



### **Testimony in Support of SCR43**

Proposes constitutional amendment to make State trustee of public natural resources and guarantee to the people other environmental rights.

### **Senate Environment and Energy**

**March 5, 2024**

Good morning Chairman Smith and members of the committee. My name is Joan Divor and I am testifying in support of SCR43 on behalf of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey.

SCR43 is designed to give New Jersey residents a legal basis against further harm to their health and the health of our environment. We are seeing negative impacts in our state, like asthma, water contamination, and increased flooding, particularly in overburdened communities that are closest to pollution sources. These are caused by fossil fuel production, incinerators, truck transportation, and climate change. The residents that are living with these realities, some of whom are here today, speak up against new pollutant sources and new harms to their environment, but that has not been enough. New Jersey needs a green amendment. We need a line in the sand that guarantees the public basic protections to our health and legal recourse to defend those rights.

A bill for a New Jersey Green Amendment was first introduced to the legislature over six years ago. Since then, it has received large public support from constituents across the state and dozens of sponsors in both the senate and assembly. We thank you for holding this hearing today to allow for some public voices to be heard, and we urge you to quickly schedule a committee hearing with a vote on this critical issue that has stalled for far too long.

As this bill directly impacts New Jersey residents, it is time to let them decide. Our state and our democracy is at its strongest when NJ voters are active and empowered. By putting the green amendment on the ballot, voters have the opportunity to codify their right to public health and a clean environment for generations to come.

Just as the League of Women Voters believes that everyone has a fundamental right to vote, we believe that everyone has a fundamental right to clean air, clean water, and a

healthy environment. That is why we support this bill for a Green Amendment. We urge the members of this committee to vote yes in the near future.

Thank you for your time.

Testimony Presented By:

Joan Divor, League of Women Voters of Camden County Member  
Testifying on behalf of League of Women Voters of New Jersey