NEW JERSEY:
IT'S TIME
WE HAD CITIZEN ACTION

- New Jersey pays the third highest energy costs in the United States. And our total dependence on outside producers of energy takes both our dollars and our jobs out of state, draining our pocketbooks and economy.

- Our factories and businesses are closing, destroying whole communities as families re-locate in search of jobs, small businesses face bankruptcy and our cities lose their tax base.

- Corporate tax loopholes abound, increasing the burden of property taxes on homeowners, senior citizens and working people, and creating the curtailment of our city and community services.

- NJ has one of the highest cancer rates in the country, with several hotspots linked to the presence of toxic waste dumps in our neighborhoods. And as working people we are often forced to choose between our job and our health.

WHAT CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE?
To a community - a working person - a senior citizen?

CITIZEN ACTION, a strong united voice that represents the real public interest can make the difference. Citizen Action can effectively fight against entrenched special interests and corporations who are now in control over those decisions that affect our jobs, our lives, our children.

With Citizen Action, we can:

- Challenge the energy regulators who rubber-stamp constant rate increases for the utility companies and energy giants.
- Force corporations to be accountable to the communities in which they do business.
- Work to close tax loopholes and make sure that the tax burden is fairly distributed.

More than 1,000 people rallied in Trenton last May to protest unfair budget cuts and corporate tax breaks.

TAX CUTS FOR
THE RICH . . .

While New Jersey's wealthy and large corporations enjoy their new tax cuts — gifts from President Reagan, Governor Kean and the New Jersey Legislature — the rest of us suffer.

The New Jersey Legislature, at Governor Kean's urging, snuck through a phased elimination of the corporate net worth tax that will cost the state $100 million a year when complete. Meanwhile, Governor Kean, sitting on top of a state budget surplus of 150 million axed 2,000 state jobs in vital state programs. Gone, or reduced, will be:

- Help for abused and troubled young people . . . at a time when families suffering from the collapsing economy need the most support.
- Money for road maintenance . . . when our state highways are falling apart.
- Enforcement of air pollution and coastal regulations . . . while cancer rates soar and our beaches disappear.

These, and other Kean cuts, come before the weight of the Reagan inspired Federal cuts hit New Jersey on October 1. The budget passed by the Legislature does not account for the huge drop in federal funds, which may amount to more than $200 million. Particularly hard hit will be the working poor and senior citizens, as Medicare, Medicaid, emergency energy assistance and food stamps are reduced.

Education is also a target of both federal and state officials. Perhaps the best investment we can make in a healthy economy and society is educating our children. But instead, Kean and Reagan insist on trying to encourage investment with tax breaks for corporations and supply-side economics. The result: tuition hikes at New Jersey colleges of 10% to 23%, massive reductions in student loans, cuts in state aid to school districts and teacher lay-offs.

Continued on Page 3
CLEC Defeats BIG OIL

ROUND ONE:
Citizens Stop Natural Gas Decontrol in 1982

In 1981, the Big Oil companies of this country had one item high on their agenda for the new Congress and administration: push up the schedule for decontrol of natural gas prices. If Big Oil interests and their friends on Capital Hill had been successful, our average home heating bills would have gone up by at least $360 this past winter. In New Jersey, our industry costs would have increased by more than $270 million.

Instead we — senior citizens, trade unionists, farmers, community groups — stopped Big Oil in 1982. A nationally coordinated campaign included letter-writing, district sessions with almost 300 Congresspeople, huge rallies and demonstrations. Door-to-door efforts in 10 states brought the message of decontrol home to more than 1 million American families. Hundreds of organizations and hundreds of thousands of individuals sent Congress the message — no decontrol. Our protests made decontrol proposals so unpopular in Congress that the White House was forced to cancel its plan to seek decontrol legislation.

'BACK-DOOR DECONTROL'

In the face of defeat, the White House then attempted to have the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), which administers natural gas prices, raise the prices of several categories of gas. Without Congressional approval, these FERC proposals would have circumvented the intent of the Natural Gas Policy Act of 1978 (NGPA).

Citizen Labor Energy Coalition affiliates in 30 states continued their direct action and pressure campaigns. Joined by NJCLEC and 12 of our 15 Congresspeople, CLEC won the support of more than half of Congress for an anti-FERC resolution. The Dingell Resolution instructed the FERC to stop any moves to 'back-door' decontrol natural gas prices.

In the end, the CLEC won a hard fought victory over Big Oil and pro-decontrol, anti-consumer forces, and delivered a major defeat to the Reagan Administration and its campaign promise to accelerate gas prices in the first year of its national program.

![Image of protest]

600 people from Cleveland, Akron, Canton, and Youngstown came to protest President Reagan's proposed decontrol of natural gas on June 20.

ROUND TWO:
CLEC Pushes for Continued Gas Price Controls

The oil companies' major priority will again be to have gas decontrolled before 1985. This fall, as incumbents and new Congressional candidates hit the campaign trail, millions of dollars will be spent by Big Oil as campaign contributions to candidates who will vote the Big Oil line this winter.

As Big Oil moves to push up the decontrol schedule, CLEC will launch a major offensive to keep controls on.

Our 'Candidate Pledge' campaign will force candidates to choose between consumers and Big Oil. The Pledge will tell consumers where their candidate stands on a major economic concern.

There are two choices: Either a candidate supports decontrol and higher prices — inflation, job loss and profits for Big Oil; or a candidate supports continued controls on natural gas prices — to protect consumers, the elderly, small business, industry and our economy.

The NJ Citizen Action has adopted the CLEC program as its energy campaign, and has appointed Andy Gottberg, NJ Federation of Senior Citizens, and Ed Murphy, Machinists-1445 as Co-chairs. Throughout New Jersey, NJCA will be holding our candidates accountable — through letter writing campaigns, district accountability sessions, and Big Oil Watches — highlighting campaign contributions to congressional candidates — and economic studies of the impact of decontrol on New Jersey's economy.

For more information on the campaign, or to get involved in the campaign call Lauren Regan at NJCA: (201) 246-4772.

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Citizen Action
Applauds Its Founders and Leaders

For the past few months, leaders from community, labor, disabled, senior citizen, environmental and church organizations have been working together to create Citizen Action, an organization that can speak for citizens on public policy issues.

The Organizing Committee of NJCA consists of leaders with a vision who, through their hard work, have enabled us to begin our research, our public education and outreach, our fundraising and campaigns.

Michael Shay
Amalgamated Clothing & Textile Workers, Central South Joint Board

Carol Allen
Community Action Program-Executive Directors Association

Larry Cohen, Brooks Sunkett
Communication Workers of America

Reva Schwartz, Kitty Warchofowski
Disabled Citizens Organization of New Jersey

Fred Stecher
Essex County Central Labor Council
Peter Montague
NJ Toxics Project
Al Petchiar
Middlesex County Labor Retirees, USWA Retirees 837

Andy Gottberg, Edith Edelson, Veronica Kane
Senior Citizen Representatives

Barbara Hoemer, Ray Peterson, Marco Lacatena
NJ State Federation of Teachers and Council of State College Locals

Mitch Kahn
NJ Tenants Organization
Brant Carleton, Debbie Schneider
International Ladies Garment Workers Union

Ed Murphy, Ed Borowik
International Association of Machinists: 1445

Dorothy Saltz
Trenton Senior Resource Center

Rev. Art Stanley
Bethany Presbyterian Church, Trenton

Joe Yeager, John Meszaros
United Steelworkers, NJ

Pat Morrissey
Essex County Housing Coalition

Hans Spiegel
Professor of Urban Planning, Hunter College

Lorenzo 'Doc' Oakley
United Auto Workers, Region 9

Archer Cole
District 3
International Union of Electrical Workers (IUE)

Maurice Veneri
Industrial Union Council

Alma Hill
Trenton Ecumenical Area Ministry
WHAT IS NEW JERSEY CITIZEN ACTION?

New Jersey Citizen Action represents a new effort on the part of community and labor leaders throughout New Jersey — an effort which can transform the nature of politics in our state.

NJCA is an organization which will bring together senior citizens, labor, minority, community, disabled and tenant groups into a broad-based coalition to organize on economic issues and problems shared by coalition members.

Taxes · Energy · Toxic Wastes · Jobs · Housing

In confronting these issues, NJCA will:
- Research the issues, analyzing problems, their causes and people-oriented solutions;
- Provide public education and debate through canvassing drives, newsletters, public exposes and forums;
- Organize at the community level through existing groups to advocate for our rights;
- Take direct action, focusing on the cause of the problem — whether a corporation, a landlord or other special interest;
- Lobby at the grass-roots level to persuade our state and federal legislators and/or regulators to vote for people, not private interest.

Larry Cohen, Communication Workers of America:
"Citizen Action is an opportunity to bring together community and labor groups for the long-term, not just for single issues. As Citizen Action groups, so will our own organizations. We have to have Citizen Action to take on broad economic issues. And unless we take on these issues, our own organizations, in the workplace or in the community, will not survive."

Veronica Kane, Union County, Federation of Senior Citizens:
"Many people think seniors care only about 'our' issues — like Social Security and Medicare. We fight hard for those issues — let's face it — nobody is handing us anything we don't fight for.

But we're paving the way for younger people. What we win today, all of you will need tomorrow. So we need each other. Citizen Action needs seniors — we vote, and we're growing. And we need Citizen Action — we can't do it alone.

Mike Shay, Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers:
"My members are more than just union workers. They're family people, churchgoers, taxpayers and members of community organizations. They want safe and secure working conditions. But they also want a fair tax system, a decent community with clean air and water, and a better future for their children in New Jersey. That's why ACTWU is joining NJ Citizen Action."

NJ Citizen Action, the bi-monthly publication of NJ Citizen Action, welcomes your contribution of articles, reports, notes on organization activities, etc. We reserve the right to edit or reject copy.

STAFF
Richard Kirsch .................... Co-Director
Jeanne Otersen .................... Co-Director
Lauren Regan  Central Region and CLEC Organizer
Ed McCool ......................... Southern Region
Lynne Brown ....................... New Brunswick Canvass-
Tab Buckner ....................... Hackensack Canvass

Outreach Director

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Hackensack, NJ 07601
(201) 484-2804

46 Paterson Street (2nd floor)
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
(201) 246-4772
Grass-Roots Leadership Conference Scheduled

On October 2, leaders from community organizations, statewide tenants', senior disabled and labor groups will join together to launch a grass-roots force which can meet head on the power of the corporations and special monied interests.

The theme of the day will be citizen empowerment — the rights of ordinary citizens over decisions affecting the quality of their lives — and the power of organization — the building of a united force called NJ Citizen Action.

NJ Citizen Action Leadership Conference
OCTOBER 2, 1982
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
CENTER FOR HEALTH AFFAIRS
760 Alexander Road  •  Princeton

AGENDA

9:00 am - 9:45 am
Registration and Coffee
Invocation

10:00 am - 11:00 am
Opening Statements:
- Why NJ Needs Citizen Action
- What Is Citizen Action: Citizen Victories Across the Country
- The Leadership Conference:
  Today's Agenda

11:00 am - 12:30 pm
Workshop Series I
- Tax Systems and the Need for Tax Reform In New Jersey
- Toxic Hazards in NJ: The Current and Future Crises
- Building A Citizen Action Coalition

12:30 pm - 2:00 pm
Luncheon (Buffet)
Speaker: Reaganomics and Corporate Power:
The Challenge to Citizen Organizing

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Workshop Series II
- The Citizen Labor Energy Coalition Program: Fighting Decontrol of Natural Gas
- Plant Closings and Jobs
- Housing: Making It Available and Affordable
- Who Runs New Jersey: Corporate Power and Politics

3:45 pm - 4:15 pm
Where Do We Go From Here
- Closing Summary

4:30 pm - 5:30 pm
Social Hour/ Wine & Cheese

Speakers will include community and labor leaders from throughout New Jersey and other states.

Registration is by invitation only. Fee, covering coffee, lunch and materials are $12.00 per person. Cocktails following are additional.

Citizen-Labor Coalitions Gain Strength Around Country

In Connecticut, citizens and workers now have the right to know what hazardous chemicals are being used in their community and workplace. And the organization that won that right — the Connecticut Citizen Action Group (CCAG) — is now working to clean up what health hazards remain.

Over the last ten years, citizen organizations like CCAG have grown chapter by chapter, by focusing on basic economic problems facing poor and moderate income families: utility rate hikes, auto and home insurance rates and tax reform.

These organizations listened to a new kind of 'leadership' — the average citizen, homemakers, working people. They taught people how to exercise their democratic rights in order to challenge corporations and powerful interests in the public arena.

From some of the first efforts, 'citizen action' has spread to more than 15 states, combining chapters of concerned citizens with effective community-labor coalitions to end the corporate domination over our communities and workplaces.

Through community organizing and coalition-building, citizen groups have won impressive victories in a range of issues:

**Energy Costs**
- In New Hampshire, the New Hampshire People's Alliance won lifeline utility rates, so that 'the less you use, the less you pay', reversing the long-standing policy of cheap rates for larger and wasteful consumers of electricity.
- The CCAG increased the amount of money Connecticut authorized for both weatherization programs and home energy assistance funding for the poor and elderly.
- The Illinois Public Action Council (IPAC) won a ban on winter shut-offs of energy for the poor and elderly.

**Tax Reform**
- In Minnesota, the Community Organizations Acting together (COACT) stopped the tax avoidance policy of major corporations and oil companies, bringing millions of dollars in revenues into their state in a time of budget crisis.

**Toxic Wastes**
- In Cincinnati, Ohio Public Interest Campaign won the first city-wide Right to Know Legislation, successfully overriding the lobby of big companies who were polluting the community and workplaces.
- In Massachusetts, Fair Share has 28 active community committees who demanded and are winning the right to know, inspect and negotiate on the toxic chemicals being used in their communities.

Each of the Citizen Action groups have developed great expertise in research, organizing and advocacy. They raise 70% of their own funding through door-to-door canvasses, which also serve to educate and inform the public.

In 1980, these groups and others formed a federation called 'Citizen Action' to pool resources, share information and help other organizations begin the process of real democracy in their own states.