



STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU 'ĀINA O HAWAII

DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA

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GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

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**HAWAII CONDEMNS ADMINISTRATION'S ILLEGAL ATTEMPT TO
INTERFERE WITH STATE LAWSUIT AGAINST BIG OIL**

Hawaii Sues Fossil Fuel Interests for Climate Deception

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HONOLULU – Attorney General Anne Lopez condemns the U.S. Department of Justice lawsuit, filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Hawaii on April 30, 2025, seeking to preemptively halt a separate lawsuit against Big Oil companies for their deceptive conduct leading to the current climate crisis:

Attorney General Lopez said: “We have an obligation to the people of Hawaii, to do everything in our power to fight deceptive practices from these fossil fuel companies that erode Hawaii’s public health, natural resources and economy. The federal lawsuit filed by the Justice Department attempts to block Hawaii from holding the fossil fuel industry responsible for deceptive conduct that caused climate change damage to Hawaii.”

Governor Josh Green, M.D. states: “Hawaii suffered a devastating climate-driven, wildfire-initiated disaster on Maui that resulted in the tragic loss of 102 lives and billions of dollars in damage. This climate-related wildfire was the deadliest in United States history in more than a century.”

“The use of the United States Department of Justice to fight on behalf of the fossil fuel industry is deeply disturbing and is a direct attack on Hawai‘i’s rights as a sovereign state,” added Attorney General Lopez. “The state of Hawai‘i will not be deterred from moving forward with our climate deception lawsuit. My department will vigorously oppose this gross federal overreach.”

Notwithstanding the federal lawsuit, Governor Josh Green M.D., and Attorney General Lopez today announced a lawsuit against fossil fuel companies for their deceptive conduct and failure to warn about their products’ climate change danger, now harming Hawai‘i’s public health, infrastructure, natural resources and economy. The lawsuit was filed in the Circuit Court of the First Circuit.

“The climate crisis is here, and the costs of surviving it are rising every day,” said Governor Green. “Hawai‘i taxpayers should not have to foot that bill. The burden should fall on those who deceived and failed to warn consumers about the climate dangers lurking in their products. This lawsuit is about holding those parties accountable, shifting the costs of surviving the climate crisis back where they belong, and protecting Hawai‘i citizens into the future.”

The state’s lawsuit names seven groups of affiliated fossil fuel companies and the American Petroleum Institute, the largest oil and gas trade association in the United States. It alleges seven causes of action against all defendants, including violations of Hawai‘i’s Unfair or Deceptive Acts or Practices Statute, failure to warn, harm to public trust resources, public and private nuisance, trespass, and negligence. The lawsuit also alleges civil aiding and abetting against the American Petroleum institute.

“These defendants had a duty to warn people about the climate dangers associated with their products, or to mitigate those dangers. But they did neither of those things,” said Attorney General Lopez. “Instead, they put profits ahead of people and facilitated the increased use of their dangerous products through decades of deceptive conduct. They violated Hawai‘i law, harmed all Hawai‘i residents, and will now be held accountable in a Hawai‘i court.”

The lawsuit filed today details the history of defendants’ deceptive conduct, and many of the resulting harms inflicted on the state of Hawai‘i as a result of that conduct. Some key excerpts from the complaint filed today:

- “Climate change has already impacted and will continue to harm Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices including upland forest practices, traditional agriculture, and coastal and nearshore marine practices.” (para 274)

- “As of 2021, 66 state-owned facilities have reported flooding from sea level rise and precipitation. These facilities include public housing complexes in Kāne‘ohe, the Hulihe‘e Palace historic site, and the Kaua‘i and O‘ahu Community Correctional Centers.” (para 280)
- “Moreover, 70 percent of the state’s beaches have already experienced erosion, and 13 miles of beach have been lost across the islands. These impacts will continue to worsen as the sea level rises further. By 2050, NOAA predicts that more than 90 percent of the state’s beaches will be receding.” (para 280)
- “Climate impacts threaten Hawai‘i water resources. As rainfall levels decline, Hawai‘i will have decreasing access to freshwater... By 2030, the state may suffer from a freshwater shortfall of 100 million gallons per day.” (para 292)
- “Climate change increases the threat of wildfires for Hawai‘i. The 2023 Maui wildfires were the deadliest in modern U.S. history and the worst natural disaster in the history of the state. More than 100 lives were lost, and more than 2,200 structures were destroyed, causing \$5.5 billion of damage.” (para 294)
- “Climate change has, and will continue to have, constant, widespread, and severe impacts to the physical health of Hawai‘i residents. Rising temperatures and intense heat waves, extreme weather events, related disruptions to health and emergency services, and increased proliferation of vector-borne disease and pathogens will and has already taken its toll.” (para 311)

The lawsuit requests a jury trial and seeks relief in the form of compensatory, punitive, and natural resource damages; civil penalties; disgorgement of profits; and an order enjoining Defendants from engaging in the unfair or deceptive acts or practices described in the lawsuit, among others.

A copy of the complaint as filed can be found [here](#).

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