



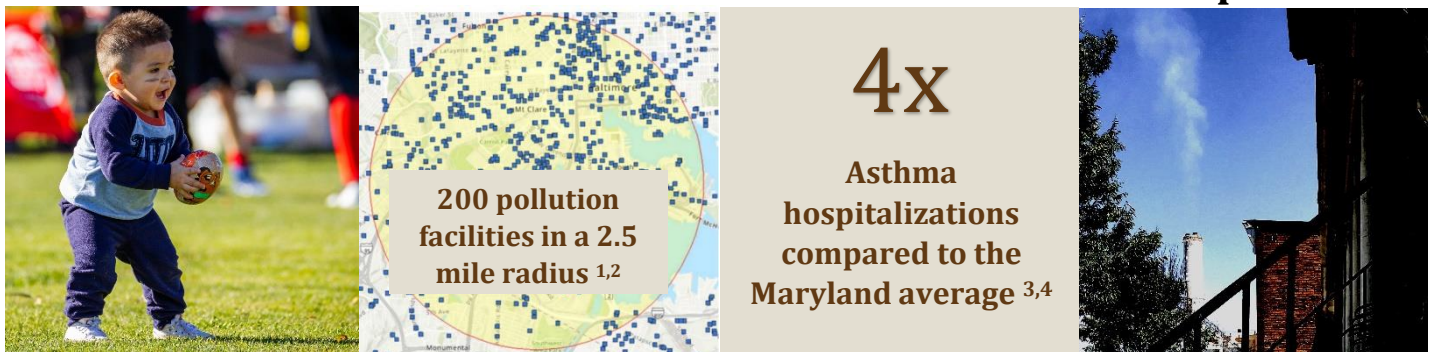
# What Are Environmental Human Rights?



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MARYLAND EPISCOPAL ENVIRONMENTAL PARTNERS  
A Mission of the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland

Every person in every generation deserves the right to clean water, clean air and a healthy environment. And it's the duty of government bodies to preserve, protect and enforce this right. However, current environmental law in Maryland falls short. Even more, the state's inadequate protection from environmental degradation and pollution has inequitably impacted low-income residents and communities of color state-wide.

## Excess Air Pollution in South Baltimore Leads to Health Disparities



## Maryland Campaign for Environmental Human Rights

Over 20 states in the United States and 100 nations around the world have provisions protecting the environment in their constitutions. But not Maryland. The purpose of the Maryland Campaign for Environmental Human Rights is to provide constitutional protection by way of a state amendment that addresses three goals:

- **Creation Care** -- the protection of a clean, vibrant ecosystem and a stable climate.
- **Public Health** -- personal health uncompromised by human-induced environmental degradation.
- **Environmental Justice** -- the assurance there is equity in all environmental decisions and outcomes

Maryland's Environmental Human Rights Amendment would assure these rights, require that they be equitably and impartially pursued, and hold our state government responsible for enforcing them.



# Why Care About Environmental Human Rights?



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**Caring for Creation and for those who are most vulnerable is at the heart of our charge as Christians.**

Establishing the right to a healthy environment for Marylanders is a moral imperative. There is a long history of our state and local governments locating a disproportionate number of sources of pollution, such as highways, incinerators, and utility plants, within the immediate airshed of communities of color.

As Episcopalians, we follow Jesus so we love the world God loves. We show our love in how we care and advocate for each other, especially for individuals and our communities which are most vulnerable. Through this we also show our love in how we care and advocate for “this fragile earth, our island home” that sustains all life.

The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland stands in support of the Environmental Human Rights Amendment and with communities of color in the pursuit of racial and environmental justice.

## **Racial Justice requires Environmental Justice**

In a year with growing protests over systemic racism in our institutions, it is time to acknowledge the need to redress the cumulative impacts on the health of low-income neighborhoods and communities of color.

## **Building a world for future generations**

Each generation has advanced guaranteed rights under our constitution. Establishing the right to a healthy environment will be another tool in ensuring that state and local government are stewards of public natural resources and the rights of all citizens to live in a healthy environment.

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### References

<sup>1</sup>Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Wheelabrator Incinerator. Accessed December 18, 2019 from <https://cbf.org/about-cbf/locations/maryland/issues/wheelabrator-incinerator.html>

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool. <https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper>

<sup>3</sup>Maryland Department of Health. Maryland Environmental Health Tracking Program. <https://maps.health.maryland.gov/epht/>

<sup>4</sup>Neall, Robert R. Maryland Department of Health. RE: HB Chapter 366 of the 2002 - 2017 Legislative Report of the Maryland Asthma Control Program. Jan 23, 2018. <https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/Documents/Maryland-Asthma-Control-Program-2017-Legislative-Report.pdf>

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**Join the Campaign.**

**Email [nina@mdehr.org](mailto:nina@mdehr.org) to learn more.**