

GREEN AMENDMENTS FOR THE GENERATIONS PURE WATER, CLEAN AIR, A STABLE CLIMATE & HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

ForTheGenerations.org

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How to Get Involved

- → Become a member of Green Amendments For The Generations to stay up to date on everything Green Amendment related and how you can help the movement in your state!
- → Become a Green Amendment Leader by completing our Getting Up to Speed to Lead training program. Green Amendment Leaders develop the knowledge and skills to become key partners, spokespersons, advocates, organizers and engaged advocates in your home community.
- → Get involved at the Take Action page of our national and state-specific websites and/or make a donation to help us meet the rising demand for Green Amendment engagement and support.

Schedule An Event

Maya is always available to come speak to an audience eager to learn more. All programs can be tailored to fit your group's interests. A passionate and compelling speaker, Maya is regularly invited to give keynote presentations and has been featured on programs, such as Midday on WNYC and BBC World Service Business Matters as an environmental expert. To

Staff List

Maya K. van Rossum Founder and Leader

Bridget Brady
Communications & Advocacy Coordinator

Molly Atz
Operations Manager

Camryn Allen
Green Amendments Coordinator

Mel Gardner

Development Associate

The Green Amendment: Securing Our Right to A Healthy Environment

The *Green Amendment* Book is the most comprehensive tool of all. Sharing the book is a great way to introduce new people to this transformative idea. *The Green Amendment* was selected as the 2018 Living Now Evergreen Awards GOLD Winner in the Nature Conservation category. Get your copy to see how our Founder, Maya van Rossum lays out this inspiring new agenda for environmental advocacy, one that will finally empower people, level the playing field, and provide real hope for communities everywhere.

make a speaking request, email <u>GAFTG@forthegenerations.org.</u>

Stay Engaged

Remain up to speed on the Green Amendment movement and the advancement of Green Amendments across the country by visiting forthegenerations.org and following GAFTG on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram

Reflections from Our Founder



We began and ended 2021 filled with the joy of success, flush with excitement for the year to come, but also feeling overwhelmingly challenged by COVID and the impact of the pandemic on our need for financial support, advocacy, public engagement, and other facets of our work necessary to secure environmental rights for all people and generations.

The year began with communities from across the nation being inspired by the power of Green Amendments to advance environmental protection and secure environmental justice. We initiated the year with active Green Amendment proposals in NY, NJ, NM, ME, MD, WVA, VT, and Hawaii. However, quickly into the new year, Delaware, Arizona, and Iowa came on board with proposals for their own Green Amendments – some we knew were coming but some were unexpected. Strong interest started to emerge from Kentucky, Colorado and Michigan.

While COVID made outreach to more rural and less connected communities a challenge, it also gave me an ability, through Zoom, to span the nation to testify, give talks, strategize with partners, and work with new leaders. One day, I testified in Hawaii; a few days later in Washington; the next day Maine; and soon after in New Mexico. The new reliance on Zoom for legislative hearings and strategy meetings allowed me to be everywhere I needed to be with just a few clicks. At the same time, I was able to provide talks with and for our partners, including for interested legislators who wanted to learn more and join the movement.

As COVID eased a bit, Zoom allowed me to engage with communities across the nation and I also travel for in-person meetings and connections. As more people heard our message, more wanted to come on board. On this journey to save our environment and the world, I never know who I will meet day to day. A lot of people expect that I am plagued by industry opponents – dogging my every move. But the truth is, while they are definitely rising up to challenge our work, opposers are forced to do it in the shadows, where they won't be ridiculed for taking a position that argues that you, your children, family, and friends don't deserve clean water or clean air. It is one of the powerful aspects of a Green Amendment – the opposition is very powerful, but must tread lightly or risk exposing cruelty and callousness. It is quite fun to watch them wriggle to make an argument of opposition.

All the while, we inspire powerful voices to step forward on the part of our movement. We attract legislators and environmental leaders, young and old, who see the Green Amendment movement as a powerful tool to protect their future and ability to live in a safe world. Leaders of

all professions, ethnicities, races, religions, and backgrounds, who work day in and day out for racial, civil and environmental justice, recognize that a constitutional environmental rights amendment of this kind can help them secure needed transformational change.

The stories of the need for clean air and water have brought me to tears and inspired me to jump up in ecstatic enthusiasm. It's impossible to overstate the positive energy the Green Amendment inspires in all who come to it with an open heart and a desire to serve their country and community versus a political or profit agenda. One young veteran has such severely compromised health conditions from exposure to dangerous toxins while serving our nation, that the ability to ensure clean water and air is a daily struggle of life and death. High school students have dedicated their environmental club activities to the Green Amendment, organizing legislative briefings, lobby days, and Letter to the Editor workshops.

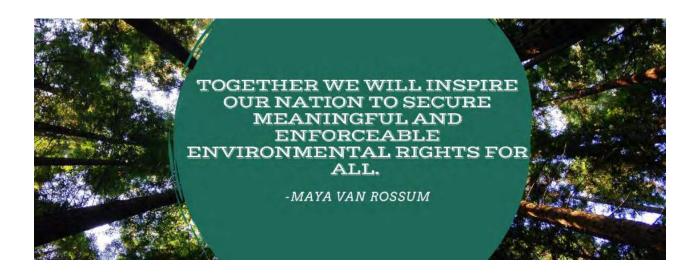
Because of the amazing vision and hard work of our movement, we secured passage of the first Green Amendment in the modern era in New York with 70% of the people's vote! There are Green Amendment proposals in a dozen states – not all of them are moving but some are and with each success we strengthen the path for others.

To be able to rise to the occasion and seize on this moment in history, we need your signatures, volunteerism, activism, and donations.

Thank you for your support,

Mayo k. van Rom

Maya K. van Rossum, Founder, Green Amendments for the Generations



2021 Successes



New York Becomes the 3RD State to Pass A Green Amendment (November 2, 2021)

The New York Green Amendment:

"Each person shall have a right to clean air and water, and a healthful environment."

In 2017, Assemblyman Steve Englebright first proposed New York's Environmental Rights Amendment. Five years later, the bill was placed on the New York state ballot for the people to vote on November 2, 2021.

New York's Green Amendment was passed by the people of the state on the ballot on November 2, 2021. The 70% vote count stands as strong testimony to overwhelming support for clean air, clean water, and a healthful environment for all New Yorkers. The passage of the NY Green Amendment makes NY the third state in the entire country, and first of the 21st Century, to mandate recognition of these inborn rights in their state constitution! While the victory is sweet, the work is far from finished. Education and spreading the word, especially to overburdened BIPOC communities, will truly breathe life into this historic development toward environmental protection and justice. We look forward to NY residents gaining greater awareness and becoming empowered to utilize their Green Amendment in their struggles to secure a cleaner environment. It took five years, three legislative sessions, and a historic election, but we did it!

Reflections from the 1ST Annual Green Amendment Day (July 13, 2021)

Green Amendment Day provided a powerful opportunity to gather like-minded and passionate community members, activists and legislators to discuss the transformational benefits of Green Amendments for securing the systemic legal reforms necessary to end environmental racism. By providing constitutional recognition and protection we can raise up the inalienable rights of all people to a clean & healthy environment, and transform our system of laws and government to ensure environmental justice is mandatory, equitable and enforceable. Over 560 actions were taken that day in the name of environmental rights, including signing petitions, writing to legislators, spreading the word on social media, a kids Kahoot! game, action item sticker incentives, and more. We concluded with a panel of leading environmental justice voices from across the nation, including the lead sponsor of the NM Green Amendment, Senator Antoinette Sedillo-Lopez (NM District 16), and Dr. Sacoby Wilson, Associate Professor at the Maryland Institute for Applied Environmental Health. Attendees from 33 states engaged and benefited with an enriched perspective and deeper understanding of Green Amendments for ending environmental racism and restoring environmental justice through constitutional empowerment.

NCEL Boot Camp (December 10, 2021)

In collaboration with our partner the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators (NCEL), GAFTG led a Green Amendment Boot Camp for legislators to engage in trainings, workshops, and to share their experiences from all stages of their Green Amendment movements. Lawmakers from eight states attended in person and virtually to learn about the Green Amendment impacts on environmental protections, ways to advocate, and how to grow a grassroots coalition of support. Assemblyman Steve Englebright, the dedicated



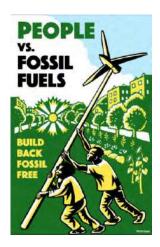
champion of the recently passed New York Green Amendment, joined us to share his advocacy experiences on the road to enacting a Green Amendment. The NCEL Boot Camp was an important catalyst for the relationships among participating legislators to take back to their states.

GAFTG Founder Named "Mother of the Green Amendment"

The Green Amendment team was excited to see our founder, Maya van Rossum recognized for her visionary role in the movement in such a poignant and powerful way by Albuquerque newspaper, "The Paper.", dubbing her as the Mother of the Green Amendment! She works tirelessly day in and day out to help raise up others to learn, lead, and shine. Having helped inspire over a dozen new states to get involved since its original publication, Maya spent much of 2021 revamping *The Green Amendment: Securing Our Right to A Healthy Environment* and incorporating new perspectives, lessons and information into an even more powerful second edition which will be released in 2022!

People vs. Fossil Fuels D.C. Action (October 10-15, 2021)

An objective of our work is to support and collaborate with a diversity of organizations and communities, and to stand with communities who are continually sacrificed for devastating development and fossil fuel expansion projects. The Indigenous Environmental Network invited GAFTG to participate in People vs. Fossil Fuels, a week of actions in Washington, D.C., with other climate activists under the Build Back Fossil Free campaign. GAFTG stood with Indigenous leaders over two days of civil disobedience directly in front of the White House, demanding that President Joe Biden declare a climate emergency and uphold his fossil free promises. Maya was among many environmental leaders



invited to inspire the crowd of activists by recounting her path to advance the Green Amendment. Thousands of people attended the rally, and both days, the protests came to a halt as Capitol police arrested Indigenous leaders, Maya, and other frontline activists. You can watch Maya's energy-filled speech here.

2021 Highlights





New Mexico 2021 Climate Summit (October 25-26, 2021)

The first ever Climate Summit at the Roundhouse in Santa Fe, NM, was held in October 2021. GAFTG was invited to host a Green Amendment breakout session, in which Maya was joined by legislative champions Sen. Antoinette Sedillo Lopez and Rep. Joanne Ferrary, Eric Jantz of NM Environmental Law Center, and activist and veteran Nicole Olonovich. There was a lively discussion focused on Green



Amendment impacts on environmental justice, sacrifice zones, and implications for Indigenous communities. In the effort to advance bold legislative initiatives GAFTG engaged with legislators and activists alike while building strong bonds with our 24 cosponsors.

The Green Genes Podcast

The "Green Genes Podcast", a medley of dialogues between Maya van Rossum, her daughter, and environmental and social justice activists, was launched in 2021. The duo highlight specific environmental and social topics coupled with relevant interviews – ultimately offering a veteran's insight and wisdom coupled with that of an up-and-coming organizer. As intergenerational activists, they bring complementary perspectives on the environmental and social justice issues of our time, including what needed solutions look like. While it serves as a road map for growing into environmental activism, it is also a charming and warm



expression of this mother-daughter team's shared passion for environmental protection, Green Amendments and one another; and how such devotion can be passed down from one generation to the next. "Green Genes: A Mother Daughter Duo Fighting for our Planet" episodes have featured compelling interviews with activists from across the US, who are equally impassioned in their fight for environmental protection and justice. The podcast can be found on Spotify, Google Podcasts, and YouTube.

Maine's Art Builds & Lunch and Learns

The Pine Tree Amendment (PTA) Steering
Committee (our Maine partners), with Artists'
Rapid Response Team (ARRT), hosted an Art
Build educational event in support of the Pine
Tree Amendment, Maine's version of a Green
Amendment. Attendees discussed local
environmental issues and the importance of a Pine
Tree Amendment and its legal applications,
surrounded by artwork, while creating their own
personalized lawn signs displaying their support
for the Pine Tree Amendment. The PTA Steering



Committee also implemented "Lunch and Learns" to meet with different community sectors and educate them on the PTA and what it means for their issues of concern and focus. Throughout the year, organizations, potential volunteers, youth, businesses, and anyone else with questions attended the Lunch & Learn forums to ask Maya and the PTA team to explain the nuts and bolts of a Green Amendment and what these rights would bring to the state. Case studies, Q&As, and access to specially created GAFTG one-page fact sheets served as helpful resources for those who attended these educational events. With these actions, the PTA Steering Committee has increased awareness and receptivity to adopt the PTA.

2021 Key States

Arizona

In Arizona, GAFTG worked with our legislative champion, Senator Juan Mendez, on the key elements of a Green Amendment. While the 2021 amendment has strong language, due to a clerical error it was erroneously placed elsewhere in the AZ constitution rather than the Bill of Rights, thereby undermining its strength and its ability to meet the Green Amendment definition. Senator Mendez took quick action to ensure that his 2022 proposal has both strong language and proper placement in the constitution, thereby solidifying it as a true Green Amendment. GAFTG continues to reach out to environmental groups to secure strong grassroots partnership and leadership. GAFTG launched an Arizona specific website in 2021 to serve as a resource hub and resource repository for the effort. We are currently growing our organizational partnerships in the state.

Delaware

On Earth Day 2021 (April 22), Delaware State Representatives Madinah A. Wilson-Anton and Paul Baumbach proposed a Green Amendment, which would amend the Delaware Constitution to add enforceable environmental rights. The official announcement of the Green Amendment proposal was made at a Youth Earth Day Rally, held at the Charter School of Wilmington, where Maya van Rossum spoke alongside students who are enthusiastically supportive of the proposal. Since then, the Delaware strategy team, referred to as the Delaware Table, which includes our core partners at Socially Responsible Agriculture Project, OK Delaware and Namati, is working to create messaging and awareness programming to inform Delawareans of environmental rights that are not actually granted by their state constitution and how a Green Amendment can change that. GAFTG launched a Delaware specific website in 2021 to serve as a resource hub and resource repository for the effort.

Hawaii

Expanding grassroots support for the Hawaii Green Amendment has been a high priority for GAFTG and our partners, including Senator Mike Gabbard, and Representative Amy Perruso. Additional outreach and educational programming, as well as some open strategy discussions, grew our leadership team, adding new organizations and voices to help advance efforts underway in this key state. In 2021 the Hawaii Green Amendment progressed all the way through the Senate, getting stymied in the House, but only after several committee votes of support. After a dangerous fuel leak from the U.S. Navy off the coast of Hawaii in November 2021, almost 94,000 Hawaiians have been left without access to clean drinking water and their health is suffering as a result. The interest in a constitutional right to clean water and air, and a healthful environment is growing in important ways. GAFTG launched a Hawaii specific website in 2021 to serve as a resource hub and resource repository for the effort. Key state allies: Hawaii Reef and Ocean Coalition, 350 Hawaii, and Our Revolution Hawaii.

Iowa

On Earth Day 2021, Representative Chuck Isenhart proposed a Green Amendment for Iowa. After attending the Legislator Boot Camp Representative Isenhart became even more excited and helped us identify key leaders in the state we needed to connect with. Outreach efforts are yielding positive energy, boding well for growth of the effort in 2022. GAFTG is currently working with Rep. Isenhart and the other sponsors to build grassroots support for the amendment. The need for an Iowa specific website was highlighted and efforts began to get one underway.

Maine

On February 17, Senator Chloe Maxmin and Rick Bennett proposed the Maine Green Amendment, referred to as the Pine Tree Amendment with notable bi-partisan support. With Sector Letters, Advocacy Toolkits, and Letter-Writing Toolkits available to the public, Maine residents of all kinds--from youths and grandparents to healthcare and agricultural workers--demonstrated their support for the PTA. The Maine Leadership and Action Team highlighted advocacy with Maine Youth and Indigenous Nations as major priorities. With youth interns, collaboration with organizations like Maine Youth Climate Justice and the Color of Climate, the PTA is developing strong



partnerships and support with Maine's youngest generation. We are also collaborating with the Wabanaki Alliance, not only to advance the PTA, but to also bolster support for Indigenous environmental justice efforts that have been active for centuries. Additionally, GAFTG launched a Maine specific website in 2021 to serve as a resource hub and resource repository for the efforts. Key state allies: Maine Conservation Voters, Maine Climate Action NOW!, Sierra Club Maine, and Down to Earth Storytelling.

New Jersey

The youth of New Jersey are one of the greatest sources of pride for the GAFTG team due to their involvement, dedication, and aptitude for inspiring others to join the Green Amendment movement. The NJ Student Sustainability Coalition (NJSSC) is a driven group of organized high schoolers who advocate for environmental rights, and specifically for the Green Amendment, through lobbying, political organizing, and spreading awareness through their podcast, "The New Jersey Green Amendment Podcast". Additionally, New Jersey has passed municipal resolutions in support of the Green Amendment in Burlington County, Essex County, Cape May Pt, Aberdeen Township, Borough Bradley Beach, Medical Society of NJ, and within the state chapter of the Sierra Club. This uptick in passed resolutions is an energizing sign, especially

because this same pattern was present in New York prior to officially passing its new Green Amendment in November 2021. GAFTG launched a New Jersey specific website in 2021 to serve as a resource hub and resource repository for the effort. Key state allies: Delaware Riverkeeper Network (DRN), Clean Water Action, NJ Student Sustainability Coalition (NJSSC), and Waterspirit.



New Mexico

2021 was a busy year for the New Mexico Green Amendment movement. The year kicked off in January with the pre-filing of the NM Green Amendment by sponsors Senator Antoinette Sedillo Lopez, Senator Bill Soules, Senator Harold Pope, Jr., and Representative Joanne Ferrary, and was the subject of a February 8, 2021 hearing and vote before the Senate Rules Committee, who voted 7-4 in favor. From there the amendment proceeded to the Senate Judiciary Committee where it unfortunately languished because it was not brought forth for a hearing. 2021 also saw the release of our New Mexico documentary series, which follows Maya in her journey across New Mexico to meet with impacted communities and environmental, legislative and sustainable business leaders to explore their stories and the power of a Green Amendment. Beyond the



legislative session, we continued to build grassroots support and broaden our New Mexico coalition bringing the total number of supporting organizations to over 45. On national Green Amendment Day (July 13) the Doña Ana Board of County Commissioners stood in solidarity with many New Mexico organizations and passed a proclamation formally recognizing July 13 as Green Amendment Day. Read the proclamation here and listen to co-sponsor Senator Carrie Hamblen's powerful remarks on the need for a NM Green Amendment particularly for BIPOC communities. GAFTG expanded our New Mexico specific website to strengthen its role as a resource hub and resource repository for the effort. Key state allies: Environmental Justice Caucus of the Democratic Party, OLÉ! NM, and 350 New Mexico.

ENDING ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM & RESTORING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE THROUGH CONSTITUTIONAL EMPOWERMENT

New York

The year began with spectacular and swift victories before the NY legislature. In January New York State Senate voted 48-14 in support of second passage of the proposed amendment followed shortly thereafter with second passage by the Assembly. As a result the amendment was headed to the people of New York for a vote. In response, GAFTG spent most of 2021 working with our key partners, Environmental Advocates of New York and the NY Adirondack Mountain Club, to increase our education and outreach efforts. Programs, including robust question and answer sessions, were brought before audiences of all kinds from the public, to municipal government, to attorneys, water purveyors and



environmental leadership organizations. GAFTG expanded our New York specific website to strengthen its role as a resource hub and resource repository for the effort. As a result, when the amendment was put on the ballot for a November 2, 2021 vote the populace was well informed. The NY Green Amendment passed overwhelmingly by a vote of 70%; while multiple other proposed amendments failed, demonstrating that the people of the state were being very deliberate in their intention to vote yes for the NY Green Amendment. Key state allies: Delaware Riverkeeper Network (DRN), Environmental Advocates NY, and Adirondack Mountain Club.

Pennsylvania

In May 2021, GAFTG celebrated the 50th anniversary of Pennsylvania's Green Amendment. While the PA Green Amendment was originally proposed by Senator Franklin Kury and added to the constitution in 1971, it wasn't given proper recognition and legal strength until the Delaware Riverkeeper Network and partners successfully revived it through a victorious challenge of the devastating pro-fracking law, Act 13. PA Supreme Court Chief Justice Ronald Castille handed down the plurality opinion at the time, vindicating the importance and power of the Environmental Rights Amendment of the Pennsylvania Constitution; promising all generations of Pennsylvanians that they will benefit from pure water, clean air and a healthy environment, and giving them the ability to defend that right in the courts if it is violated. To celebrate the golden anniversary, GAFTG, the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, and Better Path Coalition hosted a screening of an unreleased interview between former Chief Justice Castille and the Mother of the Green Amendment Maya van Rossum.

PA's Green Amendment continues to be used both proactively to defend good decisionmaking by state officials, and as a legal backstop when the government infringes on the people's environmental rights, such as in the 2021 decision in Pennsylvania Env't Def. Found.v. Commonwealth (PEDF IV), which further codified the significance of the rights for future generations to a healthy environment.

Washington

A Green Amendment has also been filed in the state of Washington! First advanced in 2021 by Representative Debra Lekanoff, the Washington Green Amendment has now secured a powerful partner in Senator Mona Das, following our NCEL Bootcamp! In addition, <u>350 Seattle</u> and 350 Washington's Civic Action Team have joined the advocacy as lead grassroots partners focused on strengthening public education efforts and ensuring a strong and growing coalition of educated supporters. GAFTG launched a Washington specific website in 2021 to serve as a resource hub and resource repository for the effort.

2021 Challenges

Meeting the Needs of A Rapidly Growing Movement

While the Green Amendment For The Generations organization is less than 4 years old, we are experiencing tremendous growth and success. The Green Amendment movement's growth is a demonstration of its power and ability to captivate communities of all different backgrounds. In addition to our successful New York effort, there are 11 Green Amendment proposals actively under consideration, with growing interest in a handful of other states. A number of these proposals are enjoying bi-partisan political sponsorship and support. In addition, there is a tremendous diversity in terms of geography and politics, showing the all-partisan interest in clean and healthy water, air and environments. We are also working with communities in

Pennsylvania, New York and Montana to secure the many benefits constitutional environmental rights provide – these are the only 3 states where we currently have Green Amendments here in the U.S..

While the Green Amendment concept – the right to a clean, safe and healthy environment for all – is simple to understand, properly advancing and defending it can be quite complex. Hands on engagement; carefully crafted and understandable written, video and social media materials; expert testimony and talks; travel to



accommodate those efforts where Zoom and phone just won't cut it; along with legal expertise, are essential for communities seeking success.

At this point there is just a small team working hard to meet the swiftly growing demand. But with more resources more can be done. In this age of COVID, when resources across foundations and donors are increasingly in demand for important causes, balancing all of the

need for assistance and taking on the increasingly well-funded opposition is a definite challenge. But, with your help, we are up for the challenge. Among our many efforts are those to expand the depth and breadth of financial and in-kind support we can bring to this growing body of work and share with partner organizations working just as hard along with us.

Outreach, Inclusion, and Allyship

GAFTG does not function alone; our allies are a keystone of our grassroots approach and we work to support their efforts towards environmental rights and social justice however we can manage. While this work is essential to building a sustainable movement, all the communities who benefit from a Green Amendment do not have adequate--let alone equal--access to the internet, digital devices, funds, or the free time to engage with our work in the most effective ways. Recognizing these challenges, GAFTG is working towards the ability to provide small supplemental grants that enable BIPOC community-based orgs, nonprofits and other groups to advocate for the Green Amendment movement. Additionally, in states, such as New Mexico and Delaware, we are working to have all of our factsheets and other educational documents translated into a second language so they are accessible to a broader audience.

Staffing Developments

Internal staffing changes within our organization created some unanticipated challenge this year. Given our team consists of just 1 full time staff person and 3 part time staff, when our full time staff person moved on to another opportunity, it was a setback for the work as we sought a new team member and got them up to speed. We now are fully staffed, and have added an additional staffer to our team who is largely focused on grant and development opportunities allowing us more time for advocacy and grassroots organizing, and expanding our financial support so we can offer more and more programming and support to our partner organizations and active Green Amendment communities.

Organizing for the People's Environmental Rights Needs Your Support

In a year of political and social unrest, the Green Amendment Movement pushed forward! Though we all experienced unprecedented challenges, your support helped us harness the power of positive, constitutional change in 12 states with more communities contacting our team weekly. Your donation will directly support our work to secure the right to pure water, clean air, a stable climate and healthy environments for all people including future generations. A single dollar donated makes a difference on our impact and success, as we work to strengthen environmental protection & justice for all.



Contact Us

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