



# Free New York

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The Official Newsletter of the Libertarian Party of New York

December 2025

## 2026 NATIONAL CONVENTION DELEGATES CHOSEN



by Andrew Kolstee  
LPNY Secretary

Recently, the LNC Secretary Evan McMahon posted the final delegate numbers for all the states for the 2026 National Convention. The cut off was October 31, 2025. New York, as a result, has 33 delegates.

This is a decrease of 8 delegates from the 2024 convention, where there were 41 delegates. This is attributed to the drop in votes for the Libertarian Party Presidential candidate. In 2020, Jo Jorgensen had over 60,000 votes in New York, while on the ballot. In 2024, Chase Oliver, who was a write-in candidate, only garnered over 5,000 votes. The lack of votes for Oliver directly resulted in the decrease of New York's delegation number.

Even though it was not enough,

the Libertarian Party of New York is grateful for those who supported Chase Oliver as a write-in candidate, as voters for our candidate help our delegate count and are crucial for ballot access, even if we were short.

At the nominating convention of October 25, 2025, the number of delegates remained uncertain, and so only 30 were voted upon based on the rubric. An additional 3 delegates will be confirmed, along with the Alternates, in January 2026. Note that you can still reach out if you would like to be an Alternate Delegate. New York ended up with 15 Alternates in 2024, and the 15th Alternate ended up getting promoted to Delegate during the convention.

These are the names of those appointed as New York delegates to

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the 2026 Libertarian National Convention, so far:

1. Duane Whitmer
2. Andrew Kolstee
3. Chance Haywood
4. Mark Axinn
5. Justin Carman
6. Pietro Geraci
7. Paul Grindle
8. Christopher Skelly
9. Catrina Rocco
10. Rose Leatherman
11. Christian Padgett
12. Steven Becker
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. Justin Pelletier
22. Patrick Corrigan
23. Theresa Corrigan
24. Nicole Hewson
25. Jack Terran
26. Larry Sharpe
27. James Condon
28. Caryn Tarnoff
29. James Ostrowski
30. Randy Tarnoff

All delegates have been informed to confirm that they will be going to Grand Rapids. If there are any changes to the composition of the delegation, they will be announced.

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# LPNY STATEMENTS

The LPNY has issued a number of statements on several issues over the past month.

Press Contact: Christopher Skelly, Communications Director

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## LPNY DENOUNCES OSWEGO COMMON COUNCIL'S PROPERTY RIGHTS VIOLATION

DECEMBER 15, 2025 - The Libertarian Party of New York condemns the Oswego Common Council's 7-0 vote to revoke Anthony Schmitt's permission to maintain a wheelchair ramp on his property, ordering its removal over his refusal to sign a waiver and pay a fee for minor encroachment on public space.

This exemplifies government over-

reach violating property rights and liberty. Schmitt built a portable ramp that flips up to avoid obstructing the sidewalk, accommodating a family member's disability. The city's demands amount to regulatory extortion, ignoring common sense and compassion.

Property owners should control their land without interference, ab-

sent harm to others. This ramp poses no real threat.

We urge Oswego officials to reverse this decision, respect individual rights, and halt coercive local regulations. New Yorkers need freedom from unnecessary government burdens.

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## LPNY CONDEMNS PASSAGE OF COPA

DECEMBER 29, 2025 - The Libertarian Party of New York strongly opposes the recent passage of the Community Opportunity to Purchase Act (COPA) by the New York City Council on December 18, 2025.

This legislation represents a blatant infringement on private property rights, a core principle we hold sacred. By mandating that owners of certain multifamily residential buildings grant qualified nonprofits a right of first offer and right of first refusal before selling to private buyers, COPA effectively imposes government-forced preferences in

voluntary transactions. Property owners should have the unfettered right to sell their assets to whomever they choose, at terms they negotiate freely, without interference from the state or favored third parties.

While proponents claim COPA will preserve affordable housing and combat displacement, it achieves the opposite in practice. Such interventions distort the housing market, discourage investment, prolong sales processes, and ultimately reduce the supply of available properties, driving up costs for all New

Yorkers.

True solutions to housing affordability lie in reducing government barriers: eliminating excessive regulations, zoning restrictions, and taxes that stifle new construction and renovation.

We call on Mayor Adams to veto this bill and urge the City Council to reject any overrides. New Yorkers deserve freedom, not more coercive mandates that erode individual liberty under the guise of social good.

**See pages 6-7 for County Reports**

**Don't see your county listed?**

**We are looking for Libertarians  
to organize new County Affiliates!**

**Contact us for more details!**

**[affiliates@lpny.org](mailto:affiliates@lpny.org)**

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# JUDICIAL REFORM

by Vincent O'Neill  
State Committee Member (JD10)

“Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.” - Eighth Amendment

“A common argument defense lawyers make when trying to get courts to dismiss evidence obtained illegally against their client is that it was “the fruit of the poisoned tree”. The PATRIOT Act itself was the fruit of the tree of law enforcement’s relentless desire to be free of the inconveniences of the Fourth amendment and its guiding principles of privacy and due process.” - Brian Doherty, p. 17, *Reason Magazine*, November, 2021

A system of justice must replace the current ‘legal system as a Cash Cow’ system we have now.

## 1. Guilt, Innocence, and the Right to Trial by Jury

Requiring a unanimous verdict is a strategy used to cheat the defendant and guarantee a conviction. A very simple change eliminates this injustice.

If a unanimous verdict is required, anything less is an acquittal. According to the U.S. system, this is a ‘hung jury’, and a do-over occurs. The ‘government,’ which never pays

its bills but has access to unlimited taxpayer funding, can now keep a defendant, whose funds are limited, going to court forever.

This is a recipe for deliberate dishonesty and the elimination of the right to a jury trial. It also explains the incredibly high percentage of cases which result in a ‘plea bargain.’

### Solution

Once jury deliberation begins, juries will have as many business days as they require to reach a verdict. They can have as many votes each day as they like. The only one that counts is the last of the day.

They can vote on a maximum of 3 days.

The first vote must be unanimous for a conviction.

The second vote must be at least 11 of 12 for a conviction.

The third vote must be at least 9 of 12 for a conviction.

If any day’s last vote is less than 9 of 12 for conviction, it is an acquittal.

Anything less is not a “Hung Jury” or a “mistrial.” It is an acquittal. Jurors should not be forced to change their decision in order to reach an

artificial unanimity. This will allow them to maintain their integrity.

## 2. Jury Selection

End stacking the jury, which is actually taught in U.S. “Law Schools”

### Procedure:

Judge will ask prospective jurors if they know either lawyer, or the plaintiff, or the defendant. Anyone who does will be dismissed.

The Judge will also ask prospective jurors if they are prejudiced for or against the plaintiff or defendant to such an extent that they will be unable to provide a just verdict based on the evidence. Anyone who answers in the affirmative will be dismissed.

Additionally, each lawyer receives 2 peremptory challenges only.

## 3. Bail Reform

Although the Constitution forbids the institution of excessive bail, another strategy used by the prosecution is to keep a defendant who can’t make bail in jail indefinitely ‘awaiting trial.’ “Excessive Bail” is any amount a defendant cannot reasonably afford. Therefore, limits should be in place.

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If a defendant is unable to make bail after two weeks, the bail is excessive and should be cut in half. If the defendant is still unable to make bail after an additional two weeks, it should be cut in half again. This will make sure that excessive bail cannot be imposed and will guarantee the defendant's right to a jury trial.

The other extreme, the abolition of bail, is also unacceptable. These

simple changes will create the basis for a just system to replace the "Judicial System as Cash Cow" that we have now.

One final addition will be necessary.

#### **4. "Loser Pays" If he brought the suit**

In the English Legal System, the loser is responsible for the winning party's legal costs, including attorney's fees. This is an excellent way

to get rid of frivolous and/or meritless lawsuits, but it needs one small improvement.

The improvement is to institute "Loser Pays," but only if he brought the suit. This is an improvement on the English system of "Loser Pays," since it eliminates the advantage a wealthy party would otherwise hold.



**LEARN MORE:**

**[www.LarrySharpe.com](http://www.LarrySharpe.com)**

# COUNTY AFFILIATE NEWS

## BRONX

**CONTACT:**

**Kim Antonio,**  
Acting County Chair

## CHAUTAUQUA

**NEXT MEETING:**

Tues., Jan. 13, 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**  
ngrass89@yahoo.com

**LEARN MORE:**

lpchemung.org

## COLUMBIA

**NEXT MEETING:**

Wed., Jan. 21, 2026 @ 7 PM  
Google Meet  
(third Wednesdays)

**CONTACT:**

**Scott Hoskins, Chair**  
scottdhoskins@gmail.com

## DUTCHESS

**NEXT MEETING:**

Sat., Jan. 17, 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., Jan. 20, 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., Jan. 1, 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., Jan. 8, 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., Jan. 21, 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., Jan. 10, 2026 at 12 PM  
Stamatis Greek  
and Mediterranean Restaurant  
29-09 23rd Ave., Astoria

**CONTACT:**

**John Clifton, Chair**  
mrjclifton@yahoo.com

## RENSSELAER

**NEXT MEETING:**

Wed., Jan. 7, 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., Jan. 15, 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., Jan. 12, 2026 at 6:30 PM  
Hickory BBQ, Kingston, NY  
(second Mondays)

**CONTACT:**

**Sam Kniffen, Chair**  
samkniffen01@gmail.com

**LEARN MORE:**

[www.UlsterLP.org](http://www.UlsterLP.org)

## WAYNE

**MONTHLY SOCIAL:**

Sat., Jan. 24, 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](http://lpwaynecounty.org)

## WESTCHESTER-PUTNAM

**NEXT MEETING:**

Thurs., Jan. 8, 2025 at 7 PM  
St. John's Italian Restaurant  
915 N Broadway,  
White Plains, NY 10603

**CONTACT:**

**Rajib Maitra, Chair**  
rajib.maitra1@gmail.com

# LPNY DIRECTORY

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	COMMITTEE CHAIRS	
<p><b>Duane Whitmer</b> Chair  <b>Daniel Castello</b> Vice Chair  <b>Andrew Kolstee</b> Secretary  <b>Chance Haywood</b> Treasurer  <b>Christopher Skelly</b> Communications Director  <b>Mark Axinn</b> Fundraising Director  <b>Justin Carman</b> IT Director  <b>Richard Purtell</b> Legislative Affairs Director  <b>Pietro Geraci</b> Outreach Director  <b>Paul Grindle</b> Political Director  <b>Catrina Rocco</b> Volunteer Director</p>	<p><b>Daniel Castello</b>  Platform Committee Chair  <b>Andrew Kolstee</b>  Rules Committee Chair  <b>Daniel Castello</b>  Strategic Planning Committee Chair</p>	
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<a href="mailto:info@lpny.org">info@lpny.org</a>	<a href="http://www.LPNY.org">www.LPNY.org</a>	<b>866-336-3120</b>