

[Union of
Concerned Scientists

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

*Science for a healthy planet
and safer world*





WE PUT SCIENCE INTO ACTION

UCS scientists and analysts develop and implement innovative, practical solutions to some of our planet's most pressing problems—solutions for combating global warming; developing sustainable ways to feed, power, and transport ourselves; fighting misinformation; advancing racial equity; and reducing the threat of nuclear war.

THANK YOU

**A MESSAGE FROM THE
PRESIDENT & CHAIR**



As we write this, we don't yet know the outcome of November's election. But we do know that our country has suffered through distressing political polarization and, perhaps like you, we have watched this election cycle with alarm.

We also know that the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) will be effective no matter what happens. We have a focused and achievable list of federal initiatives we will pursue if the opportunity presents itself, as well as a plan to prevent harmful backsliding if necessary. Our staff, members, and supporters have long demonstrated an ability to press for vital changes,

grounded in science, in many different political climates. And especially in these fast-moving times, we must remember to pause and celebrate the truly momentous victories we collectively achieved over the past year.

Together, we made tremendous progress in 2016. By supporting UCS, you helped make the scientific case and galvanize

critical support for a suite of landmark policies. You helped build significant momentum for clean energy: first, when Oregon phased out coal, and then when California and Massachusetts passed ambitious bills that will significantly cut global warming emissions and ramp up renewable energy. You helped put game-changing analysis in the right hands, leading directly to national standards for heavy-duty vehicles that will eliminate more than 1 billion tons of global warming emissions. And you helped us expose decades of climate deception by companies like ExxonMobil, which prompted two state attorneys general to launch investigations, bringing national attention to the responsibility these companies bear for climate change.

We've prepared this report for you as a snapshot of our work together over the past year, of victories small and large—all of which you helped make possible. We know how deeply you care about good policy informed by rigorous science, and we hope you are proud of your contributions to a healthier planet and safer world this year. Our gratitude to you rings out from every page.

KEN KIMMELL President

ANNE KAPUSCINSKI Chair

**CLEAN
ENERGY
VICTORIES
FROM
COAST TO
COAST**



If the states are the laboratory of democracy, then UCS has a formula for success in the fight against climate change: keep winning state-level clean energy policies that will transform the US electricity grid and build enough momentum to break the gridlock in Congress.

CALIFORNIA Just over a year ago, UCS analysis played a key role in California's adoption of a landmark renewable energy standard requiring the state to obtain 50 percent of its electricity from renewable resources by 2030. This year, we can celebrate a similarly momentous achievement in the Golden State: passage of an ambitious law to reduce heat-trapping emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030.

When the bill appeared to be headed for defeat in the face of oil industry opposition, UCS rallied its supporters and worked with a diverse coalition of scientists, businesses, labor leaders, faith-based organizations, and social justice advocates united in their desire to combat climate change. The resulting letters, phone calls, and meetings succeeded in swinging the momentum in favor of action, re-establishing California as the nation's leader in clean energy and climate policy.

OREGON On the first day of Oregon's traditionally short legislative session, UCS presented lawmakers with a letter signed by climate scientists and other

experts calling for reductions in global warming emissions. From there we worked with local partners and our network of supporters, gaining votes on both sides of the political aisle for a bill that would phase out coal power by 2030 and establish a goal of 50 percent renewable energy by 2040. When the governor signed the bill in March, Oregon became the first state in the nation to commit to going coal-free.

MASSACHUSETTS In April, ahead of the state legislature's consideration of an omnibus energy bill, UCS published an analysis showing that a large-scale investment in renewable energy is affordable and far less risky than relying on natural gas. By engaging our supporters, briefing numerous state officials including the Senate president and House speaker, and publishing editorials in local newspapers, we secured bipartisan support for a bill that prioritizes clean energy and will make Massachusetts the nation's leader in offshore wind power almost overnight: from zero capacity now to 1,600 megawatts (15 percent of the state total) by 2027.



FIGHTING CLIMATE SCIENCE DECEPTION

The major fossil fuel companies are wrong to think they can deceive the public about climate change and get away with it. Our campaign to hold these companies accountable for their share of the damage from global warming is rattling the right cages.

In 2015, the UCS report *The Climate Deception Dossiers* and subsequent reporting by *InsideClimate News* and the *Los Angeles Times* used internal industry documents to prove that some of the world's largest fossil fuel producers have known for decades that their products contribute to rising temperatures, but instead of publicizing the risks and reforming their business models, they chose to mislead their shareholders and the general public. As a result of these reports, during the past year the attorneys general of Massachusetts and New York each began investigating whether ExxonMobil committed fraud. One of the company's key allies in Congress, House Science



Committee Chair Lamar Smith, responded by accusing these state officials, UCS, and other nonprofit groups of colluding to deny ExxonMobil its right to free speech, and issued subpoenas demanding to see all communications among parties.

There is, of course, no constitutional right to commit fraud. UCS is refusing to comply with the subpoena, which President Ken Kimmell called an abuse of power that denies our own right to free speech. UCS has spent a decade exposing the climate denial and misinformation perpetrated by the fossil fuel industry and its allies, and we will not be intimidated by these baseless attacks.

As new revelations surface about ongoing deception, UCS will continue to call out those responsible and demand that they stop their disinformation, leveraging the unwanted attention these companies are receiving to engage with them and their shareholders directly. As this annual report went to press, we published a new analysis that illustrates in greater detail the extent to which eight major fossil fuel producers misrepresent climate science or fund those who do, and what changes in business practices they have or have not undertaken to prepare for a warmer world. Our work has clearly struck a nerve, and we are ready to apply even more pressure.



BIG RIGS, FEWER EMISSIONS



Big rigs, 18-wheelers—whatever you wish to call them, heavy-duty trucks play an outsize role in the US economy: nearly everything we buy spends time on a truck, and the money truck operators spend on fuel is reflected in the prices we pay. Considering that truck fuel economy hasn't improved much since the 1970s, this takes a toll on our wallets. Trucks also play an outsize role in the environmental impact of the US transportation sector: though they account for just 7 percent of vehicles on the road, these trucks consume 25 percent of the fuel sold in the United States and produce millions of tons of heat-trapping emissions.

UCS worked for the past two years to reduce these impacts, and we were rewarded this past summer when the federal government unveiled the

strongest fuel economy and emissions standards ever for heavy-duty trucks.

Transportation is now the biggest source of US global warming emissions (having recently surpassed electricity generation), and UCS previously made a significant dent in this sector's future emissions by working with the Obama administration to nearly double the fuel economy of new cars and light-duty trucks. Shifting our focus to heavy-duty trucks, we developed the critical technical foundation for a new set of standards and used our March 2015 report *Engines for Change* to show it would be both technically feasible and cost-effective to reduce trucks' fuel consumption 40 percent by 2025.

During the past year, we led a national coalition of organizations, drew atten-

tion in the media, and generated nearly 29,000 comments from UCS supporters in favor of strong heavy-duty truck standards, which helped produce a final rule that almost doubles the fuel economy of these vehicles (from their paltry average of six miles per gallon today). The result: oil consumption will be reduced by 2 billion barrels over the life of these vehicles, saving their operators \$170 billion per year and driving down the costs consumers pay for shipping—about \$150 less per year for the average household.

Just as importantly, 1.1 billion tons of global warming pollution will be eliminated over the life of these trucks. And that's an important step forward in helping the United States live up to its commitment under the United Nations' Paris Agreement (see p. 12).

UCS has a unique approach to local and regional problem solving: we connect communities with local scientists to identify and fill scientific gaps on issues critical to residents' health and environment, building strong relationships that will help our partners and UCS achieve our long-term, collective goals.

Based on input from community leaders, in 2016 we published Scientist-Community Partnerships, a guide to successful collaboration between scientists and local residents who need technical information to make evidence-based decisions. Our Center for Science and Democracy also hosted a forum to explore how scientists can be effective partners in achieving environmental justice. Here are some examples of how UCS is putting these principles to work around the country.

PARTNERSHIPS THAT WORK



GULF COAST UCS worked with a delegation of Gulf South Rising coalition members and students, faculty, and staff from historically black colleges and universities on a strategy to contribute to the December 2015 Paris climate agreement by pointing out similarities between the communities most vulnerable to climate change around the world, and calling for fairness in who must pay for disaster preparedness and recovery.

The Gulf South delegation inspired New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu to convene a climate change summit in that city, where our allies with the Gulf Coast Center for Law and Policy distributed UCS reports on sea level rise to local policy makers, activists, and representatives of the fossil fuel industry.

TEXAS UCS worked with Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services



(t.e.j.a.s.) to provide Houston residents with the scientific information about pollution they need to create healthy communities. A June report described air pollutants threatening residents in one particular neighborhood, and an October report focused on the disproportionate exposure to toxic chemicals in Houston's communities of color and lower-income communities. These reports provide t.e.j.a.s. and local activists with a tool to

push for safer facilities, stronger oversight, and equitable zoning laws.

FLORIDA Our work with the South Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce on local risks of sea level rise earned UCS Climate Advocate Nicole Hernandez Hammer an invitation to chair the organization's new environmental working group. Nicole brought attention to underserved Miami communities coping with

tidal flooding—not only among reporters (MSNBC, *The New Yorker*, Telemundo) but also among county commissioners, who created a group that will involve community members in decisions about climate preparedness. And she has been advising Florida Representative Carlos Cubelo, who called for his fellow House Republicans to take action on global warming and co-founded the bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus.



PARIS AGREEMENT: A CLIMATE GAME CHANGER

The Paris Agreement signed in December 2015 was a historic milestone, with nearly 200 countries including the United States committing to hold the global average temperature increase to less than 2°C above pre-industrial levels, and to pursue efforts to hold the increase to less than 1.5°C. The fact that it went into effect in October—much earlier than expected—demonstrates the momentum for action the agreement has created. UCS played an important part in this achievement through our work on clean energy and vehicles policies here at home, which enabled the United States to play a leadership role in Paris.

More than 1,100 mentions of UCS in the press during the negotiations attest

to the respect we have earned in the international community. Officials and experts around the world know the influence UCS had in shaping rules that will dramatically lower heat-trapping emissions from the two biggest US sources: cars and trucks (see p. 8) and power plants. Even though the power plant regulations (the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan) were still held up in court as this report went to press, UCS is already working with individual states on strategies for compliance—strategies that will greatly expand the market for clean energy.

Between these significant advances at the federal level and the state-level progress UCS helped achieve during the past year (see p. 4), negotiators in Paris had ample evidence of the United States' seriousness about fighting climate change. That commitment made the Paris Agreement's targets more credible, easing the way for other large, high-emitting countries to sign, and giving the world a better chance to avoid the worst consequences of climate change.

THE NEXT STEP FORWARD ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS

While the threat of nuclear weapons may have faded for some, it is no less real today than it was during the Cold War. UCS has been working to call attention—and put an end—to one vestige of Cold War nuclear policy that makes us less safe: keeping US land-based missiles on “hair-trigger” alert, which increases the risk of accidental launch. In 2016 UCS succeeded in generating a public and high-level discussion about this misguided policy.

We built a coalition of scientists and faith leaders representing the National

Association of Evangelicals, the National Latino Evangelical Coalition, and the US Conference of Catholic Bishops to meet with National Security Advisor Susan Rice and then issue a joint letter calling for an end to hair-trigger alert. We followed that by presenting the president’s science advisor with a similar letter signed by more than 90 prominent US scientists, including 20 Nobel laureates. For the general public, we produced an animated video that has been viewed more than 1.4 million times and a Web feature that uses a “Wheel of

Misfortune” to illustrate the numerous times the world has veered closer to nuclear catastrophe.

UCS also put the issue in front of the public and policy makers through op-eds, ads, and a series of blog posts—including a *Huffington Post* piece that Ariana Huffington tweeted to her 2.3 million followers. Both the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* have run editorials on the topic. You can be sure the new administration will be hearing from us as we continue our efforts to build a safer world.

VICTORY ON SUGAR PUTS SCIENCE BACK IN PUBLIC POLICY

Too often, big-money corporate interests use their influence to distort the science behind vital policy decisions. The harmful implications for our environment and health are clear. Through its Center for Science and Democracy, UCS pushes back by ensuring that communities and their elected officials have access to the rigorous, independent science they need to make decisions that prioritize the public interest over profit. Our victory on food labeling during the past

year is a prime example of how science combined with advocacy can provide a powerful counterweight to well-funded corporate lobbyists.

In light of the mounting scientific evidence linking overconsumption of sugar with diabetes, obesity, and heart and liver disease, UCS pushed for a revision of the Nutrition Facts label appearing on roughly 700,000 packaged food items. We called for the label to

include the amount of “added sugars” in a product and a serving’s percentage of the recommended daily allowance, and mobilized more than 45,000 supporters (including Science Network members and leading public health professionals) to submit comments on the proposed rule. Despite strong opposition from the sugar and food industries, the Food and Drug Administration adopted our recommendations and you’ll see the new label beginning in July 2018.



RAISING FUNDS TO HEAL OUR FOOD SYSTEM

Because science alone cannot solve the problems with the way food is produced and consumed in the United States, UCS helped create a coalition of food service workers, farmers, community organizers, and activists—the HEAL Food Alliance—to call for reforms to our broken food system. And when a generous anonymous donor promised to match our fundraising for the alliance, we challenged our members to raise one million dollars to help the alliance launch a unified food movement with the political power to affect lasting change.

We succeeded: through the generosity of more than 5,000 UCS donors and the matching gift, we raised more than \$2.5 million. This year, the HEAL Food Alliance launched its “Plate of the Union” campaign, a collaborative call to action on food reform aimed at the presidential candidates (see below), and has been working to unify 50 affiliated organizations under a 10-plank platform for change.

ADDING HEALTHY FOOD TO THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

To lay the groundwork for food policy reform during the new administration, UCS and its partners HEAL Food Alliance and Food Policy Action teamed up with local chefs and restaurants to provide food for thought along with actual food to presidential campaign staff, reporters, and voters with a “Plate of the Union” food truck tour of the major party conventions and key swing states. The Plate of the Union campaign calls on the president to fix the US food system so it produces healthy, sustainable, affordable food for everyone, and the *New York Times* covered the tour’s kick-off event in Cleveland.



NEW ALLIES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST WARMER—AND HIGHER—SEAS

Though UCS primarily focuses its work on the United States, our reputation for independent science reaches across borders. That's why UNESCO—the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization—approached UCS to partner on a report assessing climate-related threats to UNESCO-designated World Heritage sites, such as Australia's famed Great Barrier Reef. Ironically, the Australian government's last-minute demand to delete any reference to the Great Barrier Reef and other Australian sites boosted media interest in the report following its May release. We anticipated the political controversy and made the excised text available, resulting in widespread television and radio coverage and more than 1,000 print stories mentioning UCS and bringing attention to the threatened sites.

Within the United States, UCS is working to broaden the movement calling for action on climate change by appealing to constituencies that have not previously expressed a sense of urgency about the problem, such as US military personnel, their families, and the legislators who represent them. Our July report *The US Military on the Front Lines of Rising Seas* showed that nearly half of the 18 East and Gulf Coast military bases we studied would lose half or more of their land area to daily high-tide flooding by the end of the century. These bases—and the homes of millions of personnel—also face increasing risk from storm surge. Military personnel at the Department of Defense thanked us for this work, and the report was featured on Military.com and in the *Navy Times* and *Stars and Stripes*.

UCS will continue spreading the message that global warming affects everyone regardless of income level, ethnicity, or political persuasion—and we'll continue working with anyone who is ready to join the fight.





UCS SCIENCE NETWORK

2016 ENGAGEMENT BY THE NUMBERS

The UCS Science Network is an inclusive community of thousands of scientists, engineers, public health specialists, and other experts working nationwide to inform decisions critical to our health, safety, and environment. Science Network members make a difference in a variety of ways: taking online action, speaking to the media, delivering testimony, signing on to expert letters to elected officials, conducting research and environmental impact assessments, and serving on federal, state, and local advisory committees.

To learn more or join the UCS Science Network, visit www.ucsusa.org/sciencenetwork or call (617) 301-8019.

17,544
EXPERT MEMBERS

5,522
TOOK ONLINE ACTION

2,315
PARTICIPATED IN
UCS TRAININGS

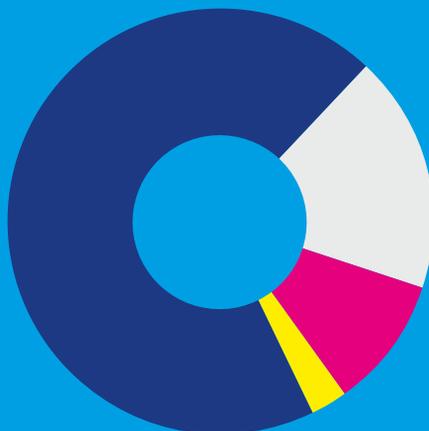
2,200
LENT THEIR EXPERTISE
TO A UCS CAMPAIGN

FINANCIAL REPORT

Fiscal year ending September 30, 2016

REVENUE

The Union of Concerned Scientists continues to benefit from the generosity of our members (more than 100,000) and foundations, who work in partnership with us to build a healthier and safer world. In fiscal 2016, the majority of our support—69 percent—came from generous individual donors, while support from foundations represented 18 percent of our revenue. Bequests represented another 10 percent of revenue. In addition, we continued the strategic use of our board reserve fund (\$3.2 million this fiscal year) to offset risk and support our programs.



69%

MEMBERSHIP & CONTRIBUTIONS ●

18%

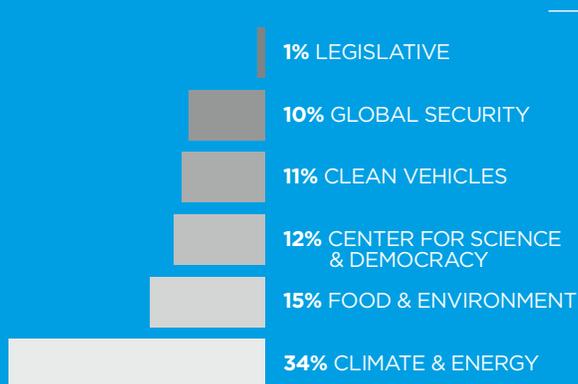
FOUNDATIONS ●

10%

PLANNED GIFTS ●

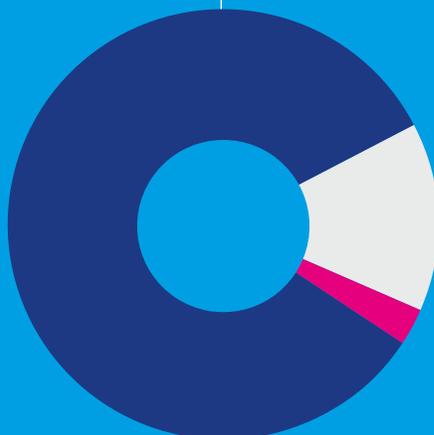
3%

INVESTMENTS ●



EXPENSES

Eighty-three percent of every dollar contributed to UCS directly funded program work in fiscal 2016, with the remaining 17 percent spent on the critical infrastructure that supports our programs. With an annual budget of \$32 million, UCS continues to strengthen our unique ability to help solve our planet's most pressing problems with the power of independent science.



83%

PROGRAMS ●

14%

FUNDRAISING & MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS ●

3%

GENERAL & ADMINISTRATIVE ●

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Fiscal year ending September 30, 2016

OPERATING REVENUE AND OTHER SUPPORT	UNRESTRICTED			TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED	TOTAL
	GENERAL OPERATING	BOARD DESIGNATED	TOTAL			
Individual contributions	\$16,367,515		\$16,367,515	\$4,563,110		\$20,930,625
Foundation and other institutional grants	100,000		100,000	5,214,270		5,314,270
Net investment income	(90,368)	2,425,697	2,335,329	17,650		2,352,979
Bequests and net annuities	1,434,818	1,525,122	2,959,940			2,959,940
Other revenue	1,022,566		1,022,566			1,022,566
Interfund transfers	1,978,735	(1,978,735)				
Net assets released from restrictions:						
Appropriation of cumulative gains	1,312,494	(1,312,494)				
Satisfaction of program restrictions	9,776,537		9,776,537	(9,776,537)		
Total operating revenue and other support	31,902,297	659,590	32,561,887	18,493		32,580,380
OPERATING EXPENSES						
Programs:						
Climate and Energy	11,010,149		11,010,149			11,010,149
Food and Environment	4,781,059		4,781,059			4,781,059
Center for Science and Democracy	3,801,568		3,801,568			3,801,568
Clean Vehicles	3,383,186		3,383,186			3,383,186
Global Security	3,071,491		3,071,491			3,071,491
Legislative	348,092		348,092			348,092
Total programs	26,395,545		26,395,545			26,395,545
Supporting services:						
Fundraising and member communications	4,349,805		4,349,805			4,349,805
General and administrative	1,156,947		1,156,947			1,156,947
Total supporting services	5,506,752		5,506,752			5,506,752
Total operating expenses	31,902,297		31,902,297			31,902,297
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS		659,590	659,590	18,493		678,083
NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	2,800,132	30,360,106	33,160,238	4,333,288	185,435	37,678,961
Interfund transfer for capital improvements	998,413	(998,413)				
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	\$3,798,545	\$30,021,283	\$33,819,828	\$4,351,781	\$185,435	\$38,357,044

Note: These results had not been audited at press time; for our official statement, visit the UCS website at www.ucsus.org/annualreport. Shaded area indicates operating budget.

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Members of the UCS National Advisory Board support our work by lending their time, resources, and considerable expertise in support of our strategic goals. We thank these members for their partnership and dedication.

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