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Alaska Youth Press State to Uphold Legal and Moral Obligations to Address Climate Change

Anchorage - Alaska youth from communities on the frontlines of climate change convened yesterday to submit a petition for rulemaking to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC). The petition calls on the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation to reduce CO2 emissions according to best available climate science, inventory substantial sources of GHG emissions, and adopt a Climate Action Plan.

Jode Sparks, one of the 15 petitioners, of Sterling said, "With Alaska Youth for Environmental Action, I've advocated for the return of a state Climate Task Force and met with Lieutenant Governor Mallott to discuss the administration's plans for the future. Near my home in the Kenai Peninsula, streams are already creeping to temperatures that are deadly to salmon. Now is the time for Alaska's government, private sector and citizens to come together for climate action."

With support from Our Children's Trust, Youth Organizers with Alaska Youth for Environmental Action (AYEA) have joined petitioners who are calling on the State of Alaska to adhere to its legal and moral obligation to protect current and future generations from the deepening impact of Alaska's changing climate. AYEА teens have advocated for action on climate change with local, state, and federal elected officials for years. After repeated requests for Alaskan leaders to address this issue, AYEА teens now submit this petition with the intention of advancing action on climate.

16-year-old petitioner Summer Sagoonick of Unalakleet, shared, “My culture and future way of life depend on Alaskan leaders taking bold action on climate change now. Our family provides for itself with a subsistence lifestyle throughout the year, and the changing weather, erosion and thinning winter ice makes it harder to do what we love. Taking action on climate change is our only hope to save the villages of Alaska.”

The petitioners urge Alaskans of all ages to tell state leaders that adopting their proposed rule is critical to the cultural and economic well-being of the state. Alaskans are already responding to devastating impacts of rapid climate change, including infrastructure damage due to thawing permafrost; loss of and reduced access to subsistence resources due to warming ocean temperatures; and the relocation of entire communities due to rising sea levels and coastal erosion.

The petition is one of many related legal actions brought by youth in several states and countries, supported by Our Children’s Trust, seeking science-based action by governments to stabilize the climate system.

To learn more about the Petition and Youth Organizers, go to www.alaskaclimate.org.

Alaska Youth for Environmental Action (AYEA) is a program that inspires and trains youth leaders to impact issues by providing leadership skills training and supporting youth-led community action projects and campaigns. AYEAs has engaged over 5,000 teens since it started in 1998 through an array of local and statewide campaigns and projects. Youth in AYEAs come from a diverse array of cultural, geographic, economic, and social backgrounds. AYEAs is a program of [The Alaska Center](http://TheAlaskaCenter.org).

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

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