



August 30, 2024

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Inspired by the *Juliana* Plaintiffs, South Korean Youth Secure a Landmark First Step from the Nation's Constitutional Court

EUGENE, Ore.— In 2020, Korean youth, inspired by the 21 young plaintiffs who brought *Juliana v. U.S.*, worked with lawyers at Solutions for Our Climate and Seoul National University School of Law to bring a kindred case against the government of the Republic of Korea for its role in violating the youths' fundamental constitutional rights to security, liberty, and the right to live in a healthy environment.

Yesterday, in a landmark decision, the Constitutional Court of Korea used its power of declaratory judgment to declare a provision of the country's climate law unconstitutional, marking the first partial victory in climate litigation in Asia. Having provided young people with the opportunity to be heard, this high Court's decision represents a significant step forward in recognizing the need for more robust climate protection measures, especially for children, and a constitutionally compliant response to climate change.

Julia Olson, Co-Executive Director and Chief Legal Counsel with Our Children's Trust said of the ruling, "The Constitutional Court of Korea has set a powerful precedent by granting young people access to justice and recognizing their constitutional climate rights. This declaration of youths' rights and the government's wrongs is a testament to the leadership of youth plaintiffs and their relentless advocacy for a safe and livable future, and of another judiciary doing its job. We hope it serves as a clarion call for U.S. courts to follow suit. For nearly a decade, the *Juliana* plaintiffs have fought to have their case heard at trial and their rights protected. For a decade, dozens of youth cases inspired by *Juliana* globally have been heard and decided on the merits. Youth are crying out and courts around the world are listening. It's time for U.S. courts to catch up."

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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. ourchildrenstrust.org