

[Union of
Concerned Scientists

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

*Science for a healthy planet
and safer world*





CLIMATE CHANGE AFFECTS OUR HEALTH AND SAFETY

STAND UP FOR SCIENCE. OUR HEALTH AND SAFETY

CO₂



SCIENTISTS AGREE

HUNDREDS OF YEARS (BEFORE)

STAND UP
for
SCIENCE

OBSERVATION
CHANGES HERE

STAND UP
for
SCIENCE



WE'RE STANDING UP FOR SCIENCE

We work to reduce global warming emissions; develop sustainable ways to feed, power, and transport ourselves; fight the suppression, censorship, and manipulation of science; and reduce the threat of nuclear war. When science is under attack, we mobilize, and when we see opportunities to make progress, we seize them.



THANK



KEN KIMMELL President

ANNE KAPUSCINSKI Chair

YOU

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CHAIR

When we wrote this letter to you last year, we lived in a different political world.

We could count on scientific positions within government being held by scientists. Our president spoke regularly about climate change, and took steps to address it. Industry-related conflicts of interest in government were an embarrassment, not standard operating procedure.

Today, we face a new reality. The Trump administration poses an unprecedented threat to our public health and safety, our climate, and the role of science in our democracy. Since his inauguration, President Trump, his administration, and Congress have started rolling back vital protections for our health and safety. They have appointed high-ranking officials with glaring conflicts of interest and a lack of qualification. They have created global uncertainty around the Paris climate agreement. They have threatened devastating attacks on a nuclear-armed state. And on a wide range of issues ranging from air quality and worker safety to pesticides and nutrition, they have demonstrated a deep disregard for facts, expertise, and the need to include science in the decisionmaking process.

But in these uncertain times, we have also witnessed another change: a wonderful, meaningful, and enduring movement for truth led by regular Americans—including you, our supporters.

Today, UCS has thousands of new members. And our supporters have risen to the challenge: testifying at congressional hearings, writing letters to local papers, phoning and emailing elected officials, marching in the streets, and speaking up at town halls. Many of you have attended our trainings, summits, phone conferences, or webinars, and have volunteered your time or expertise in other ways. Some have sent increased financial support or convinced a friend to join us. Time and time again, you have shown up to defend science.

The result is nothing less than a united and growing coalition—one that fully recognizes the importance of facts, reason, and evidence-based decisionmaking and the power of science to serve the public good.

Thanks to you, we are a far stronger movement than we have ever been. We've preserved necessary protections that were under threat. We've blocked harmful policies. And we've taken advantage of many different opportunities to make progress instead of just playing defense.

Every accomplishment in the pages ahead was made possible because you stood up for science this year. We are so grateful.

PUSHING THE



BACK AGAINST TRUMP AGENDA

A key tenet of American democracy is that government decisions—especially those that affect our health and safety—should be based on facts and evidence.

The Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) underscored this point to President-elect Trump shortly after his election in a letter signed by multiple Nobel Prize winners and thousands of other scientists who set a standard by which his administration would be judged. When the president and his appointees began to blatantly disregard science and facts, UCS sprang into action.

We called on scientists across the country to help us by acting as watchdogs on administration activities, and hundreds volunteered. We set up a webpage to track attacks on science and recorded more than 40 in President Trump's first six months in office, and documented many of them in our July report *Sidelining Science Since Day One*. In August, we launched the Science Protection Project, connecting government whistleblowers with experienced attorneys. And through our new Science for Public Good Fund, we are offering grants to UCS Science Network members fighting for science-based decisionmaking.

In the current political environment, stopping bad legislation is a vital imperative, and we are proud to report that our nation's bedrock environmental laws remain intact so far. Over the past year, UCS helped fend off numerous attempts

by the administration to reward its powerful allies at the expense of the common good:

- President-elect Trump's transition team abandoned an attempt to identify federal employees working on climate change after UCS condemned the tactic.
- UCS explained the true nature and impact of several deceptively named bills that threatened to restrict the role science should play in setting public safeguards and, thus far, we have prevented their passage.
- To protect government research on health and the environment, UCS helped shape bipartisan legislation that would preserve public access to federal data.
- UCS played a pivotal role in preserving—and in some cases *increasing*—funding for critical scientific research in President Trump's proposed budget.
- UCS and our allies stopped the rollback of a rule that limits heat-trapping methane emissions from oil and gas operations on public and tribal lands.
- UCS joined in lawsuits to stop two particularly egregious corporate giveaways: an executive order requiring that two regulations be eliminated for every new one created, and the delayed implementation of a rule protecting communities located near chemical facilities.



BRINGING THE FIGHT TO THE PUBLIC

UCS has been reaching out to both longtime supporters and new audiences to create a united movement that will monitor the Trump administration and Congress, and defend against their attacks on science.

To mobilize the scientific community, we and our allies organized events at the annual meetings of the American Geophysical Union in December 2016 and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) in February. Hundreds of attendees joined the UCS Science Network and signed our open letter to President Trump (see p. 5). A *New York Times* live stream of a rally we held during the AAAS meeting reached more than 400,000 people.

We used blogs and social media such as Facebook and Twitter to respond to the administration's anti-science moves as they were happening, reaching more people than we ever have before. For example, a tweet about Scott Pruitt's record of hostility toward the EPA (the agency he now leads) reached more than 3 million people. We also launched our biweekly podcast "Got Science?" and got creative in our outreach to audiences that might not normally focus on the importance of science, with articles in such outlets as *Rolling Stone* and *Teen Vogue*.



Over the span of two weeks in April, we helped bring the scientific and activist communities together for a series of high-profile events. First, UCS had a conspicuous presence at the March for Science, which drew more than a million people in locations around the world. At the Washington, DC, march we trained scientists on how to become effective watchdogs for science. Then, we combined the energies of 35 members of our National Advisory Board and scores of UCS Science Network members for a series of 75 meetings on Capitol Hill with Democratic and Republican lawmakers alike. Finally, UCS and more than 1,000 of our supporters joined 200,000 others—more than twice what was expected—for the March for Climate, Jobs, and Justice.

And because you don't need to be a scientist to care deeply about facts and evidence-based decisionmaking, UCS launched the Science Champions campaign in July, offering effective ways for people from all walks of life to stand up for science in their local communities. In the first month alone we welcomed more than 2,200 Science Champions from all 50 states and Puerto Rico.



RISING SEAS HIT HOME— AND HIT HARD

With our July report *When Rising Seas Hit Home*, UCS continued to educate the public and policymakers on both sides of the political aisle about the growing dangers of climate-driven sea level rise. This first-of-its-kind analysis—also published in the peer-reviewed scientific journal *Elementa*—considered at what point chronic, non-storm-related flooding makes normal daily life impossible, and established a threshold of 26 times per year (or every other week) on 10 percent of the community’s usable land.

By this definition, we found that roughly 170 US communities are likely to be chronically flooded in less than 20 years. By the end of the century, that number rises to 500 or more—roughly 40 percent of all oceanfront East and Gulf Coast communities. These communities face difficult and costly choices about how to prepare, or, for those without the necessary financial resources to make adequate preparations, possibly retreat.



The disturbing findings, made even clearer by a series of interactive maps on the UCS website, were mentioned in more than 1,300 stories around the world, including coverage by Bloomberg, CNN, *Scientific American*, and Univision. And following the launch of the report and maps, the feature page on the UCS website drew more than 120,000 views.

Of course, these findings don't directly address the threat of storms that ride in on top of higher, warmer seas—a threat that directly affected millions of people shortly after the report's release when Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria devastated parts of the Caribbean and US Gulf Coast.

For more on how UCS responded to these disasters, see p. 16. We will continue drawing the connections between such events and the urgent need to curb emissions to slow global warming and its destructive potential.



MOMENTUM BUILDS FOR CLEAN ENERGY

UCS analysis has consistently shown that clean, renewable energy is not only good for the environment, but also for consumers and businesses.

Our work has led to the adoption of renewable electricity standards in numerous states across the country, and in the past year UCS contributed to increasing momentum in the adoption of wind and solar power. By mobilizing our supporters through emails and social media, and providing lawmakers with critical technical information, we scored many impressive bipartisan victories:

CALIFORNIA accelerated its pace toward a clean energy future with a renewed commitment to reducing the emissions that drive climate change. Following the September 2016 adoption of a law cutting carbon emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, the state ensured its ability to meet this goal by extending a landmark law that makes polluters pay for exceeding emissions limits—a policy that has global impact given the size of California’s economy, which is larger than all but seven of the world’s *nations*.

ILLINOIS passed one of the most comprehensive state energy bills ever crafted, with significant investment in clean energy,

including expanded access for low-income households.

MICHIGAN raised its bar for clean energy and energy efficiency to 35 percent of electricity sales by 2025.

NEW MEXICO introduced legislation to raise its renewable electricity target from 20 percent to 80 percent by 2040.

In addition, UCS made progress toward modernizing the nation’s electricity grid so it can accommodate increasing amounts of renewable energy. Our pathbreaking analysis has shown that solar and wind power can provide reliable levels of electricity even when the sun is not shining or the wind is not blowing—if grid operators adjust their current practices. This conclusion was validated by a study published by California’s primary grid operator and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in January, and by the May decision of the Midwest’s largest grid operator—after persistent engagement by UCS and allies—to plan for accelerating deployment of wind turbines, solar generation, and electric vehicles.

REDUCING THE THREAT OF NUCLEAR WAR

With tensions rising over the United States' standoff with North Korea, UCS worked hard to make sure the press, the public, and policymakers had accurate information about North Korea's capabilities, and to push for a diplomatic solution to the crisis.

Our nearly 50 years of experience on nuclear weapons issues and 25 years on North Korea ensures that when UCS speaks on these matters, journalists pay attention.

Thus, as North Korea accelerated the pace of its missile launches, our rapid technical analyses made UCS the go-to source for reporters seeking independent information about them: in the span of just four months, we were mentioned more than 10,000 times in the media's coverage of the crisis, with quotes or interviews in the Associated Press, BBC, CBS, CNBC, CNN, C-SPAN, *Economist*, *Financial Times*, NBC, *New York Times*, NPR, PBS, Politico, Reuters, *USA Today*, and *Washington Post* among others. Our experts concluded that North Korea's ballistic missiles could now reach cities in the lower 48 states, but were careful to note that they may not be able to carry a nuclear warhead that distance. To emphasize the need for diplomacy in the region, we held an April press conference with former Secretary of Defense William Perry that was cited in a front-page

New York Times article, and organized a letter signed by former high-level officials from both major political parties timed to coincide with President Trump's June meeting with South Korea's president.

UCS actively sought to reduce nuclear weapons risks on other fronts as well. Our continuing call to take US land-based nuclear weapons off high alert (to lower the odds of an accidental or mistaken launch) is gaining mainstream support, including that of *Scientific American*. We explained the dangers of leaving the decision to launch nuclear weapons with the president alone rather than making it a shared responsibility. And we held not one but two of our annual Summer Symposium on Science and World Affairs—the first in Hong Kong and the second in Germany. Altogether, nearly 60 young scientists and engineers from around the world joined us to discuss arms control issues and expand the international technical community working to avert nuclear disaster.







PARTNERING FOR JUSTICE

UCS recognizes that science has a role to play in reducing racial and economic inequity. That's why we are working with, and learning from, a number of local groups fighting to make their neighborhoods cleaner and healthier.

As documented in our report *When Rising Seas Hit Home* (see p. 9), many communities of color and low-income communities are particularly vulnerable to sea level rise and extreme weather such as hurricanes. UCS had been working with groups in communities affected by Hurricanes Harvey and Irma well before those storms hit, including the Gullah/Geechee Sustainability Think Tank, the Miami Climate Alliance, and Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services (t.e.j.a.s.). We provided analysis for t.e.j.a.s. in 2016 that helped people speak out about toxic chemicals in their Houston neighborhoods

and, after Harvey struck, we connected reporters with t.e.j.a.s. to discuss the local impacts.

The damage wreaked by the hurricanes provided a tragic illustration of the Trump administration's seeming obliviousness to the plight of at-risk communities, and UCS publicized the fact that the administration had delayed a plan that would have improved safety at chemical facilities like Houston's Arkema plant, which exploded in the wake of Harvey and spilled pollutants into nearby communities. We had submitted comments back in May opposing the delay on behalf of more than 5,000 people living near such facilities, and are now analyzing post-hurricane chemical releases to support a lawsuit filed by t.e.j.a.s. and other groups.

Other recent partnerships include an examination of toxic pollution risks

in Delaware's New Castle County, produced in collaboration with several groups, and efforts to expand solar power in neighborhoods of color, including in Illinois and New Mexico. A report developed with the California-based Greenlining Institute on the benefits of electric buses and trucks in vulnerable communities contributed to a key victory in Los Angeles—see p. 17.

In our ongoing efforts to draw more people into the climate fight, UCS worked with the HBCU Climate Consortium to bring more than 200 students from historically black colleges and universities to the March for Climate, Jobs, and Justice in Washington, DC, and cohosted an event highlighting the contributions people of color have made to the environmental movement. More than 350 people attended, including prominent environmental justice leaders.

A BOOST FOR HEALTHY FOOD AND FARMS

UCS and a group of agricultural researchers from around the country met with key members of Congress in April to call for increased investment in research that supports healthy food, farmers, rural communities, and the environment. A month later, despite the current budget-slashing atmosphere, we were pleased to see Congress approve an additional \$27.3 million for this critical agroecological research.

UCS also continues to position itself as a leader in innovative ideas for producing healthier and affordable food in ways that are sustainable and support farmers. In February, we joined with our partners in the Health, Environment, Agriculture and Labor (HEAL) Food Alliance to

release a 10-point platform for transforming US food production. In June, a UCS report showing how farmers could rotate crops to reduce erosion and pollution while maintaining profits drew a positive editorial from one of the Corn Belt's top newspapers, the *Des Moines Register*. And our August report *Turning Soils into Sponges: How Farmers Can Fight Floods and Droughts* was featured in *AgWeek*, a leading newspaper for farmers.

As this report went to press, UCS was rallying opposition to one of President Trump's most questionable nominations: that of Sam Clovis, a controversial radio personality with no scientific credentials, to the position of chief scientist at the USDA.





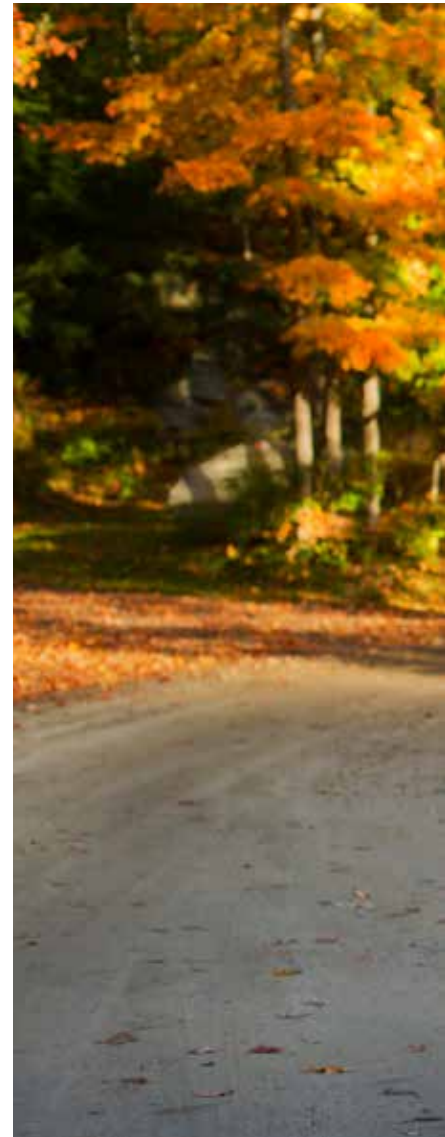
TURNING UP THE HEAT

The Union of Concerned Scientists' multiyear campaign to hold the major fossil fuel companies accountable for their role in climate change took an important step forward in May: ExxonMobil shareholders—by a two-to-one margin—called on the company to issue annual reports on how its business will be affected by measures such as the UN's Paris climate agreement. UCS attended the shareholder meeting and generated visibility and investor support ahead of the vote.

As documented by UCS reporting over the past several years, ExxonMobil has been a particularly egregious offender in spreading misinformation about climate science—even research conducted by its own scientists. The fact that the company issued a subpoena to UCS last November shows that we're making its management nervous. The company is trying to divert attention away from its decades-long history

of misleading the public and investors, but the evidence is mounting that ExxonMobil and other large fossil fuel producers bear significant responsibility for the damages caused by climate change.

In September, a team of scientists including two from UCS published a first-of-its-kind paper in the peer-reviewed journal *Climatic Change* that shows the world's 90 largest carbon producers (ExxonMobil being one) are responsible for nearly half of the rise in global average temperature since 1880 and about 30 percent of sea level rise. These findings offer a scientific basis for judges and juries to calculate damages in potential climate-related lawsuits; already five California communities including Oakland and San Francisco have filed suits against fossil fuel companies for damages caused by rising seas—and cited UCS analyses in their complaints.



KEEPING VEHICLES ON A CLEANER ROUTE

The EPA determined in January that federal fuel efficiency and global warming emissions standards for cars and light trucks should remain as they are through 2025. The Trump administration, however, opted to reopen the standards, giving automakers an opportunity to weaken them. UCS fought hard to put these standards in place and, by the end of 2017, they will have already kept enough global warming pollution out of the atmosphere to equal the impact of shutting down 20 coal-fired power plants.

UCS responded to the administration's decision by rallying our supporters to join us in testifying

in support of the standards and submitting 20,000 comments. We produced a set of 50 state-specific fact sheets to show lawmakers just how much their constituents benefit by keeping the standards in place, as well as an analysis demonstrating that fuel efficiency benefits rural and low-income households even more than most Americans. We also launched an online fuel economy savings "ticker" that tallies the total economic impact of the standards in real time.

In the states, we are making steady progress on cutting transportation emissions: UCS helped secure incentives for electric vehicle buyers

in Massachusetts and Oregon, and, in collaboration with local partners (see p. 14), persuaded the city of Los Angeles to electrify its entire bus fleet by 2030. Further success on the West Coast came with two votes by the California Air Resources Board that set examples for the rest of the nation: one set stricter limits on freight-related emissions (as championed by UCS and our allies); the other reaffirmed strong state vehicle standards through 2025—a move encouraged by UCS and our coalition partners with expert testimony, an expert sign-on letter, and the endorsement of more than 100 mayors and other elected officials.



FINANCIAL REPORT

Fiscal year ending September 30, 2017

REVENUE

The Union of Concerned Scientists continues to benefit from the generosity of nearly 125,000 members and foundations, who work in partnership with us to build a healthier and safer world. In fiscal 2017, the majority of our support—77 percent—came from generous individual donors, while support from foundations represented 18 percent of our revenue. Planned giving represented another 3 percent of revenue. Our donors responded very generously to support our new and increased work in this changed political climate, and the operating surplus from this year will continue to fund these critical efforts.



77%

MEMBERSHIP & CONTRIBUTIONS ●

18%

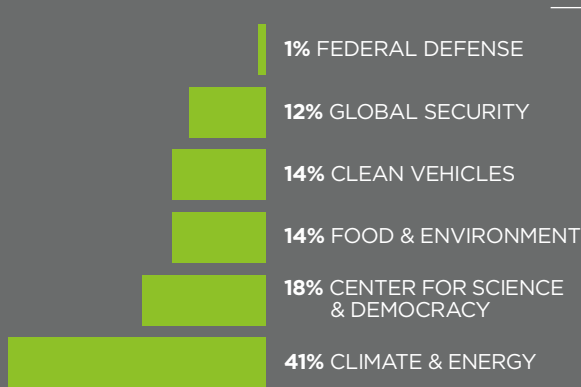
FOUNDATIONS ●

3%

PLANNED GIFTS ●

2%

INVESTMENTS ●



EXPENSES

Eighty-one percent of every dollar donated to UCS in fiscal 2017 directly funded our program work, with the remaining 19 percent spent on the critical administrative infrastructure and fundraising that support our programs. With an annual budget of \$33 million, UCS continues to strengthen our unique ability to help solve our planet's most pressing problems with the power of independent science.



81%

PROGRAMS ●

15%

FUNDRAISING & MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS ●

4%

GENERAL & ADMINISTRATIVE ●

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Fiscal year ending September 30, 2017

OPERATING REVENUE AND OTHER SUPPORT	UNRESTRICTED			TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED	TOTAL
	GENERAL OPERATING	BOARD DESIGNATED	TOTAL			
Individual contributions	\$25,733,470		\$25,733,470	\$2,558,717		\$28,292,187
Foundation and other institutional grants	123,212		123,212	6,706,175		6,829,388
Net investment income	(19,172)	3,312,701	3,293,529	19,194		3,312,723
Bequests and net annuities		1,100,123	1,100,123			1,100,123
In-kind contributions	329,698		329,698			329,698
Other revenue	370,278		370,278			370,278
Interfund transfers	(2,595,757)	2,595,757				
Net assets released from restrictions:						
Satisfaction of program restrictions	9,053,173		9,053,173	(9,053,173)		
Total operating revenue and other support	32,994,903	7,008,580	40,003,483	230,913		40,234,396
OPERATING EXPENSES						
Programs:						
Climate and Energy	10,879,936		10,879,936			10,879,936
Clean Vehicles	3,756,505		3,756,505			3,756,505
Global Security	3,165,938		3,165,938			3,165,938
Food and Environment	3,665,508		3,665,508			3,665,508
Center for Science and Democracy	4,618,848		4,618,848			4,618,848
Federal Defense	224,540		224,540			224,540
Legislative	373,210		373,210			373,210
Total programs	26,684,486		26,684,486			26,684,486
Supporting services:						
Fundraising and member communications	4,847,300		4,847,300			4,847,300
General and administrative	1,262,488		1,262,488			1,262,488
Total supporting services	6,109,788		6,109,788			6,109,788
Other expenses:						
Online store	36,475		36,475			36,475
Total other expenses	36,475		36,475			36,475
Total operating expenses	32,830,749		32,830,749			32,830,749
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS BEFORE TRANSFER FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	164,154	7,008,580	7,172,734	230,913		7,403,647
Transfer for capital expenditures	571,029	(571,029)				
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$735,182	\$6,437,551	\$7,172,734	\$230,913		\$7,403,647

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

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† Denotes leadership gifts of \$10,000+

* Denotes this member has passed away

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Global Security Program

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www.ucsusa.org

HEADQUARTERS

Two Brattle Square
Cambridge, MA 02138-3780
Phone: (617) 547-5552
Fax: (617) 864-9405

WASHINGTON, DC

1825 K St. NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20006-1232
Phone: (202) 223-6133
Fax: (202) 223-6162

WEST COAST

500 12th St., Suite 340
Oakland, CA 94607-4087
Phone: (510) 843-1872
Fax: (510) 451-3785

MIDWEST

One N. LaSalle St., Suite 1904
Chicago, IL 60602-4064
Phone: (312) 578-1750
Fax: (312) 578-1751

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