



For Immediate Release June 09, 2022

Contacts:

Julia Olson, Executive Director & Chief Legal Counsel, Our Children's Trust, 415-786-4825, julia@ourchildrenstrust.org

Erin Barnhart, Chief Communications Officer, Our Children's Trust, 541-653-7597, erin@ourchildrenstrust.org

People vs. Fossil Fuels Launches Petition to Attorney General Merrick Garland and U.S. Department of Justice: End Opposition to *Juliana v. United States* Youth Climate Case!

WASHINGTON, DC – Yesterday, People vs. Fossil Fuels launched a new online [petition](#), directed to the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) and Attorney General Merrick Garland, demanding that Attorney General Garland end the DOJ's opposition to the children's climate lawsuit, [Juliana v. United States](#).

[People vs. Fossil Fuels](#), a coalition of “hundreds of groups representing millions of people across the country fighting for climate, racial, and economic justice,” is spearheading this petition effort in support of the *Juliana* youth plaintiffs and their landmark constitutional climate case.

The petition notes that “For almost seven years, these 21 young people, from across the United States and including 11 Black, Brown, and Indigenous youth, have waited for their day in court, delayed again and again by tactics employed by the Department of Justice to impede or dismiss their case. And for almost seven years, young people like these 21 young Americans have suffered from increasingly severe climate harms.”

Led by close to 220 leading climate, public health, children's, legal, labor, minority, business, faith, human rights, and environmental justice organizations - including Amnesty International USA, Center for Biological Diversity, GreenFaith, GreenLatinos, Greenpeace USA, Food & Water Watch, Friends of the Earth, Oxfam America, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Port Arthur Community Action Network, Sunrise Movement, 350.org, Women's Earth and Climate Action Network, and Zero Hour - the petition will collect signatures from individuals across the United States and around the world, to be delivered to Attorney General Garland and the U.S. DOJ in support of the *Juliana* youth and their case.

On Wednesday, June 8th, over 150 individual supporters and key international, national and local organizations, including Indigenous Environmental Network, Center for International Environmental Law, and Citizens' Climate Lobby - DC Chapter, rallied via a tweetstorm standing in solidarity with the youth plaintiffs and urging individuals to sign the petition.

"People vs. Fossil Fuels is proud to stand with the *Juliana* youth plaintiffs. It's past time President Biden and the Department of Justice stand with the hundreds of organizations and millions of people who have

linked arms with the *Juliana* plaintiffs in their struggle for justice. Our communities and climate depend on it," stated **Dallas Goldtooth on behalf of People vs. Fossil Fuels**.

"In this moment, we need to advocate powerfully for the rights of our living, breathing children to be recognized in our courts. It is not a time to turn our backs on the courts. Rather it's a time when we must meet the urgency of the moment and demand that our children's claims be heard by the court in the full light of day," stated **Julia Olson, Executive Director and Chief Legal Counsel of Our Children's Trust**. "Instead, for the past seven years, these 21 youth plaintiffs have experienced historically aggressive delay tactics from the Department of Justice under three different presidential administrations, including repeated but unsuccessful efforts to relegate the case to the dark corners of the shadow docket."

She continued, "Under President Trump, the DOJ filed six petitions for Writ of Mandamus, more than the DOJ has filed in any other case we know of in history, and all with the intention of causing unprecedented delay. It has always been an effort to keep these young people, and their evidence, from being heard by their own courts. And so far, the DOJ under President Biden has demonstrated that they will continue to rely on these undemocratic tactics, seeking to prevent these young plaintiffs' evidence from being heard by a judge. Win or lose, they deserve a trial."

Olson concluded, "Today, we are grateful for the support of the people around the world who will be signing this petition to urge the DOJ to end its opposition to this case proceeding to trial. Let the youth be heard!"

Here's a brief [video statement](#) from ***Juliana v. U.S.* youth plaintiff Isaac V.:**



The *Juliana* youth plaintiffs are currently awaiting a ruling from U.S. District Court Judge Ann Aiken on a motion to amend their complaint, where a favorable decision - barring further attempts by the DOJ to delay or seek dismissal of their case - would put the youth plaintiffs back on the path to trial.

Represented by attorneys at the nonprofit public interest law firm, Our Children's Trust, *Juliana v. United States* was originally filed in 2015. The *Juliana* plaintiffs argue in their complaint that their federal government has directly contributed to the climate crisis more than any other government on the planet -- including creating a fossil fuel energy system that causes and worsens climate change -- and thus is

harming the youth plaintiffs, violating their constitutional rights to life, liberty, and property, as well as failing to protect essential public trust resources and the children's rights of equal protection of the law. The youth plaintiffs are now between the ages of 14 and 26.

###

*Our Children's Trust is the world's only nonprofit public interest law firm that provides strategic, campaign-based legal services to youth from diverse backgrounds to secure their legal rights to a safe climate. We work to protect the Earth's climate system for present and future generations by representing young people in global legal efforts to secure their binding and enforceable legal rights to a healthy atmosphere and safe climate, based on the best available science. Our Children's Trust represents the youth plaintiffs behind the landmark federal constitutional climate lawsuit, *Juliana v. United States*, which was brought by 21 young Americans as well as represents and/or supports youth in global cases like *La Rose v. Her Majesty the Queen (Canada)* and *Jóvenes v. Gobierno de México* and U.S. state cases, including *Layla H. v. Commonwealth of Virginia*, *Natalie R. v. State of Utah*, *Navahine F. v. Hawai'i Department of Transportation*, and *Held v. State of Montana*, the latter of which will become the first children's climate trial and first constitutional climate trial in U.S. history when trial proceedings begin in February 2023.*

www.ourchildrenstrust.org