
OLR Bill Analysis

sSJ 36

RESOLUTION PROPOSING A STATE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT CONCERNING ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS.

SUMMARY

This resolution proposes a 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. Under the resolution, these rights are inalienable, and state residents may directly invoke and enforce them.

It prohibits the state from unreasonably infringing on these rights and requires it to make reasonable efforts to protect them equitably for all state residents. It also requires that the state seek to conserve, protect, and maintain all of its natural resources for state residents (present and future), including its waters, air, flora, fauna, soils, and climate.

It also directs that the state shall not unreasonably allow any degradation, diminution, or depletion of the natural environment that contributes to significant or widespread environmental harm, or results in an unhealthy or unsustainable environment.

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 resident of this state 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, and (2) place certain obligations upon the state, including requiring the state to seek to conserve, manage, protect and maintain the state's natural 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 session of the legislature. 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 approve it, the amendment will become part of the state constitution.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 13 Nay 6 (03/19/2025)