LETTERS IN THE EDITOR’S MAILBAG: Wednesday’s paper

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Climate change action needed now

Climate change is a human rights issue threatening the well-being of the young people of our nation.

It is also an environmental problem, but one with such catastrophic consequences that the livability of our planet is at stake.

The atmospheric trust lawsuit brought by young citizens against the state of Oregon is not a “loophole.” Our Legislature and governor have a duty, under the Public Trust Doctrine, to protect crucial natural resources essential to Oregonians. And if our government fails to meet that obligation, the courts have the duty to enforce it.

As the third branch of government, the judiciary provides the check and balance essential to the functioning of our democracy.

Is it really too radical to advocate for the urgent action needed to avoid catastrophic consequences for humanity? What’s radical is to ignore the science, continue business as usual for narrow economic self-interests, and completely alter the planet’s climate, betraying future generations.

Leading climate scientists say we still have time, but our window to act is rapidly closing.

Youth are leading the way forward out of the dark days of fossil-fuel dependence. During another civil rights movement, Martin Luther King Jr. declared, “We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there is such a thing as being too late.”

The atmosphere is young people’s rightful public trust to inherit and I hope the court comprehends the “fierce urgency of now.”

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