

# LETTER TO THE EDITOR GUIDE - STATES WITHOUT GREEN AMENDMENTS

## What are LTEs? Why are they important?

Letters to the Editor (LTEs) are great tools for sharing your perspective on an important issue with your community. They are typically the most widely-read section of a news publication, so they give you the opportunity to reach individuals far beyond your immediate network of friends, family, and colleagues. They are short, to-the-point, and often inspire others to learn more and take action!



## When can I write one?

LTEs are often (but not always) responses to other articles in a publication. So if you see a news article about the environment, an environmental challenge, or your state's proposed Green Amendment, take the opportunity to write an LTE in response! However, you should still feel empowered to write an LTE at any time to share your thoughts and educate others on the Green Amendment.

## How can I write one?

A personal letter (rather than a fill-in-the-blank template message) is the most powerful and the most likely to get printed. So please craft your own letter written from the heart. Mention any issues or threats your community is struggling with and simply note that a Green Amendment can help.

We have included some tips and ideas below to help you get started!

- Use our helpful online Letter to the Editor tool at [bit.ly/GALetterToEditor](http://bit.ly/GALetterToEditor). This will help fill in the names & contact info of all the news outlets near you so that you can submit a handful of letters with the click of a button! *Note: You will want to submit a unique version of your letter to each publication, as different news outlets do not want to risk printing the same article.*
- When it comes to the body of your letter, remember to be TO THE POINT! Usually, letters to the editor are no more than 300 words, so you will have to share the key issue and your stance on it, why it's important, and any examples or evidence in just a few paragraphs.
  - 1) **Start with your key takeaway you want readers to remember**– which is likely a statement expressing support of the environmental rights values & protections a state Green Amendment would provide, and highlighting that the people of your state deserve the opportunity to vote on whether they want to see these values reflected in the state constitution.



- 2) **Give a brief explanation of what the your state’s Green Amendment is**, in case any readers are unfamiliar with the concept. You can include any of the following details in your description:

<b>Definition of a Green Amendment</b>	<p>Green Amendments are self executing provisions added to the Bill of Rights section of a constitution that recognize and protect the rights of all people – regardless of race, ethnicity, religion or income, including future generations – to pure water, clean air, a stable climate, and healthy environments.</p>
<b>Language of the Green Amendment</b>	<p>If your state has proposed Green Amendment language, feel free to include it in your LTE. You can find if your state has proposed language by navigating to our <a href="#">Active States</a> page, choosing your state, and going to the ‘Overview’ page.</p>
<b>Legislative History of the Green Amendment</b>	<p>On the same ‘Overview’ page on your state website, there is likely some legislative history of the proposed Green Amendment – what year it was first proposed, prime &amp; co-sponsors, committee hearing history, etc. – you may want to include this background information for publishers and readers.</p>

- 3) **Give some background on why the issue is important.** Here, you can touch on:
- How everyone has a human right to clean air, pure water, a safe climate, and healthy environments, and that this right should receive the highest legal protection as our other fundamental rights such as free speech;
  - How we should be protecting our precious environments for the benefit of future generations;
  - How all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, Tribal affiliation, or socioeconomic status are deserving of the equitable environmental protections a Green Amendment would provide;
  - How the changing climate requires us to have a strong foundation of environmental protection that a Green Amendment would provide;
  - How our current system of environmental legislation is focused on permitting and managing pollution after-the-fact, as opposed to avoiding it in the first place;
  - How now is the time for states to step up while basic environmental protections are being stripped away at the federal level.

4) **Share personal experiences with or examples of environmental issues in your area that a Green Amendment could help with.** Some examples to consider include:

- **PFAS contamination**
- **Air pollution**
- **Contaminated sites**
- **Water quality issues**
- **Flooding concerns**
- **Overdevelopment**
- **Ecosystem degradation**
- **Public health concerns**
- **Etc.**

5) **You may want to include other benefits of Green Amendment protections beyond the environmental.** Consider:

- How a Green Amendment will advance good, quality clean energy projects;
- How a Green Amendment supports a healthy, active workforce;
- How a Green Amendment can protect essential environments that support property values and eco-tourism;
- How a Green Amendment fosters healthy communities by protecting the natural areas that promote mental and physical well-being.

6) **Re-state your key message and let people know where they can go to learn more.**

When you've laid out all the points you want to make, wrap up your letter with another statement of how environmental rights are human rights deserving of highest constitutional recognition and protection. Let people know that they can learn more and get involved at [www.GreenAmendment.org](http://www.GreenAmendment.org)!

➤ If you want more help crafting your letter, please get in touch with our Founder, Maya van Rossum. You can reach her through the [Green Amendments For The Generations contact page](#). Rest assured Maya will care and respond with help!

## DON'T FORGET TO SHARE YOUR LETTER WITH US!



Share your inspiring letter with us (published or unpublished) so we can share the message with other advocates in your state's Green Amendment Movement!

Feel free to email it to us at [gaftg@forthe generations.org](mailto:gaftg@forthe generations.org) OR post it on our [Green Amendment Action Platform Community](#).