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New Mexico House Energy, Environment, and Natural Resources Committee Votes to Pass A Green Amendment

*The Constitutional Amendment will Secure the Right to Clean Air and Water
and a Healthy Environment*

Santa Fe, NM: Today, the New Mexico Green Amendment House Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Committee voted to pass an updated version of HJR2, or the Green Amendment, through committee with a vote of 6 to 4. A revised version was considered by the committee after the original language failed to achieve the majority necessary at last week's hearing to advance. The new language, according to sponsors, addresses concerns raised at last week's hearing while still providing essential environmental rights and natural resources protection. The proposed New Mexico Green Amendment will be moving forward to the House Judiciary Committee next.

"I am deeply appreciative of the house committee moving this bill forward, and seeing its value for protecting our environment and the people of our Land of Enchantment," offered **Representative Joanne Ferrary, lead sponsor on the Green Amendment proposal.**

Senator Antoinette Sedillo Lopez, lead sponsor on the Senate side, expressed great appreciation for Committee Chair Matthew McQueen's collaboration in making this a better bill. Senator Sedillo Lopez also stated that, "New Mexicans deserve to vote on the importance of clean air, water, land and the environment in our beautiful but environmentally fragile state."

The Joint Resolution proposes amending the state constitution's Bill of Rights to recognize and protect the rights of all of the people of New Mexico to "*clean and healthy air, water, soil and environment; a stable climate; and self-sustaining ecosystems*" and to ensuring the New Mexico government officials conserve, protect and maintain the state's natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

"I'm really excited that the Green Amendment is a step closer to going to the people for consideration. All New Mexicans want clean water, land and air for themselves and their families. The Green Amend will ensure that the people have a strong voice in how their environment is cared for," stated **Eric Jantz, Senior Staff Attorney with the New Mexico Environmental Law Center** who was also raised up as an expert panelist during the hearing.

"This is a receipt that the Democratic Representatives are listening to the voice of the people of New Mexico, and hopefully this victory will not be the last, as the voters of New Mexico are watching and our retention of the

House & Executive hinge on us believing we are being heard,” said **Nicole Olonovich, DPNM Adelante Progressive Caucus, Representative Candidate for HD12.**

“The sponsors of the New Mexico Green Amendment proposal have been working hard to advance this transformative vision for environmental protection, and we thank them for keeping the fundamental rights of every New Mexican at the forefront of their efforts. The comments and contributions of the HEENRC committee and Chairman McQueen have been a valuable part of this process” said **Maya van Rossum, founder of [Green Amendments For the Generations](#)** and author of the book, *The Green Amendment*, who was also raised up as an expert panelist during the hearing. “New Mexico is a national leader in the movement to recognize environmental rights as deserving of the same highest protection currently given to other fundamental rights we hold dear such as the rights to free speech.”

“Clean air and water and safe communities are a human right and now they are closer on their way to being a civil right. We’re thankful to Chairman McQueen and the other members of the committee who voted to move the Green Amendment forward,” offered **Luis Guerrero, Legislative and Political Organizer for the Sierra Club Rio Grande Chapter.**

“Mother Earth, her inhabitants and our beloved Land of Enchantment were respected and honored today with a victory in the NM House Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Committee with the passage of HJR 2 Environment Rights-the Green Amendment by a vote of 6-4! I thank our incredible Mother Earth Champions. Senator Antoinette Sedillo Lopez, Senator Joanne Ferrary, Sponsors and Chair Mathew McQueen for their work and leadership in support of the NM Green Amendment. And thank you to all our Green Amendment supporters and great team, YESSS!” said **Terry Sloan, Director of Southwest Native Cultures.**

Montana, Pennsylvania and New York currently protect environmental rights as an inalienable right in the Bill of Rights section of the state Constitution, with New York achieving passage of their amendment in November 2021. But the Green Amendments For The Generations movement is gaining traction and has inspired Green Amendment proposals in 11 additional states.

If passed in all committees and through both houses, the amendment will be placed on the ballot for New Mexico voters in the 2022 General Election. Legislative sponsors of the New Mexico Green Amendment include: Senator Antoinette Sedillo Lopez, Representative Joanne Ferrary, Senator Harold Pope, Jr., Senator Bill Soules, Senator Elizabeth “Liz” Stefanics, Senator Gerald Ortiz y Pino, Senator Carrie Hamblen, Representative Tara Lujan, Senator Shannon Pinto, Representative Debbie Sarinana, Senator Linda Lopez, Representative Patricia Roybal Caballero, Senator Bill Tallman, Senator Jeff Steinborn, Representative Kay Bounkeua, Representative Elizabeth “Liz” Thomson, Representative Gail Chasey, Representative Miguel Garcia, Senator Roberto "Bobby" J. Gonzales, Senator Brenda McKenna, Senator Michael Padilla, Senator Nancy Rodriguez, Senator Benny Shendo, Representative Pamela Herndon and Representative Linda Serrato

The proposed New Mexico Joint Resolution reads as follows:

SECTION 1. It is proposed to amend Article 2 of the constitution of New Mexico by adding a new:

- A. The people of the state shall be entitled to clean and healthy air, water, soil and environment; a stable climate; and self-sustaining ecosystems, for the benefit of public health, safety and general welfare. The state, including its political subdivisions, shall serve as trustee of the natural resources of New Mexico and shall conserve, protect and maintain these resources for the benefit of all the people, including present and future generations.*
- B. The provisions of this section are self-executing. Monetary damages shall not be awarded for a violation of this section."*

SECTION 2. It is proposed to amend Article 20 of the constitution of New Mexico by repealing Section 21.

To learn more about the New Mexico Green Amendment movement, visit www.NMGreenAmendment.org.

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