



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 19, 2013

For inquiries or interview requests, please contact:

Kenneth Kristl, 302-477-2053, ktkristl@widener.edu

Julia Olson, 415-786-4825, julia@ourchildrenstrust.org

Ashley Funk, 724-953-2062, afunk@wellesley.edu

Pennsylvania Environmental Quality Board Votes To Accept Youth's Climate Change Petition

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania – Today, the Pennsylvania Environmental Quality Board voted to accept Ashley Funk's climate change [petition for rulemaking](#). Ashley, a 20-year-old from Mount Pleasant, PA, filed her revised climate change petition in September to the Pennsylvania Environmental Quality Board and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to strictly limit and regulate fossil fuel CO₂ emissions, and to establish an emissions reduction strategy that will achieve safe atmospheric concentrations of CO₂ by 2100. In October, the DEP determined that the petition met its petition policies. Today, Ashley's attorney, Kenneth Kristl from Widener Environmental and Natural Resources Law Clinic, made a five-minute presentation on the petition to the Board before they put the petition to vote.

"I am glad that the EQB decided to stand with me and my generation by accepting my petition for rule-making," said Ashley. "I'm looking forward to following the DEP's next steps in the process, and I'm glad that Pennsylvania's government will finally be beginning its necessary journey in addressing climate change."

Ashley has asked the State of Pennsylvania to adopt a carbon dioxide emissions reductions plan that is consistent with the best available science described by Dr. James Hansen, the nation's top climatologist, in his most recent paper. Such a plan would reduce state-wide fossil fuel carbon dioxide emissions by at least 6% annually until at least 2050, and expand Pennsylvania's capacity for carbon sequestration through forest and soil protection, among other methods.

Ashley's petition for rulemaking relies on Article I, Section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution, which states:

The people have a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and esthetic values of the environment. Pennsylvania's public natural resources are the common property of all the people, including generations to come. As trustee of these resources, the Commonwealth shall conserve and maintain them for the benefit of all the people.

"I am pleased that the EQB accepted Ashley's Petition for Rulemaking, and that the DEP recommended that acceptance," said Kenneth Kristl. "Now the DEP will turn to the substance of

the issue that Ashley has long pressed: whether to issue regulations that would reduce CO₂ emissions in Pennsylvania. I hope that the DEP will ultimately recognize that the public trust articulated in Pennsylvania's Constitution requires such regulation in order to conserve and maintain the atmosphere and environment for Pennsylvanians like Ashley and future generations of Pennsylvanians to come.”

Ashley's petition was filed with the help of [Our Children's Trust](#), an Oregon-based nonprofit orchestrating a global game-changing, youth driven legal campaign. 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.

Ashley shares her personal story with climate change in [TRUST Pennsylvania](#), available here: <http://ourchildrenstrust.org/video/368/trust-pennsylvania>

***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/*

###