

Why PARA is worried about a NYS Constitutional Convention:

What you need to know to protect your pension!

September 2017

PARA was established 30 years ago to maintain programs for the general benefit of its membership, especially those that would help protect our retirees' earned benefits. In light of this, your PARA Board is alerting you to an upcoming ballot issue in New York State (NYS) on November 7, 2017.

Every twenty years, per the New York State Constitution, NYS voters are asked whether or not they want to convene a NYS Constitutional Convention (ConCon) for the purpose of changing the NYS Constitution. This question will be on the NYS ballot on November 7, 2017. We repeated this date because it is so critical.

As a result of a NYS ConCon, your NYS pension could be diminished, future pension benefits could be at risk and the tax-exempt status of your pension in NYS could be eliminated. Any other protected rights under the NYS Constitution such as public education, environmental protections, right to organize (e.g., unions), collective bargaining, and workers' compensation, could be up for grabs. There is no fixed agenda for a ConCon.

Convening a ConCon in the hopes of making important reforms in NYS is not a bad thing. But avenues other than holding a long, expensive and no-agenda ConCon exist to propose amendments to NYS's Constitution. A NYS Constitutional Convention which elects 204 paid delegates can cost taxpayers a lot – the estimate for a new ConCon could cost more than \$100 million. It could cost NYS public employees who have earned their pensions a lot more than that.

We ask you, if you are a registered NYS voter to vote NO on Tuesday, November 7, 2017 for the NYS ballot question to hold a Constitutional Convention. We ask that you talk to the NYS registered voters in your families, your friends, and other acquaintances who rely on their earned NYS pensions and benefits and tell them to vote NO.

PARA will continue to track this issue, and we will keep you posted about the latest news, especially whether it looks like NYS voters might approve holding a ConCon.

See PARA's website for regularly updated posts on this issue: www.paranynj.org.

If you have questions about the November 7, 2017 NYS Constitutional Convention ballot referendum, **send us an email at para@paranynj.org.**

Dear PARA member:

You receive our newsletters twice a year, so you know that this is a special mailing.

When we need to get news out quickly, our eBulletins (sent via email) are the best choice. Paper ("snail mail") requires a longer lead time and is expensive.

If you aren't receiving PARA's eBulletins, go to our home page: www.paranynj.org and scroll down to "Not signed up for eBulletins – Join Today!" Enter your email information and you're done!

If you signed up earlier, but you changed your email address, you need to update it by going to our home page and follow the instructions (see above).

Thanks from your PARA Board