

New York Prohibitionist



Think NY Vote Dry

March 2022

Volume 5 #3

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.

"When I dare to be powerful, to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid." Audre Lorde

State and National Party News

The Prohibition Party continues to move forward with its work on the state and national level. On the national level, the Prohibition Party has finished making updates to the prohibitionparty.org website. The changes include a redesign of the front page, updating other pages to have a more consistent format, updating the links page, adding a page on the party's national committee, and redesigning aspects of the website so that it will display correctly on mobile devices.

On the state level, the Prohibition Party of New York continues its legislative activism. We have worked to message members of the state legislature to encourage them to reject the Governor's misguided efforts to permanently legalize to-go sales of alcoholic beverages from bars and restaurants. The Governor has been attempting to get pro-alcohol policies included in the state budget, but the Prohibition Party of New York has been encouraging members of the state legislature to reject her proposal. We have also been encouraging members of the state legislature to support Bill A08683,

which would undo many of the anti-democratic changes to state ballot access laws that were made back in 2020. The State Chairman has been working to try to find a member of the state assembly that would be willing to sponsor a new bill for the Addiction Prevention and Recovery Act. The bill, which was initially proposed by then-Assemblyman DenDekker in 2019, would greatly increase state support for prevention, addiction treatment, and recovery programs for alcohol and other drugs. With DenDekker no longer in office and State Senator Comrie supporting the bill in the Senate, the bill needs someone to reintroduce it in the state assembly. So far, we have yet to get a member of the assembly to commit to sponsoring the bill, but the effort is still ongoing, and with various members of the assembly who had cosponsored the bill in previous years still in office, hopefully, one of them will be convinced to take up the task.

In electoral news, State Chairman Jonathan Makeley is running for a position on the Sweet Home Central School Board. He has been working to collect signatures from residents of the district in order to get on the ballot. So far, those efforts have gone well and the petition is nearing completion. If he qualifies for the ballot, it would be the first time in decades that a member of the party had gotten on ballot for a non-partisan office in New York State.

Budgetary Contentions

The New York State Legislature is in the midst of contentions over the 2022 state budget. Continuing disagreements among state legislators over funding priorities and policy issues have made it so that the legislature will not complete this year's budget by the standard April 1st deadline, and the budget will likely not be finished until some later point in April.

As part of the budget debates, there are ongoing contentions about whether and in what way, the state will amend previous reforms to the state's bail



system. It seems likely that some categories of crime (that were changed to no longer require those accused to post bail to be released while awaiting trial) may once be eligible for requiring bail, and potentially judges may be granted discretion to require bail for accused that are believed to pose a threat to others.

There are efforts by several government watchdog groups to try to convince the state legislature to pass a plan for establishing a new public ethics commission to replace JCOPE, which would be more independent and have greater power to enforce ethics rules. There are also efforts by various legislators to try to improve tuition assistance programs and make college education more affordable in the state. Hopefully, these efforts will make progress in the state budget.

The governor and various state legislators are trying to use the state budget, to try to weaken state restrictions on alcohol sales and expand gambling in the state. Hopefully, enough members of the state legislature will be sensible enough to reject these efforts.

Sources: <https://nypost.com/2022/03/30/whats-at-stake-as-clock-ticks-on-new-yorks-budget/>, <https://nynow.wmht.org/blogs/economy/live-blog-the-new-york-state-budget-2022/>, <https://spectrumlocalnews.com/nys/central-ny/ny-state-of-politics/2022/03/29/new-york-s-budget-talks-remain-in-neutral-amid-disagreement>, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/31/nyregion/new-york-state-budget-bail.html>, <https://www.wamc.org/news/2022-03-29/government-watchdog-groups-push-for-ethics-reform-in-nys-budget?fbclid=IwAR2-yT94WlW5NnmVKQGfBfjbn8tDlnXoeVsBEDzpKbldoJP1eUIPI-0>

"One of the penalties of refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors." Plato

Update on Ballot Access Bill

As we had reported last month, State Assemblyman Salka has put forward Bill A08683: a bill that would improve the state's ballot access laws, by largely repealing the anti-democratic changes to ballot access laws passed in 2020 and establishing standards similar to what had previously existed. The passage of this bill would be a significant step toward fixing the damage that was done to our state's electoral process in 2020, and better enabling New Yorkers to be able to vote for the candidates of their choice. Over the past month, the number of cosponsors for the bill has increased from one to four, with Assembly members Tague, DeStefano, and Angelino joining in support of the bill. Gaining supporters in the state legislature will be key to moving this bill forward. Those who are interested in helping to get the bill passed can aid by contacting their representatives in the state legislature and encouraging them to support the bill.

Sources: <https://nyassembly.gov/leg/?bn=08683>
https://615c4beb-b241-4f4a-a6b4-a074dc02ce34.filesusr.com/ugd/2cc7be_6db30ff74900411e962e87a212358582.pdf

Bill Introduced to Increase Validity Rate for Nomination Petition Signatures

State Senators Elijah Reichlin-Melnick and Rachel May have introduced a bill to help the validity rate for nomination petition signatures for primary and general election candidates seeking ballot access. Bill S8444 would ease the technical requirements for counting a petition signature as valid, by establishing standards that accept signatures as valid if a reasonable person could determine that the signer is a registered voter. Various technical mistakes such as if a voter made slight errors in filling out their address, cover sheet errors, and errors in page numbers would no longer be grounds for invalidating a signature. The bill has been referred to the State Senate Committee on Elections. If passed, it would make it easier for candidates to be able to gather signatures from voters to get on the ballot. Those who are interested in helping to get the bill passed can aid by contacting their representatives in the state legislature and encouraging them to support the bill.

Sources: <https://ballot-access.org/2022/03/06/new-york-bill-to-increase-validity-rate-for-nomination-petition-signatures/>
https://nyassembly.gov/leg/?default_fld=&leg_video=&bn=508444&term=0&Summary=Y&Actions=Y

"If they don't give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair." Shirley Chisholm

Judge Rules Against State Redistricting Plan

A state judge has ruled against a set of state redistricting plans that had been passed by the state legislature. Acting Supreme Court Justice Patrick F. McAllister had issued an 18 page ruling against the redistricting plans for congressional and state legislative districts, in which he concluded that the state legislature had engaged in illegal partisan gerrymandering, in violation of provisions in the state constitution. The judge ordered that the state legislature had until April 11th to design a new set of bipartisan supported maps for congressional and state legislative districts and to submit them for judicial review, or he would move to have a neutral third-party design new district maps.

This ruling is a legal victory for those who opposed the district maps passed by the legislature and had contended that the Democratic Party dominated state legislature had engaged in illegal partisan gerrymandering.

In response to the ruling, the League of Women Voters of New York State had issued the following statement:

“In 2014, with support from the League of Women Voters of New York State, voters approved the establishment of an Independent Redistricting Commission (IRC) to draw new district lines free from partisan bias. A New York State Supreme Court judge’s decision today invalidated the new Congressional, State Senate and State Assembly lines adopted by the Legislature on its own initiative. The Court found that the Legislature on its own initiative. The Court found that the Legislature had failed to follow the Constitutional process approved by voters, and that the Congressional lines also violated the new anti-gerrymandering provisions of the Constitution. The Court ordered the Legislature to submit new maps, with bipartisan support, by April 11, 2022, or the Court will retain a neutral expert to prepare new maps.”

“The Court’s decision, if upheld on appeal, unsettles the 2022 election process. That unfortunate outcome is solely the responsibility of the Legislature for ignoring the 2014 Constitutional

amendment and the will of the voters. The League calls on the Legislature to promptly adopt redistricting lines with bipartisan support that comply with the Constitutional standards.”

This case will likely be appealed to the New York State Court of Appeals. It remains to be seen whether the Court of Appeals would uphold or overturn Judge McAllister's ruling.

Sources: <https://ballot-access.org/2022/03/31/new-york-state-trial-court-invalidates-u-p-house-and-state-senate-district-boundaries/>
https://nystatetopics.com/state-of-politics/new-york/ny-state-of-politics/2022/03/31/judge-rejects-legislative-maps-orders-new-districts-drawn/?id=share_twitter
<https://nypost.com/2022/03/31/nypost/news/courts/state-ny-us-nyscf/ViewDocument?docid=9f90XQwPvzegb8i5SomqVnQ==>
<https://www.facebook.com/LWNVNY/>

Letter to the Legislature

In the midst of budget debates in Albany, the Prohibition Party of New York has been working to oppose Governor Hochul's attempts to sneak pro-alcohol policies into the state's 2022 Budget. Particularly, her attempt to try to get the state legislature to permanently legalize to-go sales of alcohol at bars and restaurants. As part of this effort, the Prohibition Party of New York emailed a letter to the members of the State Assembly and State Senate. The content of the letter can be read below:

We are writing to encourage you to reject the Governor's misguided proposal to make to-go sales of alcohol permanent. Alcohol is a toxic substance, which causes widespread illness, injury, and death, and which costs our state over 16 billion dollars a year in social, medical, and economic damages. In addition to this, alcohol use weakens the immune system and makes users more susceptible to the coronavirus. The state government's misguided decision to allow to-go sales of alcohol during the pandemic undermined both public health and efforts to mitigate the pandemic. The governor's proposal to make to-go sales permanent would cause long-term damage to public health, as it would make it easier for harmful alcoholic beverages to be sold. It will not help the economy, as the damaging effects of increased alcohol sales will cost our state and communities more money dealing with the damaging effects of alcohol than would be gained from its traffic. As such, we would urge you to reject the Governor's proposals and vote against them. We would also urge you to make sure that these pro-alcohol policies are not attached to the state budget.

The Prohibition Party of New York

Government Watchdog Groups Push for Alternative Plan for Ethics Reform

As contentions are underway over how to approach ethics reform in the state government, a coalition of government watchdog groups has put forward a plan for replacing JCOPE. Back in January, Governor Hochul had stated her intention of replacing the state's Joint Committee on Public Ethics, with a new public ethics organization, which will hopefully be more independent and have greater power to enforce state ethics laws for public officials. The governor subsequently put forward a plan for a 15 member ethics committee to replace JCOPE. Though her plan for a new ethics commission has been criticized by various government watchdog groups as having similar problems as JCOPE and the governor's plan has struggled to gain support in the state legislature.

A coalition of government watchdog groups including the New York Public Interest Research Group, the League of Women Voters of New York State, Citizens Union, Common Cause New York, and Reinvent Albany, have introduced an alternative plan for establishing a new public ethics commission. Their plan would replace the direct appointment of ethics board members with an indirect system of selection. The Governor, Attorney General, Comptroller, Senate Majority Leader, Senate Minority Leader, Speaker of the Assembly, and Minority Leader of the Assembly would each select one member of a seven-person selection committee. This selection committee would handle the process of selecting members of a five-member public ethics commission. Members of the public could apply to be considered for positions on the ethics committee, but lobbyists, big-money donors to political campaigns, and those holding contracts with the state would not be eligible to serve on the commission. The selection committee would go through a process of selecting a final list of candidates that would be available to the public 15 days before the selection vote, then the selection committee would publicly vote to select the five members of the new ethics commission, and a public report would be made on the vetting and selection process. The new public ethics commission would be provided with

expanded resources to investigate ethics issues, the power to directly discipline non-elected state officials for ethics violations, increased monitoring and reporting of financial contributions made by lobbyists in support or opposition to legislation, and improvements to the system for financial disclosure statements.

There have been some reports that the watchdog groups' alternative ethics plan is gaining attention among state lawmakers, though it remains to be seen whether it would gain enough support to be passed. Those who are interested in helping to get the bill passed can aid by contacting their representatives in the state legislature and encouraging them to support the bill.

Sources: <https://www.wamc.org/news/2022-03-29/government-watchdog-groups-push-for-ethics-reform-in-nys-budget-2b0d1d1wARZ-7384WVNSNmVKGc7Bb0jansichXoeVsBEQzskbid0P1eUJP-0>
<https://reinventalbany.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Proposed-Ethics-Commission-March-2022.pdf>
<https://www.facebook.com/VWVNY/photos/a.152201216184/10159458186106185/>
<https://nypost.com/2022/03/30/whats-at-stake-as-clock-ticks-on-new-yorks-budget/>

Temperance Awakening: Books by Dr. R.T. Cooper

Prohibition Party member Dr. R.T. Cooper has been working to produce a series of books related to temperance and theologic interpretation of social ills. The first book is titled, *Temperance Awakening: A Biblical Look At Tobacco, Alcohol & Pornography*, in which Cooper provides a theological interpretation of the problems of alcohol, tobacco, and pornography, and ways to address these issues. The second book, titled, *Temperance Awakening: A Biblical Exposition on Tobacco*, further expounds on the issue of tobacco. Those who may be interested in reading these books can purchase copies on the Book Patch and Kobo ereader.

"The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well." Ralph Waldo Emerson

Autism Acceptance Month

"April is designated as Autism Acceptance Month. Let us use this as an opportunity to foster accurate mutual understanding of one another, to foster the recognition of our common humanity, to foster acceptance of the natural diversity of humanity, and to stand in favor of the dignity and equality of all people." State Chairman Jonathan Makeley

New York Prohibition Party History

Levi C. Van Fleet

Levi C. Van Fleet was a lawyer and local politician, who was involved with the Prohibition Party and later the Democratic Party in Allegany County, New York. Levi C. Van Fleet was born November 22, 1849, in New Hudson, New York. He was the son of Benjamin Van Fleet and Evaline (Carmer) Van Fleet. He had four siblings: Herman B. (b.1846), Harrison (b.1848), Arthur J. (b.1851), Sarah B. (b.1854). Levi grew up with his family in New Hudson.

Van Fleet went to college at Alfred University. After graduating, he began to study law. He read law with multiple lawyers and firms, including Luddington and DeCamp of Syracuse, Allentown and Mills of Port Jervis, and Rufus Scott of Wellsville. In 1877, he was admitted to the bar in Buffalo, New York.

After being admitted to the bar, Van Fleet moved to the town of Andover of New York and started practicing law. He moved to Michigan for a short time, but then moved back to Andover in 1879, and established a long-time law career in Andover. In 1894, he formed a law partnership with Jesse S. Phillips, which lasted for several years. In 1900, Phillips was elected as a Republican to the New York State Assembly. By 1901, the law partnership between the two was dissolved and Van Fleet returned to having a solo law practice in Andover.

Levi C. Van Fleet married DeEtte Van Noy. They had one daughter, Bertha B. Van Fleet, who was born in 1884.

Van Fleet had become involved with the temperance movement at least as early as 1880. In that year, he delivered the welcoming address at the annual meeting of the Allegany County Temperance Association, held at Methodist Episcopal Church in Andover.

In the 1880s, Van Fleet had begun getting involved with local politics. He began his career as a local politician with the Prohibition Party in Allegany County. In the early 1880s, the Prohibition Party was starting to grow into a significant third-party political force in the state and country, was attracting a growing base of supporters, and building up its local level organizations. In Allegany County, Van Fleet and local Prohibitionists worked to establish the Allegany County Prohibition Party as an organization that could run and support candidates for county and state elections.

In 1883, Van Fleet was nominated as the Prohibition Party candidate for Allegany County District Attorney. The Republican Party nominated Oscar Fuller of Belmont, the Democratic Party had nominated Frank A. Harding of Friendship, and the Greenback Party had nominated Virgil A. Willard (who was also

the Prohibition Party candidate state Attorney General in the same election). Van Fleet reportedly attracted support from a wide range of voters, including Prohibitionists, and voters that normally voted for Democratic or Republican candidates. The Rushford Spectator described Van Fleet as a strong temperance man and respected member of his community, who could appeal to voters that wanted strong enforcement of the law and wanted a district attorney who was not bound to the interests of the major parties. His efforts would end up bearing fruit on election day.

In the 1883 election, Van Fleet attracted support from a significant portion of the county's voters. He received 1,793 votes (19.20%) and came in 3rd place, behind Fuller and Harding. Van Fleet received the largest number of votes out of all the state and county Prohibition Party candidates in Allegany County. The Prohibition Party candidates overall did relatively well in Allegany County; with most candidates receiving 1,500 or more votes and 15% of more of the total county vote in their races. In this respect, Van Fleet played a part in establishing the Prohibition Party as a significant political force within Allegany County.

In 1886, Van Fleet was once again nominated as the Prohibition Party candidate for District Attorney. He ran against Republican incumbent Oscar Fuller and Democratic candidate Charles A. Dolson of Andover. Van Fleet received 1,689 votes (20.26%) and came in third place behind Fuller and Dolson.

In 1888, Van Fleet attended the Prohibition Party Congressional District Convention in Olean, New York, as one of the delegates for Allegany County. The convention was comprised of 45 delegates from Allegany, Cattaraugus, and Chautauqua Counties. Van Fleet was selected to act as chairman of the convention. The convention nominated Medad S. Corey of Villenova, NY as its 1888 congressional candidate. The convention also formed a congressional campaign committee (headed by the chairmen of the Allegany, Cattaraugus, and Chautauqua County Prohibition Party committees), selected delegates to the Prohibition Party's 1888 national convention in Indianapolis, and passed a resolution mourning the death of former U.S. Senator from New York Roscoe Conkling.

In 1889, the Allegany County Prohibition Party nominated Van Fleet as its candidate for Allegany County Judge and Surrogate. He ran against Republican candidate S. McArthur Norton of Friendship, Democratic Candidate Frank M. Todd of Cuba, and Union Labor Party candidate Foster Dickinson of Genesee. Van Fleet received 1,051 votes (13.11%) and came in third place behind Norton and Todd. Van Fleet came in second place in several towns, including Alfred, Andover, Centerville, Friendship, Genesee, New Hudson, and West Almond. In Andover, he came only four votes

behind Norton (153 to 157 votes). Overall, Van Fleet had attracted support from a significant part of the county's voters.

In 1890, Levi Van Fleet ended up becoming the legal guardian of four children. In April of that year, Samuel C. Kemp Sr. had died, leaving behind his wife, five adult children, and four minor children. Van Fleet was appointed to act as the general guardian of the four youngest children: Emma L. Kemp, Isabelle Kemp, Mae Anna Kemp, and Samuel C. Kemp Jr. As guardian, he was tasked with managing the financial and property assets that the four children inherited from their father, until they reached legal adulthood, and held legal authority regarding certain decisions related to the care of the children. This legal guardianship was distinct from custodianship (which person was legally designated with the task of raising the children in their household). The children appear to have continued living under the custody of their mother for the remainder of their childhood, while Van Fleet managed their inheritance until they were old enough to manage it for themselves.

In 1895, Van Fleet was both a candidate of and a leading figure within the Allegany County Prohibition Party. In August of that year, Van Fleet attended the Allegany County Prohibition Party convention in Andover, where he was nominated as the party's candidate for Allegany County Judge and Surrogate. In September, the Allegany County Prohibition Party held an organizational meeting, where Van Fleet was selected to be the chairman of the Allegany County Prohibition Party, as well as a member of its executive committee. As such, he spent the fall both running for office himself and working to lead Allegany Prohibition Party's efforts to support its entire ticket of candidates in the 1895 elections. In the election, Van Fleet ran against Republican incumbent S. McArthur Norton of Friendship and Democratic and People's Party candidate Elba Reynolds of Belmont. Van Fleet received 611 votes (7.01%) and came in third place, behind Norton and Reynolds.

In 1896, Levi C. Fleet had changed his political affiliation from the Prohibition Party to the Democratic Party, and from that point forward was a local politician involved with the Allegany County Democratic Party. There comes the question of why Van Fleet had changed his party affiliation. While a recorded statement regarding his reasons for changing parties has yet to be found, available sources and the context of 1896 politics allow a possible reason to be inferred.

In 1896, a set of debates shifted the political dynamics of the Democratic and Prohibition Parties. In the late 1800's, there was a significant debate over the printing and minting of U.S. currency, and what should be used to back the value of U.S. currency. Some advocated for U.S. currency to be backed by gold in order to maintain a more stable value

for U.S. currency. While others advocated for U.S. currency to be backed by silver or both gold and silver, in order to make the value of currency more flexible. And some, such as the Greenbackers, advocated for a fiat currency. As part of this, the free silver movement campaigned for having silver included in the U.S. monetary system and for the unlimited minting of silver coins; which they argued would create a flexible currency system that would benefit farmers, wage laborers, and people trying to pay off debts. In 1896, William Jennings Bryan, a leading figure in the free silver movement (and a supporter of various reforms, including prohibition) won the Democratic Party nomination for president. Bryan had also gained the nomination of the Populist Party (which supported free silver). The Republican Party nominated William McKinley, who supported the gold standard. McKinley would end up winning the 1896 election and signed the Gold Standard Act: making gold the basis for backing U.S. currency for the next 33 years.

Within the Prohibition Party, there were growing contentions between the narrow-gauge and broad-gauge factions of the party. The narrow-gauge faction believed that the Prohibition Party should solely focus on the issue of prohibition and not hold stances on other issues, so as to try to attract support from the broadest number of voters that supported prohibition. The broad-gauge faction believed that prohibition was the most significant issue for the party, that the party should continue to hold positions on other issues and support other major reform efforts, so that the party could bring together a coalition of voters that supported social reform. The tension between the factions came to a head at the Prohibition Party's 1896 national convention in Pittsburgh. The narrow-gauge faction had succeeded in selecting Joshua Levering and Hale Johnson as the party's presidential ticket and created an 1896 platform focused solely on prohibition. A group of broad-gauge prohibitionists, known as the free-silver prohibitionists, broke away from the main national party organization and nominated their own rival presidential ticket of Charles Eugene Bentley and James H. Southgate, under the name, the National Party. As a result of the split, the Prohibition Party saw a significant decrease in votes in the 1896 election. After the election, the two factions reconciled back into a single national organization, but still continued to debate with each other over the party's platform and strategy. Though by 1904, the Prohibition Party had returned to having a broad-gauge national platform which held positions on a variety of issues, and in the early 20th century championed many of the key reforms of the Progressive era. While many of the broad-gauge prohibitionists who were alienated in 1896 had returned to the party afterwards, some of them left the party permanently.

Van Fleet appears to have been one of the broad-gauge prohibitionists who ended up permanently leaving the party in 1896. In 1896, Van Fleet had delivered multiple speeches in Allegany County promoting the free-silver movement. This indicates that Van Fleet cared significantly about the silver issue and that while he believed the cause of prohibition to be important, that other reform causes were important as well. In New York, the state Prohibition Party organization had sided with the party's official presidential ticket, while the silver prohibitionists were unable to get their candidate on the ballot in the state. At the same time, the nomination of William Jennings Bryan presented an option for New Yorkers focused on the free-silver issue and made the Democratic Party more attractive to voters supporting the free silver cause. These shifting political dynamics and Van Fleet's support for the free-silver cause may help to explain why he chose to switch to the Democratic Party.

After joining the Democratic Party, Van Fleet quickly rose to become a prominent figure in the Allegany County Democratic Party. In 1896, Van Fleet was one of the contenders for the Democratic nomination for state assembly at the Allegany County Democratic Party convention in Belfast. He received support from the Bourbon faction of the county's Democratic Party. The Bourbon Democrats were a subgroup of the Democrats who tended to have conservative/ classical liberal views, tended to support laissez-faire economics, the gold standard, and civil service reform, opposed protectionism, opposed Tammany Hall, and supported politicians such as Grover Cleveland. While Van Fleet differed from the Bourbons on at least some issues (notably his support for free-silver and prohibition), the local Bourbon Democrats saw him as a viable figure to support. The other main contenders at the convention were the group supporting P.J. Quinn of Belfast and a group that wanted to endorse Republican candidate Frederick A. Robbins. Van Fleet came in 2nd place at the convention with 28 votes, compared to 47 votes for Quinn. The Populist Party in Allegany County also nominated Quinn as part of a deal where the Democratic Party agreed to endorse the Populist candidates for County Treasurer and County School Commissioner. Quinn would end up coming in second to Robbins in the general election. While Van Fleet did not win the nomination, he still had achieved a degree of prominence with the Allegany County Democratic Party.

In 1898, Van Fleet acted as chairman of the Allegany County Democratic Convention and had received the Democratic nomination for state assembly. His opponents included Republican incumbent Almanzo W. Litchard of Rushford and Prohibition Party candidate Sylvester D. Pickett of Cuba. Van Fleet received 3,106 votes (32.27%) and came in second place to Litchard. He came in 1st place in the towns of Almond, Andover, Birdsall, and Ward. Van

Fleet appears to have been the Democratic Party's highest performing candidate in Allegany County in the 1898 election; with the party's candidates for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Congress each receiving less than 3,000 votes. This was the second time that Van Fleet was the leading vote receiver for his party's ticket in Allegany County.

In 1899, Van Fleet was appointed as the Village Attorney for the village of Andover. As Village Attorney, he was the primary figure for handling legal issues for the village. In the same year, the Allegany County Democratic Party selected Van Fleet as one of its delegates to the party's 8th District judicial convention. The convention was held at the Genesee Hotel in Buffalo, NY. There was a contentious debate as to whether they would nominate candidates for all three open positions for justices in the 8th District of the New York Supreme Court, or just one. The convention opted to nominate three candidates and selected John Cuneen, Charles F. Tabor, and Louis Braunlein as its candidates. The Democratic candidates ended up being beaten by the three Republican candidates for justices, Warren B. Hooker, Daniel J. Kenefick, and Truman C. White.

In 1901, Van Fleet ran as the Democratic candidate for Town Supervisor of Andover. His opponents were Republican Party candidate Henry Stephens and Prohibition Party candidate H. Wisnor Cook. Van Fleet received 205 votes (40.28) and came in 2nd place, while Stephens won with 284 votes (55.80%) and Cook received 20 votes (3.93%).

In the same year, the Allegany County Democratic Party nominated Van Fleet as its candidate for Allegany County Judge and Surrogate. His opponents in the race were Republican candidate Elba Reynolds and Prohibition Party candidate Walter T. Bliss of Bolivar. Elba Reynolds had been the Democratic candidate for county judge back in 1895, but after becoming alienated with the Allegany County Democratic party had switched to the Republican Party. Walter Bliss was a lawyer and long-time local Prohibition Party politician, who was the Prohibition Party candidate for Allegany County District Attorney in 1895 and 1898. Van Fleet received 1,869 votes (28.50%) and came in second place, while Reynolds received 4,205 votes (64.13%) and Bliss received 483 votes (7.37%). This election was the last time that Van Fleet ran as a candidate for county office.

While the 1901 election was the last time that Van Fleet ran for countywide office, Van Fleet continued to be involved with local politics and the Democratic Party. In 1903, Van Fleet represented Andover on the Allegany County Democratic Committee.

In 1907, Van Fleet bought in the town of Alma, and subsequently moved. He would spend the latter part of his life living in Alma.

By 1911, Van Fleet had begun running for town office in Alma. In that year, he ran as the Democratic candidate for Town Supervisor. His opponent was Republican candidate E.J. Richardson. Van Fleet received 101 votes (45.08%) to 123 votes (54.91%) for Richardson.

In 1915, Van Fleet ran as the Democratic candidate for Town Supervisor of Alma again. His opponent in the race was Republican candidate Sidney J. Cleveland. Van Fleet won the election, with 110 votes (63.58%) to 63 votes (36.42%) for Cleveland. As Alma Town Supervisor, Van Fleet was the head of the town government, tasked with managing various aspects of the town government's services and activities. As Town Supervisor, Van Fleet was a member of Allegany County's Board of Supervisors. The Board of Supervisors was the legislative body of the county government at the time, whose functions included creating county laws, managing finances, and overseeing the operations of county departments. As part of the Board of Supervisors, Van Fleet served on the Committee on Equalization and Apportionment and the Committee on Town Expenses. As such, Van Fleet was involved with both managing the operations of both the Alma town government and the Allegany County government.

In 1917, Van Fleet ran for reelection as Alma Town Supervisor. His opponent was Republican candidate E.E. Bartlett. Van Fleet won the election, with 130 votes to 45 votes for Bartlett, and spent another two years managing the town government and participating in the County Board of Supervisors.

In 1919, Van Fleet sought to run for another term as Town Supervisor. His opponent was Republican candidate Geo W. Hill. Van Fleet narrowly lost the election by 6 votes. Van Fleet had received 117 votes (48.75), while Hill received 123 votes (51.25%). Van Fleet finished his last term as Town Supervisor and returned to his private life.

Levi C. Van Fleet spent the last years of his life living in Alma. He died in November 1923. His funeral was held at his daughter's home and he was buried in Black Creek Cemetery, in New Hudson, New York. Throughout his life, Levi C. Van Fleet was a lawyer, local politician, and Town Supervisor. Throughout his political career, he had been a significant figure in the Allegany Prohibition Party and later the Allegany Democratic Party. Van Fleet's political career reflects some of the political dynamics and shifts that were going on in Allegany County, New York State, and the United States during the late 19th and early 20th century.

Source: https://615c4beb-b241-4f4a-a6b4-a074dc02ce34.filesusr.com/ugd/2cc7be_4d969a703e994537981b871f98ffe709.pdf