

Amicus Curiae

Scenario:

There is a lawsuit in the news by the State of California against the six leading automobile manufacturers stating that they are the cause of nearly one third of the state's emissions problem and a leading cause of global warming. The judge for this case needs background information so that he/she can be prepared to hear motions as to whether the case should be dismissed or move forward and possibly go to trial. Your group has been hired in the role of "friend of the court," or in Latin, amicus curiae, to provide the judge with an overview of the impact of the lawsuit. The judge has a very busy schedule, so you only have ten minutes to get her/him up to speed on the issues.

Possible topics to cover (these are only suggestions and are not a requirement for a superior presentation):

1. What is your role as a "friend of the court?"
2. What evidence is there that automobile emissions are leading to global warming?
3. What negative impact could California claim is a result of global warming?
4. What does the State of California hope to gain by filing this lawsuit?
5. How does the State of California's actions relate to the Kyoto conference?
6. Why would the automobile manufacturers want to fight this lawsuit?
7. Why could this case be considered unusual?
8. What are some potential outcomes to this lawsuit?

Possible Sources

Newspapers, environmental scientists, weather experts, automobile dealerships library books, videos, encyclopedias, science textbooks

ERS Portal sources: EBSCO, United Streaming, California Streaming, Brainpop, Associate Press Extensive Photo Archive and Marco Polo Science NetLinks <http://www.erslibrary.org>

Internet websites:

Tech Law Journal: <http://www.techlawjournal.com/glossary/legal/amicus.htm>

Environmental Protection Agency: <http://www.epa.gov/>

New York Times:

http://www.nytimes.com/2006/09/21/business/21auto.html?_r=1&oref=slogin

Bloomberg:

http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601103&sid=aSthCirr_IoI&refer=us

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kyoto_Protocol

Bibliography

Be sure to have a printed bibliography to hand to the judges before you begin your presentation. You are encouraged to cite all of your sources including graphics. A simple web tool to organize your bibliography can be found at <http://citationmachine.net/>.