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## Major Party NY AG Candidates Would Take Pay Cut if Elected, Filings Show

Their financial disclosure forms, released by the state's Joint Commission on Public Ethics, showed a wide array of incomes in 2017, ranging from below \$200,000 to more than \$4 million. The state attorney general has an annual salary of \$151,500.

By Dan M. Clark | July 25, 2018

Each of the major party candidates for New York state attorney general would take a pay cut if elected as the state's top lawyer, according to documents filed with the state.



Joe Shlabotnik/CC/Flickr

Their financial disclosure forms, obtained from the state's Joint Commission on Public Ethics, show a wide array of incomes in 2017, ranging from below \$200,000 to more than \$4

million. The state attorney general has an annual salary of \$151,500.

There are five candidates running for attorney general on major party lines: four Democrats and one Republican. Voters will decide in September which Democrat will go on to face Keith Wofford, the Republican candidate and a partner at Ropes & Gray (<https://www.law.com/law-firm-profile?id=259&name=Ropes-%26-Gray>), in the general election.

Wofford, for his part, has the highest income of any candidate in the race. He reported earning between \$4.35 million and \$4.45 million at Ropes & Gray in 2017 on his disclosure form. Wofford is on a leave of absence from the firm at the moment, but specializes in bankruptcy and creditors' rights, according to his biography on the firm's website.

He co-manages the firm's New York office. He would have to give up that position if elected attorney general, greatly reducing his annual income.

Letitia James, the New York City public advocate, would also see a salary decrease. According to her financial disclosure form, she earned between \$100,000 and \$250,000 in 2017. A query on See Through NY (<http://seethroughny.net/payrolls/>), the Empire Center's database of state salaries, showed her annual salary as public advocate as \$184,800.

James also reported earning between \$5,000 and \$48,000 as an adjunct professor at SUNY Empire State College in Manhattan. See Through NY lists her total pay as \$6,320 at the college in 2017. She said on her disclosure form that she does not have any interactions with the state or city on behalf of SUNY.

She also reported rental income of between \$5,000 to \$48,000 in 2017.

James has been the city's public advocate since 2014. She served on the New York City Council before taking the position. She's no stranger to the Attorney General's Office.



Prior to joining the city council, she led the attorney general's regional office in Brooklyn.

James has been endorsed by Gov. Andrew Cuomo and the state Democratic committee in her run for attorney general. She is being challenged by U.S. Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney, D-New York, Fordham University School of Law professor Zephyr Teachout and former Cuomo aide Leecia Eve in the Democratic primary.

Eve is the highest-earning Democrat in the race. She reported earning between \$850,000 and \$950,000 in 2017 as vice president of state government affairs for Verizon in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. She is a registered lobbyist with the state, but does not practice law outside her position with Verizon, according to her financial disclosure form. Eve is also on the board of commissioners for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which does not pay.

Eve has worked alongside some big names in Democratic circles. She served as counsel to former Vice President Joe Biden and later Hillary Clinton when they were U.S. senators. She was also deputy secretary for economic development in New York under Cuomo. Eve started her legal career clerking for Court of Appeals Judge Fritz Alexander II.

Teachout has also been active in New York state politics, particularly during the past two election cycles. She ran a primary against Cuomo in 2014 and was the Democratic candidate for the 19th Congressional District in 2016. Teachout is a Yale and Duke graduate who clerked for Chief Judge Edward Becker of the Third Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals.

She reported earning between \$150,000 and \$250,000 as a professor at Fordham Law School in 2017. During her run for Congress, she reported ([http://clerk.house.gov/public\\_disc/financial-pdfs/2016/10012517.pdf](http://clerk.house.gov/public_disc/financial-pdfs/2016/10012517.pdf)) earning \$183,991 in 2015 at Fordham.

She also reported between \$23,002 and \$67,000 in income from various writing,

speaking and academic engagements. Between \$20,000 and \$50,000 of that was from a book advance.

Maloney's situation is unique. He's running for state attorney general but has said he will run for his seat in Congress if he loses the September primary. He was first elected to Congress in 2012. He was a senior adviser in the White House under President Bill Clinton and also worked in the administrations of former New York Govs. Eliot Spitzer and David Paterson.

Maloney reported two sources of income. The first, with no surprise, was his salary as a member of Congress. Each federal lawmaker earns \$174,000 each year and is not allowed to be employed in any other capacity to supplement that income. Maloney also reported collecting between \$100,000 and \$150,000 from a trust fund.

A handful of candidates are running on third-party lines as well.

Vincent Messina, a partner at Sinnreich Kosakoff & Messina in Suffolk County, is the endorsed candidate of the Independence party. He reported earning between \$350,000 to \$450,000 at the firm in 2017.

Michael Sussman, of Sussman & Associates in Orange County, won the Green Party's nomination for attorney general. He reported on his financial disclosure form that his firm was paid about \$1 million in 2017.

Three candidates have been approved to run on the Reform Party line. Nancy Regula, an attorney at [Willkie Farr & Gallagher \(https://www.law.com/law-firm-profile?id=328&name=Willkie-Farr-%26-Gallagher-LLP\)](https://www.law.com/law-firm-profile?id=328&name=Willkie-Farr-%26-Gallagher-LLP), reported earning between \$5,000 and \$20,000 in 2017; Michael Diederich only reported income from a military pension despite having his own practice in Rockland County; and Christopher Garvey reported earning between \$5,000 and \$20,000 at Collard & Roe in Nassau County.

The primary for statewide offices is set for Sept. 13.

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