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Our Children's Trust Files Amicus Brief in Willow Project Appeals

In support of Plaintiffs in Sovereign Iñupiat for a Living Arctic, et al. v. Bureau of Land Management, et al. and Center for Biological Diversity, et al. v. Bureau of Land Management, et al.

San Francisco—On Friday, January 5, Our Children's Trust filed an [amicus brief](#) with the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in support of the plaintiff-appellants in *Sovereign Iñupiat for a Living Arctic v. Bureau of Land Management* and *Center for Biological Diversity v. Bureau of Land Management*. This "friend of the court" brief supports the organizations Sovereign Iñupiat for a Living Arctic, the Center for Biological Diversity, and other plaintiff-appellants in their challenges to the Biden Administration's approval of the Willow Project, a major oil and gas development in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska.

In November 2023, Judge Sharon Gleason of the Federal District Court for the District of Alaska dismissed the plaintiffs' challenges. The plaintiffs subsequently appealed the decision to the Ninth Circuit.

In filing the brief, Our Children's Trust seeks to assist the Ninth Circuit in its analysis of the case by illuminating the vulnerabilities and harms to youth in Alaska and worldwide from the federal government's continued contributions to the climate crisis by approving such fossil fuel projects as the Willow Project. The brief also seeks to educate the Court on the best available climate science, which demonstrates that continuing fossil fuel emissions by approving such projects critically harms and endangers the lives, health, and safety of children.

"The Willow Project represents another significant step towards irreversible climate disaster," said Andrew Welle, Our Children's Trust senior staff attorney and counsel on the brief. "The federal government's continued approval of projects like Willow presents an existential threat to our nation's youth. In considering the legality of these actions, it's critical that our courts are educated on the best available climate science and the resulting harms to children, whose lives, health, and safety depend on eliminating fossil fuel emissions as soon as possible."

[Read the full brief here.](#)

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Our Children's Trust was founded in 2010 on the idea that courts are vital to democracy and empowered to protect our children and the planet. Without a stable climate system, every natural resource we rely upon to exercise our basic human rights—life, liberty, home, happiness—is under threat. Our work will be achieved when there is universal recognition of children's climate rights by courts around the world and children's fundamental rights to life on this planet are protected. www.ourchildrenstrust.org