



## ACA 16 – The California Green Amendment

### SUMMARY

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ACA 16 will amend the State’s constitution to enshrine the right to clean air, water, and a healthy environment for every Californian.

### BACKGROUND

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For many years, California has led the nation in combating the effects of climate change. From statutorily protecting the right to affordable drinking water, to advancing statewide air quality and emissions standards, California continues to lead. However, despite all of these efforts, the California Constitution still has no permanent environmental language in it. In fact, many other states are ahead of California in their efforts to establish the right to a healthy environment for all of their residents. These “Green Amendments” are becoming commonplace for states seeking to further protect and affirm environmental rights.

Most recently, in 2021, the state of New York proposed to amend its constitution to add environmental language. With a resounding 70% of the public voting in support, it is clear that green amendments are both necessary and desired. To date, Nevada, New Mexico, Hawaii, Connecticut, Texas, Maine, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Washington all have introduced green amendment language.

### PROBLEM

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California is a leader in environmental policy. Our state sets a tone for the nation and often the world. Still, the 40 million people who call California home do not have a fundamental right to clean air, water, and a healthy environment. Without a constitutional right, all of the progress we have made is momentary and subject to potential rollbacks. It also leaves California increasingly vulnerable to changes in federal policy. If our state is to continue making equitable environmental progress, it is imperative that we join the growing list of states who have moved to enshrine environmental rights in their constitutions.

### SOLUTION

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ACA 16 will codify the right to clean air, water, and a healthy environment for every Californian. It will provide a foundation for the laws the legislature has fought to pass, and provide a permanent guidepost for our longevity and sustainability. Moreover, ACA 16 has the potential to ensure that 1 in 8 Americans has the fundamental and constitutionally protected right to clean air, water, and a healthy environment.

### SUPPORT

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Center for Biological Diversity (co-sponsor)  
Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice (co-sponsor)  
Community Water Center (co-sponsor)  
Human Impact Partners (co-sponsor)  
Green Amendments for the Generations (co-sponsor)  
Climate Equity Policy Center (co-sponsor)  
Sunrise Movement LA (co-sponsor)  
1000 Grandmothers for Future Generations  
350 Bay Area Action  
350 Conejo/ San Fernando Valley  
350 Sacramento  
350 South Bay Los Angeles  
350 Ventura County Climate Hub  
Active San Gabriel Valley  
Asian Pacific Environmental Network  
Azul  
Bay Area Youth Lobbying Initiative  
California Association of Local Conservation Corps  
California Coastal Protection Network  
California Coastkeeper Alliance  
California Environmental Justice Alliance Action  
California Environmental Voters  
California Green Business Network  
California Nurses for Environmental Health and Justice  
California Trout  
Californians for Pesticide Reform  
Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment  
Central Valley Air Quality Coalition  
Clean Water Action

CleanEarth4Kids.org  
Climate Action California  
Climate Health Now  
Climate Plan  
Climate Reality Project San Fernando Valley  
Climate Reality Project, California Coalition  
Climate Reality Project, LA Chapter  
Climate Resolve  
Coalition for Clean Air  
Communities for a Better Environment  
Culver City Democratic Club  
Defenders of Wildlife  
Democratic Socialists of America – Los Angeles  
Dietrick Institute for Applied Insect Ecology  
East Area Progressive Democrats  
Environmental Defense Center  
Environmental Defense Fund  
Environmental Working Group  
Families Advocating for Chemical and Toxics Safety  
Families for A Future  
Fossil Free California  
Friends Committee on Legislation of California  
Friends of the River  
Glendale Environmental Coalition  
Green Amendments for the Generations  
JAIDE Conservation Collective, LLC  
LA Waterkeeper  
Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability  
Los Angeles City Councilmember Eunisses Hernández  
Los Angeles City Councilmember Katy Yaroslavsky  
Los Angeles Unified School Board District 2, Dr. Rocio Rivas  
Lutheran Office of Public Policy- California  
Mono Lake Committee  
MoveLA  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
NextGen CA  
Pacifica Climate Committee  
Peninsula Interfaith Climate Action  
Pesticide Action Network  
Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Planning and Conservation League  
Project Green Home  
Public Health Institute  
Sacramento Climate Coalition  
Santa Cruz Climate Action  
Santa Cruz Climate Action Network  
SCOPE LA  
Sierra Club California  
Sierra Nevada Alliance  
Sonoma County Democratic Party

South Los Angeles Transit Empowerment Zone  
Stand Together Against Neighborhood Drilling  
Streets For All  
Sunrise Movement Long Beach  
Sunrise Movement Sacramento  
Sunrise Movement San Diego  
The Climate Center  
The Nature Conservancy  
Third Act SoCal  
Transformative Wealth Management  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
Unite Here Local 11  
Urban Environmentalists  
USBC Los Angeles  
Valley Improvement Projects  
Vista Hermosa Heights Community Group  
Vote Solar  
West LA Democratic Club

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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