

**Maine Climate Protection Petition**

**Youth Toolkit**

**Contents**

1. Handout describing our effort
   * Share with other kids to let them know about our work
2. Maine Climate Protection Youth Petition
   * Use this form to gather signatures. Save paper – make double-sided copies!
   * At the bottom of the sheet, write in the name of the person responsible for collecting the completed signature sheets for your school or organization.
   * Once your school/organization has gathered completed signature sheets, please return them to (**Put in your name.)**
3. Global Warming 101
   * A simple introduction to climate change
4. Half-page handout
   * Give one of these to everyone who signs the signature sheet

**Maine Climate Protection Petition**

**Youth Petition**

On behalf of all the world’s children, 350 Maine and the Citizens Climate Lobby are partnering with a youth-driven, international campaign to stabilize the world’s deteriorating climate. The campaign is led by *Our Children’s Trust,* a nonprofit organization supporting youth all over the globe in the development and pursuit of legal actions to compel science-based government efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that are causing devastating climate consequences.

**On the national level,** 21 young people have filed a lawsuit against the federal government in U.S. District Court (D. of Oregon). They believe that youth and future generations have a right to a stable climate under the United States Constitution. Their suit says that, although the government has known about the dangers of climate change for over 50 years, it has continued to pursue reckless and dangerous fossil fuel development, harming the health of our communities and endangering our futures. This lawsuit is called Juliana v. the United States and is anticipated to be heard sometime this spring.

**In Maine**, we have a 14 year old law that states that Maine will reduce greenhouse gas emissions “sufficient to eliminate any dangerous threat to the climate.” So far, Maine has not developed rules to reach this statutory goal. **Maine Climate Protectors**, a group of concerned citizens and attorneys, are petitioning the Maine Department of Environmental Protection to make rules based on climate science so we can meet those goals. The petition will be delivered to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection in January 2018. Once the DEP receives the petition, they are required by law to initiate rulemaking procedures within 60 days..

We seek rules that, according to the best science available, are sufficient to stabilize the climate. As recent events have underscored—four foot rains in Texas, grid-destroying winds in Florida, record-breaking wildfires in Montana and California, and utter devastation in Puerto Rico—our future and our children’s future depends on what we do right now.

You can help. We need signatures on our Maine Climate Protection Youth Petition to show the Department of Environmental Protection that the young people of Maine CARE about their future and the future of this planet. We are asking you to ask your friends and family to sign our Youth Petition. We want our young people to find their voices and demand the future they deserve. Join us!

Learn more at: <https://www.ourchildrenstrust.org/maine>

http://maine-climate-protectors.org/

**Maine Climate Protection Youth Petition**

I want the Maine Department of Environmental Protection to establish science-based rules to reduce the impact of climate change in Maine. Unchecked climate change will do immense harm to the environment and reduce the quality of life for my generation and for generations to come.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Age** | **Town/School** | **Email**  **(Parent email if under 16)** | **I want to participate in future actions (Y/N)** |
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Collector’s name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Collector’s town: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Return this petition to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by **March 16, 2018** (or sooner if possible!).

# Global Warming 101

### What is global warming? Think of a blanket, covering the Earth.

When CO2 and other heat-trapping emissions are released into the air, they act like a blanket, holding heat in our atmosphere and warming the planet.

Overloading our atmosphere with carbon has [far-reaching effects](https://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/science_and_impacts/impacts/) for people all around the world, including [rising sea levels](https://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/science_and_impacts/impacts/infographic-sea-level-rise-global-warming.html), [increasing wildfires](https://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/science_and_impacts/impacts/infographic-wildfires-climate-change.html), [more extreme weather](https://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/science_and_impacts/impacts/extreme-weather-climate-change.html), [deadly heat waves](https://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/science_and_impacts/impacts/global-warming-and-heat-waves.html), and more severe droughts.

### What causes global warming? We do.

The primary cause of global warming is human activity, most significantly the burning of fossil fuels to drive cars, generate electricity, and operate our homes and businesses.

[Tropical deforestation](https://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/solutions/stop-deforestation/), also by human hands, is another major contributor. When these forests are burned, they release huge amounts of carbon into the atmosphere and because the forests no longer exist, they are no longer available to absorb CO2.

### Who can reduce global warming? We can.

To address global warming, we need to significantly [reduce the amount of heat-trapping emissions](https://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/solutions/reduce-emissions/). As individuals, we can help by being mindful of our electricity use, [driving more efficient cars](https://www.ucsusa.org/clean_vehicles/), reducing the number of miles we drive, and taking other steps to [reduce our own consumption of fossil fuels](https://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/what_you_can_do/practical-steps-for-low-carbon-living.html).

But we can also help by calling for government and corporate decision makers to reduce the threat of global warming by:

* Expanding the use of [**renewable energy**](https://www.ucsusa.org/clean_energy/) and transforming our energy system to one that is cleaner and [**less dependent on coal and other fossil fuels**](https://www.ucsusa.org/clean_energy/smart-energy-solutions/decrease-coal/).
* Increasing [**vehicle fuel efficiency**](https://www.ucsusa.org/clean_vehicles/) and supporting other solutions that [**reduce U.S. oil use.**](https://www.ucsusa.org/clean_vehicles/smart-transportation-solutions/vehicle-policy/current-policies-and-legislation/how-to-reduce-us-oil-use.html)
* [**Placing limits**](https://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/solutions/reduce-emissions/new-epa-carbon-rules-for-power-plants-climate-game-changer-OLD.html) on the amount of carbon that polluters are allowed to emit.
* [**Building a clean energy economy**](https://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/solutions/reduce-emissions/global_warming_crossroads.html)by investing in efficient energy technologies, industries, and approaches.
* [**Reducing tropical deforestation**](https://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/solutions/stop-deforestation/)and its associated global warming emissions.
* Implementing effective [**national and regional climate policies.**](https://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/solutions/reduce-emissions/#national_policies)

**Source:** Union of Concerned Scientists, <https://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/global_warming_101#.WkxI4zdG3IU>

**Other useful websites:**

* [www.ourchildrenstrust.org/maine](http://www.ourchildrenstrust.org/maine)
* [www.350maine.org](http://www.350maine.org)
* [www.citizensclimatelobby.org](http://www.citizensclimatelobby.org)

**Maine Climate Protection Petition**

**Youth Petition**

This petition asks the state of Maine to enforce the 2003 state law that requires the Maine to reduce greenhouse gas emissions “sufficient to eliminate any dangerous threat to the climate.” We demand that the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP) get on with it and write rules that will substantially reduce Maine's carbon emissions right away. Our petition contains 26 pages of effective, science-based rules that will do the job.

****Young Mainers did not create climate change, but we will be its primary victims. We can no longer wait for caring adults to fight climate change alone. Youthful energy is required now to win the changes that we need and deserve.

Rising seas, super storms and floods, deadly droughts, mega-fires, crazy weather.   No thanks!

Sign the youth petition!       Get others to sign!        Be part of the solution!

For more information, contact **Maine Youth Environmental Association.**

Ryan O’Leary, [roleary2019@scarboroughschools.org](mailto:roleary2019@scarboroughschools.org)

Or **350Maine** Karen Luse, [luse.karen@gmail.com](mailto:luse.karen@gmail.com)

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**Here’s more ways you can help:**

* Write a letter to the Department of Environmental Protection asking them to fulfill the law by creating scientifically based rules that will reduce carbon emissions ”sufficient to eliminate any dangerous threat to the climate,” specifically, to 75% to 80% below 2003 levels by 2035. Be sure to include who you are (e.g. “I am a junior at Portland High School) and why this is important to you. Remind them that you didn’t cause this problem, but as a young Mainer, you will inherit it.
* Write a letter to the Portland Press Herald, or other local newspapers. Again, tell them who you are and why the reduction of greenhouse gases is important to you. The stronger you state your case, and the more personal your examples, the more powerful your letter will be.

**Portland Press Herald:** Send your letter by email to [letterstotheeditor@pressherald.com](mailto:letterstotheeditor@pressherald.com)

Or use their form <https://www.pressherald.com/reader-services/letters-editor/>

**Department of Environmental Protection:**

Use their on-line form at <http://www.maine.gov/dep/contact/>

Or send it by snail mail to: Maine Department of Environmental Protection  
 17 State House Station  
 Augusta, Maine 04333-0017

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**Portland Press Herald:** Send your letter by email to [letterstotheeditor@pressherald.com](mailto:letterstotheeditor@pressherald.com)

Or use their form <https://www.pressherald.com/reader-services/letters-editor/>

**Department of Environmental Protection:**

Use their on-line form at <http://www.maine.gov/dep/contact/>

Or send it by snail mail to: Maine Department of Environmental Protection  
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