



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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March 3, 2025

Honored Co-Chairs Sen. Flexer and Rep. Blumenthal, Vice Chairs Rep. Morrin Bello, Rep. Osborne and Sen. Honig, and Ranking Members Sen. Sampson and Rep. Mastrofrancesco.

Re: Resolution Proposing a State Constitutional Amendment Concerning Environmental Rights

The Council on Environmental Quality (Council) is a nine-member board that works independently of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to assess the condition of Connecticut's environment and report its findings annually to the Governor; recommend actions to improve state environmental programs; advise other state agencies on the environmental impacts of proposed projects; and investigate citizens' complaints and allegations of violations of environmental laws.

The Council **SUPPORTS** the concepts addressed in the proposed amendment to the State's Constitution that each person shall have an individual right to a clean and healthy environment and a safe and stable climate, and that such right be equitably protected for all people regardless of race, ethnicity, tribal affiliation, gender, socioeconomic status or geography. Effectively, this amendment would deputize every citizen as private attorneys general to protect a basic human right of a clean environment, which was the original purpose of the Environmental Protection Act and the formation of the Council itself in the early 1970's. Since that time, standing to initiate legal action has been eroded making it ever more difficult for citizens to protect natural resources where the government or commercial and industrial interests fail to do so.

The Council notes that the proposed amendment bolsters the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act, which provides that "there is a public trust in the air, water and other natural resources of the state of Connecticut and that each person is entitled to the protection, preservation and enhancement of the same" and that "it is in the public interest to provide all persons with an adequate remedy to protect the air, water and other natural resources from unreasonable pollution, impairment or destruction".<sup>1</sup>

Sincerely,

*Keith R Ainsworth*

Keith R Ainsworth, Esq.  
Acting Chairman

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<sup>1</sup> Connecticut General Statutes, Sec. 22a-15. Declaration of policy; [https://www.cga.ct.gov/2019/pub/chap\\_439.htm#sec\\_22a-15](https://www.cga.ct.gov/2019/pub/chap_439.htm#sec_22a-15)  
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