



For Immediate Release:

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AMIDST MOUNTING CLIMATE CHAOS, ONE COURT PRESIDES OVER FATE OF NATION AND ITS YOUTH

WHAT: Oral arguments in Juliana, et al. v. United States, et al., before Judge Ann Aiken on government and fossil fuel industry's objections to Magistrate Judge Thomas Coffin's recommendation that their motions to dismiss be denied.

WHEN: Tuesday, September 13, 2016 @10:00 am PST. Arrive by 8:00 am to secure a seat in the courtroom.

A news conference will be held on the courthouse steps immediately following the hearing at approximately 12:00 pm.

WHERE: The Wayne Lyman Morse United States Courthouse
Courtroom 1 (Overflow viewing in Courtrooms 2, 4)
405 E. 8th St., Eugene, Oregon

WHO: Youth plaintiffs Alex, Aji, Avery, Hazel, Isaac, Jacob, Jaime, Jayden, Journey, Kelsey, Kiran, Levi, Miko, Nathan, Nick, Sahara, Sophie, Tia, Victoria, Xiuhtezcatl, and Zealand, and Dr. James Hansen, as guardian for future generations.

Please contact: Meg Ward to arrange to speak to plaintiffs and/or attorneys.

WHY: Twenty-one youth plaintiffs, and Dr. James Hansen, filed a lawsuit in 2015 against the United States, seeking to secure their constitutional and public trust rights to a stable climate. Three trade associations, representing the fossil fuel industry intervened to protect their interests. Both the government and the trade associations filed motions to dismiss to throw the youth's case out of court. They lost.

In April, U.S. Magistrate Judge Thomas Coffin recommended that [all the motions to dismiss should be denied](#), paving the way for the case to move forward. However, both the government and fossil fuel industry objected to Judge Coffin's findings and recommendations. On Tuesday, U.S. District Court Judge Ann Aiken will hear oral arguments on those objections from lawyers representing all of the parties.

Jayden, 13, one of the 21 youth plaintiffs in this landmark climate case, is a resident of Rayne, Louisiana. For her, the hearing comes just one month after the waters from a catastrophic 1,000 year flood crept into her bedroom in the middle of the night and destroyed most of her family's home. The flooding in Louisiana killed 13 people and forced at least 30,000 more to evacuate. An estimated 146,000 families, like Jayden's, are now trying to repair the flood damage to their homes.

The Louisiana flooding came a little more than a week after NOAA released its [2015 State of the Climate Report](#), confirming that "global surface temperature in 2015 easily beat the previous record holder, 2014, for the title of warmest year in the modern instrument record," and that "14 of the 15 warmest years on record have occurred since the year 2000."

"They called it a thousand year flood, meaning it should only happen every thousand years or so," said Jayden. "But in my state - Louisiana - we have had that 1,000 year flood and eight 500-year floods in less than two years. A few weeks ago I literally stepped out of bed and was up to my ankles in climate change. Soon I will leave my home, which is still a mess - no walls, no carpet, even my little brothers toys were destroyed! But I feel like I have to go to court, because my little brother can't speak for himself, he's too little. But I can speak for him, and for everyone in my generation. It's time we were heard. It's time President Obama protects our future, and my little brothers future."

Jayden and her fellow plaintiffs will be entering the hearing Tuesday with momentum from legal victories from their peers. Aside from their own victory before Judge Coffin, they are emboldened by other youth plaintiff wins in state courts in Washington, Massachusetts, and New Mexico. Not to mention [other state](#) and [international legal actions](#) underway, all with support from Our Children's Trust.

"We must hold the world's governments accountable for the safety of current and future generations," said [Roger Cox](#), the Dutch lawyer who won a similar lawsuit against the Netherlands last year for not taking sufficient measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that cause dangerous climate change. "If U.S. courts uphold their federal government's duty to protect our atmosphere, that would bolster our own legal efforts in Europe and give hope across the world that the U.S. may finally walk the walk, and not just talk the talk."

"My client Jayden, who is 13 years old, just survived a 1,000-year flood event that devastated her home with sewage-contaminated rivers running through her bedroom and her community," said Julia Olson, plaintiffs' attorney and Executive Director and Chief Legal Counsel of Our Children's Trust. "This is the ninth flood event that is supposed to happen once every 500 years or more to hit her region in two years, floods that would not happen but for climate change. Yet, the national energy policy of the U.S. is 'drill baby, drill'. And by 2040, fossil fuel consumption will still make up more than 75% of our energy supply compared to 80% today. According to these federal defendants, by 2040 our carbon dioxide emissions will at best be flatlining at dangerous levels. Make no mistake, the U.S. government has caused climate change and continues to promote a fossil fuel system that is violating the rights of these 21 young plaintiffs."

Representing the plaintiffs on Tuesday are Julia A. Olson of Wild Earth Advocates, [Philip L. Gregory of Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy, LLP](#), and Daniel M. Galpern. Olson also serves as the [Executive Director and Chief Legal Counsel of Our Children's Trust](#).

SOCIAL MEDIA:

Facebook event: <https://www.facebook.com/events/809503839149675/>

Twitter: [#KidsvGov](#)

WHILE YOU'RE IN TOWN:

Just one day before the hearing, on Monday, September 12, 2016, the University of Oregon Environmental & Natural Resources Law Center and the Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics will be hosting: [*Climate in Court: A Convening of Renowned Climate Experts in Eugene, Oregon*](#). The panel, scheduled to run from 12 pm - 2 pm PST, will include climate scientist Dr. James Hansen (who is both a plaintiff and an expert in the youth's lawsuit), economist Dr. Jeffrey Sachs, and psychiatrist Dr. Lise Van Susteren. The panel will take place in the University of Oregon's EMU Redwood Auditorium (Room 214), but as seating is limited to 275 persons, the panel will be also live streamed at: <http://media.uoregon.edu/channel/livestream>.

Our Children's Trust is a nonprofit organization, elevating the voice of youth, those with most to lose in the climate crisis, to secure the legal right to a healthy atmosphere and stable climate on behalf of present and future generations. We lead the global human rights and environmental justice campaign to implement enforceable science-based Climate Recovery Plans that will return atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration to levels below 350 ppm. Youth have secured judicial rulings in their favor in WA, NM and MA, and in their landmark U.S. federal climate lawsuit, and have multiple other cases pending. www.ourchildrenstrust.org/

Earth Guardians is a Colorado-based nonprofit organization with youth chapters on five continents, and multiple groups in the United States with thousands of members working together to protect the Earth, the water, the air, and the atmosphere, creating healthy sustainable communities globally. We inspire and empower young leaders, families, schools, organizations, cities, and government officials to make positive change locally, nationally, and globally to address the critical state of the Earth. www.earthguardians.org

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