

2019

Green Amendments For The Generations



A Need for Green Amendments

Across our nation communities are drinking contaminated water, breathing contaminated air, watching forests fall and drilling rigs rise, and watching as contaminated sites are paved and developed rather than having their dangerous toxins cleaned up. And across our nation communities wonder, how can this be? Don't we have laws that protect us?



The truth is, our system of government usually leaves consideration of environmental pollution and degradation until late in the process when the focus is on managing environmental, community and human health harms, rather than preventing them.

We need to change this paradigm. A paradigm that gives greater protection to religion and gun rights than it gives to water, air, climate and environmental rights. *Green Amendments For The Generations* seeks to create the paradigm shift we need to transform protection of environmental rights to the level they deserve.

Green Amendments recognize and protect the inalienable rights of all people to pure water, clean air, a stable climate, and healthy environments in the Bill of Rights section of our constitutions. The goal of *Green Amendments For The Generations* is to secure such protection in every state constitution across our nation, and ultimately at the federal level.

In every state where a Green Amendment is advancing, it is *Green Amendments For The Generations* that inspired the effort. And, in every one of these states we are actively engaged in working to inform and secure the constitutional right to pure water, clean air, a stable climate, and healthy environments and to fend off the ill-informed challenges industry, developers and others raise in order to derail the efforts to create constitutional environmental rights.

2019 was a Big Year of FOURS

- 1 After 4 years of operating as a program of the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, we secured our own independent 501(c)(3) status. We are now able to directly accept donations and grants in support of our work. A diverse and committed group of leaders hailing from five states across the country joined the GAFTG board, which now includes educators, activists, attorneys, a radio host, a communication and marketing leader, and a national and international indigenous liaison.
- 2 By year end, Green Amendment proposals were advancing in 4 states: New Jersey, New York, Maryland and West Virginia.
- 3 Our education and outreach are inspiring active community interest in 4 other states: Vermont, Maine, Arizona and New Mexico.
- 4 Outreach, talks and education in 14 more states—Connecticut, Delaware, Colorado, Idaho, Florida, Washington, Oregon, Virginia, Louisiana, Texas, Massachusetts, Kentucky, Tennessee, Michigan—and the District of Columbia is sparking budding interest that we hope will translate into action in the coming years.

Education Inspires...

Our education and outreach are helping to inspire and inform a growing number of Green Amendment partners and future advocates:

115 We distributed 115 (75 print and 40 downloaded from our website) copies of our free Student Guide and Teacher Guide that can be used to bring the Green Amendment message into the classroom. This will enable young people to learn that while currently their inalienable rights to pure water, clean air, a stable climate and healthy environments are not recognized in constitutions across our nation, they have the power to change that by pursuing a Green Amendment in their State.

1,854 In 2019, 1,854 copies of *The Green Amendment* have been sold or distributed, helping to inspire communities across our nation. In the span of one year, we saw almost a 50% increase in sales and distributions since the book was published in 2017, with a grand total of 3,946 books out in the world! *The Green Amendment Securing Our Right to a Healthy Environment*, has been honored as a Gold Winner in the Living Now Evergreen Awards, was a Foreword INDIES Book of the Year Winner in 2017, and continues to be among the top sellers on Amazon, consistently within the top 100 and regularly reaching the top 20 in its category.



The Green Amendments in Pennsylvania and Montana continue to advance environmental protection, with a major new legal victory from Montana where that state's Green Amendment helped to secure revocation of approval for a devastating gold mining operation proposed outside of Yellowstone National Park. Pennsylvania's Green Amendment continues to support important legal cases pressing Pennsylvania government to clean up the highly contaminated Bishop Tube site, and is also being used in litigation to seek higher drinking water standards responding to PFAS contamination.



We continue to develop valuable and state specific resources including Frequently Asked Question sheets, new fact sheets responding to specific requests for additional information, online videos and regular informational webinars.



Maya personally visited and spoke with communities in 16 states during 63 gatherings.



5 webinars with 139 participants helped spread the Green Amendment message.



Green Amendments For The Generations Speaks to State Legislators Nationwide

In a plenary session at the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators annual meeting, founder and author Maya van Rossum spoke to 152 legislators representing 39 states. Maya was joined and introduced by NJ Senator Linda Greenstein, Champion of the proposed NJ Green Amendment. Her talk was well received, and after delivering her message, she was approached by over half a dozen legislators making clear they wanted to advance a Green Amendment in their state. As a direct result of this conference a Green Amendment was proposed in Vermont in early 2020.



New York

In 2019, New York's Green Amendment, first proposed in April 2017, secured first passage of its proposed Green Amendment, putting New York well onto the path of Green Amendment success. A second vote of both houses will be required in 2021 before the people of New York get a chance to cast their ballots, but securing first passage is a major milestone of success. If you live in, or enjoy, beautiful New York state and want to be engaged, [please sign in support](#) of New York Green Amendment rights.

Our active NY partners include Delaware Riverkeeper Network, Environmental Advocates of New York & the NY Adirondack Mountain Club.



New Jersey



Monthly strategy calls, a strategic google group, a springtime legislator education day in which over 15 people participated, and an organized twitter/phone call storm have all helped to steadily advance awareness and support for Green Amendment protection in NJ. The year ended with 40 legislators sponsoring a proposed NJ Green Amendment; 1535 people and 93 organizations signing petitions and letters in support of constitutional environmental rights in the state; and 3 resolutions passed in support of a NJ Green Amendment by the Medical Society of New Jersey, Borough of Cape May Point and the Essex County Board of Freeholders. In addition, a compelling memo providing answers to questions asked by legislators was developed as a helpful compliment to the more general frequently asked questions already crafted by GAFTG for NJ. NJ's Green Amendment was first proposed in November 2017 and has been receiving growing interest and support ever since.

Our active NJ partners include Delaware Riverkeeper Network, Clean Water Action, Environment New Jersey, the Highlands Coalition, and NJ Sierra Club.

New Mexico

When a resident of New Mexico heard Maya on the Thom Hartmann show, he called to talk about advancing a Green Amendment in his state. One phone call turned into 3, as well as the sharing of information, contacts and then a planned August trip. After 10 days of meetings, talks and tours with environmental leaders, indigenous leaders, and government officials, a NM Green Amendment movement quickly began to take hold. Maya met with the All Pueblo Council of Governors' Natural Resources Committee which was followed by a November 2019 presentation to the full Council of Governors. In addition, Maya spoke before 8 groups, held more than 20 meetings and joined Daniel Tso in his Greater Chaco Fracking reality tour, which provides a clear demonstration of why New Mexico needs a Green Amendment. To get involved in the New Mexico's Green Amendment effort sign the [petition](#) of support.



Our active NM partners include: a very proactive group of environmental activists along with an expanding group of organizations including Southwest Native Cultures.

Delaware



GAFTG joined forces with the Sussex Health and Environmental Network (SHEN) and Socially Responsible Agriculture Project (SRAP) to organize a fall gathering that attracted 35 leaders and activists to talk about how Green Amendment protection could benefit Delaware.

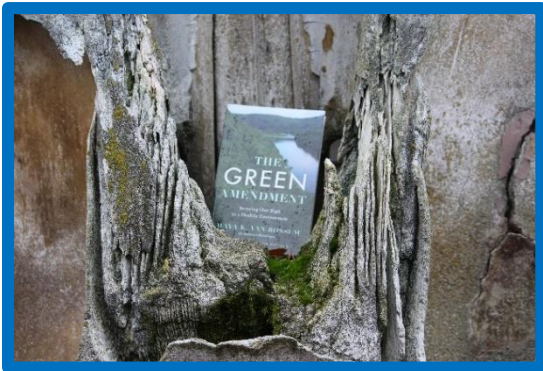
Our key DE partners include: the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, Sussex Health and Environmental Network (SHEN), Socially Responsible Agriculture Project (SRAP), and DE Audubon.

Maryland

Maryland's Green Amendment proposal was re-proposed in 2019 and found itself the focus of a spirited and passionate hearing. Environmental, environmental justice, youth, and community advocates testified in support of constitutional protection of environmental rights and demonstrated the clear and growing community support. While the proposal was pulled back in order to avoid an adverse vote count, the hearing was but an early step in an effective grassroots Green Amendment movement advancing in MD. Waterkeepers Chesapeake took on the leadership role in pulling together a diverse, engaged and growing state Green Amendment movement that continues into 2020. Maryland had its first Green Amendment proposal in March 2018, but the language was modified for the 2019 version and further enhanced to accommodate new input and feedback for a further modified 2020 version.



Our key MD partners include: Waterkeepers Chesapeake, 350.org, Earthworks, Central Maryland Ecumenical Council, and Maryland Legislative Coalition.



Maine

After reading [The Green Amendment the book](#), a resident of Maine reached out to talk. Regular phone calls; introductions to key environmental, youth and indigenous leaders followed; a small strategy session on a lovely front porch is blossoming into an effective and growing grassroots effort. You can join the Maine Green Amendment movement by signing in support of ME constitutional environmental rights protection [here](#).

West Virginia

On February 11, 2019 the West Virginia Green Amendment proposal, already drawing support from 31 legislators, was put forth. In a public statement about the proposal WVA Delegate Hansen recognized both the economic, human and environmental value of the proposal stating:

"The best way to diversify our state's economy is to create jobs that also protect the environment. We can grow our population and our industrial base while keeping the water we drink and the air we breathe clean."



Our key WVA grassroots partner is the West Virginia Rivers Coalition.

Getting a Green Amendment Education

Green Amendments For The Generations has created a Teacher Guide and Student Guide that can help bring environmental values and the message of environmental rights into the classroom from middle school through law school. If you are or know a teacher, consider checking out [these free materials](#).

To help grassroots activists and government leaders understand the many benefits of a Green Amendment and to help them educate others, we have expanded the many information tools available, from fact sheets you can read, to podcasts you can listen to, to videos you can watch and share.

Among the resources now available:

[What Is A Green Amendment](#)

[Using Green Amendments to Strengthen Environmental Justice](#)

[Protections Offered with Trust Language In a Green Amendment](#)

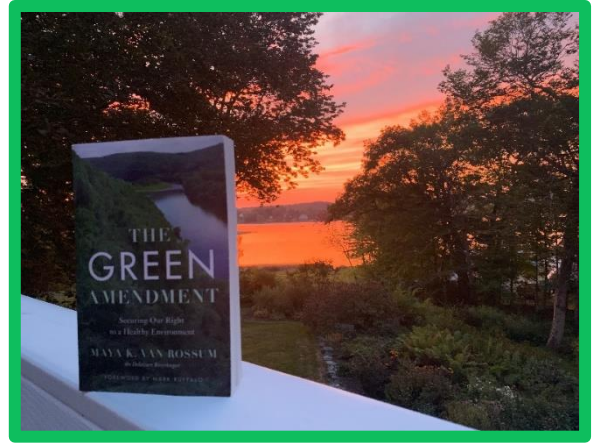
And of course, the book The Green Amendment is the most comprehensive tool of all!

Sharing [the Book](#) is a great way to introduce new people to this transformative idea. If you buy in bulk for sharing (3 or more), we are happy to give you a great deal.

Maya is always available to come speak if you have an audience willing and wanting to listen and learn more. All you need to do is [get in touch](#) and ask. She is a passionate and compelling speaker and always happy to engage.

Staying Engaged:

Keep up to speed on what is happening with the advancement of Green Amendments by following [Green Amendments For The Generations on Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) where we post ongoing actions in all of our active states. [Follow us on Instagram](#) to see where Maya is spreading the Green Amendment message.



Grassroots movements depend on your much needed financial support to raise awareness and get folks engaged!



In 2019 our founder, Maya van Rossum spoke on 8 podcasts and radio/tv programs, and she or the Green Amendment movement was featured in 20 reported stories. You can hear the great interviews [here!](#)

If you like what you hear, consider giving a personal [donation](#) to help us accomplish passage of Green Amendments nationwide. Or send your check to Green Amendments For The Generations, 925 Canal St, Suite 3701, Bristol, PA 19007.

Know a foundation board member or staff member? Please introduce them to our Green Amendment effort: www.ForTheGenerations.org.

Whether you have attended a talk about [the Book](#), are considering leading an action in your own state, have signed a letter or petition to advance the Green Amendments progressing in the state where you live, or have shared a copy of the book with a friend, family member or your favorite legislator, you have been part of advancing this important concept and conversation. Thank you for being a Green Amendment leader!

The Battle to save our water, air, climate and environment must be won today before we reach the point of no return. We need everyone on board and engaged.

