



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Women's City Club of New York Urges New Yorkers to Vote NO on Constitutional Convention on November 7

NEW YORK, N.Y. – The Women's City Club of New York (WCC) opposes the holding of a New York State Constitutional Convention, a measure that will be put to voters in the New York State General Election on November 7, 2017.

Every two decades, New Yorkers have the chance to decide whether to hold a Constitutional Convention to consider amendments to the State's Constitution. If voters approve the measure this November, then a process is launched to appoint delegates across the state who then convene to adopt amendments, which are then put to voters in 2019.

"A New York State Constitutional Convention poses an overwhelming threat to current protections and other provisions in the State, as every provision in the Constitution is available for change," a Board resolution stated. "Well-funded special-interest groups in New York and nationally are poised to use the Constitutional Convention process to roll back provisions the WCC has long supported. These special interest groups could deploy their resources to elect delegates favorable to their views and to shape the process of subsequent public votes."

A review by WCC's Public Policy Committee determined that if a Constitutional Convention happens, the State's governing document could be overhauled to roll back such key provisions as aid to the needy, requiring that States provide a "sound basic education" to all children, criminal justice protections, access to reproductive health care or pension guarantees. Rather, many of the reforms that WCC has called for – championing equality in the workplace and housing, protecting the environment, preserving women's rights and campaign finance reform – could still be achieved through State legislative actions, without the need for a Constitutional Convention.

"It is very possible that the recommendations [made by a Constitutional Convention] would be on the ballot in 2019, an off-year when turnout will likely be low, making it possible for harmful reforms to be approved by a well-organized and financed minority," the Board resolution reads. "Further, a Constitutional Convention could also yield a significant, but unnecessary, price-tag."

About Women's City Club of New York

Women's City Club of New York (WCC) is a nonprofit, non-partisan, multi-issue activist organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for all New Yorkers. WCC shapes public policy through education, issues analysis, advocacy, and civic participation. As WCC enters its second century of activism, it continues to pursue economic, racial, and gender justice with the goal of dismantling the social inequities that deprive citizens of the opportunity to thrive.

Through member-led Task Forces, WCC conducts research, publishes reports, fosters dialogue with public officials, and launches public education and multi-year advocacy campaigns in the following focus areas: Criminal Justice, The Environment, Good Government, Health, Housing and Homelessness, Income Inequality, and Public Education. For more information, visit <http://www.wccny.org>.

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