

# A Short History of the Conservative Party

The Conservative Party was formed in 1962 to restore a meaningful choice to the voters of New York State. At that time, the three existing political parties espoused the doctrinaire liberal philosophy of the welfare state at home and the collectivist ideology abroad. In just four short decades, the party has grown from a small band of conservative-minded men and women to a statewide organization dedicated to the traditional American values of individual freedom, individual responsibility, and individual effort.

From a humble beginning garnering 141,000 votes on ballot Row F, our principles have attracted Empire State voters in sufficient numbers to raise the Party to Row C and twice received over a million votes for our candidate in a statewide election. From the founding of the party, it has been successively chaired by Kieran O'Doherty, J. Daniel Mahoney, Serphin R. Maltese, Michael R. Long and Gerard Kassar. Through the leadership of these men and the hard work of committee members, the Conservative Party elected James L. Buckley to the U. S. Senate, William Carney to the House of Representatives, Serphin R. Maltese to the State Senate, Rosemary R. Gunning, Charles Jerabec and Angela M. Wozniak to the State Assembly. History was made in New York City with the 2001 election of then Conservative Party Executive Vice Chairman James P. Molinaro as the Borough President of Staten Island and his reelections in 2005 and 2009.

The 1994 elections were a breakthrough for the Conservative Party as we provided the margin of victory for Governor George E. Pataki with the 326,605 votes cast on our line. Attorney General Vacco narrowly defeated radical Karen Burstein by 88,340 votes. He received 305,961 votes on the Conservative Line. In 1998, 348,272 votes for Governor George E. Pataki were cast on the Conservative line, over 20,000 more than in 1994, an anomaly in political history.

In the past 57 years, the Conservative Party has played many pivotal roles in electing officials from every political division from Supreme Court Justices to Village Justices, County Executives to Village Board Members, Mayors and City Council Members to Ward Leaders, and will continue to play a pivotal role in the process of electing those who are committed to conservative values.

Our strong support of term limits was instrumental when New York City voters went to the polls two separate times and defeated proposed changes to the term limits for the offices of Mayor and the City Council previously enacted.

In 1990, conservative savant, Herb London, ran for governor on the Conservative Party line only and garnered 827,614 votes, just 1% less than the republican candidate.

In 1997, the Conservative Party led the citizens of New York in defeating the \$2.4 billion School Bond Act. Liberals outspent us 6 to 1 in trying to pass what would have been nothing more than a colossal waste of taxpayer money. And, we defeated the proposal for a Constitutional Convention; twenty years later, in 2017, we led a coalition to defeat passage of a Constitutional Convention again. In the year 2000, we were instrumental in defeating the most expensive transportation bond issues ever placed on the ballot. In November 2003, we were instrumental in defeating the "non-partisan election" ballot question in New York City and the raising of the debt limit for small city school districts. In 2005, we led the way to defeat the ill-conceived "Power Grab" by Albany's legislators.

In 2009, the Conservative Party's candidate for the 23<sup>rd</sup> CD, Doug Hoffman, running on the CPNYS line alone, garnered 45.98% of the vote. The race energized a grassroots response seldom seen in politics; and helped give birth to the "TEA Party" movement.

In 2010, the Conservative Party regained Row C when Carl Paladino was our gubernatorial candidate and provided the margin of victory to numerous elected officials; in 2014 and 2018 voters solidly reaffirmed our position on Row C.

In 2011, the Conservative Party provided the margin of victory in a special election to Bob Turner who took back a Congressional Seat held by Democrats for eighty years.

In 2017 we helped pass a Constitutional Amendment that requires any elected official convicted of a felony related to their duties to forfeit their pension.

In 2019 the Conservative Party vote was the margin of victory in many important races including the flipping of several County Legislatures and Towns including Hempstead the largest town in the United States. Additionally, enrolled members of the Conservative Party enjoyed victories ranging from State Supreme Court to Town Councils making 2019 a banner year.

The 2019-20 Legislature includes 24 State Senators and 46 Assembly Members with Conservative Party designation. The 116<sup>th</sup> Congress includes five Representatives from New York State who ran with conservative designation. Statewide the Party has forged strong links to the Republicans and Democrats of compatible views and has helped prevent a complete leftward drift of state government. On the national level, we are affiliated with the American Conservative Union. Although we are not formally affiliated with any other national conservative organization, we are recognized as the influential New York branch of the American conservative movement and maintain a close and cordial relationship with conservative organizations and public officials in other states and Washington, D.C.

President Ronald Reagan stated; "The Conservative Party has established itself as a preeminent force in New York Politics and an important part of our political history."

President Donald J. Trump noted "It's not easy to be an unapologetic conservative in one of the most liberal states in America, but your loyalty and commitment to the cause of freedom have paid off with a growing and thriving Party."

With your help, the Conservative Party will continue its vital role in reshaping the political agenda of the State and Nation.

*Adopted 01/04/20*