



August 10, 2023

On the Devastating Wildfires in Maui

*Statement from Julia Olson, Executive Director and Chief Legal Counsel,
Our Children's Trust*

We are deeply saddened to witness the devastation unfolding in Maui, and offer our heartfelt condolences to the families of those who have lost their lives in this disaster. Our hearts go out to the people of Lahaina, especially those who have lost their homes, animals, and livelihoods to the wildfires in their beloved town and beyond. We've heard from our friends of the loss of the beloved Banyan Tree and so much that is dear to life on the Islands. We offer our gratitude to the brave firefighters and first responders who have battled the flames and continue their critical rescue efforts, and to each of you who are housing those who evacuated seeking safety.

We know that extreme events like this are becoming more frequent in Hawai'i due to the climate crisis: more and larger wildfires, extreme heat, coral bleaching, extreme precipitation events, rising sea level, flooding, and more. And so it is with heavy hearts but fierce determination that we continue our work to protect the Earth's climate system for present and future generations, including and most especially our 14 young plaintiffs on the Islands, two of whom live on the West side of Maui.

It is during difficult times like these when community is vital to take care of each other, especially those who need it most. Here, at OCT, we are offering immediate trauma support for our youth through our trauma-informed care consultant. For members of our global community wondering how they can help, the following local organizations are focused on providing support for those most affected by these devastating fires. To contribute or learn more about rescue and response operations:

[Kāko`o Maui](#)
[Maui Strong Fund](#)

Holding our young clients, our dear friends and supporters, and all of the people of Maui in our hearts,

Julia Olson
Executive Director and Chief Legal Counsel
Our Children's Trust

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Our Children's Trust is the world's only nonprofit public interest law firm that exclusively 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. Globally, we support youth-led climate cases in front of national courts, regional human rights courts, and UN bodies. <http://www.ourchildrenstrust.org/>