



Written by [James Murphy](#) on June 22, 2024

## Hawaiian Youth Secure Settlement in Climate-change Case

Climate activists, hiding behind 13 Hawaiian schoolchildren, have secured at least \$40 million in promises from the government of Hawaii. Under the terms of the settlement, Hawaii must establish a greenhouse-gas reduction plan that will supposedly lead to net-zero emissions by 2045, and the Aloha State will be forced to invest at least \$40 million toward an electric-vehicle charging network by 2030.

In the case [Navahine v. Hawaii Department of Transportation](#), plaintiffs claimed that the state's transportation department violated the children's constitutional right to "a clean and healthful environment." While 13 youths are technically listed as the plaintiffs, the suit was, in reality, brought by climate activist groups Our Children's Trust and Earthjustice.



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"Our courts are essential guardians of children's constitutional rights and empowered to protect the planet, but they rely on our collective engagement," said Our Children's Trust founder Julia Olson. "Navahine youth plaintiffs activated the courts and inspired true democracy in action — all three branches of government committing to work together to do what needs to be done according to best available science, to safeguard their futures."

Media outlets are calling the settlement "historic," and environmental groups hope it could lead to more youth climate rebellion.

"Young people across the country and around the world will follow in their footsteps, carrying the same values of care, defense, and love of the land to action," Olson added.

In reality, all that happened is that a state government already friendly to the climate-zealot movement made promises to aggressive climate zealots without any input from the elected state Legislature.

You can tell the settlement was more of a wink-and-nod situation by how plaintiffs were referring to defendant Ed Sniffen, director of the state's Department of Transportation.

"The historic resolution of the *Navahine* case came down to the spirit of leadership and partnership modeled by HDOT Director Ed Sniffen," [said Isaac Moriwake of Earthjustice](#). "Hawai'i has often led the way in setting goals, but this agreement gets us moving on real action."

Sniffen retorted with more climate-zealot talking points.

"Climate change is indisputable, burying our heads in the sand and making it the next generation's problem is not pono," [said Sniffen](#). (*Pono* is a Hawaiian term for righteous) "In our agreement with Our



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Children’s Trust and Earthjustice we’re committing to develop and use greenhouse gas emission measurements and reductions in vehicle miles traveled when we develop ground transportation projects and look for ways to translate that to our Airports and Harbors projects.”

At least Governor Josh Green mentioned the children who allegedly brought forth the lawsuit.

“The passion demonstrated by these young people in advocating for a healthy, sustainable future for their generation and those to come, is laudable,” [Green said](#). “This settlement informs how we as a state can best move forward to achieve life-sustaining goals and further, we can surely expect to see these and other youth in Hawai’i continue to step up to build the type of future they desire.”

There are other climate lawsuits supposedly brought by youths currently wending their way through the court system in America. The most notable of these is [Juliana v. United States](#) which is also fronted by Our Children’s Trust and has repeatedly been dismissed, with judges saying that the courts are not the proper venue to decide climate policy.

And, of course, that’s the point of these lawsuits — to get the courts to mandate climate policies that legislatures are unwilling to. They also look for judicial endorsement of climate change as a problem that must be dealt with, instead of a fallacy that reasonable people can ignore. Worst of all, they’re hiding behind children to do it.



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