

# **Constitutional Amendments-Pennsylvania**

## **Article I, Declaration of Rights**

### **Section 29. Right of the People to Local Self-Government**

**As all power is inherent in the people, the people have an inherent and inalienable right to local self-government, including in each county, city, township, borough, town, and any other municipal subdivision of the Commonwealth. That right shall include, without limitation: (a) the power to enact local laws recognizing the fundamental rights of people, communities, and the natural environment, and securing those rights using prohibitions and other means; (b) the power to enact local laws for the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of people, their communities, and the natural environment; and (c) the power to enact local laws establishing, defining, altering, or eliminating the rights, powers, and duties of for-profit business entities, operating or seeking to operate in the community, to prevent such rights and powers from usurping or otherwise conflicting with the fundamental rights of people, their communities, and the natural environment. Local laws shall not be subject to preemption by international, federal, or state law; provided, however, that local laws shall not restrict fundamental rights of individuals, their communities, or the natural environment secured by the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the U.S. Constitution, or international law, nor shall local laws weaken protections for people, their communities, or the natural environment provided by state, federal, or international law.**

### **Section 30. People's Rights Superior to Corporate Powers**

**Business corporations and other for-profit business entities shall not be "persons" under international law, the U.S. Constitution, the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, or local law, and thus shall not have fundamental rights secured by those laws. Nor shall those corporations or entities have legal rights, privileges, powers, standing, or other protections that conflict with the fundamental rights of people, their communities, or the natural environment.**

### **Section 31. Rights of Nature**

**The natural environment within the Commonwealth, including all of the components and systems thereof, has the inherent and inalienable right to exist, persist, evolve, maintain its systems, and regenerate its own vital cycles, structures, functions, and processes. The Commonwealth, local governments, and each resident of the Commonwealth shall have standing to enforce these rights on behalf of the natural environment.**

### **Section 32. Right to Enforce Fundamental Rights Against Private and Public Entities**

The people of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania have the right to enforce the fundamental rights of persons, their communities, and the natural environment, as secured by international law, the U.S. Constitution, the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and local laws, against business corporations, other for-profit business entities, and governmental entities. The Commonwealth, local governments, and each resident of the Commonwealth shall have standing in such enforcement proceedings.

### **Section 33. Property and Equal Governmental Participation**

An enormous proportion of property vested in a few individuals is dangerous to rights, and destructive of the common happiness of humankind; and therefore every government has a right by its laws to discourage the possession of such property. Every person, regardless of wealth, shall be entitled to equal access to, participation in, and use of, all organs of government, executive, legislative, and judicial. No person or group of persons shall have an advantage, by virtue of wealth, in elections, appointments, lawmaking, influence of public opinion, development of jurisprudence, or judicial contests, and all governments shall have an affirmative duty to enforce these provisions through law and policy.

### **Section 34. Right of the People to Change the Constitution**

The people of the Commonwealth have the inherent and inalienable right to amend, alter, or abolish their current Constitution. A call for amending the Constitution made by ten percent of the electors of the Commonwealth shall require the Secretary of State to submit such amendment to the electorate at the next general election, and approval of the amendment by a majority of electors voting thereon shall render the amendment effective. A call for a new Constitution made by twenty-five percent of the electors of the Commonwealth shall require the Secretary of State to design a non-partisan plan of delegation for a constitutional convention in which each borough, township, and town within the counties of the State, and each ward or equivalent unit within the cities, receives direct and equal representation by delegates selected by the people. The Secretary shall convene the convention no later than twelve months following the submission of the call, and the convention shall dissolve no later than twelve months after it convenes. A proposed Constitution, if one has been recommended by a majority of the convention delegates, shall then be submitted to the electorate for a vote at the next general election, and approval of the proposed Constitution by a majority of electors voting thereon shall render it effective.