



## ***Connecticut Environmental Rights Amendment Alliance***

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### **Connecticut Public Hearing on a Constitutional Amendment Demonstrates Strong Public Support For Recognizing the Right to Clean & Healthy Water, Air, Soil, and Environment**

**Hartford, CT:** On March 4, the Government Administration and Election Committee (GAE) held a public hearing on [SJ37](#), a resolution proposing an amendment to the Connecticut State Constitution that would recognize the right of the people of Connecticut to clean and healthy air, water, soil, ecosystems, and environment and a safe and stable climate. Under the title, Connecticut Environmental Rights Amendment, the proposed amendment would be added to the constitution's Declaration of Rights.

The resolution drew overwhelming support from over 175 people and organizations [submitting written testimony](#), with 13 people testifying in person or online.

“Connecticut needs to act to protect our people and the environment and natural resources we will be leaving to the future. This constitutional amendment, after it is passed by a referendum of the people, will empower the people to demand the government policies, statues, standards, and enforcement necessary for a healthy environment.” **explained Dr. Kimberly Stoner, Director of Advocacy for CT NOFA (Northeast Organic Farming Association of CT), and Coordinator of the CT Environmental Rights Amendment Alliance**, which has been working for over 4 years to secure a constitutional environmental rights provision for the people of Connecticut.

“Immigrants and US citizens are being snatched off the street by secret police, low income people are forced into unaffordable, subpar housing, and utility bills are through the roof causing many to struggle. As our human rights are being stripped away now is the time to ensure that we have environmental protections. It is our right to be able to breathe quality air and drink clean water;” **said Tenaya Taylor, Non-Profit Accountability Group.**

“Sierra Club Connecticut is proud to stand alongside advocates and policymakers in support of the Environmental Rights Amendment. Every Connecticut resident deserves the right to a clean and healthy environment. Every Connecticut voter deserves the opportunity to weigh in on this constitutional amendment, and it’s up to our legislators to give voters a chance,” **stated Julianna Larue, Sierra Club Connecticut.**

“While constitutional recognition of environmental rights has long been needed, the stripping away of basic federal environmental protections is highlighting the critical importance of state leadership and constitutional environmental rights protection that cannot be rolled back when the political winds change. This first hearing of 2026 for the CTERA demonstrated that there is overwhelming public support for recognizing a healthy environment as a constitutional right. There were no points of opposition offered that should derail the public’s right to decide whether their state constitution should be amended to protect environmental rights,” **offered Maya van Rossum, author of the book, *The Green Amendment*, founder of the [Green Amendments For The Generations](#) movement,** and a member of the CTERA Alliance. “Connecticut is at the forefront of the national movement to recognize environmental rights as fundamental inalienable rights deserving the same highest protection that is currently given to speech, religious freedom, and property rights,” adds van Rossum.

The Connecticut Environmental Rights Amendment has been drawing support from legislators as well:

"Connecticut is the Constitution State — and it's time our constitution reflected what our residents deserve: a guaranteed right to clean and healthy air, water, and soil, a stable climate, and a healthy environment. Right now, those rights aren't protected, which means government decision-makers are too often free to prioritize political or economic interests over the health of our communities. The CT Environmental Rights Amendment changes that. It shifts our approach from managing pollution after the fact to preventing it from the start. And critically, it would ensure those protections are applied equitably — because communities of color, Indigenous communities, and low-income communities have borne a

disproportionate burden of environmental harm for too long. I'm proud to support the CTERA and urge my colleagues to pass it," **said Representative Josh Elliott (D-88) of Hamden.**

According to [Green Amendments For The Generations](#) which has been working nationally since 2014 to help people understand, secure and enforce constitutional environmental rights, constitutional amendments of this kind and quality currently exist in three states -- Pennsylvania, Montana, and New York – where they have been used to secure clean drinking water, address air pollution, protect natural open space in remote as well as built areas, to address climate pollution, and to secure needed cleanup of toxic contamination. In addition, amendments have been [proposed in over 20 other states](#).

To secure passage of a constitutional amendment in Connecticut, the proposed language must be passed by 75% of the vote in each legislative house one time, or passed by majority vote in each legislative house in two consecutive legislatures, after which it is placed on the ballot for a referendum of the people and must secure majority support from the voters of Connecticut.

To learn more, visit <https://www.ctenvironmentalrightsamendment.org/>

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