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***For immediate release***

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**Would New York Benefit from a Constitutional Convention?**

***Panel Featuring Gerald Benjamin, Ronald Deutsch and Susan Arbetter to discuss pros and cons of a NYS ConCon which is on the ballot in November***

Albany, New York... The Women's Press Club of New York State and the League of Women Voters of Albany County will present a panel discussion on the November ballot question of whether New York should hold a constitutional convention. The discussion, open to the public, will take place at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, October 24, 2017 in the Guilderland Public Library, 2228 Western Ave., Guilderland. This event is free and open to the public.

The New York State Constitution calls for voters to decide at least every 20 years whether New York should convene a constitutional convention. The last convention was held in 1967. If the ballot proposal is approved on Nov. 7, voters would select convention delegates in November 2018. The convention would meet in early 2019. Any proposed amendments to the constitution would appear on the November 2019 ballot.

Panelists will be Gerald Benjamin of the Benjamin Center for Public Policy Initiatives at SUNY New Paltz, and Ronald Deutsch, executive director of the Fiscal Policy Institute in Latham. Susan Arbetter, host of the syndicated public radio program "The Capitol Pressroom," will be the moderator.

*About the Panel:*

**Gerald Benjamin** founded what is now named the Benjamin Center for Public Policy Initiatives at SUNY New Paltz in 2008. Benjamin is the former director of New York State and local government studies at the Rockefeller Institute of Government. He was named by then-Gov. Mario Cuomo to serve as research director of the Temporary State Commission on Constitutional Revision.

**Ronald Deutsch** has worked with the Fiscal Policy Institute since 2015. He previously was director of New Yorkers for Fiscal Fairness and led the Statewide Emergency Network for Social and Economic Security, an anti-poverty advocacy group. Deutsch also serves as president of the Giving Circle, an all-volunteer non-profit organization that assists families locally, nationally and internationally.

**Susan Arbetter** is director of news and public affairs for WCNY, the Syracuse-based public broadcaster, and host of "The Capitol Pressroom," a daily program broadcast and live-streamed from the Legislative Correspondents Association pressroom in the state Capitol. An award-winning journalist, Arbetter previously created, hosted and produced WMHT's television program "New York Now." She also worked at WAMC Northeast Public Radio as news director and as a host of the morning program "Roundtable."

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*About the Program Sponsors:*

The **Women's Press Club of New York State, Inc.** is a nonprofit organization formed in 1966 by a small group of women journalists committed to supporting women in journalism and communications. Today, the organization's members include women and men who work for radio and television stations, digital media, newspapers, government agencies, nonprofit organizations and private companies, as well as freelance writers, entrepreneurs and students. The WPCNYS provides support, professional development, programming, mentoring and networking opportunities for New Yorkers in the field. Further information may be found on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/wpcnys> or WPCNYS website at [www.womenspressclubnys.org](http://www.womenspressclubnys.org).

The **League of Women Voters**, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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