

Old-Timers Back “Climate Change Kids” in Lawsuit

By Larry Morgenstern and Ron Verzuh

The lawsuit now before the Court of Appeals of the Ninth Circuit calls on the federal government to protect today’s young people and future generations from the effects of climate change. We old people need to support their case and the Green New Deal for the sake of our grandchildren and great grandchildren.

The urgency of the case gains new relevance when we consider that some young women have pledged not to have children as part of a new movement called BirthStrike. Our granddaughters and great granddaughters are potentially part of this drastic statement about the future.

Perhaps they are right that bringing children into a world clogged with climate problems is not a future that a new mother should want for her children. For the older generation, people like us, this is a clear warning signal. Our own progeny are willing to end the family line if governments fail to address climate change. The existential threat of climate change is thus pushing a generation to voluntarily eschew a functional life span.

We have known about the potential impact of climate change for decades and yet our generation has failed the generations that follow us. With the case before the court, we have an opportunity to avoid repeating that mistake.

We have let economic and political agendas prevent implementation of policies that could save our planet and humanity from the impact of climate change and we are now paying the price with irreversible tipping points evident on many fronts.

We owe it to the generation presenting the case to support them in insisting on immediate measures to stop and reverse global warming. We owe it to this and future generations to support decarbonizing the economy, investing in renewable energy, upgrading our electrical grid, protecting our water supplies, providing more public transportation, implementing methods of sustainable agriculture, and restoration of forests and ecosystems.

It is essential that we start listening to, and learning from, the legitimate concerns of the younger generations whose futures are under threat through no fault of their own. Our senior generations must use any influence and resources available to resist the Trump administration and GOP policies that deny climate change. As the young people know, it is folly to accept the Republicans’ hardening position against climate science.

We are behind the young climate change activists in their quest to influence and educate family, friends and neighbors of the reality and magnitude of this existential crisis. They are in the forefront of efforts to create the political will necessary to combat climate change.

Our job is to listen to them, not denigrate and dismiss them. Our job is also to speak out in support of these courageous and knowledgeable young people. The future is theirs and when young people do not see a future for themselves beyond the next few decades, society's job is to take action either with or without the current federal government.

We are with the 21 "Climate Kids." We urge other old people to be there as well.

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