



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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For inquiries or interview requests, please contact:

Andrea Rodgers

206-696-2851

[rodgers@westernlaw.org](mailto:rodgers@westernlaw.org)

Julia Olson

415-786-4825

[julia@ourchildrenstrust.org](mailto:julia@ourchildrenstrust.org)

## **Youth Petitioners In Washington Climate Case to Meet with Department of Ecology to Discuss Potential Settlement**

Seattle, Washington – Eight youth petitioners will meet with the head of the Washington Department of Ecology (“Ecology”) to discuss potential settlement options in their climate change case. On June 23, 2015, in a [landmark decision](#), King County Superior Court Judge Hollis Hill ordered Ecology to reconsider their climate change petition asking for carbon dioxide reductions based upon best available science. The court ordered Ecology to report back by today, July 8, 2015, as to whether they would promulgate the proposed rule. However, the youth petitioners have agreed to a 30-day extension so that the parties can engage in settlement negotiations.

Ecology has committed to have Director Maia Bellon and the agency’s director of air quality meet in person with the eight petitioners and their attorney this month to discuss a potential settlement. The petitioners have invited Gov. Inslee to attend the meeting, and await a formal response from his office.

The youth petitioners will continue to push Ecology to promulgate a rule regulating carbon dioxide emissions based on the best available science and they are hopeful Ecology will work with them to make that happen. In an Ecology report issued in December 2014, the agency acknowledged that “if we delay action [on climate change] by even a few years, the rate of reduction needed to stabilize the global climate would be beyond anything achieved historically and would be more costly.” Both parties now have until August 7 to come to an agreement on a proposed rule. If an agreement isn’t reached, the youths are prepared to go back to court and ask the court to order Ecology to promulgate a science-based rule to reduce carbon pollution in Washington.

“I’m looking forward to sitting down with Director Bellon to discuss why it’s so important that Ecology take action now to regulate carbon dioxide emissions,” said 14-year-old petitioner Aji Piper. “I hope that Gov. Inslee will join us and stand by us at this critical meeting. I hope our voices are heard. And I hope that Ecology steps up to the plate to protect our futures.”

In its December 2014 report, Ecology recognized that “we are imposing risks on future generations (causing intergenerational inequities) and liability for the harm that will be caused by climate change that we are unable or unwilling to avoid.” The youth seek agency action to prevent that from happening.

“We are pleased that Ecology is willing to sit down with us and come up with a solution,” said Western Environmental Law Center Attorney Andrea Rodgers. “The science is clear: We need to take action now to reduce our carbon dioxide emissions and Ecology is the only state agency that has the legal authority to make that happen. Gov. Inslee has recognized this generation has a moral obligation to address climate change. Now he has the opportunity to fulfill that obligation by coming to the table and directing Ecology to promulgate a rule that regulates carbon dioxide emissions as required by best available science.”

“Going into the settlements, I’m excited and hopeful because what we’re doing is so monumental,” said 14-year-old petitioner Wren Wagenbach. “This is the first time something like this has happened in America!”

The youth petitioners acted with the help of Our Children’s Trust, an Oregon-based nonprofit orchestrating a global, game-changing, youth-driven legal campaign to establish the right to a healthy atmosphere and stable climate. The legal effort advances the fundamental duty of government today: to address the climate crisis based on scientific baselines and benchmarks, and to do so within timeframes determined by scientific analysis.

*Our Children's Trust is a nonprofit organization advocating for urgent emissions reductions on behalf of youth and future generations, who have the most to lose if emissions are not reduced. OCT is spearheading the international human rights and environmental TRUST Campaign to compel governments to safeguard the atmosphere as a "public trust" resource. We use law, film, and media to elevate their compelling voices. Our ultimate goal is for governments to adopt and implement enforceable science-based Climate Recovery Plans with annual emissions reductions to return to an atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration of 350 ppm.*

[www.ourchildrenstrust.org/](http://www.ourchildrenstrust.org/)

*The Western Environmental Law Center is a public interest nonprofit law firm. WELC combines legal skills with sound conservation biology and environmental science to address major environmental issues throughout the West. WELC does not charge clients and partners for services, but relies instead on charitable gifts from individuals, families, and foundations to accomplish its mission. <http://www.westernlaw.org>*

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