



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Velmanette Montgomery

What's At Risk: Environmental Protections in the New York State Constitution

SENATOR VELMANETTE MONTGOMERY October 1, 2017

| ISSUE: **NEW YORK STATE CONSTITUTION, ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION, FOREVER WILD ACT, NEW YORK STATE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION**

**NEW YORK STATE
CONSTITUTIONAL
CONVENTION**

On September 19th, Senator Velmanette Montgomery, Senate Democratic Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Assemblyman Walter T. Mosley, Assemblywoman Jo Anne Simon, Assemblywoman Tremaine S. Wright and Public Advocate Letitia James hosted a Community Town Hall Meeting on the New York State Constitutional Convention. Over 450 people attended the educational forum to learn more about the New York State

Constitution and the protections guaranteed to all residents of our great state.

The event was co-sponsored by New York State AFL-CIO, New York State United Teachers (NYSUT), New York State Nurses Association, Transport Workers Union Local 100, Council of School Supervisors & Administrators (CSA), CWA Local 1180, District Council 1707, 32BJ SEIU, UFCW Local 1500, United Federation of Teachers (UFT), Teamsters Local 237, District Council 37 (DC 37), United University Professions (UUP), UAW, Region 9A and the New York State Public Employees Federation (PEF).

During the event, panelist John F. Sheehan, Director of Communications for the Adirondack Council discusses the history of the Forever Wild Act and outlines the environmental protections in the New York State Constitution. Article XIV of the Constitution guarantees the conservation of our state's natural resources including 3 million acres of forest preserves and protects natural resources such as our state's reservoirs.

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It stands now as the strongest forest protection law on earth. There's nothing stronger, nothing has lasted this long. Nothing has been better at protecting forests from harm. And no one else in the United States, not one other in the 49 states or the District of Columbia has managed to duplicate that. We caught lightning in the bottle in 1894 and every time there is talk about a Constitutional Convention, I get worried that [that] provision is going to disappear."

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[The forest preserve also protects the] purity of the New York City water supply. Catskill Park and Catskill Forest Preserve is the reason that you have the best water in the United States, in New York City. It's the reason you don't have to go to bed at night worrying that your children

has suffered the same fate as the children of Flint, Michigan who drank poison water for years and had no idea. Forever Wild can protect that for generations to come."

For more information about Senator Montgomery's Constitutional Convention Educational Forum and the New York State Constitution, visit:

<https://www.nysenate.gov/newsroom/articles/velmanette-montgomery/community-town-meeting-new-york-state-constitutional>

To learn more about the New York State Constitution and the Constitutional Convention process, visit: <https://www.nysenate.gov/newsroom/articles/velmanette-montgomery/what-new-york-state-constitutional-convention>