

A Subsidiary Of ConocoPhillips Withdrew From A Major Multi-Party Oil Case Before The Supreme Court, Clearing The Way For Justice Alito, A ConocoPhillips Shareholder And Industry-Friendly Jurist, To Hear The Case

SUMMARY: Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito [holds stock](#) in multiple companies, including a [stake](#) in oil giant ConocoPhillips. In light of this, a decision by Burlington Resources Oil & Gas—a wholly owned subsidiary of ConocoPhillips—to withdraw from a case before the Supreme Court in its 2025-2026 term appears to be a cynical attempt to avoid forcing Justice Alito to recuse himself from the case or weaken calls for his recusal, at a time when [scrutiny](#) of the court's politicization is at an all-time high.

It also forces the question of whether Justice Alito should be bound by [stronger ethics requirements](#) that would require him to recuse from the case regardless of whether he personally decides to, considering that its outcome will affect ConocoPhillips despite the fact that its name no longer appears among the petitioners.

Over the past decade, Alito has recused himself from cases in which ConocoPhillips and its subsidiaries were parties. This includes two cases involving another ConocoPhillips subsidiary, whose cert petitions the high court considered just this year.

This appears to be the first instance in which ConocoPhillips or one of its subsidiaries have preemptively removed itself from the cert petition shortly before conference.

The case in question is [Chevron USA Inc. v. Plaquemines Parish, La.](#), one of [dozens](#) of lawsuits filed by Louisiana parishes seeking damages for coastal land destruction allegedly caused by major oil and gas companies. Notably, Burlington Resources remains a party to a related case filed in Louisiana state court.

In the coming months, the Supreme Court will rule on whether the case can be moved from state to federal venue, but in the broader picture, billions in damage awards are at stake.

A Subsidiary Company Of ConocoPhillips, Whose Stock Is Owned By Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito, Withdrew From Litigating A Case Currently Before The Supreme Court, A Move That Obscured The Justice's Conflict Of Interest.

In Its 2025-2026 Term, The Supreme Court Will Hear *Chevron USA Inc. v. Plaquemines Parish, La.*, A Case That Could See Oil And Gas Companies Forced To Pay Billions To Fund Land Restoration Efforts.

June 2025: The Supreme Court Granted Certiorari In *Chevron USA Inc v. Plaquemines Parish, La.*

Title:	Chevron USA Incorporated, et al., Petitioners v. Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana, et al.
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[...]

Jun 16 2025	Petition GRANTED.
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[Supreme Court of the United States, docket, accessed [9/2/25](#)]

Chevron USA Inc. v. Plaquemines Parish, La. Is One Of Dozens Of Lawsuits Filed By Louisiana Parishes Seeking Compensation From Oil And Gas Companies For Coastal Land Loss And Environmental Degradation. “The Supreme Court announced Monday it will hear an appeal from Chevron, Exxon and other oil and gas companies that lawsuits seeking compensation for coastal land loss and environmental degradation in Louisiana should be heard in federal court. The companies are appealing a 2024 decision by a federal appeals court that kept the lawsuits in state courts, allowing them to move to trial after more than a decade in limbo... The verdict reached in April was the first of dozens of lawsuits filed in 2013 against leading oil and gas companies in Louisiana alleging they violated state environmental laws for decades.” [The Associated Press, [6/16/25](#)]

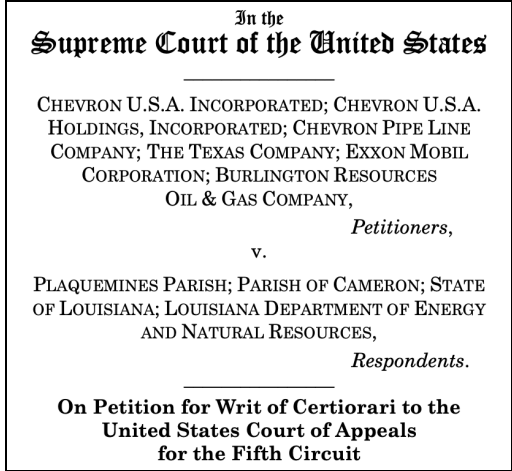
- **In Total, Louisiana Parishes Have Filed 42 Nearly-Identical Lawsuits Against Oil And Gas Companies Seeking Compensation For Coastal Land Loss And Environmental Degradation.** “Beginning in 2013, six Louisiana parishes along the coast filed 42 lawsuits accusing the oil and gas companies of violating Louisiana's State and Local Coastal Resources Management Act of 1978, a state permitting law.” [Reuters, [6/16/25](#)]
- **Louisiana Parishes Have Sought Billions In Damages From Oil And Gas Companies To Fund Land Restoration And Storm Protection Efforts To Mitigate Coastal Land Loss.** “The various parishes accused the companies of damaging coastal marshlands through dredging and pipeline development and have sought billions of dollars in damages to fund land restoration and storm protection efforts to mitigate erosion.” [Reuters, [6/16/25](#)]

Chevron USA Inc. v. Plaquemines Parish, La. And Other Similar Lawsuits Were Filed In 2013 And Have Been Stalled For Over A Decade, As Oil And Gas Companies Have Sought To Remove The Cases To Federal Venues, Which Are Considered More Business-Friendly. “The verdict reached in April was the first of dozens of lawsuits filed in 2013 against leading oil and gas companies in Louisiana alleging they violated state environmental laws for decades. Chevron argues that because it and other companies began oil production and refining during World War II as a federal contractor, these cases should be heard in federal court, perceived to be friendlier to businesses. But the plaintiffs’ attorneys — representing the Plaquemines and Jefferson Parish governments — say the appeal is the companies’ latest stall tactic to avoid accountability.” [The Associated Press, [6/16/25](#)]

In Chevron USA Inc. v. Plaquemines Parish, La., The Supreme Court Took Up A Question Of Whether The Cases Could Be Moved From State To Federal Court. “And in *Chevron USA Inc. v. Plaquemines Parish, La.*, the Supreme Court agreed to hear a long-running lawsuit brought by Louisiana and two of its parishes, attempting to hold oil companies liable for their production of crude oil in the state during World War II. The question that the court agreed to decide arises from the oil companies’ latest efforts to transfer the cases from state court, where they were filed, to federal court.” [SCOTUSblog, [6/16/25](#)]

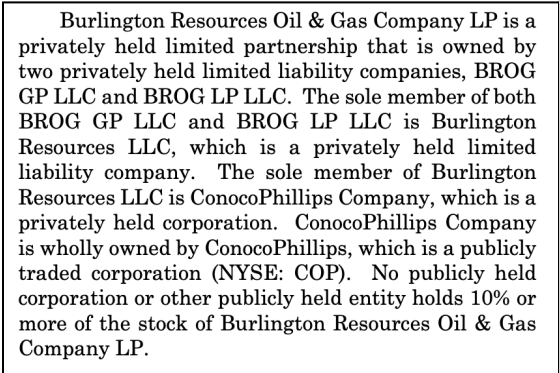
Burlington Resources Oil & Gas, A Subsidiary Of ConocoPhillips, Was Part Of Chevron USA Inc. v. Plaquemines Parish, La., But, Strangely, Withdrew Itself As A Plaintiff In The Cert Petition Right Before The Supreme Court Was Set To Decide Whether To Hear The Case.

January 2025: Burlington Resources Oil & Gas Company Was Among The Parties Filing Cert In *Chevron USA Inc. v. Plaquemines Parish, La.*



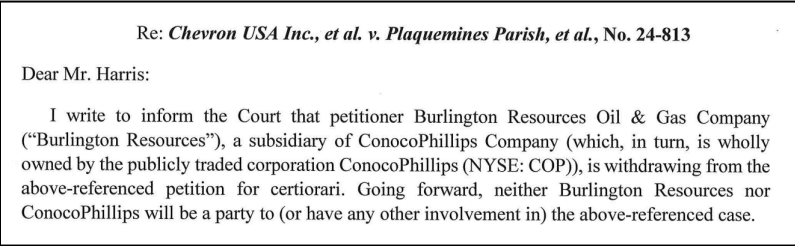
[Supreme Court of the United States, petition for writ of certiorari, [1/29/25](#)]

Burlington Resources Oil & Gas Company Is A Wholly Owned Subsidiary Of ConocoPhillips.



[Supreme Court of the United States, petition for writ of certiorari, [1/29/25](#)]

May 7, 2025: Burlington Resources Oil & Gas Company Withdrew From The Supreme Court Cert Petition In *Chevron USA Inc. v. Plaquemines Parish, La.* Without Providing A Reason.



[Supreme Court of the United States, letter, [5/7/25](#)]

May 13, 2025: *Chevron USA Inc. v. Plaquemines Parish, La.* Was Distributed For Conference Before The Supreme Court.



[Supreme Court of the United States, docket, accessed [9/2/25](#)]

Burlington Resources Oil & Gas Was The Only Party To Withdraw From The Case.

As Of September 2025, Burlington Resources Oil & Gas Is The Only Party In *Chevron USA Inc. v. Plaquemines Parish, La.* To Have Withdrawn From The Case. [Supreme Court of the United States, docket, accessed [9/2/25](#)]

As Of September 2025, Burlington Resources Oil & Gas Has Remained Part Of An Original State Court Lawsuit From Which *Chevron USA Inc. v. Plaquemines Parish, La.* Was Appealed.

***Chevron USA Inc. v. Plaquemines Parish, La.* Is An Appeal Originally Filed From Louisiana State Court Case *Plaquemines Parish v. Total Petrochemicals & Refining USA, Inc.* Among Other Cases.**

STATEMENT OF RELATED PROCEEDINGS

This case arises from the following proceedings:

- *Plaquemines Parish v. BP America Production Co.*, Nos. 23-30294, 23-30422 (5th Cir. May 29, 2024) (opinion and judgment)
- *Plaquemines Parish v. Total Petrochemical & Refining USA, Inc.*, No. 18-cv-5256 (E.D. La. Apr. 21, 2023) (order granting motion to remand)
- *Parish of Cameron v. Apache Corp. of Delaware*, No. 2:18-cv-688 (W.D. La. Dec. 22, 2022) (order granting motion to remand)
- *Plaquemines Parish v. Total Petrochemicals & Refining USA, Inc.*, No. 61-0002, 25th Judicial District Court for the Parish of Plaquemines (Division "B"), Louisiana (state-court petition filed, no judgment entered)
- *Parish of Cameron v. Apache Corp. (of Delaware) et al.*, No. 10-19579, 38th Judicial District Court for the Parish of Cameron, Louisiana (state-court petition filed, no judgment entered)

Petitioners are not aware of any other proceedings that are directly related to this case within the meaning of Rule 14.1(b)(iii).

[Supreme Court of the United States, petition for writ of certiorari, [1/29/25](#)]

As Of September 2025, Burlington Resources Oil & Gas Remained A Defendant In *Plaquemines Parish, La. v. Total Petrochemicals & Refining USA, Inc.*

Case Information								
Case Number	Filing Date	Case Type	Filing Type	Court Type	Division	Judge	Case Status	Case Title
00061002	11/08/2013	CIVIL	DAMAGES	PARISH COURT	B	MICHAEL D CLEMENT	OPEN 10/11/2020	PLAQUEMINES PARISH VS. TOTAL PETROCHEMICALS & REFINING USA INC ET AL

[...]

DEFENDANT	BURLINGTON RESOURCES OIL & GAS COMPANY LP
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[Louisiana 25th Judicial District Court, docket of case no. 61002, accessed [9/8/25](#)]

Justice Samuel Alito Is Known To Hold ConocoPhillips Stock, Which Compels Him To Recuse From Cases Directly Involving The Company.

As Of His Latest Available Annual Financial Disclosure Report, Covering FY 2024, Justice Alito Held ConocoPhillips Stock.

A. Description of Assets (including trust assets) Place "(X)" after each asset exempt from prior disclosure	B. Income during reporting period		C. Gross value at end of reporting period	
	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
	Amount	Type (e.g.,	Value	Value
	Code 1 (A-H)	div., rent, or int.)	Code 2 (J-P)	Method Code 3 (Q-W)

[...]

42. - ConocoPhillips	A	Dividend	J	T
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[...]

1. Income Gain Codes: (See Columns B1 and D4)	A = \$1,000 or less F = \$50,001 - \$100,000	B = \$1,001 - \$2,500 G = \$100,001 - \$1,000,000	C = \$2,501 - \$5,000 H1 = \$1,000,001 - \$5,000,000	D = \$5,001 - \$15,000 H2 = More than \$5,000,000	E = \$15,001 - \$50,000
2. Value Codes (See Columns C1 and D3)	J = \$15,000 or less N = \$250,001 - \$500,000 P3 = \$25,000,001 - \$50,000,000	K = \$15,001 - \$50,000 O = \$500,001 - \$1,000,000	L = \$50,001 - \$100,000 P1 = \$1,000,001 - \$5,000,000 P4 = More than \$50,000,000	M = \$100,001 - \$250,000 P2 = \$5,000,001 - \$25,000,000	
3. Value Method Codes (See Column C2)	Q = Appraisal U = Book Value	R = Cost (Real Estate Only) V = Other	S = Assessment W = Estimated	T = Cash Market	

[Fix the Court, Financial Disclosure Report, 2024, [8/26/25](#)]

Justice Alito Was Known To Hold ConocoPhillips Stock Before This Most Recent Term. “Alito or his wife own tens of thousands of dollars of stock in companies including Raytheon Co., ConocoPhillips and a subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson. The holdings may force him to recuse as oil companies challenge lawsuits blaming them for climate change and J&J tries to settle talc lawsuits by placing a subsidiary into bankruptcy.” [Bloomberg Law, [9/9/24](#)]

Justice Alito “Is The Only US Supreme Court Member With A Stake In More Than Two Dozen Individual Companies,” Threatening “To Sideline Him From Major Business Cases.” “Justice Samuel Alito is the only US Supreme Court member with a stake in more than two dozen individual companies, a distinction that threatens to sideline him from major business cases.” [Bloomberg Law, [9/9/24](#)]

The Supreme Court’s Code Of Conduct Holds That Justices Should Recuse From Cases In Which Their “Impartiality Might Reasonably Be Questioned,” Including When They Have “A Financial Interest [...] In A Party To The Proceeding.”

- (2) A Justice should disqualify himself or herself in a proceeding in which the Justice’s impartiality might reasonably be questioned, that is, where an unbiased and reasonable person who is aware of all relevant circumstances would doubt that the Justice could fairly discharge his or her duties. Such instances include, but are not limited to, those in which:

[...]

- (c) The Justice knows that the Justice, individually or as a fiduciary, or the Justice’s spouse or minor child residing in the Justice’s household, has a financial interest in the subject matter in controversy or in a party to the proceeding, or any other interest that could be affected substantially by the outcome of the proceeding;

[Supreme Court of the United States, [11/13/23](#)]

Justice Alito Took Part In The Decision To Grant Cert In *Chevron USA Inc. v. Plaquemines Parish, La.*

Justice Alito Took Part In The Decision To Grant Cert In *Chevron USA Inc. v. Plaquemines Parish, La.*

Title:	Chevron USA Incorporated, et al., Petitioners v. Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana, et al.
Docketed:	January 31, 2025

[...]

Jun 16 2025 Petition GRANTED.

[Supreme Court of the United States, docket, accessed [9/10/25](#)]

Justice Alito Has Recused From Past Cases In Which ConocoPhillips And Its Subsidiaries Have Been Parties.

2018: Justice Alito Recused From The Decision Of Whether To Grant Cert In *Noble Energy v. ConocoPhillips*.

Title:	Noble Energy, Inc., Petitioner v. ConocoPhillips Co.
Docketed:	April 18, 2018

[...]

Oct 01 2018 Petition DENIED. Justice Alito took no part in the consideration or decision of this petition.

[Supreme Court of the United States, docket, accessed [9/10/25](#)]

- 2018: Justice Alito Held Stock In ConocoPhillips.**

40. - ConocoPhillips	A	Dividend	K	T				
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[Financial Disclosure Report, 2018, [5/23/19](#)]

- Noble Energy v. ConocoPhillips* Was A Texas Supreme Court Case That Arose After Noble Unwittingly Assumed A \$63 Million Liability From An Entity It Acquired.** “A recent case from the Texas Supreme Court emphasizes the importance of doing due diligence before purchasing assets from a debtor in bankruptcy. The case, *Noble Energy, Inc. v. ConocoPhillips Company*, held that Noble, through its predecessor and without realizing it, purchased a \$63 million liability when, in addition to purchasing the bankrupt entity’s assets, it agreed to assume liability for all ‘Assumed Liabilities and Assumed Obligations,’ even ones not expressly disclosed in the bankruptcy.” [Gordon Arata Montgomery Barnett, [7/21/17](#)]
- Noble Energy* Asked The Supreme Court To Rule On Whether A State Court Could Impose Contractual Obligations In Spite Of Federal Bankruptcy Law Disclosure Requirements Not Being Met, As Well As For Clarification On A Question Of Bankruptcy Law.**

QUESTIONS PRESENTED
1. Whether a state court may impose onerous contractual obligations on a non-signatory to the contract by disregarding the full-disclosure requirements of federal bankruptcy law and foisting the undisclosed perpetual indemnity obligation of a Chapter 11 debtor upon an unknowing purchaser of related assets.
2. Whether boilerplate “assumed-unless-rejected” language in a bankruptcy reorganization plan renders an undisclosed executory contract assumed under 11 U.S.C. §365.

[Supreme Court of the United States, petition for writ of certiorari, [4/16/18](#)]

2020: Justice Alito Recused From The Decision Of Whether To Grant Cert In *Ramirez v. ConocoPhillips*.

Title:	Leon Oscar Ramirez, Jr., et al., Petitioners v. ConocoPhillips Company, et al.
Docketed:	September 2, 2020

[...]

Oct 05 2020 Petition DENIED. Justice Alito took no part in the consideration or decision of this petition.

[Supreme Court of the United States, docket, accessed [9/10/25](#)]

- 2020: Justice Alito Held Stock In ConocoPhillips.**

41. -ConocoPhillips	A	Dividend	J	T	Sold (part)	12/28/20	J
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[Fix The Court, Financial Disclosure Report, 2020, [7/23/21](#)]

- **Ramirez v. ConocoPhillips Was A Texas Supreme Court Case Concerning Land And Mineral Rights.** “The Texas Supreme Court issued its opinion in *ConocoPhillips Co. v. Ramirez*, No. 17-0822, a family dispute over ownership of minerals in 10,058 acres in Zapata County, and ConocoPhillips’ claim to an oil and gas lease covering those minerals.” [Oil and gas Lawyer Blog, [1/29/20](#)]
- **The Case Was Appealed To The Supreme Court For Clarification On The Takings Clause.**

In *Stop the Beach Renourishment, Inc. v. Florida Department of Environmental Protection*, 560 U.S. 702 (2010), the Court was unable to resolve whether the Takings Clause proscribes state courts from the elimination of established property ownership by changing or disregarding their common law. A four-Justice plurality answered in the affirmative. A two-Justice concurrence opined that the better course was to apply a due process analysis. Because the state court did not change or disregard its common law, another two-Justice concurrence concluded the question should be left for another day. Some lower courts adhere to the plurality, but others do not. The Court should resolve this important question of the meaning of the Takings Clause. The Questions Presented are:

1. Whether the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments prohibit common law courts from eliminating property ownership by changing or disregarding their common law.

2. Whether the Texas Supreme Court violated the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments by disregarding its 160-year-old law that a conveyance of land passes both the surface and minerals unless one is reserved or excepted by clear and express language.

[Supreme Court of the United States, petition for writ of certiorari, [8/26/20](#)]

2020: Justice Alito Recused From The Decision Of Whether To Grant Cert In *Gonzales v. ConocoPhillips*.

Title:	Samuel Gonzales, Petitioner
	v.
	ConocoPhillips Company, et al.
Docketed:	November 10, 2020

[...]

Dec 14 2020	Petition DENIED. Justice Alito took no part in the consideration or decision of this petition.
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[Supreme Court of the United States, docket, accessed [9/10/25](#)]

- **2020: Justice Alito Held Stock In ConocoPhillips.**

41.	-ConocoPhillips	A	Dividend	J	T	Sold (part)	12/28/20	J
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[Fix The Court, Financial Disclosure Report, 2020, [7/23/21](#)]

- **Gonzales v. ConocoPhillips Was A 2020 Employee Benefits Case.** “This petition concerns a critically important issue of statutory interpretation regarding Section 502(g)(1) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), 29 U.S.C. § 1132(g)(1): how to square this provisions allowance for attorney’s fees to “either party” with ERISA’s textual commitment “to protect the interests” of participants in employee benefit plans and their beneficiaries.” 29 U.S.C. § 1001(b).” [Supreme Court of the United States, petition for writ of certiorari, [11/6/20](#)]

2022: Justice Alito Recused From The Decision Of Whether To Grant Cert In *NGL Supply Wholesale, L.L.C. v. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission*, A Case In Which ConocoPhillips Subsidiary Phillips 66 Was A Party.

Title:	NGL Supply Wholesale, L.L.C., Petitioner
	v.
	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, et al.
Docketed:	July 29, 2022

[...]

Party name: Phillips 66 Pipeline LLC and
Phillips 66 Company

[...]

Dec 05 2022 Petition DENIED. Justice Alito took no part in the consideration or decision of this petition.

[Supreme Court of the United States, docket, accessed [9/10/25](#)]

- **2022: Justice Alito Held Stock In ConocoPhillips.**

41. - ConocoPhillips	A	Dividend	J	T					
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[SCOTUSBlog, Financial Disclosure Report, 2022, [6/23/23](#)]

- ***NGL Supply Wholesale, L.L.C. v. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Was A Lawsuit Brought By A Propane Distributor Who Claimed That The FERC Wrongly Allowed Phillips 66 TO Evade A Review Of Its Operation Of An Interstate Pipeline.*** “The U.S. Supreme Court will not hear a case brought by an Oklahoma propane distributor who said the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission wrongly allowed Phillips 66 Co. to evade review of its operation of an interstate pipeline... The high court denied NGL Supply Wholesale LLC's certiorari petition Dec. 5, leaving in place a District of Columbia U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals opinion affirming FERC's determination that it did not have jurisdiction over the claims.” [Westlaw Today, [12/7/22](#)]

2025: Justice Alito Recused From Two Decisions Of Whether To Grant Cert In Cases In Which Marathon Petroleum Corp., A Subsidiary Of ConocoPhillips, Was A Party. [Supreme Court of the United States, [Shell PLC v. City and County of Honolulu, Haw.](#) and [Sunoco LP v. City and County of Honolulu, Haw.](#), accessed 9/10/25]

- **Justice Alito Recused From The Decision Of Whether To Grant Cert In *Shell PLC v. City And County Of Honolulu, Haw.***

Title:	Shell PLC, fka Royal Dutch Shell PLC, et al., Petitioners
	v.
	City and County of Honolulu, Hawaii, et al.
Docketed:	March 1, 2024

[...]

Party name: Petitioners Marathon Petroleum Corp.

[...]

Jan 13 2025 Petition DENIED. Justice Alito took no part in the consideration or decision of this petition.

[Supreme Court of the United States, docket, accessed [9/10/25](#)]

- **Justice Alito Recused From The Decision Of Whether To Grant Cert In *Sunoco LP v. City And County Of Honolulu, Haw.***

Title:	Sunoco LP, et al., Petitioners
	v.
	City and County of Honolulu, Hawaii, et al.
Docketed:	March 1, 2024

[...]

Party name: Marathon Petroleum Corp.

[...]

Jan 13 2025 Petition DENIED. Justice Alito took no part in the consideration or decision of this petition.

[Supreme Court of the United States, docket, accessed [9/10/25](#)]

- **The Cases Were An Attempt By Oil Companies To Scuttle A Lawsuit By Honolulu, Hawaii, Accusing Them Of Misleading The Public For Decades About The Dangers Of Climate Change Induced By Burning Fossil Fuels.** “The U.S. Supreme Court declined on Monday to hear a bid by Sunoco (SUN.N), opens new tab and other oil companies to scuttle a lawsuit by Honolulu accusing them of misleading the public for decades about the dangers of climate change induced by the burning of fossil fuels.” [Reuters, [1/13/25](#)]

[###]