

A Green Amendment for New York

Environmental

Advocates

NY

What is the Green Amendment?

The Green Amendment is a simple 15-word addition to the New York State Constitution:
Each person shall have a right to clean air and water, and a healthful environment.

The current New York Bill of Rights contains many of our most sacred civil liberties, but nowhere is there a right to a clean and healthful environment. The inclusion of a Green Amendment would provide these important protections as a constitutional right for all New Yorkers, critical to sustaining healthy lives and economies.

What impact would a Green Amendment have?

A Green Amendment is a value statement that declares that New Yorkers acknowledge that clean air, clean water, and a healthy environment are fundamental rights for all of us. It sends a clear message about our collective values and priorities and would be on par with fundamental freedoms like the right to free speech and freedom of religion.

But what is more, a Green Amendment is not just symbolic, but an actionable right. Its inclusion in the State Constitution would provide procedural and substantive safeguards by requiring the government to consider the environment and our relationship to it in decision-making.

What is the process for enacting a Green Amendment?

Though the New York Legislature passed a bill — A.2064/S.2072 — to add a Green Amendment in the 2019 legislative session, *full enactment is a multi-year process*. First, a bill supporting the constitutional amendment must pass two elected legislatures. After this passage, the Green Amendment moves to a statewide referendum where voters will decide whether to enshrine the Green Amendment into the State Constitution. This bill now needs to be passed again by the 2021-2022 legislature, and then added as a ballot measure thereafter.

How can I get involved?

Add your name to our [letter of commitment](#) in support of a Green Amendment to receive updates about this multi-year campaign - and join our [Environmental Bill of Rights in New York Facebook Group](#). For more resources, visit the [Green Amendments For The Generations website](#).

If you want to help pass a local resolution in support of a Green Amendment where you live, contact Joshua Cohen, Director of Campaigns, at jcohen@eany.org for more details.