

# 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.

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"The thing that the alcohol industry fears more than increased taxes is increased knowledge about the risks associated with drinking alcohol, particularly around cancer,"  
Mike Marshall

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## State and National News

The Prohibition Party continues to move forward on the state and national level. On the national level, the Prohibition Party is continuing with efforts to build up the party's organization and membership.

This year, we have seen the retirement of Russel Hallock from his leadership roles within the Prohibition Party. Russel Hallock was a long-time member of the Prohibition National Committee representing New York and member of the party's executive committee.

Party Chairman Zack Kusnir had made the following statement on Hallock's retirement,

"I want to extend the biggest of thank yous to Russell Hallock. It is with much gratitude and respect that I announce Russell has stepped down from his committee roles with the Prohibition Party to concentrate on matters closer to home. He remains a member of the party, for which I am grateful. Russell informed me of his decision some time ago, and I

figure it is now an appropriate time for an announcement.

Russell has been a driving force for the Prohibition Party, strengthening our goals both nationally and in New York. In 2017, Russell joined with other New York Prohibitionists to reestablish a state-level organization, forming a new chapter in the history of the Prohibition Party in New York State.

Russell, thank you for your unwavering commitment to the Prohibition Party and it's values over the years, you are an inspiration. We celebrate your excellent service and wish you fulfillment and joy.

All, please join me in thanking Russell for his years of service and wishing him the very best."

On the state level, the Prohibition Party of New York is continuing to move forward with information efforts and legislative activism. With the regular legislative session for the state legislative session completed, the remaining part of the year provides time to work on local organizing efforts and working to reach out to state legislators in preparation for next year's legislative session. Though, we must also keep an eye out for any attempts by pro-alcohol politicians to try to push through pro-alcohol bills should the legislators convene outside the regular legislative session.

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"Alcohol is a well-established, preventable cause of cancer responsible for about 100,000 cases of cancer and 20,000 cancer deaths annually in the United States – greater than the 13,500 alcohol-associated traffic crash fatalities per year in the US – yet the majority of Americans are unaware of this risk," Vivek Murthy



## Attack on Public Awareness: Pro-Alcohol Forces Gutting Federal Dietary Guidelines on Alcohol Use and Suppressing Research on Alcohol Harms

Alcohol industry lobbyists and their coconspirators within the HHS Department are on the warpath, seeking to gut federal efforts to inform the public about the harmful effects of alcohol and redraw U.S. dietary recommendations to serve alcohol industry interests.

Things had initially appeared hopeful early in the year. The then-U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy had released a report that highlighted the role that alcohol use plays in causing cancer (including recognizing that alcohol use is a direct cause of several types of cancer and that any level of alcohol use increases cancer risks). In the same month, the HHS released the draft of the 2025 Alcohol Intake & Health Study; one of the major studies for presenting scientific research on alcohol. The study demonstrated growing research showing the negative effects of 'moderate' alcohol consumption on health and that drinking even within the current recommended limits in the U.S. Dietary guidelines increased risks of death. Recommendations were being made to increase public information efforts about the negative effects of alcohol use on health. The Surgeon General voiced support for putting cancer warning labels on alcohol, similar to those on cigarettes.

Efforts were underway to update the U.S. Dietary Guidelines recommended daily limit for alcohol use to a lower amount, in recognition of growing science showing that even light alcohol use has detrimental effects on health.

Unfortunately, this movement toward progress within federal health agencies did not last. The alcohol industry, fearing that such advancements in public knowledge would lead to reduced alcohol consumption and thus threaten their profits, reacted by pouring money into lobbying efforts to try to gain more influence over federal agencies and reverse their move towards progress. The officials overseeing the Department of Health and Human Services under the current administration have not only halted efforts to advance public awareness of the harms of alcohol, but, as they have come under increasing influence of alcohol industry lobbyists, are now moving backwards.

Recently, the HHS has withdrawn the 2025 Alcohol Intake & Health Study and won't put it forward for full publication. This study had pointed out that drinking on average even 1 standard drink per day produced risks of death from alcohol use. It stated that men and women who consumed an average of one drink per day had a higher risk of liver cirrhosis, esophageal cancer, oral cancer, and injuries. It acknowledged that alcohol use at any level increased the risk of dying from seven types of cancer and increased by the amount used. And it stated that alcohol attributable death increased linearly with consumption. This study has now been suppressed, much to the satisfaction of the alcohol industry and its lobbyists, who sought to bring it down.

The Alcohol Intake & Health Study is being sidelined in favor of a competing report. The competing report was made by a NASEM (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine) panel. This panel has multiple members with financial ties to the alcohol industry and has had persistent issues of being affected by the alcohol industry's financial influence. The report that they created parrots alcohol industry propaganda claiming that moderate alcohol use increases longevity, based on alcohol industry-funded studies using severely flawed and debunked methodologies. It

downplays the proven connections between alcohol use and cancer and growing research showing that even light alcohol use increases cancer risks. The alcohol industry is openly supporting the NASEM report as it tries to influence the contents of the new U.S. Dietary guidelines, which are supposed to come out soon.

Additionally, figures in Congress have taken action to defund the Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Prevention of Underage Drinking (ICCPUD), which produced the 2025 Alcohol Intake & Health Study. An action that has the further effect of undermining independent research on the health impacts of alcohol use and gives further advantage to committees under the alcohol industry's influence.

The alcohol industry has been attempting to influence the HHS to write the new U.S. Dietary guidelines in a way that suits their interests. At minimum, they seek to oppose updates to the guidelines that would set a lower recommended limit on alcohol use or include more information about the health risks of alcohol. On the higher end, they seek to have the section rewritten to promote so-called "moderate" drinking, to try to eliminate recommended limits on drinking, or to potentially eliminate the section on alcohol from the dietary guidelines altogether. The alcohol industry is attempting to use its financial and political influence to suppress scientific information, promote propaganda, and undermine public awareness about the harms of alcohol use.

This should not be allowed to stand. Sensible Americans should tell the HHS to stand up against the alcohol industry's censorship attempts, publish the 2025 Alcohol Intake and Health Study, keep recommended limits in the U.S. Dietary guidelines, and update to those recommended limits to lower levels, in recognition of what sound independent scientific research is showing us.

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**Letter to the Editor: Ban Menthol In Buffalo, NY, No More Delays**

**Date: Wednesday, September 3, 2025**

*The No Menthol Buffalo team, represented by Stan Martin and Annette Colden, recently attended the National Conference on Tobacco or Health in Chicago, Illinois. This national convening brought together public health leaders, policymakers, and advocates committed to advancing strategies that save lives and promote health equity. We returned to Buffalo with a renewed sense of urgency and determination: it is time for our city to end the sale of menthol and all other flavored tobacco products by January 1, 2026.*

*On June 24, 2025, the Buffalo Common Council took an important step by adopting a resolution to ban menthol cigarettes. However, since then, no legislative action has been introduced to bring this resolution into law. A resolution without legislation leaves our community vulnerable to the continued harms of menthol and flavored tobacco, which have been deliberately marketed to young people, Black communities, and other marginalized populations for decades. The result has been disproportionate addiction, illness, and death.*

*Buffalo now has the opportunity—and the responsibility—to lead New York State in protecting public health. Every day of inaction perpetuates preventable suffering and loss. As a resident of the city of Buffalo, "I must emphasize that now is the time to take menthols off the shelves—no more delays."*

*We call upon the Buffalo Common Council to honor its commitment and act decisively by-passing legislation to remove menthol and flavored tobacco products*

*from our city. Doing so will save lives, protect our youth, and move Buffalo closer to becoming a model of health equity and justice.*

*Sincerely,  
Stan Martin  
Buffalo Resident and Spokesperson for No Menthol Buffalo*

## **The New York City Mayoral Race and Its Implications**

In November, New York City will hold a vote to select its next mayor. There are several candidates who will be on the ballot for mayor. These include Zohran Mamdani (Democrat and Working Families), Andrew Cuomo (independent, under Fight and Deliver ballot line name), Curtis Sliwa (Republican and Protect Animal Rights), Eric Adams (independent, under Safe&Affordable/EndAntiSemitism ballot line name), Irene Estrada (Conservative), Joseph Hernandez (independent, under Quality of Life ballot line name), and Jim Walden (independent, under Integrity ballot line name). Eric Adams and Jim Walden dropped out of the race after the deadline to be able to remove their names from the ballot. The remaining five candidates on the ballot are still running as of the time of this article having been written.

Earlier this year, the city saw a Democratic primary election, which was conducted using ranked choice voting. Ranked choice voting being a system of voting where voters rank candidates in order of preference. Once the ballots have been cast, voters' first choices are tallied. If no candidate gets a majority of votes in the first round, then an instant run-off process is done in rounds, where the lowest performing candidate is eliminated and the votes for them then go to the next candidate that voters had ranked in order of preference. This instant run-off tabulation process continues until a candidate has gained a majority of votes. New York City uses ranked choice voting for primary elections and special elections, but not for the regular general election. Voters were able to rank up to five candidates on their ballot.

The use of ranked choice voting played a role in shaping the dynamics of a democratic primary. The fact that candidates were ranked provided some incentives for candidates to focus more on

positives and commonalities in order to appeal to voters who had other candidates as their first choice in hopes of potentially getting to be a second choice. Some candidates, such as Zohran Mamdani and Brad Lander, would cross-endorse each other; encouraging their supporters to pick the other as their second choice. There were also indications that the ranked choice voting may have played a partial role in driving higher voter participation in the primaries; similar to how ranked choice voting has contributed to higher voter turnout in various localities in which it has been used. At the end of the Democratic Primary, Zohran Mamdani would end up achieving a surprise victory against former-governor Andrew Cuomo, to win the Democratic nomination.

Following his loss in the Democratic Primary, Andrew Cuomo decided to continue running in the general election as an independent candidate. Now, Mr. Cuomo has a right to decide to run in the general election and to present himself as an option for voters; without being blocked by onerous ballot access restrictions. Unfortunately, this is not a right that Mr. Cuomo believes in or would recognize for others. When he was governor, he pushed through a set of anti-democratic changes to state ballot access laws, which vastly increased the requirements for minor parties to be able to attain and retain statewide ballot access status and tripled the number of signatures needed to get on the ballot through the independent petitioning process. These changes caused four parties to lose their statewide ballot access status, made 2022 the first year in several decades where there were only two candidates on the ballot for governor, and made New York to only state in the 2024 presidential election with no third party alternatives on the ballot. It's ironic that Mr. Cuomo is now hoping to convince independent and third party interested voters in the city to vote for him after years of abusing his former office trying to suppress them and undercut their freedom to vote for the candidates of their choice. Perhaps he is hoping that voters will have forgotten about he has done.

Voters should be mindful of the records of what candidates have stood for

and what they have done. For Mr. Cuomo, it is important to remember his record of pushing forward regressive policies which harmed the health, safety, and wellbeing of New Yorkers. As governor, he pushed forward policies to weaken restrictions on alcohol sales and used state agencies and taxpayer dollars to promote the growth of the alcohol industry. These policies contributed to increased illness, injuries, and deaths from alcohol. They contributed to alcohol-related violence and crime, harmed local communities, and had a net-negative impact on the state's economy. He prioritized alcohol industry profits over the lives of the New Yorkers he was supposed to represent. Additionally, it should be remembered that Mr. Cuomo was credibly accused of sexual harassment by multiple women, was investigated by the State Attorney General's office and the State Legislature for those and other offences, and resigned from office in disgrace, rather than face impeachment. Mr. Cuomo has demonstrated through his record of conduct that he is ethically and morally unfit for holding major public office.

This November, voters in New York City will cast their ballots to decide who will become the next mayor. For this, it is important for voters to look at the candidates who are running; to look at where they standing on the issues affecting New York City, to look at their records, look their qualifications, look at their character, look at what they would seek to accomplish as mayor; and decide who they consider to be most fit for office and best for serving in the public interest. Ultimately, the results of this race will determine who will lead the state's largest city for the next four years and by extension affect the lives of millions of New Yorkers in numerous ways.

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## 2<sup>nd</sup> Circuit Court Upholds State Restrictions Against Use of Independence in Ballot Line Name For Independent Candidates

An attempt to challenge state restrictions against using the word “Independence” as part of the ballot line name for an independent candidate was defeated in court. In 2022, politicians in the state legislature pushed through a law banning the words “Independent” and “Independence” from being used as part of the name for state-recognized political parties on the ballot. State officials then subsequently decided that they would ban independent candidates who get on the ballot using an independent nominating petition from being able to use the words as part of the name for their ballot line. In New York, independent candidates (and candidates of minor parties without statewide ballot access) can use independent nominating petitions to get on the ballot, and are able to choose the name of the ballot line they would be listed as on the ballot; provided that the name fits certain requirements. The decision by state officials on interpreting the 2022 law change in effect banned independent candidates for office in the state from being listed as independent.

Jim Walden, who was an independent candidate for mayor of New York City and wanted their ballot line to be labeled “Independence”, filed a lawsuit challenging those restrictions. The case made its way to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Circuit Court. In May, the court decided to rule against Walden and deny him relief. At the time, the court did not provide any reasoning as to why they made their decision. Months later, in August, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Circuit Court finally released a document on their decision and its reasoning. The judges claimed that the state had a public interest in banning the use of “Independence” on ballot labels, because “It could lead unaffiliated voters to mistakenly believe that this designation was intended to represent all unaffiliated/independent voters, rather than identify a specific political organization.”

Ballot access expert Richard Winger would criticize the decision, saying, “One could use the same reasoning to say that

the state should outlaw any party from having “Democratic” in its name, because that might lead people to think that the Democratic Party was intended to represent all voters who believe in democracy.”

As a result of this ruling, Jim Walden was denied the ability to use “Independence” as his ballot line name and chose “Integrity” as the name for his independent ballot line. Walden would later withdraw from the New York City mayoral race in September.

The broader effect of this ruling is that it upholds state restrictions on the use of “Independent” and “Independence” for the names of state-recognized political parties, parties seeking ballot access, and independent candidates. Thus, effecting various independent candidates who may have wanted to be listed under those names on the ballot, as well as creating a further impediment to the New York Independence Party. The New York Independence Party had lost its statewide ballot access status as a result of the anti-democratic changes to state ballot laws made in 2020, which vastly increased the vote requirements for parties to gain and retain statewide ballot access and tripled the number of signatures required to get on the ballot through independent nominating petitions. Now, even if they somehow manage to get a candidate on the ballot for governor/president and get enough votes to regain statewide ballot access, they would have to change their party’s name. Overall, this can be seen as part of a cluster of actions taken by state politicians aimed at suppressing minor party and independent participation in state elections.

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“A lie is not an answer” Lawrence O’Donnell

## Marijuana Industry Chips Away at Protections for Communities in the State

The marijuana industry is working to chip away at protections for communities across the state. Back when the state legislature made the poor decision to pass a law legalizing the sale of recreational marijuana, it had included a narrow one-year window where local governments could vote to opt-out of recreational marijuana sales and have local restrictions against licensing marijuana sellers in their municipality. Over 40% of local communities voted to opt-out during that time window and gave themselves some protections against the marijuana industry. The thing is, the provisions in that law allowed local governments to later vote to opt-in to allowing marijuana sales, while refusing any community that later recognized the harm that the marijuana industry was doing to their communities to change their local laws and opt-out. Thus making it so that the marijuana industry only needs to gain influence over local officials once to eliminate restrictions and allowing them the ability to work toward gradually eliminating protections for local communities throughout the state.

The marijuana industry has been working towards this end and has been able to expand into some communities that previously opted-out. Spectrum News has reported that 19 towns, villages, and cities, including the city of Watertown, have switched to opting into marijuana sales.

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“But if they realize that their true freedom consists in the acceptance of principles, of laws which are the own, a synthesis of universal and particular interests becomes possible.” Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel



## State Liquor Authority Reinterprets Policies to Expand Venues Eligible for Liquor Licenses

The New York State Liquor Authority is moving to expand the variety of venues they deem eligible to be granted liquor licenses. The SLA put out an advisory on September 18<sup>th</sup>, in which they claim that existing laws grant them the authority to classify additional categories of businesses with tavern-style menus as being eligible for acquiring liquor licenses. They declared that the types of businesses that were eligible included, but were not limited to,

“Pool halls, axe throwing venues, racket sports, virtual reality arcades, laser tag arenas, go-kart tracks, batting cages, climbing gyms, darts lounges, board game cafes, shuffleboard bars, escape rooms, mini-golf courses, comedy clubs, art galleries, paint-and-sip studios, cooking class studios, pottery workshops, and similar recreational businesses.”

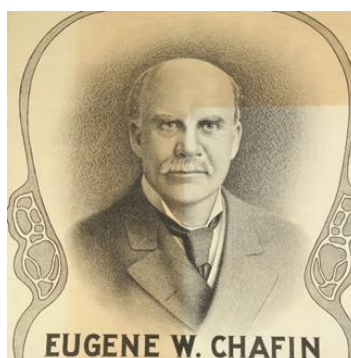
This advisory not only expands the kinds of venues that the alcohol industry could spread into, but also declares their intention to expand the variety of venues even further in the future. This decision by the State Liquor Authority will be detrimental to the health, safety, and wellbeing of New Yorkers. Expanding the commercial availability of alcohol and weakening restrictions on sales contributes to increased alcohol use and by consequence contributes to increasing rates of alcohol related illnesses, injury, violent crimes, and death. This is especially irresponsible in a time where alcohol related deaths have been surging since the pandemic, in large part due to states weakening restrictions on alcohol sales. This news further serves to highlight the need for state legislators to start being responsible, pass legislation to increase restrictions on sales, and pass structural reforms to change the state liquor authority into an organization focused on acting as a watchdog and reducing alcohol harms, rather than acting as promoters for the alcohol industry.

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## Prohibition Party History Chafin and Springfield

Here is a bit of history. On August 14-16, 1908, the city of Springfield, Illinois experienced the Springfield Race Riot. In which, an angry mob of racists rioted, went around attacking the city's African American population, killed 9 African-Americans, and destroyed part of the city. During this time, 1908 Prohibition Party presidential candidate Eugene Chaffin was in the city, delivering a speech at a campaign rally. During the event, an African American man fleeing members of the mob took refuge on the rally stage with Chafin. Several dozen members of the mob showed up. Eugene Chafin stepped in front of the mob and stated that he would defend the man. Newspaper reports indicate that he said something along the lines, "I will shoot the first man who attempts to take this colored man", or "Stand back gentleman or I will shoot every one of you who touches this man". Despite not actually having a gun, he placed his hands in his pockets to try to trick the mob into thinking he did. A member of the mob then threw a brick at Chafin, hitting him in the head, and knocking him down. Chaffin's supporters, as well as the African American man who had sought refuge with them, then entered into a melee to fight off members of the mob. In the midst of this terrible event, Chaffin and others acted to protect the lives of people.

Source: [https://615c4beb-b241-4f4a-a6b4-a074dc02ce34.filesusr.com/ugd/2cc7be\\_241fd3580ca54907abc742d3a35b466e.pdf](https://615c4beb-b241-4f4a-a6b4-a074dc02ce34.filesusr.com/ugd/2cc7be_241fd3580ca54907abc742d3a35b466e.pdf)



“Organization is physically stronger than principle and therefore if you want to carry out any great moral question, you have got to hitch it up with organization.” Eugene Chafin



### Sarah Jane Woodsen Early

Sarah Jane Woodsen Early (1825-1907) was an African American educator, author, advocate for black education, temperance activist, and prohibitionist. She was the daughter of former slaves, who worked with the underground railroad the African Methodist Episcopal Church. She was educated at Oberlin College. She taught in black community schools in Ohio for several years, served as principal of a school in Xenia, Ohio, and became the first African American woman to teach at a college in 1858. She continued teaching at schools and colleges after the Civil War. Following the Civil War, she got involved with temperance and prohibition activism. She was involved with the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and rose to be a leading figure in the WTCU. She had also been a spokesperson for the Prohibition Party in Tennessee. She is one of the many African American activists in the period who was involved with temperance and prohibition activism.

“Prohibition, as viewed by Prohibitionists, with its relation to the solution of many other social and economic problems, with its economic outreaches, with its view of government as an agency for the promotion of the public good, provides an issue, a platform, a tendency and a new spirit in politics around which to build a party for the present crisis.” David Leigh Colvin

“The Prohibition Party was established as a moralist party, to advance prohibition and other social reforms to promote the public wellbeing. The party is not conservative, it is not liberal; it is prohibitionist.” Jonathan Makeley