

7176

2015-2016 Regular Sessions

I N A S S E M B L Y

April 27, 2015

Introduced by M. of A. ROSENTHAL -- read once and referred to the
Committee on Election Law

AN ACT on the application of the legislature of the state of New York
petitioning the Congress of the United States of America to call a
national constitutional convention to propose amendments in order to
address concerns raised by the decision of the United States Supreme
Court in CITIZENS UNITED V. FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION 130 S.Ct. 876

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEM-
BLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

- 1 Section 1. Legislative findings and intent. The legislature finds
2 that:
3 a. the first President of the United States, George Washington, stat-
4 ed: "The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to
5 make and to alter their Constitutions of Government.";
6 b. it was the stated intention of the framers of the Constitution of
7 the United States of America that the Congress of the United States of
8 America should be "dependent on the people alone." (James Madison,
9 Federalist 52);
10 c. that dependency has evolved from a dependency on the people alone
11 to a dependency on those who spend excessively in elections, through
12 campaigns or third-party groups;
13 d. the United States Supreme Court ruling in CITIZENS UNITED V.
14 FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION 558 U.S. 310 (2010) removed restrictions on
15 amount of independent political spending;
16 e. the removal of those restrictions has resulted in the unjust influ-
17 ence of powerful economic forces, which have supplanted the will of the
18 people by undermining our ability to choose our political leadership,
19 write our own laws, and determine the fate of our state; and
20 f. Article V of the United States Constitution requires the United
21 States Congress to call a convention for proposing amendments upon

EXPLANATION--Matter in *ITALICS* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[] is old law to be omitted.

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1 application of two-thirds of the legislatures of the several states for
2 the purpose of proposing amendments to the United States Constitution.

3 S 2. The legislature declares that:

4 a. the State of New York sees the need for a convention to propose
5 amendments in order to address concerns such as those raised by the
6 decision of the United States Supreme Court in CITIZENS UNITED V.
7 FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION (2010) 130 S.Ct. 876 and related cases and
8 events including those occurring long before or afterward or for a
9 substantially similar purpose, and desires that said convention should
10 be so limited; and

11 b. the State of New York desires that the delegates to said convention
12 shall be comprised equally from individuals currently elected to state
13 and local office, or be selected by election in each Congressional
14 district for the purpose of serving as delegates, though all individuals
15 elected or appointed to federal office, now or in the past, be prohibit-
16 ed from serving as delegates to the Convention, and intends to retain
17 the ability to restrict or expand the power of its delegates within the
18 limits expressed above; and

19 c. the State of New York intends that this be a continuing application
20 considered together with applications calling for a convention currently
21 pending in the 188th Massachusetts legislature as S.1727 and H.3190, the
22 2013-2014 Vermont legislature as SJR 27 and the 2013-2014 California
23 legislature as AJR 1, the 97th Michigan legislature as House Joint
24 Resolution BB and all other passed, pending, and future applications,
25 the aforementioned concerns of New York notwithstanding until such time
26 as two-thirds of the several States have applied for a Convention and
27 said Convention is convened by Congress.

28 S 3. Pursuant to Article V of the United States Constitution, the
29 Legislature hereby petitions the United States Congress to call a
30 Convention for the purpose of proposing Amendments to the Constitution
31 of the United States of America as soon as two-thirds of the several
32 States have applied for a Convention.

33 S 4. The Governor of the State of New York shall transmit copies of
34 this act to the President and Vice President of the United States, the
35 Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Minority
36 Leader of the United States House of Representatives, the President Pro
37 Tempore of the United States Senate, to each Senator and Representative
38 from New York in the Congress of the United States, to the Governor of
39 each State, and to the presiding officers of each legislative body of
40 each of the several States, requesting the cooperation of the several
41 States in issuing an application compelling Congress to call a conven-
42 tion for proposing amendments pursuant to Article V of the United States
43 Constitution.

44 S 5. This act shall take effect immediately.