

# New York Prohibitionist



*Think NY Vote Dry*

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## A Vision for the Future

In these trying times, the Prohibition Party of New York continues its work to advocate for positive policies and advance social reform. We offer a vision for a better future for New York. A vision for a new approach to governance focused on moral principle, public service, and advancing the public wellbeing. A vision of a state filled with healthy, prospering communities, and greater opportunity for all New Yorkers. If you are interested in helping to make a positive impact on your state and your community, consider joining the Prohibition Party of New York.

"Always vote for principle, though you may vote alone, and you may cherish the sweetest reflection that your vote is never lost." John Quincy Adams

## State and National Party News

The Prohibition Party continues its work on the state and national level. On the national level, the party has been working on preparations for the 2024 presidential campaign. We have begun running Facebook advertisements in Arkansas, encouraging voters in the state to learn about and consider donating to the party. On the state level, we have continued to work on issue advocacy, networking, and informing New Yorkers. We have been working to develop relations with local anti-tobacco organizations. We have worked to reach out to some members of the state legislature, to encourage them to continue supporting bills to help address the problem of alcohol and to support ballot access reform.

"In order to write poetry that isn't political, I must listen to the birds and in order to listen to the birds the warplanes must be silent"  
Marwan Makhoul

## Wood Speaks at Event in California

Prohibition Party presidential candidate Michael Wood spoke at an event held by a foodbank in Riverside County California. While visiting the area, he had arranged with the managing director to visit the largest foodbank in the county. He spent four hours distributing food with some members of the foodbank's team. He then spoke at the foodbank's annual Thanksgiving lunch for volunteers. There were 52 people present at the lunch. He spoke about the history of the Prohibition Party, how drug and alcohol abuse contribute to poverty, how the party's national platform is the only national platform that addresses the need to support food banks, and expressed his personal thanks for the important work the members of the foodbank team are doing.

## Special Elections Coming in Two New York Congressional Districts

Special Elections will be coming next year in two of New York's Congressional districts. The first will be in New York's 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District. This special election will come as a result of the House of Representatives voting to expel George Santos, following the release of a report of the House Ethics Committee and George Santos having received 23 count indictment on fraud charges. The special election for this district should take place sometime in this coming February. State law gives the governor 10 days to select the date of a special election, which must take place 70-80 days later.

The second special election will be New York's 26<sup>th</sup> congressional district. Longtime congressman Brian Higgins has announced that he plans to retire from Congress in February, in order to become the new president of Shea's Performing Arts Center in Buffalo. Depending on



when in February he resigns from his position, the special election could take place sometime in April or May of this coming year.

Sources: <https://ballot-access.org/2023/12/01/new-york-special-u-s-house-election-will-be-in-february-2024/>  
<https://www.politico.com/news/2023/12/01/santos-expelled-special-election-00129590>  
<https://higgins.house.gov/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=4903>  
<https://apnews.com/article/congress-higgins-de-mocrat-buffalo-b071be8c098e2a790534050fdd8a395>  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/12/politics/higgins-house-de-mocrat-new-york.html>

## Assemblymember Tries to Get Rid of Disaggregate Fusion Voting

Assemblymember Pat Burke (District 142) has put forward a bill to try to get rid of most forms of disaggregate fusion voting in New York State elections. Bill A8178 would replace the current system of disaggregate voting for candidates nominated by two or more parties, with an aggregate system of fusion voting, except for gubernatorial and presidential elections.

Disaggregate fusion voting has long been used in New York state. Under disaggregate fusion voting, a candidate nominated by two or more parties for a position is listed under the ballot lines of each party that nominated them and the votes for them under each ballot line are totaled. Under aggregate fusion voting, the candidate would only be listed under one ballot line and have a note for each other party that nominated them. Burke's bill presumably excludes elections for governor and president from his proposed change due to the fact that under current ballot access laws, parties seeking to acquire or maintain statewide ballot access are required to receive a certain

minimum number of votes for governor/president under their ballot line. In order to change fusion voting for those positions, the state would also need to create a new system for parties to qualify for statewide ballot access status.

Assemblymember Burke contends that his proposed changes would help to simplify the ballot for voters. But this argument doesn't hold water. Given that New York state has long used disaggregate fusion voting, voters in the state are often used to this system of voting. The concept of voting for your preferred candidate under the ballot line of the party you more prefer isn't all too complicated. Furthermore, having two different systems of fusion voting for different positions would make voting more complicated and potentially more confusing for voters. Elections expert Richard Winger has predicted that this bill is likely to attract significant opposition from minor parties, such as the Conservative and Working Families Parties. It remains to be seen how many members of the state legislature would even be willing to consider Burke's questionable proposal. Though, various third party activists will likely do what they can to dissuade state legislators from letting this bill move forward.

Source: <https://ballot-access.org/2023/11/04/new-york-bill-to-eliminated-disaggregated-fusion-except-for-presidential-and-gubernatorial-races/>

## The Future of Local Elections is in the Hands of the Governor

The future of local elections in the state is in the hands of Governor Hochul, as she considers whether to sign or veto a bill to change the years of most local elections in the state. Currently, most elections of local elections in the state take place in odd-numbered years, while most statewide, state legislative, and federal elections occur in even-numbered years. Earlier this year, a bill was passed in the state legislature that would require local governments outside of New York City to move their local elections to even years, to coincide with state and federal elections. Governor Hochul has yet to officially decide whether to sign the bill into law.

The bill's proponents contend that changing local elections would serve to increase voter turnout for local elections,

as people to come to vote in state/federal elections may also cast votes for local candidates. They also contend that the change would save money, by reducing the number of different voting days that are held over a multi-year period.

Opponents of the bill contend that changing the years of local elections is a misguided measure, which would come with various negative effects. They contend that having local elections in the same years as state/federal elections would result in statewide and national issues taking up more attention, local candidates and issues receiving less attention in a crowded field of information, and a more crowded ballot. They contend that this change would result in less frequent input from voters (given that there would be elections every two years, instead of elections each year); reducing the regular influx of new ideas into the electoral system, and increasing the time that it would take for grassroots organizing and candidates to rise from the local to the state level.

The editors of the Albany Times Union have publicly came out against the bill and publicly called for the governor to veto the bill. They claimed that the bill was "a cosmetic solution, at best" and the "bread-and-butter local issues behind those races may get drowned out in the hyperpartisan, hot-button din of state or federal elections".

They contended the bill "doesn't help democracy, and it ultimately doesn't help our political system, which needs a constant influx of fresh voices and ideas. It's not particularly good for political parties, either, not if they hope to develop strong future state and national candidates from the grassroots of local politics."

The editors further argued that instead of changing the years for local elections, the state would be better off seeking to increase voter engagement in local elections, by enacting measures to help increase the competitiveness of local elections. That it was estimated that nearly a third of local elections in 2021 had only one candidate on the ballot running unopposed. They contend that working to better engage voters is what

will help to substantively improve turnout for local elections.

The fate of the bill remains to be seen. Governor Hochul may decide to either sign the bill into law or decide to veto it. In the meantime, advocates on each side may seek to convince the Governor to make the decision that they want.

Sources: <https://www.timesunion.com/opinion/article/editorial-veto-fix-new-york-s-election-18527561.php>  
<https://ballot-access.org/2023/12/04/albany-new-york-daily-newspaper-urges-governor-kathy-hochul-to-veto-bill-that-moves-most-local-elections-from-odd-years-to-even-years/>

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"Wisdom outweighs any wealth" Sophocles

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## Hochul Signs Two More Pro-Alcohol Bills, Misusing Public Resources

Governor Hochul has signed two more pro-alcohol bills, which will open the door for further misuse of public institutions and resources to support the alcohol industry. Bill S1054/A04113 increases the number of state government-sponsored cuisine trails. These include more state craft beverage trails: promoting alcohol sales. This uses state agencies and resources to promote alcohol use and aid the alcohol industry, to the detriment of public health.

Bill S7085/A07293 allows the manufacturing of alcohol at SUNY Broome Community College and Cornell University. This would be done in order to train students for future jobs working in the alcohol industry. It would use both a state-funded college and one of the state's top universities to manufacture a toxic substance that causes widespread harm to both consumers. It would use these institutions and taxpayer dollars to help support the growth of an industry that causes harm to the public. And it does so with the public endorsement of the state government, in contradiction to its ethical obligation to protect the public welfare. This is unethical on several levels.

These bills will lead to state agencies, state resources, and taxpayer money being increasingly misused to promote an industry that profits off exploiting and harming the people of this state. In the meantime, the state government continues to fail to address alcohol as a public health problem, underfunds prevention programs, underfunds addiction treatment programs, and

promotes a false narrative of the alcohol industry helping the state's economy, while the public is forced to endure ever increasing costs from the social, medical, and economic damages caused by alcohol.

Source: <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-signs-legislative-package-support-new-yorks-food-and-beverage-industry>

## **New York Prohibition Party History**

### **William J. Richardson**

William John Richardson was born on March 31, 1848, in Richburg, New York. He was the second youngest child of Alvan Richardson Jr. and Rebecca H. (Gray) Richardson. William J. Richardson came from a locally prominent family. His grandfather Alvan Richardson Sr. was an early settler of both Richburg and Wirt. He came to Wirt in 1819, built a farm, and established several businesses, including a sawmill in Wirt, the first inn in Wirt, and a gristmill at Little Genesee creek. He established the first post office in Richburg (which was named after him) and was its first postmaster. He had 7 children, including Alvan Jr. Alvan Richardson Jr. was a farmer and landlord, who had a 300-acre farm in Wirt. He married Rebecca H. Gray of Franklin County and had 6 children: Alvan III (b.1840-d.1841), Marian A. (b.1843), Frances Caroline (b.1844-d. 1917), James Wallace (b.1846/1847), William John, and Walter Gray (b.1850-d.1920). He was a Baptist and was spent a significant part of his life as a deacon for Richburg's Baptist Church. He served in multiple local offices, including town assessor, commissioner of schools, and several terms as overseer of the poor. The discovery of oil on his land during the 1881 Oil Boom in Allegany County made him fairly wealthy, and he spent the final years of life (1882-1894) living in Friendship, New York.

William J. Richardson grew up in the town of Wirt. He spent his early adult years working as a farmer on his father's farm and as a teacher. In 1871, he married his wife Helen A. (Jordan) Richardson. They had a son, Frederick B. Richardson (b.1875-d. 1905). They also reportedly had two other children who died at an early age. In 1880, was a U.S. Census enumerator. In 1882, Richardson started a career in banking. He became cashier of the First National Bank of Richburg. In the same year, he was elected and served as

Town Clerk of Wirt. In 1884, Richardson was elected to his first term as Town Supervisor of Wirt.

In 1886, Richardson was elected Town Supervisor of Wirt as a part of a wave of Prohibition Party candidates elected to offices in Allegany County. This wave resulted in the Prohibition Party winning most of the town offices in Wirt that were voted on in 1886. During his time as Town Supervisor of Wirt, he was part of the Allegany County Board of Supervisors. He was on the committee on County

Treasurer's Accounts (which oversaw the accounts of the county treasurer) and the committee on County House and Farm (which oversaw the finances of the Allegany County Poor House). He proposed and passed a resolution to raise the salary of the county district attorney. He supported the passage of a resolution to renovate the county courthouse and grounds in Belmont. He introduced a bill known as "An act to prevent the spread and procure the destruction of what is known as Canada Thistles, in Allegany County". Canada Thistles being a type of invasive plant that causes problems for farmers.

The bill was sent to the Committee on Laws and appears to have died in the committee. As a member of the County House and Home Committee, he helped produce the committee's annual report, which reported that the Allegany County Poor House was generally doing well, recommend having the house repainted next year, and recommended the purchase of a land roller for the facility. These appear to have been the main actions of Richardson during his 1886 term as Town Supervisor.

In 1887, Richardson moved to Belmont, New York and became a cashier at the First National Bank of Belmont. In 1888, the State Bank of Belmont was established. Richard was part of the original staff as a cashier, and by 1896 had become one of the directors of the bank. In 1890, Richardson was part of a group of investors that started construction on a new hotel in Belmont (after the previous one had burned down in 1888). High construction costs resulted in it being mortgaged before construction was complete and the financier of the

mortgage (Isaac Willets) took ownership of the hotel. In spring 1895, the Citizens National Bank is opened in Allegany County, and Richardson was one of its directors. In addition to banking and finance, Richardson was also involved in the area's oil producing business.

While living in Belmont, William Richardson and his wife were heavily involved in the community. William Richardson had served terms as treasurer and vice-president of the Allegany County Sunday School Association, had served as treasurer of the Allegany County Historical Society, and was a member of the Masonic Lodge in Belmont. Helen A. Richardson was involved with the Allegany County Women's Christian Temperance Union, and was their treasurer from 1889-1895.

By 1900, Richardson had moved to Wellsville, New York. He continued to be involved in the Prohibition Party. In 1906, he served as treasurer of the Allegany County Prohibition Party and was also on the county executive committee. He continued to be involved in banking. By 1910, he had become president of a bank. In 1926, he became president of Citizen's National Bank of Wellsville. His involvement in banking and oil businesses allowed him to become wealthy and amass a relative fortune. He used part of his wealth to make charitable donations (including donating \$100,000 to Keuka College).

In his later years, Richardson was a member of the Masonic lodge in Belmont, the Hornell Commandery, the Corning Consistory, and the Rotary Club. He lived as a widower following his wife's death in 1918. He lived to see the Prohibition Party's goal of establishing national prohibition, following the passage of the 18<sup>th</sup> amendment and saw the first several years of the National Prohibition era.

William J. Richardson died on May 30, 1929. His funeral was held in Wellsville, by Rev. J.G. York of the Baptist Church, and he was buried in Woodlawn Cemetery, in Wellsville.

Source: [https://615c4beb-b241-4f4a-a6b4-a074dc02ce34.filesusr.com/ugd/2cc7be\\_b4f96ee113a2d4dfbaafe0223fb7a03c.pdf](https://615c4beb-b241-4f4a-a6b4-a074dc02ce34.filesusr.com/ugd/2cc7be_b4f96ee113a2d4dfbaafe0223fb7a03c.pdf)