



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Constitutional Green Amendment Coming to Massachusetts in Live Event This Fall

**Northampton, MA:** Advocates in Massachusetts are working to secure new constitutional protections for Massachusetts' environment and its communities through a state-level constitutional amendment recognizing environmental rights across the Commonwealth. A Massachusetts Green Amendment would enshrine the rights to clean air, clean water, a healthy environment, and a stable climate in state law.

To introduce the Green Amendment concept to Massachusetts audiences, **the emerging coalition of advocates will host an in-person talk in partnership with Smith College on October 28.** The live event is open to the public and will feature national expert and founder of the Green Amendments movement, Maya K. van Rossum, who will talk about the importance of constitutional environmental rights amendments and their value in the Bay State. Ms. van Rossum is also the author of an award-winning book now in its second edition: *Green Amendments, The People's Fight for A Clean, Safe & Healthy Environment*.

Also attending the autumn event with [Green Amendments for the Generations](https://www.forthethegenerations.org) (GAFTG) will be Ava Blando, GAFTG Board Member and Smith College student, and Samuel Bennett, GAFTG Legal Advisory Board Member, Massachusetts Green Amendment leader and retired Counsel to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

These environmental leaders are concerned about federal environmental protection rollbacks and the limitations of existing state law to ensure protection of the water, air, soils, biodiversity, climate and environments essential for supporting healthy communities.

“While many states, among them Massachusetts, already include environmental language in their state constitutions, for the most part they have proved ineffectual. Constitutional provisions that meet the definition of a Green Amendment are different. These are carefully crafted provisions added to the bill of rights section of a constitution that make environmental rights and government environmental protection obligations enforceable,” says **Maya van Rossum, Founder of Green Amendments For The Generations, an attorney as well as Green Amendments author, advocate and founder who defined and coined the term “Green Amendment”**.

“This amendment isn’t symbolic. It creates real accountability,” adds **Ava Blando, GAFTG Board Member and Smith College student**. “My generation and future generations need Green Amendments to protect us from climate change and dangerous chemicals in the environment.”

“As a former counsel to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, I know there are many existing state laws, carefully designed to protect the environment; but in times of economic duress and shifting political winds, those laws may be repealed or left unenforced. We simply can’t risk delay in achieving our climate and other important environmental goals. That is why I decided we needed a Green Amendment added to our state constitution,” adds **Sam Bennett, a leader in the Massachusetts Green Amendment effort**.

“Since I connected with Maya van Rossum, who founded the national Green Amendment effort, we have seen a massive rollback in federal environmental laws. Securing a meaningful constitutional right is more important than ever,” he says.

Green Amendments have already been secured in 3 states—Pennsylvania, Montana and New York—where they are securing essential protections from fossil fuels and toxic contamination while addressing climate change and protecting natural landscapes important for people, wildlife and biodiversity.

The upcoming event will introduce the potential of a Massachusetts Green Amendment publicly.

**To learn more:** <https://forthe generations.org/events/smith-college-northampton-massachusetts/>

#### **Event Details:**

Date & Time: Tuesday, October 28, 7:00pm ET

Location: Smith College, Neilson Library, Neilson Browsing Room, 7 Neilson Drive,  
Northampton, MA 01063

Event Sponsors: This event is sponsored by Smith College Environmental Science and Policy Department, the Human Rights Initiative, and the Jandon Center for Community Engagement and Social Change.

**To learn more about the Green Amendment movement:** <https://forthe generations.org/>

**To connect with the Massachusetts Green Amendment effort:** [www.MAGreenAmendment.org](http://www.MAGreenAmendment.org)