



DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

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Hawaii Attorney General Joins Amicus Brief in Support of State of Rhode Island in its Lawsuit to Hold Oil Companies Accountable for Costs of Climate Change

HONOLULU – Hawaii Attorney General Clare E. Connors, joining a coalition of 13 states, today filed an amicus brief supporting the State of Rhode Island in its lawsuit *State of Rhode Island v. Shell Oil Products Co., et al.* In the lawsuit, Rhode Island seeks to hold oil companies accountable for their actions contributing to climate change and the resulting harms the state suffered from sea-level rise, changes to the hydrologic cycle, and increased air and ocean temperatures.

“We are filing this amicus brief to support Rhode Island’s ability to remain in state court,” said Attorney General Connors. “Individual states play a critical role in interpreting and enforcing their state’s law, including laws protecting the environment, and the federal district court properly kept Rhode Island’s suit in state court.”

The case is currently pending in the First Circuit Court of Appeals after the oil companies appealed a federal district court decision that the lawsuit belongs in the state court. In the brief, the coalition asserts that the federal district court decision should be affirmed. The coalition argues that:

- States play an important role in addressing climate change and protecting human welfare, including providing a state court forum to decide cases related to climate change;
- The Clean Air Act recognizes states’ roles in reducing air pollution and does not indicate that the federal courts should have exclusive jurisdiction over all cases involving climate change; and
- The defendants’ appeal to transfer Rhode Island’s claims to federal court, knowing that similar claims have been displaced by Congress, could unjustly deny Rhode Island a state law remedy for harm.

Joining Attorney General Connors, California Attorney General Becerra, and Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey in filing the brief are the Attorneys

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General of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington.

A copy of the brief can be found [\[here\]](#).

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