

# New York Long Lake Land Dispute Settlement Amendment, Proposal 4 (2013)

From Ballotpedia

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The **New York Long Lake Land Dispute Settlement Amendment, Proposal 4**, is on the November 5, 2013 ballot in New York as an legislatively-referred constitutional amendment.

The measure would allow the legislature to authorize a settlement in a dispute with private landowners over property in the Adirondack forest preserve.<sup>[1]</sup> Currently there are 1,000 acres of land around Raquette Lake that are claimed by both the state and private land owners. According to reports, the dispute was generated by a series of possibly illegal tax sales in the late 1800s.<sup>[2]</sup> The amendment was sponsored in the legislature by Sen. Betty Little (R-45) as Senate Bill 4689.

## Text of measure

### Ballot summary

The official ballot text reads as follows:<sup>[3]</sup>

#### “ Settling Disputed Title in the Forest Preserve

The proposed amendment to section 1 of article 14 of the Constitution would authorize the Legislature to settle longstanding disputes between the State and private entities over ownership of certain parcels of land in the town of Long Lake, Hamilton County. In exchange for giving up its claim to disputed parcels, the State would get land to be

## Proposal 4



### Quick stats

**Type:** Constitutional amendment

**Constitution:** New York Constitution

**Referred by:** New York Legislature

**Topic:** Forests and parks

**Status:** On the ballot

incorporated into the forest preserve that would benefit the forest preserve more than the disputed parcels currently do. Shall the proposed amendment be approved?

## **Constitutional changes**

If approved, Proposal 4 would amend Section 1 of Article XIV of the Constitution of New York to read:<sup>[4]</sup>

### **[show]AB 4689, Proposed Article XIV, Section 1**

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The lands of the state, now owned or hereafter acquired, constituting the forest preserve as now fixed by law, shall be forever kept as wild forest lands. They shall not be leased, sold or exchanged, or be taken by any corporation, public or private, nor shall the timber thereon be sold, removed or destroyed. Nothing herein contained shall prevent the state from constructing, completing and maintaining any highway heretofore specifically authorized by constitutional amendment, nor from constructing and maintaining to federal standards federal aid interstate highway route five hundred two from a point in the vicinity of the city of Glens Falls, thence northerly to the vicinity of the villages of Lake George and Warrensburg, the hamlets of South Horicon and Pottersville and thence northerly in a generally straight line on the west side of Schroon Lake to the vicinity of the hamlet of Schroon, then continuing northerly to the vicinity of Schroon Falls, Schroon River and North Hudson, and to the east of Makomis Mountain, east of the hamlet of New Russia, east of the village of Elizabethtown and continuing northerly in the vicinity of the hamlet of Towers Forge, and east of Poke-O-Moonshine Mountain and continuing northerly to the vicinity of the village of Keeseville and the city of Plattsburgh, all of the aforesaid taking not to exceed a total of three hundred acres of state forest preserve land, nor from constructing and maintaining not more than twenty-five miles of ski trails thirty to two hundred feet wide, together with appurtenances thereto, provided that no more than five miles of such trails shall be in excess of one hundred twenty feet wide, on the north, east and northwest slopes of Whiteface Mountain in Essex county, nor from constructing and maintaining not more than twenty-five miles of ski trails thirty to two hundred feet

wide, together with appurtenances thereto, provided that no more than two miles of such trails shall be in excess of one hundred twenty feet wide, on the slopes of Belleayre Mountain in Ulster and Delaware counties and not more than forty miles of ski trails thirty to two hundred feet wide, together with appurtenances thereto, provided that no more than eight miles of such trails shall be in excess of one hundred twenty feet wide, on the slopes of Gore and Pete Gay mountains in Warren county, nor from relocating, reconstructing and maintaining a total of not more than fifty miles of existing state highways for the purpose of eliminating the hazards of dangerous curves and grades, provided a total of no more than four hundred acres of forest preserve land shall be used for such purpose and that no single relocated portion of any highway shall exceed one mile in length. Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions, the state may convey to the village of Saranac Lake ten acres of forest preserve land adjacent to the boundaries of such village for public use in providing for refuse disposal and in exchange therefore the village of Saranac Lake shall convey to the state thirty acres of certain true forest land owned by such village on Roaring Brook in the northern half of Lot 113, Township 11, Richards Survey. Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions, the state may convey to the town of Arietta twenty-eight acres of forest preserve land within such town for public use in providing for the extension of the runway and landing strip of the Piseco airport and in exchange therefore the town of Arietta shall convey to the state thirty acres of certain land owned by such town in the town of Arietta. Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions and subject to legislative approval of the tracts to be exchanged prior to the actual transfer of title, the state, in order to consolidate its land holdings for better management, may convey to International Paper Company approximately eight thousand five hundred acres of forest preserve land located in townships two and three of Totten and Crossfield's Purchase and township nine of the Moose River Tract, Hamilton county, and in exchange therefore International Paper Company shall convey to the state for incorporation into the forest preserve approximately the same number of acres of land located within such townships and such County on condition that the legislature shall determine that the lands to be received by the state are at least equal in value to the lands to be conveyed by the state. Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions and subject to legislative approval of the tracts to be exchanged prior to the actual transfer of title and the conditions herein set forth, the state, in order to facilitate the preservation of

historic buildings listed on the national register of historic places by rejoining an historic grouping of buildings under unitary ownership and stewardship, may convey to Sagamore Institute, Inc., a not-for-profit educational organization, approximately ten acres of land and buildings thereon adjoining the real property of the Sagamore Institute, Inc. and located on Sagamore Road, near Racquette Lake Village, in the Town of Long Lake, county of Hamilton, and in exchange therefore; Sagamore Institute, Inc. shall convey to the state for incorporation into the forest preserve approximately two hundred acres of wild forest land located within the Adirondack Park on condition that the legislature shall determine that the lands to be received by the state are at least equal in value to the lands and buildings to be conveyed by the state and that the natural and historic character of the lands and buildings conveyed by the state will be secured by appropriate covenants and restrictions and that the lands and buildings conveyed by the state will reasonably be available for public visits according to agreement between Sagamore Institute, Inc. and the state. Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions the state may convey to the town of Arietta fifty acres of forest preserve land within such town for public use in providing for the extension of the runway and landing strip of the Piseco airport and providing for the maintenance of a clear zone around such runway, and in exchange therefore, the town of Arietta shall convey to the state fifty-three acres of true forest land located in lot 2 township 2 Totten and Crossfield's Purchase in the town of Lake Pleasant.

Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions and subject to legislative approval prior to actual transfer of title, the state may convey to the town of Keene, Essex county, for public use as a cemetery owned by such town, approximately twelve acres of forest preserve land within such town and, in exchange therefore, the town of Keene shall convey to the state for incorporation into the forest preserve approximately one hundred forty-four acres of land, together with an easement over land owned by such town including the riverbed adjacent to the land to be conveyed to the state that will restrict further development of such land, on condition that the legislature shall determine that the property to be received by the state is at least equal in value to the land to be conveyed by the state.

Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions and subject to legislative approval prior to actual transfer of title, because there

is no viable alternative to using forest preserve lands for the siting of drinking water wells and necessary appurtenances and because such wells are necessary to meet drinking water quality standards, the state may convey to the town of Long Lake, Hamilton county, one acre of forest preserve land within such town for public use as the site of such drinking water wells and necessary appurtenances for the municipal water supply for the hamlet of Raquette Lake. In exchange therefore, the town of Long Lake shall convey to the state at least twelve acres of land located in Hamilton county for incorporation into the forest preserve that the legislature shall determine is at least equal in value to the land to be conveyed by the state. The Raquette Lake surface reservoir shall be abandoned as a drinking water supply source.

Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions and subject to legislative approval prior to actual transfer of title, the state may convey to National Grid up to six acres adjoining State Route 56 in St. Lawrence County where it passes through Forest Preserve in Township 5, Lots 1,2,4 and 6 that is necessary and appropriate for National Grid to construct a new 46kV power line and in exchange therefore National Grid shall convey to the state for incorporation into the forest preserve at least 10 acres of forest land owned by National Grid in St. Lawrence County, on condition that legislature shall determine that the property to be received by the state is at least equal in value to the land conveyed by the state.

Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions, the legislature may authorize the settlement, according to terms determined by the legislature, of title disputes in Township Fforty, Totten and Crossfield purchase in the Town of Long Lake, Hamilton County, to resolve longstanding and competing claims of title between the state and private parties in said town- ship, provided that prior to, and as a condition of such settlement, land purchased without the use of state-appropriated funds, and suitable for incorporation in the forest preserve within the Adirondack Park, shall be conveyed to the state on the condition that the legislature shall determine that the property to be conveyed to the state shall provide a net benefit to the forest preserve as compared to the township forty lands subject to such settlement.

## Support

The measure was sponsored by Senator Little and was approved unanimously by the New York legislature in 2013.<sup>[4]</sup>

## Path to the ballot

*See also: Amending the New York Constitution*

According to the New York Constitution, a majority vote is required in two successive sessions of the New York State Legislature in order to qualify a measure for the statewide ballot.

The New York State Senate passed the amendment on June 12, 2013, with a vote of 61 to 0.<sup>[5]</sup>  
The New York State Assembly then passed the amendment on June 19, 2013, with a vote of 141 to 0.<sup>[4]</sup>

New York Long Lake Land Dispute Settlement Amendment, S 4689 Senate Vote		
Result	Votes	Percentage
 Yes	61	100%
No	0	0%

  

New York Long Lake Land Dispute Settlement Amendment, S 4689 Assembly Vote		
Result	Votes	Percentage
 Yes	141	100%
No	0	0%

## See also

- 2013 ballot measures
- New York 2013 ballot measures

## External links

- New York Board of Elections

## References

1. ↑ TimesUnion.com, "Questions that await you in the fall," June 24, 2013
2. ↑ <sup>2.0</sup> <sup>2.1</sup> *Adirondack Daily Enterprise*, "Yes on Township 40, maybe on mining," June 22, 2013
3. ↑ *New York State Board of Elections*, "Proposed Constitutional Amendments," accessed September 13, 2013
4. ↑ <sup>4.0</sup> <sup>4.1</sup> <sup>4.2</sup> *New York State Assembly*, "Senate Bill 4689," accessed July 12, 2013
5. ↑ *New York State Senate*, "Senate vote on Senate Bill 4689," accessed July 18, 2013

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