



**Connecticut Environmental Rights  
Amendment Alliance**

**For Immediate Release**

March 23, 2026

**Contacts:**

Kimberly Stoner, Coordinator, CTERA Coalition, [kim@ctnofa.org](mailto:kim@ctnofa.org)

Maya van Rossum, Founder, Green Amendments For The Generations,  
(215) 801-3043, [maya@ForTheGenerations.org](mailto:maya@ForTheGenerations.org)

**Connecticut Legislative Committee  
Passes Constitutional Environmental Rights Proposal**

**Hartford, CT:** On March 20, 2026, the Government Administration and Elections Committee (GAE) voted overwhelmingly (13 yeas; 6 nays) to advance the resolution to put the Connecticut Environmental Rights Amendment (CTERA) on the ballot. Proposed as SJ 37, the amendment would be added to the state constitution's Bill of Rights and recognize the right of all the people of Connecticut to clean and healthy water and air, soils, ecosystems, environment and a stable climate.

The CTERA was the subject of a robust hearing held before the GAE Committee on March 4. Thirteen people testified in support of the amendment with over 175 people and organizations [submitting written testimony](#).

“Federal policies that have been the basis for environmental protections are being dismantled every week. It is more important than ever that the fundamental human rights to clean and healthy air, water, soil and environment and a safe climate get the strongest protection in our Connecticut constitution. Thanks to the Government Administration and Elections Committee, and especially the co-chairs Senator Mae Flexer and Representative Matt Blumenthal, for taking this important step forward”, **says Dr. Kimberly Stoner, Director of Advocacy for CT NOFA (Northeast Organic Farming Association of CT), and Coordinator of the CT Environmental Rights Amendment Alliance** that has been working for over 4 years to secure a constitutional environmental rights provision for the people of Connecticut.

“While it was disappointing to hear some on the committee mischaracterize the proposed amendment, it was rewarding to witness this historic vote where the GAE Committee voted yes to advance the CTERA. For years, Pennsylvania and Montana have had constitutional

environmental rights of this kind in place and they are working to strengthen needed environmental protection and to ensure that the people of the state have a meaningful seat at the decisionmaking table. New York's amendment is the most recent, and we are not seeing the parade of horrors suggested by those who oppose the CTERA," explained **Maya van Rossum, author of the book, *The Green Amendment* and founder of the [Green Amendments For The Generations](#)** organization, and also a member of the CTERA Alliance. "Connecticut is right now poised to be the 4<sup>th</sup> state in the nation to recognize environmental rights as deserving the same highest protection that is currently given to speech, religious freedom, and property rights," **adds van Rossum.**

"The mission of CT NOFA is to ensure the growth and viability of organic agriculture, organic food, and organic land care in Connecticut. But, if we don't have clean and healthy air, water, and especially soil in Connecticut, we will not be able to produce clean and healthy food and have a healthy and resilient environment, even with organic practices. If we don't have a safe climate, our farmers and land care professionals will have to deal with increasing extremes of weather and temperature, leading to climate disasters. CT NOFA congratulates the Government Administration and Elections Committee on passing SJ 37, the resolution to put the CT Environmental Rights Amendment on the ballot, and we look forward to seeing it pass in both chambers of the CT General Assembly," **stated Jeremy Pelletier, Executive Director, CT NOFA (Northeast Organic Farming Association of CT).**

"Environmental impacts, especially from our energy system, disproportionately burden some communities. That's not right, and SJ 37 will provide common sense protections, long overdue, equally across Connecticut," **explained Andy Bauer, Chair, Portland Clean Energy Task Force.**

"The state of Connecticut has climate laws on the books, but state officials admit they are nowhere near on track to reach the benchmarks for reducing climate pollution. An environmental rights amendment that is part of our state constitution would provide a greater level of accountability and help protect our climate for current and future generations," **said Melinda Tuhus, Steering Committee, CT Climate Crisis Mobilization.**

"The League of Women Voters of Connecticut supports passage of the ERA for the state. We believe that clean air, pure water, and a healthy environment are fundamental human rights to which we all are entitled," **said Patricia Rossi, Co-President, League of Women Voters of Connecticut.**

"Enshrining environmental protections in our state constitution moves us from enacting piecemeal regulations year to year to taking a principled, moral stand that ensures we will protect Connecticut's natural legacy for generations to come," **adds Laura Smits, Co-President, League of Women Voters of Connecticut.**

"Advancing S.J. 37 would send a clear and powerful message: Connecticut residents deserve an environment that enables them to thrive. The resolution's growing support reflects its importance in moving it forward," **said Lilliana Sarju, Policy & Outreach Coordinator, Connecticut League of Conservation Voters.**

“Hamden Alliance for Trees thanks the GAE for the passage of this bill out of committee. With the repeal of the Endangerment Finding, rollback of environmental regulations, and dismantling of our social safety net, this legislation is more critically needed than ever before,” **stated Diane Hoffman on behalf of Hamden Alliance for Trees (HAT).**

“Connecticut is united for our right to live, work and enjoy a clean, beautiful and safe environment,” **said Carolyn Lyle on behalf of CT Advocates for Trees.**

“We’re in a pivotal era in terms of climate change. What we do now will be our legacy for generations to come. Working together to protect our environment is the best way to ensure a livable future for people in Connecticut,” **said Lea Sloan on behalf of CT Advocates for Trees. Lea adds,** “for every person in Connecticut, our environment determines our health, wellbeing and future.”

“As an organization that empowers young people to speak out on the climate change that makes their future more precarious every day, The Active Voice urges every elected official to support codifying this constitutional right,” **said Christine Palm, a former legislator who served as vice chair of the Environment Committee** and chose not to run again for office in order to launch this high-level civics internship. “Young people are tired of waiting for their government to protect them, and they certainly don't expect the fossil fuel industry to do the right thing voluntarily. So, having this legal protection as recourse is vital to them.”

“Connecticut has been a leader in environmental legislation throughout the past century. As the interpretation of existing legislation is being broadened, now is the time for Connecticut to continue its strong stand to protect clean water, clean air, and a healthy environment for all,” **said Joyce Leiz, Executive Director of The Connecticut Audubon Society.** “The passage of the Connecticut Environmental Rights Amendment, S.J. 37, will provide a legacy of protections for future generations.”

“At a time when the federal government is stripping away our basic environmental protections, it is important now more than ever for the state to recognize the fundamental human right to a clean and stable environment. An Environmental Rights Amendment will grant the people of Connecticut the power to hold our government accountable when its environmental obligations are not upheld,” **stated Stephanie Ingraldi, Sunrise New Haven.** “As young people inheriting a warming planet, we thank the Government Administration and Elections Committee for taking this positive step towards protecting the health and survival of current and future generations of Connecticut.”

“Clean air and clean water are fundamental to life in Connecticut,” **said Samantha Dynowski, State Director, Sierra Club Connecticut.** “We applaud the Government Administration and Election Committee for passing S.J. 37 today with clear and strong language that ensures, if the resolution is enacted, that essential environmental rights are given the highest level of legal protection.”

The next step for the CTERA is to go to the floor of the Senate for consideration. The proposed language must be passed by 75% of the vote in each legislative house in one session or passed by majority vote in each legislative house in two consecutive legislatures. After

legislative passage, the amendment is placed on the ballot and must secure majority support from the voters of Connecticut.

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

###