
OLR Bill Analysis

SJ 37

RESOLUTION PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE STATE CONSTITUTION CONCERNING ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS.

SUMMARY

This resolution proposes a state constitutional amendment to give each person an individual right to clean and healthy air, water, soil, ecosystems, and environment and a safe and stable climate for the benefit of public health, safety, and the general welfare. It prohibits anyone from infringing on these rights and requires the state to protect them equitably for all people regardless of race, ethnicity, tribal affiliation, gender, socioeconomic status, or geography. It also requires the state to conserve, protect, and maintain all the state's natural resources for its residents (present and future), including its waters, air, flora, fauna, soils, and climate.

The resolution directs that the state shall not allow, through government action or inaction, any avoidable degradation, diminution, or depletion of the natural environment that contributes to significant or widespread environmental harm, or results in an unhealthy or unsustainable environment.

Under the resolution, these rights are inalienable, and state residents may directly invoke and enforce them. The resolution also prohibits diverting any funds supporting the protection of the state's natural resources.

The ballot designation to be used when the amendment is presented at the general election is: "Shall the Constitution of the State be amended to (1) provide each citizen an enforceable individual right to clean and healthy air, water, soil, ecosystems and environment, and a safe and stable climate for the benefit of public health, safety and the general welfare, that is equivalent to all other inalienable rights, (2) place certain

obligations upon the state, including requiring the state to conserve, manage, protect and maintain the state's natural resources, and (3) prohibit the diversion of funds supporting protection of such resources?"

EFFECTIVE DATE: If the resolution passes by at least three-fourths of the membership of each house of the General Assembly, it will be placed on the 2026 general election ballot. If it passes by a majority of the membership of each house but less than three-fourths, it will be referred to the 2027 legislative session. If it passes in that session by a majority of each house, it will appear on the 2028 general election ballot. If a majority of those voting on the amendment in the general election approves it, the amendment will become part of the state constitution.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 13 Nay 6 (03/20/2026)