



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Youth Appellants' Federal Climate Change Case  
Gains Broad-Base Support**

**Washington, D.C.** – Yesterday, prominent groups and individuals across the nation showed their broad-base support of young people suing the federal government for not acting to reverse climate change. National security and political leaders, religious groups, scientists, legal scholars, conservation and social justice organizations, and native communities came together to file seven *amicus curiae* (“friend of the court”) briefs in support of the youth appellants’ appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit in *Alec L. v. McCarthy*.

Late last month, attorneys for five youth and two organizations filed their opening brief in the case. The brief argued that the youth have a constitutional right to have their public trust case heard by the federal court. Through their lawsuit, the youth seek to compel the federal government to implement a comprehensive national Climate Recovery Plan to reduce our nation’s carbon emissions.

The youths’ lawsuit was filed with the help of Our Children’s Trust, an Oregon-based non-profit orchestrating an international game-changing, youth-driven legal campaign. The case relies upon the long-established legal principle of the Public Trust Doctrine, which requires our government to protect and maintain essential natural resources.

The supporting *amicus* briefs detail the significant threats that climate change presents to the availability of water and food, national security, economic stability, and important cultural values. The *amicus* briefs also explain the solid legal and scientific underpinnings to the youth’s claims against the federal government and the remedy they seek.

“The science is crystal clear. If emissions continue unabated, resulting warming of the ocean will lock in a continuing acceleration of climate extremes. We would subject young people and future generations to irreparable harm, with irreversible effects including the loss of many species and continually rising sea level out of their control,” said Dr. James Hansen, the former head of NASA’s Goddard Institute for Space Studies. “Governments are shirking their responsibility, pretending they do not understand the urgency of actions – so we must count on the wisdom of our judicial system to protect the rights of young people.”

The amicus brief submitted on behalf of national security experts Rear Admiral David W. Titley, Vice Admiral Lee Gunn, and Brigadier General Steve Anderson describe the “formidable threats climate change poses for U.S. national security”—“Climate-related extreme weather events, water scarcity, and sea level rise threaten major societal disruption, with significant impacts on American economic and human security and American humanitarian and security interests around the world.” These national security expert *amici* support the relief sought by the youth appellants in their case and state that “[c]omprehensive and coordinated action by Government Appellees to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is essential to mitigate the worst security consequences of climate change.”

The plaintiffs also are supported by several youth organizations, including Earth Guardians, Global Kids, and the Boston Latin School Youth Climate Action Network, as well as elders through organizations like HelpAge International, Granny for Peace Brigade and the International Council of Thirteen Indigenous Grandmothers. Other social justice and human-rights organizations supporting the youth include 350.org, WITNESS, and the Labor Network for Sustainability.

“This case, which seeks to establish constitutional protections for future generations in the same way that *Brown v. Board of Education* established equal protection for African Americans, may be the most important appeal the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals hears for a very long time to come,” said Karl Coplan, Professor of Law at Pace Law School in New York. “The sovereign Public Trust principles at issue in the case are part of the constitutional bedrock of our nation, recognized by our founders, and they support the conditions that our youth need in their future. We believe the Constitution was formulated to limit the power of one generation to undercut the endurance of the nation and deprive posterity of the conditions necessary for citizens to survive and prosper.”

To see the *amicus curiae* briefs, learn more about the plaintiffs in this case and the global TRUST Campaign, visit: <http://ourchildrenstrust.org/US/Federal-Lawsuit>, where you can also watch the 10-part documentary series: [Stories of TRUST: Calling for Climate Recovery](#).

***Our Children's Trust*** is a nonprofit advocating for urgent emissions reductions on behalf of youth and future generations, who have the most to lose. 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 the compelling voices of youth. Our ultimate goal is for governments to adopt and implement enforceable science-based Climate Recovery Plans with annual emissions reductions to return to 350 ppm. [www.OurChildrensTrust.org/](http://www.OurChildrensTrust.org/), [www.facebook.com/TRUSTCampaign](http://www.facebook.com/TRUSTCampaign), [www.twitter.com/OCTorg](http://www.twitter.com/OCTorg), <http://www.crowdrise.com/ourchildrenstrust>

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