



# Press Release

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## **ALASKA SUPREME COURT TO HEAR CASE AT BARROW HIGH SCHOOL** **To Foster Understanding of the Justice System**

**Anchorage, Alaska (October 3, 2013)** – The Alaska Supreme Court will hear oral arguments today at Barrow High School in *Nelson Kanuk, et. al., v. State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources* (Supreme Court No. S-14776). Arguments will be heard before an audience of high school students as part of the *Supreme Court LIVE* educational program. The program will include question-and-answer sessions with the attorneys arguing the cases, and with members of the Supreme Court. Gavel Alaska will live stream the arguments at <http://www.360north.org/kanuk-v-alaska-department-of-natural-resources/> from 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM.

The case - *Nelson Kanuk, et. al., v. State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources* (Supreme Court No. S-14776) looks at the role the judicial branch plays in government, including when a court should refuse to decide a case out of deference to the other branches. In this case, a group of children and their guardians sued the State of Alaska arguing that the State had not adequately addressed carbon emissions and global warming. They asked the trial court to order the State to protect the atmosphere using a doctrine that requires the State to protect the public's access to navigable waters. The trial court decided that it should not decide the case because resolving the case would require the court to make policy decisions better made by the legislature or executive branch.

*Supreme Court LIVE* brings Supreme Court oral arguments in actual cases to student audiences at Alaskan high schools. Designed to help students better understand the justice system, this unique learning opportunity debuted in 2010. This is only the second time in the court's history and the first time in over 30 years, that it will hear arguments in Barrow, Alaska's northernmost and predominately Inupiaq community. Volunteer attorneys from the Alaska Bar Association and staff from the court system have been working with Barrow High school students to help them understand the appellate

process and the cases themselves, using case summaries and information from the court's website:

<http://courts.alaska.gov/outreach-scl2013-barrow.htm>.

The program is open to the public and attendees are encouraged to arrive at least 30 minutes early to allow time for security screening. Attendees must leave all electronic devices and bags at home.

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