed., May 20, 2026 @ 7 PM
Google Meet
(third Wednesdays)

CONTACT:
Scott Hoskins, Chair
scottdhoskins@gmail.com

DUTCHESS

NEXT MEETING:
Sat., May 16, 2026 @ 5 PM
Village Restaurant
& Pancake Factory
1540 Route 44, Pleasant Valley
(3rd Saturdays)

CONTACT:
Robert Cocomello, Chair
Catrina Rocco, Vice-Chair
info@dutchesscountylp.org

LEARN MORE:
dutchesscountylp.org

ERIE

CONTACT:
Duane Whitmer, Chair
chairman@eriecountylp.org

KINGS (BROOKLYN)

NEXT MEETING:
Tues., May 19, 2026 at 3 PM
@ Fourth Avenue Pub
76 4th Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11217
(3rd Tuesdays)

CONTACT:
Christopher Skelly, Chair
cskelly@lpny.org

MADISON

CONTACT:
Mark Braiman, Chair
mbraiman@lpny.org

MONROE

NEXT MEETING:
Thurs., May 6, 2026 @ 7 PM
(first Thursdays)
Contact us for the link.

CONTACT:
Steve Becker, Chair
drsbecker@aol.com

LEARN MORE:
monroecountylp.org
Ask about the Google Group
and social meetings

NASSAU

NEXT MEETING:
Thurs., May 14, 2026 at 7 PM
@ Landmark Diner
(2nd Thursdays)

CONTACT:
Jon Gunther,
Executive Committee Chair
jonguntherlibertarian@gmail.com

Blay Tarnoff,
County Committee Chair
LPNY@eblay.com

NEW YORK (MANHATTAN)

CONTACT:
Chance Haywood, Chair
chaywood@lpny.org

ONEIDA

CONTACT:
Keith Redhead, Chair
kredhead@lpny.org

ONONDAGA

NEXT MEETING:
Wed., May 20, 2026 at 6:30 PM
Liverpool Public Library
(3rd Wednesdays)

CONTACT:
Rachel Becker, Chair
reb4128@rit.edu
onondagacountylp@gmail.com

ONTARIO

CONTACT:
Nathan Dingey,
Acting County Chair

ORANGE

NEXT MEETING:
Held 4th Thursdays. Location varies. Contact us for details.

CONTACT:
Juan Ayala, Chair
livefree@juanrayala.com

QUEENS

NEXT MEETING:
Sat., May 9, 2026 at 12 PM
Stamatis Greek
and Mediterranean Restaurant
29-09 23rd Ave., Astoria
(2nd Saturdays)

CONTACT:
Francisco Olvera, Chair
folvera@lpny.org

RENSSELAER

NEXT MEETING:
Wed., May 6, 2026 at 6:30 PM
Alexis Diner, North Greenbush
(1st Wednesdays)

CONTACT:
Jennifer O'Connor,
Acting County Chair
joconnor@lpny.org

RICHMOND (STATEN ISLAND)

NEXT MEETING:
Thurs., May 21, 2026 @ 7 PM
@ Coffee and Collectibles
(3rd Thursdays)

CONTACT:
Susan Overeem Cummings,
Chair
susanovereem@gmail.com

SARATOGA

CONTACT:
Naz Garabedien, Chair
nazareth.garabedian
@lawsonproducts.com

SCHOHARIE

CONTACT:
Mason Hovack,
Acting County Chair

SUFFOLK

NEXT MEETING:
TBD
Panera Bread, Deer Park
(usually 4th Thursdays)

CONTACT:
Robert Schuon, Chair
rschuon@mindspring.com

ULSTER

NEXT MEETING:
Mon., May 11, 2026 at 6:30 PM
Hickory BBQ, Kingston, NY
(second Mondays)

CONTACT:
Sam Kniffen, Chair
samkniffen01@gmail.com

LEARN MORE:
www.UlsterLP.org

WAYNE

MONTHLY SOCIAL:
Sat., May 30, 2026 at 10 AM
Yellow Mills Diner
2534 NY-31, Palmyra, NY 14522
(last Saturdays)

CONTACT:
Jim Dayton, Chair
jdayton@lpny.org

LEARN MORE:
lpwaynecounty.org

WESTCHESTER-PUTNAM

NEXT MEETING:
TBD

CONTACT:
Rajib Maitra, Chair
rajib.maitra1@gmail.com

LPNY DIRECTORY

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Duane Whitmer Chair
Daniel Castello Vice Chair
Andrew Kolstee Secretary
Chance Haywood Treasurer
Christopher Skelly Communications Director
Mark Axinn Fundraising Director
Justin Carman IT Director
Richard Purtell Legislative Affairs Director
Pietro Geraci Outreach Director
Paul Grindle Political Director
Catrina Rocco Volunteer Director

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Daniel Castello
Platform Committee Chair
Andrew Kolstee
Rules Committee Chair
Daniel Castello
Strategic Planning Committee Chair
Catrina Rocco
Conventions Oversight Committee Chair

STATE COMMITTEE

Mark Axinn (JD1)
Morry Davis (JD1)
Paul Grindle (JD2)
Gary Popkin (JD2)
Evan Lebrecht (JD3)
Justin Carman (JD3)
Vacant (JD4)
Vacant (JD4)
Vacant (JD4)
Daniel Castello (JD5)
James Fitch (JD5)
E. Rose Leatherman (JD5)
Mark Braiman (JD6)
Charles Dorgan (JD6)
Samuel Hordeski (JD6)
Steven Becker (JD7)
Justin Pelletier (JD7)
Sean Phelan (JD7)
Vacant (JD7)
Maura Botsford (JD8)
Andrew Kolstee (JD8)
Wendi Szabo (JD8)
Duane Whitmer (JD8)
Vacant (JD8)
Pietro Geraci (JD9)
Catrina Rocco (JD9)
William Schmidt (JD9)
Jonathan Gunther (JD10)
Vincent O'Neill (JD10)
Christian Padgett (JD10)
Robert Schuon (JD10)
Blay Tarnoff (JD10)
Vacant (JD10)
Irwin Mark Weinblatt (JD11)
Vacant (JD11)
Vacant (JD12)
Susan Overeem-Cummings (JD13)
Chance Haywood (ex-officio)
Richard Purtell (ex-officio)
Christopher Skelly (ex-officio)

info@lpny.org **www.LPNY.org** **866-336-3120**