STATE OF NEW YORK

1061

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

January 7, 2021

Introduced by M. of A. CAHILL -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. COLTON -- read once and referred to the Committee on Environmental Conservation

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY

proposing an amendment to section 4 of article 14 of the constitution, in relation to environmental protection

Section 1. RESOLVED (if the Senate concur), That section 4 of article 14 of the constitution be amended to read as follows:

§ 4. The policy of the state shall be to conserve and protect its natural **and cultural** resources and scenic beauty and encourage the development and improvement of its agricultural lands for the production of food and other agricultural products. The legislature, in implementing this policy, shall include adequate provision for the abatement of air and water pollution and of excessive and unnecessary noise, the protection of agricultural lands, wetlands and shorelines, and the development and regulation of water resources **and shall establish an office of public advocate with the authority to commence civil action against the state or any of its departments, agencies or bureaus or its public authorities to protect the public's interest in the state's natural and cultural resources**. The legislature shall further provide for the acquisition of lands and waters, including improvements thereon and any interest therein, outside the forest preserve counties, and the dedication of properties so acquired or now owned, which because of their natural beauty, wilderness character, or geological, ecological or historical significance, shall be preserved and administered for the use and enjoyment of the people. Properties so dedicated shall constitute the state nature and historical preserve and they shall not be taken or otherwise disposed of except by law enacted by two successive regular sessions of the legislature.

§ 2. RESOLVED (if the Senate concur), That the foregoing be referred to the first regular legislative session convening after the next succeeding general election of members of the assembly, and, in conformity with section 1 of article 19 of the constitution, be published for 3 months previous to the time of such election.

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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