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California Supreme Court Rejects Petroleum Association's Retaliation Against L.A. Youth

Case Closed- Environmental Justice Youth Leaders officially win suit against Big Oil

Los Angeles, CA- The Supreme Court of California, the highest court in the state, has denied the oil industry's request for review to overturn a victory by L.A. youth and environmental groups. The Court's decision, which became public this week, effectively ends the oil association's retaliatory litigation against youth of color living in South Los Angeles and Wilmington over oil drilling.

Communities for A Better Environment's (CBE) youth group "Youth for Environmental Justice (YEJ)," South Central Youth Leadership Coalition, and the Center for Biological Diversity sued the City of L.A. in 2015 for rubber stamping oil-drilling applications in their neighborhoods which was in violation of state law. The City settled that case and began implementing stronger environmental review of drilling projects. The California Independent Petroleum Association (CIPA) intervened in the case, however, suing both CBE and the other plaintiffs, and the City of L.A. [An appellate court decided that CIPA's claims were baseless](#), but CIPA appealed to the Supreme Court of California. The highest court in California has [now denied CIPA's request](#) for review, leaving in place the appellate court opinion finding in favor of the youth.

"The CA Supreme Court's decision gives me hope for future generations. Oil drilling should not be near homes, schools, or any sensitive locations," **said Isabel Alvarenga, CBE YEJ member**. "No one's health issues should be dismissed for profit. This is a huge win, and we will continue to fight for environmental justice for all."

"By refusing to grant review, the Supreme Court of California has recognized the meritlessness of the oil association's claims. The youth have exhibited immense courage in this years-long fight against the oil industry, which has damaged their health and their neighborhoods," **said Katherine Hoff, Associate Attorney for CBE**. "Today, the youth have stopped the industry in its tracks and won a resounding and important victory."

Oil drilling is harmful to human health, and compounds other health and socioeconomic burdens already present in these communities. Residents of South LA and the Harbor area, for example, already face some of the highest pollution burdens in the state according to tools like [CalEnviroScreen](#). Health problems common near oil drilling sites include nosebleeds, nausea, respiratory illness, and dizziness.

Founded in 1978, **Communities for a Better Environment** (CBE) is one of the preeminent environmental justice organizations in the nation. The mission of CBE is to build people's power in California's communities of color and low-income communities to achieve environmental health and justice by preventing and reducing pollution and building green, healthy and sustainable communities and environments.

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