



COALITION OF LARGE TRIBES

Blackfeet Nation • Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe • Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation
Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation of Oregon • Crow Creek Sioux Tribe • Crow Nation
Eastern Shoshone Tribe • Fort Belknap Indian Community • Hopi Tribe • Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nation • Mescalero Apache Tribe
Muscogee (Creek) Nation • Navajo Nation • Northern Arapaho Tribe • Northern Cheyenne Tribe • Rosebud Sioux Tribe
San Carlos Apache Tribe • Shoshone-Bannock Tribes • Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation
Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux Tribe • Spirit Lake Nation • Spokane Tribe • Standing Rock Sioux Tribe • Ute Indian Tribe
Ute Mountain Ute Tribe • Walker River Paiute Tribe

COLT Submits Amicus Curiae Brief Reinforcing Tribal Energy Sovereignty in *Suncor Energy (U.S.A.) Inc., et al., v. County Commissioners of Boulder County, et al.* No. 25-170 before the U.S. Supreme Court

May 21, 2026

Agency Village, South Dakota – The Coalition of Large Tribes (COLT)—an intertribal organization representing the interests of the more than 50 tribes with reservations of 100,000 acres or more, encompassing more than 95% of the Indian Country lands and more than half the Native American population—submitted an amicus curiae brief in support of Petitioners in *Suncor Energy (U.S.A.) Inc., et al. v. County Commissioners of Boulder County, et al.* (No. 25-170), in which the U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to decide whether federal law precludes state-law tort claims seeking damages from fossil fuel companies for the alleged impacts of interstate and international greenhouse gas emissions.

“COLT felt it was important to voice tribal energy sovereignty concerns presented by the case,” said COLT Chairman J Garret Renville, Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Chairman. “For many COLT tribes, fossil resources are a central tool in our ability to fund government services to citizens. Tribal governments make sovereign policy choices about whether and how to develop our mineral resources and we regulate those activities. COLT felt it was important to protect tribal resources from potential efforts by other governments to intrude upon tribal sovereignty, a risk we see in the *SunCor* case.”

“Regrettably, COLT tribes have routine experience with other governments attempting to intrude on what should be tribal determinations, as territorial governments, on whether and how to develop mineral resources,” said COLT Executive Director OJ Semans, Sr. “There is simply no basis for such lateral interference. Tribes are regulators. We sometimes arrive at different policy choices than sister sovereigns, but there is no basis in the U.S. Constitution for governments who might disagree with one government’s choices to try to assert some de facto veto power to force other governments to mirror their conflicting policy choices.”

COLT tribes engage in a wide range of economic development activities and several have been national leaders in fossil energy development. “Indeed,” Chairman Renville explained, “often income from fossil energy is the only way tribal citizens are able to make ends meet on our large, rural reservations, and the primary resource to fund tribal governmental services to citizens,



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including education, healthcare and public safety. From COLT’s perspective, it was important to explain to the U.S. Supreme Court the tribal sovereignty implications of this case and to protect tribal energy sovereignty, our inherent sovereign rights to make decisions about what is best in our tribal homelands, and broadly to engage in commerce and trade freely, as secured in many Treaties with the United States.”

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