



For Immediate Release  
September 28, 2016

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## Maine Youth File Climate Rulemaking Petition

*Following in the footsteps of their peers from across the U.S., 164 young people latest to demand their State fulfill its Constitutional Duty to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions*

Augusta, Maine – Today, a group of Mainers submitted a [climate change petition for rulemaking](#) to the Department of Environmental Protection and the Maine Board of Environmental Protection. The petitioners – 216 registered voters, 164 young people, and the groups 350 Maine and Earth Guardians – are requesting that the state carry out its constitutional and public trust obligations and implement an effective CO<sub>2</sub> and GHG reduction strategy based on the best climate science. Failure to implement such a strategy, petitioners claim, would be detrimental for their well-being and survival.

“This petition for rulemaking is an incredible opportunity for Maine to do its part to address climate change and ocean acidification before the devastating impacts become locked in,” said Nate Bellinger, staff attorney with Our Children's Trust. “Maine must act with all deliberate speed to prepare and implement plans to transition the State from a fossil fuel based economy to a just economy based on renewable energy.”

The petition was filed just two weeks after young people from around the U.S. had their [landmark constitutional climate lawsuit](#) heard before U.S. District Court Judge Ann Aiken. The Maine youth petitioners are the latest young people in the U.S. to file climate legal action with the help of Our Children's Trust.

“Our youth have a right to inherit a planet that is healthy; if we stay the course, we will be handing over an uncertain future with a planet in climate crisis and chaos,” said Sarah Lachance, with 350 Maine. “It is unacceptable to burden them with this reality because of our inability to take meaningful action around stemming climate change. 350 Maine is proud to support today's youth in demanding what is their constitutional right, a sustainable future.”

The petition sites to the preamble to Maine's constitution, which states that the purpose of the state government is to “establish justice, insure tranquility, provide for our mutual defense, promote our common welfare, and secure to ourselves and our posterity the blessings of liberty.” Petitioners claim “there can hardly be a resource more necessary to our ‘common welfare’ than a healthy atmosphere and stable climate system.” The petition also outlines the tremendous threat the climate change and ocean acidification pose to Maine's economy and important resources including its forests, marine fisheries, freshwater ecosystems, and farms.

“I would really like the Maine Department of Environmental Protection to keep our waters safe from pollution,” said 13-year-old petitioner Ryan Muse. “I also want the DEP to make laws that will stop everyone from using fossil fuels that harm our people, land, wildlife, ocean and drinking water.”

***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/](http://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](http://www.earthguardians.org)*

***350 Maine** is a grassroots movement dedicated to solving the planetary climate crisis. They grow their power collectively to find real and lasting solutions, to end our dependence on fossil fuels, and to build a healthy, sustainable life for people and the planet. [www.350maine.org](http://www.350maine.org)*

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