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**GW LAW PROFESSOR JONATHAN TURLEY FILES AGAINST THE EPA
FOR FAILURE TO INSPECT SECRET AIR FORCE BASE FOR VIOLATION
OF FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS**

Washington, D.C. -- The George Washington University National Law Center Professor of Environmental Law Jonathan Turley, in an unprecedented move, filed suit today against the Environmental Protection Agency for failing to live up to its duties to inspect violations of federal environmental laws. This will be the first in a series of legal actions planned by Professor Turley.

Turley is representing current and former workers at Area 51, a secret Air Force base in Nevada -- also known as Dreamland or Groom Lake. The suit alleges serious injuries, and at least one death, to employees due to the burning of hazardous and toxic wastes at the facility. Turley's suit further alleges that workers were denied requests for protective clothing -- including gloves -- in handling hazardous wastes. Workers, who signed secrecy agreements upon employment at the base, will be represented as "John and Jane Does" to prevent possible retaliation, including physical threats.

This case is the first of its kind. Area 51 is generally considered the most secret, classified base in the U.S. military network. "By forcing compliance at Area 51, we hope to establish a precedent whereby the military will be forced to acknowledge its responsibilities in every base and facility," says Turley. "Ultimately, this case is a direct confrontation between national security laws and environmental and criminal laws."

Specifically, Turley will be asking the D.C Court to force the EPA to inspect and monitor the secret base. He will argue that the federal hazardous waste law does not give any exception for secret bases in its provisions and will be asking the court to force the EPA to fulfill a mandatory duty under the law.

"We want to establish that workers at secret bases should not be forced to rely on the arbitrary protections of the military, but should be able to go to court to receive remedies for violations," says Turley. He also intends to establish that secrecy agreements do not preempt environmental protections. Eventually, Turley plans to draft a new law on the judicial review of such cases and on issues ranging from anonymous legal

action to standing questions to citizen suit actions against the EPA.

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