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Minnesota suing “big oil” over Climate Change lies

Montevideo, MN, June 24, 2020 – Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison announced on Wednesday that the State of Minnesota had filed a consumer fraud lawsuit against ExxonMobil, Koch Industries, and the American Petroleum Institute (API). For decades ExxonMobil, the world’s largest oil company, Koch Industries, Minnesota’s largest oil refiner, and API, the national trade association for the oil and gas industry, knew that their actions and products were causing climate change—and did nothing but lie. These companies continued to profit mightily for decade after decade while maintaining a disinformation campaign. Today, Minnesota is finally taking action to hold them accountable.

Exxon doubled down on its deception, spending upwards of \$30 million on ads, front groups, and fake science to fabricate doubt about the connection between burning fossil fuels and rising global temperatures, all in an effort to delay any climate policy that would threaten their bottom line – all while doing things like raising oil rigs to safeguard against rising seas. The Koch Family Foundation, meanwhile, funded deception behind the scenes: between 1997 and 2017, Koch spent over \$127 million directly financing groups that worked to spread climate denial and unravel policies aimed at mitigating climate change.

People across Minnesota are paying the price for decades of unmitigated air and climate pollution with their health and pocketbooks. The state’s ecosystems we love are continually under assault from climate pollution. Extreme storms and weather continue to damage Minnesota’s infrastructure and economy. While we all feel the effects and sadly, it is the most vulnerable communities, such as Black and Indigenous Minnesotans that are hardest hit by the climate crisis.

CURE applauds this week’s actions by AG Ellison to protect Minnesotans across the state. Peg Furshong, Operations and Director of Programs at CURE, stated, “This reminds us our voices and our votes matter. Minnesota is saying the lies need to stop, and deceptive corporations need to be held accountable. Actions by the state leaders we elect along with regional changes to our power generation are having a global impact on the climate crisis. ”

CURE is a rural-based nonprofit organization working on climate, energy, water, and democracy issues. Our work is rooted in environmental and social justice, which can only be achieved when pursued hand-in-hand.

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