



Free New York

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The Official Newsletter of the Libertarian Party of New York

August 2026



2026 LPNY CONVENTION



OCTOBER 24, 2026



MOUNT KISCO, NEW YORK

LIBERTY TAKES CENTER STAGE

Featuring Eric Brakey, candidate training, party business, and Liberty After Dark



by **Catrina Rocco**
LPNY Volunteer Director

Dear Fellow Libertarians and Liberty Lovers,

You are warmly invited to join us for the Libertarian Party of New York's 2026 Convention on Saturday, October 24, 2026, at Hotel MTK in Mount Kisco, New York.

Check in for the daytime program opens at 9:30 a.m. with business set to start sharply at 10:00 a.m. Our daytime programming includes our LPNY business meeting with lunch being served at noon in the company of our lunchtime speaker Diane Sare. LPNY business is scheduled to conclude at 4:30 p.m. with Jim

Ostrowski joining us as our end of business speaker, followed by closing remarks from the Chair.

The evening program will feature a special Candidate Training Break-out Session and dinner with our keynote speaker, Eric Brakey.

Eric Brakey is a former Maine State Senator and current Executive Director of the Free State Project. Eric will share critical lessons and practical takeaways from his book, *The Liberty Candidate's Practical Guide to Door Knocking*.

This training is especially important as the Libertarian Party of New York announces its plan to run 50

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2026 LPNY Convention.....	1-2
A Call to Action.....	2
Election Integrity	3-5
County Affiliates.....	6-7
LPNY Directory	8

Libertarian candidates for local offices across the state in 2027. County Affiliates, We Need You!

Then, It's Time for Liberty After Dark!

Following dinner and candidate training, we'll keep the energy going during our Liberty After Dark party that will feature a candidate

(continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

meet and greet to introduce you to candidates endorsed by local county affiliates. Brett Yarris, running for Putnam County Executive, will be attending.

Afterwards, you can take the mic and roast a Libertarian. Have something you've always wanted to say about your fellow Libertarians? This is your chance to take the mi-

crophone and let it fly! Check out the Liberty's Elite Sponsor package about how to make it to the top of the roast line up. Roasts will continue throughout the evening after every three or four songs played.

Your Liberty After Dark Ticket also includes an evening full of sweet treats, cash bar and access to our table auction so you can bid on unique items and experiences while

supporting the Libertarian Party of New York.

Please visit lpny.org/2026-lpny-convention to reserve your package and stay. Discounted rooms are available now thru September 23, and reduced priced packages are on sale until August 31. We look forward to seeing you!

A CALL TO ACTION TO COUNTY AFFILIATES

by **Catrina Rocco**
LPNY Volunteer Director

Dear County Affiliates & NY Libertarians,

We can't assume that many of our state legislators are fully aware or have a clear understanding of the grievances and concerns of libertarians in New York State. But we can safely assume that our elected officials will continue to remain in the dark or happily discount the cruciality of matters that we proclaim are important to us until we are willing to make it our duty to engage in regular contact with our elected officials via face-to-face conversations, phone calls, and letter-writing campaigns to their district offices.

This past winter the Libertarian Party of New York asked its affiliates to take part in a call to action. We urgently asked our affiliates to get involved by reaching out to their local state legislators to voice their concerns about matters such as ballot access rules, qualified immunity, the prevention of a mandatory adult vaccine database, and allowing homeschooled children to

participate in district sports. However, we received only a handful of returned reports this time around.

The LPNY has extended its deadline to October 3, 2026 to provide more time for county affiliates to engage with their elected state representatives and to return their reports to us. We hope that members of each county affiliate will take the time to visit, write, call or email their state assembly members and senators about these issues and mention any additional concerns that are relevant to them.

At this time we encourage you to emphasize the need for a minor-party nominating petition. In 39 states there is a clearer distinction between the "independent" and "minor party" concepts and after what we are seeing in Putnam County where the County Executive failed to secure an endorsement from the local affiliate and yet is running on a ballot line named libertarian (with our torch!) we need this more than ever. Let's take the appropriate small steps toward regaining our ballot access. You're encouraged to discuss the

issue,- but not bombard -your legislators for a signature requirement change. The first step is to secure a minor party nominating petition that is distinctly ours. Recognition is key.

Please refer to the Quick Guide to Meeting with Your State Legislators for brief talking points and a list of district office addresses and phone numbers. If you need another copy, don't hesitate to email crocco@lpny.org for one.

We thank you for contributing your valuable time to support this very important endeavor. As county leaders and active libertarians, you are the backbone of the Libertarian Party and your efforts continually kindle the flame of liberty!

Kindly return the accompanying form to the LPNY by email to the individuals listed below by Saturday, October 3, 2026.

In Liberty,

Catrina Rocco, Volunteer Director
crocco@lpny.org

Rich Purtell, Legislative Affairs Director
rpurtell@lpny.org

ELECTION INTEGRITY

by Vincent O'Neill
State Committee Member (JD10)

"There is a way of asking us for our reasons that leads us not only to forget our best reasons but also to conceive a stubborn aversion to all reasons. This way of asking makes people very stupid and is a trick used by tyrannical people." - Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Gay Science," P. 208. Note: "The Gay Science" is Philosophy.

A comprehensive approach must be used to provide an outline for honest government, and it follows.

1. Creating and Guaranteeing Honest Elections:

The Electoral Process in General

A process must be in place for peaceful, orderly, and honest elections, as well as the transfer of power. The process should be simple, and should not resemble World War II.

The following are a few requirements.

All advantages Republicans and Democrats have given themselves against potential Competition will be ended.

A. End taxpayer-funded primaries.

Political parties are private entities, not the 'government', and must select their candidates privately in whatever manner they choose, at

their own expense.

Ending taxpayer-funded primaries will create an interesting situation. Will private political parties allow 'absentee ballots,' 'early voting,' and 'mail-in voting,' or recognize their obvious enabling of dishonest elections? Would the Democrats retain the concept of "super-delegates" and weighted voting?

B. All 'ballot access' requirements must be the same for all political parties and individuals.

They also must be reduced tremendously and quickly. Some are state, some are national, but the same

(continued on page 4)

YOU ARE INVITED TO THE 30TH ANNUAL LILCO {Long Island Libertarian Cook Out}

WHEN: Saturday 22 August 2026
TIME: 3 pm – 7 pm

WHERE: 27 Charlotte Place, Plainview, NY 11803

PHONE: 917-306-5177
e-mail: jimLPharris@gmail.com

Hamburgers, hotdogs & fixings will be supplied. Bring something to share.

RSVP ?

(continued from page 3)

procedure should apply. Reduce all requirements by 50%, 3 years in a row.

An alternative would be to require all independent candidates for an office to file nominating petitions with the names of 1,000 registered voters, acquired over the two months from May 1 to July 1, in order to qualify for ballot status.

Registered voters would be allowed to sign for more than one candidate.

Individual political parties could then set their own rules for nominating a candidate.

C. Debates

Public debate on issues should be expanded, not limited. The actions of the Republicans and the Democrats have been reprehensible. Their primary version of public policy communication consists of outright lies and the occasional resort to slander. A logical conclusion is that they have nothing worthwhile to offer on any policy issue and are afraid of any competition.

All incumbents must offer to debate their challengers. There must be at least one public debate among them in the month preceding the vote provided their challenger's accept.

Unless the challenger(s) refuse to debate, failure to do so will result in the elimination of that party's candidate for that office until the next election.

Everyone satisfying ballot access requirements will be eligible to be included in state and local debates. Presidential debates will include all candidates eligible to receive

enough Electoral Votes to win the presidency will be included. A candidates' "standing in the polls" is irrelevant.

The reliance on 'polls' displays the shallow level of public debate in this country. You can get any result you want from a poll, depending on how you frame the question. (Also, most people refuse to respond.)

D. The Electoral College and State's Rights must be preserved. This is also important for honest elections.

E. "Absentee Voting", "Early Voting" and "Mail-In Votes"

"Sixteen years ago, in 2005, the Carter-Baker Commission on Federal Election Reform issued a report that proposed a uniform system of requiring a photo ID in order to vote in U.S. elections. The report also pointed out that widespread absentee voting makes fraud more likely. Voter files contain ineligible, duplicate, fictional, and deceased voters, a fact more easily exploited using absentee voters to commit fraud. Citizens who vote absentee are more susceptible to pressure and intimidation. And vote-buying schemes are far easier when citizens vote by mail. The committee's two ranking members were former President Jimmy Carter, a Democrat, and former Secretary of State James Baker III, a Republican." - John R. Lott, "Is Ensuring Election Integrity Anti-Democratic", *Impri-mis*, October 2021, p.1

That common sense outlook has now been turned on its head. The political establishment has been working hard to create DISHON-EST ELECTIONS. Their actions must be countered.

A Picture ID should be necessary to vote.

For example, a picture ID is currently necessary to purchase the allergy pill Claritin. (purchases are also limited to a maximum of 15 at a time). Displaying a picture ID takes no time at all.

The vote would occur on one day only.

The only citizens entitled to an absentee ballot should be active duty military personnel.

If someone wants to spend November in Florida but vote in New York, they will have to return to New York to do so.

"Vote Chaos" in New York

"It wasn't just Brooklyn voters who received absentee envelopes with the wrong name and address on them-hundreds of voters on Long Island were affected as well. Now New York has to resend more than 100,000 ballots before the election." - *New York Post*, Page 1, October 1, 2020.

F. Cleaning Voter Rolls and addressing Mail-in Voting

Judicial Watch has been actively doing both. The August, 2020 "Verdict", among other months of this publication, details much that they have done, including suing California Governor Gavin Newsom for violating the State Constitution.

The January, 2021 issue of "The Verdict" reported that Judicial Watch found 353 counties in 29 states with Voter Registration Rates over 100%. Fourteen other states either don't post voter registra-

(continued on page 5)

(continued from page 4)

tion data online at all or don't post enough information to determine registration rates compared to the general population.

G. End Gerrymandering / Unnecessary Re-Districting

Districts should be based on easily recognized geography. Population density is a secondary consideration. Party registration should not figure in the process at all. The Motor Voter laws can stay, as long as no party registration occurs at the same time. The concept of government agencies collecting party registration information must end. Registering with a political party, or no political party at all, must become a purely private decision.

Once this has been done successfully, there will rarely be a need to re-draw districts unless there is a major earthquake, or if part of the earth falls into the sea.

The starting point will be the current districts.

2. Procedural Changes for Operation of a Government

A comprehensive approach to problems from a free market perspective will go a long way to countering this. Addressing elected officials and voting on issues once elected.

You recall the absurd number of times and number of co-sponsors Ron Paul needed to bring End the Fed and related issues to a discussion and votes. This type of thing happens all the time, and it happens at the national and state level. A few suggestions follow to change this:

A. Any item brought up by a member must be discussed and voted on in the current session, within reason.

B. Exactly One co-sponsor will be required to bring this about.

C. Members can only vote on an issue if they certify, under penalty of perjury, that they have read the bill in its entirety before casting their vote. A member can vote 'present' if they haven't read the bill in its entirety.

They can also ask for a one week postponement votes.

D. End Filibusters.

Any member will be able to simply ask to postpone a vote for a reasonable time to allow more discussion. One week, for example.

The focus should be on addressing issues, not avoiding them.

3. Campaign Finance

Incumbents will only be permitted to raise money for one year before a vote for re-election will occur. Currently, they raise money every day of the year.

Any money left over after the election must be dispersed. This can be given to anyone they see fit to disperse it to, with the exception of members of their family. Dispersal will not count as a charitable contribution.

Any individual will be permitted to donate any amount of money to any candidate they choose.

Keep in mind that the major political reform to come out of Watergate

was to create campaign finance restrictions in order to make sure that a Eugene McCarthy would never again be allowed to challenge the establishment candidate.

Conclusion:

The hindering of ballot access is the largest problem in the political process, and it must be addressed.

The proper and necessary response is to call for a boycott of all Republican and Democrat candidates, at least until or unless ballot access problems are properly addressed.

After that, it is unlikely that anyone will be able to find any reason to vote for one of their candidates. Meanwhile, the Libertarian Party will be addressing issues in detail.

The Republicans and Democrats have nothing positive to offer. The country is \$40 trillion in debt, a number that is expanding by \$2 trillion plus per year. They have no plans to address this issue.

The U.S. has bombed 32 countries without a declaration of war since the end of World War II. This is more than one-third of the people on Earth.

And World War II, it should be pointed out, ended when the United States government committed the biggest war crime in the history of the universe, the dropping of atomic bombs on the Japanese civilian centers of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. No one has ever been held accountable for this atrocity.

COUNTY AFFILIATE NEWS

CHAUTAUQUA

NEXT MEETING:

Thurs., Sep. 10, 2026 @ 6:30 PM
at 14 Main
14 Main Street,
Bemus Point, NY
and 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., Sep. 16, 2026 @ 7 PM
Google Meet
(third Wednesdays)

CONTACT:

Scott Hoskins, Chair
scottdhoskins@gmail.com

DUTCHESS

NEXT MEETING:

Sat., Sep. 19, 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., Sep. 15, 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., Sep. 3, 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., Sep. 10, 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., Sep. 16, 2026 at 6:30 PM
Liverpool Public Library
(3rd Wednesdays)

CONTACT:

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

ORANGE

NEXT MEETING:

Held 4th Thursdays. Location
varies. Contact us for details.

CONTACT:

Juan Ayala, Chair
livefree@juanrayala.com

QUEENS

NEXT MEETING:

Sat., Sep. 12, 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., Sep. 2, 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., Sep. 17, 2026 @ 7 PM
@ Coffee and Collectibles
(3rd Thursdays)

CONTACT:

**Susan Overeem Cummings,
Chair**
susanovereem@gmail.com

SARATOGA

CONTACT:

Naz Garabedian, 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., Sep. 17, 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., Aug. 29, 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

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