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Colorado Governor and Attorney General in Conflict over Climate and Fracking Lawsuit Brought by Youth, Supported by Our Children's Trust

Today, Colorado Attorney General Cynthia Coffman ignored Gov. John Hickenlooper's direction and filed a petition for writ of certiorari of *Martinez v. COGCC* to the Colorado Supreme Court on behalf of Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (COGCC). Coffman is asking the court to review the 2-1 [March 23, 2017 decision](#) of the Colorado Court of Appeals, which ruled in favor of the youth and declared that oil and gas development in Colorado is subject to the protection of public health, safety, and welfare, and the environment.

The case was brought by six young Coloradans, including 17-year-old Xiuhtezcatl Martinez, who are represented by Julia Olson, Dan Leftwich, and Kate Merlin.

Julia Olson, the executive director and chief legal counsel of **Our Children's Trust** and native Coloradan, said:

“The well-reasoned Court of Appeals decisions is consistent with Colorado precedent and should stand. What Colorado needs now is decisive action to protect the public health and welfare of citizens from the very real dangers posed by oil and gas development. It's time for Colorado businesses and citizens to stand on the side of our young people and oppose the COGCC's attempt to place profits over people's health and welfare.”

Martinez, plaintiff and Youth Director of **Earth Guardians** said:

“Even our Governor who has been one of fracking’s biggest cheerleaders opposes this appeal. Maybe he can now see that fracking is increasingly deadly, and that the state is not doing enough to protect its citizens. So why does the COGCC continue to resist efforts to protect public health? What we need now is for the people, businesses and leaders of Colorado to stand with us and Governor Hickenlooper in opposing this appeal.”

The COGCC had argued that the Oil and Gas Conservation Act required it to strike a balance between the regulation of oil and gas operations and protecting public health, the environment, and wildlife resources. The Colorado Court of Appeals disagreed.

According to the Colorado Supreme Court [website](#), the court “typically grants less than ten percent of the petitions filed each year.”

***Counsel for Plaintiffs** include Colorado Environmental Law, LTD., Katherine Marlin, Boulder, Colorado; Minddrive Legal Services, LLC, James Daniel Leftwich, Boulder, Colorado; Wild Earth Advocates, Julia Olson, Eugene, Oregon.*

***Our Children's Trust** is a nonprofit organization, elevating the voice of youth, those with most to lose, to secure the legal right to a healthy atmosphere and stable climate on behalf of present and future generations. We lead a coordinated global human rights and environmental justice campaign to implement enforceable science-based Climate Recovery Plans that will return atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration to below 350 ppm by the year 2100.*

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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