



**For Immediate Release:**

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**13-Year-Old Climate Activist, Hallie Turner, Gets Day in Court:  
Judge Admires Her for Trying “to make a difference in the world”**

Raleigh, NC – Last Friday, November 13, Judge Michael Morgan heard oral arguments in Hallie Turner's climate change lawsuit against North Carolina's Environmental Management Commission. Turner submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Commission in December 2014 asking for the promulgation of a rule that would reduce North Carolina's carbon dioxide emissions on a trajectory based on science in order to protect her constitutional rights to a healthy atmosphere and stable climate system. The Commission denied her petition for rulemaking and Turner is asking Judge Morgan to reverse that decision and order the Commission to proceed with rulemaking.

At a well-attending court hearing on Friday, Turner's lawyers, Ryke Longest, a Clinical Professor of Law at the Duke University School of Law, and the Law Office of Gayle Goldsmith Tuch, presented arguments for why Commissioner Benne Hutson erred when he denied the petition. They argued that Commissioner Hutson should have recused himself from making a decision on the petition because of bias and conflicts of interest between his duties as Chair and his obligations to his law firm, which represents clients that oppose restrictions on greenhouse gases and support efforts to deny climate change. Turner's lawyers also argued that the Commissioner acted unlawfully and overstepped his statutory authority when he determined that Commission did not have power to promulgate the proposed rule because such conclusions of law are beyond his power to decide.

“Hallie's Petition directly attacked the Commission's failure to act to counter climate change,” said Longest. “Commissioner Hutson went beyond his authority and prevented Hallie from having a hearing before the Commission. Our Petition asked the Court to correct this violation and allow her voice to be heard.”

“I am pleased with how the hearing went and appreciate the judge's respect for my commitment to this cause,” said Turner. “Regardless of the judge's ruling, I intend to keep making my voice heard. The amount of support I have gotten from family, friends, and strangers alike has been amazing and energizing.”

Turner has been a climate activist since fourth grade and is especially passionate about engaging other youth, recognizing that they are the ones who will inherit the Earth created by today's decision makers. During the hearing the judge noted her hard work and dedication. "The court has a great amount of admiration for Hallie Turner and her maturity as a young adult to be involved in a process to try to make a difference in the world," said Judge Morgan during the hearing. The judge said that he expects to issue his ruling in the case by Thanksgiving.

Hallie now joins youth from both Washington and Colorado who are eagerly awaiting decisions in their critical climate changes cases. Similar lawsuits against the states of Oregon, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania, and a lawsuit against President Obama and federal agencies are also before the courts now and others will be filed soon. These youth are all counting on the judicial branch of government to issue decisions that will help secure their fundamental rights to a stable climate system for themselves and for future generations since the political branches are failing to do so.

***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/)*

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