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McKinney, Shink, Advocates Introduce Michigan Green Amendment in Honor of Earth Day

*Democratic lawmakers propose constitutional amendment to promote a
healthier Michigan and protect environmental rights*

LANSING, Mich., April 22, 2026 — In honor of Earth Day, **state Rep. Donovan McKinney** (D-Detroit) hosted a press conference alongside **state Sen. Sue Shink** (D-Northfield Twp.) and advocates to announce the [Michigan Green Amendment](#).

“On this Earth Day, we are reminded that clean air, safe drinking water and a stable climate are fundamental rights,” **McKinney** said. “We are at a time when these protections should be strengthened yet efforts are being made by the GOP to [roll back](#) clean energy reforms, threatening the progress we’ve made. The Michigan Green Amendment aims to enshrine these rights in our state constitution and ensure they are protected for every person, in every community, for generations to come.”

The proposal, a part of [House Democrats’ broader push](#) to create a healthier Michigan, would amend the state constitution to protect the right of all Michiganders to a clean and healthy environment, including clean water, air and soils; balanced ecosystems; and a stable climate.

“With this proposal, Michigan is placing itself at the forefront of the U.S. environmental rights movement. Michigan is now poised to be the fourth state in the nation to give the strongest constitutional-level standing to environmental rights,” said **Maya van Rossum, Founder of Green Amendments For The Generations**, which leads a nationwide movement to secure enforceable environmental rights in every state across the country. “Currently three states have constitutional protections that give environmental rights the same high-level protection as is proposed by the Michigan Green Amendment. Twenty more states are advancing similar proposals, with Michigan’s effort being among the most robust.”

Supporters say the proposal is a critical step toward addressing environmental inequity and strengthening protections for Michigan's air, water, public lands and climate.

"The State of Michigan has a 'high, solemn and perpetual duty' under the public trust doctrine to ensure that Michigan waters remain healthy, public and protected for all. This duty is intergenerational in nature, which means that water stewardship demands protection from one generation to the next. Adopting a Green Amendment further solidifies that responsibility and enshrines the state's already necessary commitments into our constitution for good," said **Liz Kirkwood, Executive Director and Founder of For Love of Water (FLOW)**.

"In my opinion there are two critical changes that happen with this amendment. First, it clearly establishes the right of citizens to invoke the courts in defense of the environment and public health. Our current statute is not 'self-executing,' so Michiganders are left waiting until someone creates a concrete and particularized' harm — sometimes something that could and should have been avoided — before being allowed to demand protections," said **Conan Smith, President & CEO of Michigan Environmental Council**. "Second, and more importantly, the amendment moves the state from being a 'regulator'" to being a full trustee of our natural resources. We all act as stewards of Michigan's air, our water and the places we love on behalf of future generations, and that ought to be the law of the land."

"As part of our mission to explore, enjoy and protect our wild places, Sierra Club Michigan is glad to see this constitutional amendment move one step closer to becoming a reality," said **Tim Minotas, Legislative and Political Director of Sierra Club Michigan**. "This amendment provides Michiganders with a meaningful legal tool to protect their rights to clean air, safe water, a stable climate and a healthy environment — all of which are fundamental rights, not privileges. It ensures every community, especially those too often left behind, is empowered to hold decision makers accountable and protect these rights for future generations."

"This Earth Day, the Michigan Climate Action Network celebrates the introduction of a Green Amendment and applauds the leadership making it possible. We are proud to support the effort to establish clean air, clean water and a healthy environment as enforceable rights in our state constitution, ensuring every community has the protections it needs to thrive," said **Denise Keele, Executive Director of Michigan Climate Action Network**.

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