

Climate Cases Put Big Oil's Behemoth Trade Group in Bull's-Eye

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State and local governments taking Big Oil to court over climate change have a new target: the American Petroleum Institute—an approach that could pay off for plaintiffs and create serious headaches for the industry's biggest trade group.

Recent lawsuits from Delaware, Minnesota and New Jersey name API as a defendant and argue the group should be held accountable alongside oil companies for allegedly misleading the public about fossil fuels' climate impacts. The suits also claim API has organized deceptive advertising and communications campaigns that promote climate disinformation and denialism.

Speaking with Bloomberg Law, Lena Konanova explained that the trade group's prominence makes it an obvious target for some of the climate cases cropping up across the country. She drew comparisons to associations entangled in litigation over tobacco and various products liability cases, noting the claims focus on "hiding known dangers by those associations, or downplaying the dangers to the public."

While API is an industry leader, other trade groups should give "serious consideration" to their potential liability, depending on what types of work such organizations have done to direct, fund or disseminate questionable research or advocacy materials, Konanova said. "You should be concerned if you think there's some risk that the way you put out your message is false or misleading in some way."

Read the full interview in [Bloomberg Law](#).

Attorney

- Lena Konanova

Practices

- Environmental Litigation
- Public Interest and Pro Bono