

Citizens Working

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Citizen Works keeps the focus on corporate reform

By now, most Americans are likely familiar with the problems of corporate excess. If nothing else, the cascading corporate scandals that filled TV screens this summer alerted citizens to the fact that something is wrong -- A handful of greedy executives should not be making hundreds of millions of dollars while a million workers lose jobs and \$175 billion drains out of retirement savings accounts.

Less clear, however, is a consensus on how to fix the problem.

There are, of course, many folks in Washington who believe they've already solved it. Indeed, Congress passed and President Bush signed accounting and securities reform legislation this summer — the Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

But the law – itself only a first step at the tip of the iceberg – has already suffered below-the-radar rollbacks from a Bush administration that has successfully shifted the debate from corporate reform to war in Iraq.

Instead of giving the Securities and Exchange Commission the \$776



Citizen Works founder Ralph Nader speaks at a July Citizen Works corporate reform press conference, covered on C-Span.

million annual budget called for in the law, for example, Bush instead recommended \$568 million, not enough for the agency to undertake key initiatives to protect investors.

When it came to picking a leader for the accounting oversight

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A healthcare legacy for the “Greatest Generation”

Isaac BenEzra likes to talk about how the pharmaceutical industry is ripping off America.

As he traverses Massachusetts, speaking at mostly senior centers,

Citizen Spotlight on: Isaac BenEzra, Amherst, MA

he tells the tales of what has gone wrong and how it can go right again, relating to audiences with an uncommon passion and energy.

“We are talking about millions of Americans who are uninsured or

underinsured, who are tired of Mickey Mouse incremental approaches, tired of excuses about having to pay the highest retail drug prices to finance pharmaceutical research and development when taxpayers already contribute more than \$20 billion in research and development,” says BenEzra, 76, the state membership director



Isaac BenEzra, 76, sees healthcare as the next civil rights movement.

for the Massachusetts Senior Action Council. “The pharmaceutical companies are fleecing a vulnerable population and that means thousands are cutting pills or not filling prescriptions.”

Linda Stone, the Western Massachusetts organizer for Mass Senior Action Council, is perpetually moved by the force of his message.

“I’ve heard him speak probably

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EDITOR:
Lee Drutman

CITIZEN WORKS is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt organization founded by Ralph Nader to advance justice by strengthening citizen participation in power. We give people the tools and opportunities to build democracy.

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What Works

Encouraged by the response to the first issue of Citizens Working, we are at it again, bringing you another edition of updates on what nonprofits and citizen activists are doing to make the world a better place.



Theresa Amato
*Citizen Works
President*

The emerging theme here is corporate reform. Many groups are starting to take advantage of the historic opportunity provided by the recent cascade of corporate scandals. Some are pushing for small-scale legislative fixes. Others are pressing for bigger picture reforms like changing corporate codes and changing the constitution to eliminate corporate personhood.

Citizen Works has been helping to build this growing movement. We've held or participated in a dozen workshops, conferences, and press conferences on corporate reform, from D.C. to Duluth and New York to San Francisco. We've gathered a comprehensive list of necessary reforms designed to spur others onto campaigns. We continue to put out the Corporate Reform Weekly, an e-mail digest on the breaking developments in corporate reform. Both the reform list and the weekly are available on our website at www.citizenworks.org.

Citizen Works has also assembled a Commission on Corporate Reform,

a coalition of esteemed experts and practitioners who provide ideas, advice, and speak out for corporate reform. They address everything from labor rights to pensions to new approaches for curbing corporate power. If your group is looking for a speaker on corporate reform, please contact Ali Arace, our newest staff member, at

aarace@citizenworks.org. Additionally, we are starting to incubate a new group designed to organize shareholders and investors called U.S. Investors Organization. For more information, please contact 1-800-297-5610.

Right now, we're up against a campaign to bomb Iraq that diverts attention from the ongoing economic woes and corporate crimes. Many activists are saying that they wake up on most days wondering whether they should focus on anti-war/peace protests or the ongoing work of battling corporate crime, fraud, and abuse. They are finding that they must do both. Battling an elected consensus that favors invading Iraq on a possible threat but refuses to deal with the established threat of corporate crime will be tough, but working together, we can do it.

Finally, we at Citizen Works will miss Sen. Paul Wellstone and Labor Party leader Tony Mazzochi, two champions of the people and fighters against corporate crime, fraud, and abuse. They both had the courage of speaking their convictions. Our condolences to their families and constituencies.

Citizen Works needs your help to keep putting out this newsletter



Donate \$50 or more and get a free Citizen Works "Got Power?" t-shirt.

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Please cut out this coupon and send it along with your check to Citizen Works today!

Organizational Strengths:

A look at what progressive nonprofits are doing

Center for Public Integrity uncovers the seedy side of state political money

Realizing that states would play an increasingly important role in campaign finance once soft money contributions had been banned from national party committees, the Center for Public Integrity last year embarked on an epic research project – a comprehensive 50-state investigation of state political spending.

The results weren't pretty. After a year-long study, the Center found that Democratic and Republican state party committees had raised \$570 million, and of that, almost half (\$263 million) had come through the soft money transfer loophole, a troubling omen in the effort to get soft money out of politics. The campaign finance law enacted this spring does not close that loophole.

Conducting the research required getting disclosure reports from 50 states covering the agencies of 225 party committees. Most records were on paper, amounting to about 30,000 pages, the equivalent of a 15-foot-high stack.

Nor was the information consistent. Multimillion dollar discrepancies were found between state and national party numbers.

"After this November...the states will only gain in importance," said Charles Lewis, executive director of the Center for Public Integrity, at a press briefing. "And, we found, the quality of state records means that tracking that money will be much more difficult. Here we are, a year and a half after the 2000 election, still trying to learn the truth about who gave what to whom in our political process. It will only get worse, we fear, after the November election."

For more information, visit www.publicintegrity.org or call 202-466-1300

POGO report finds U.S. gov't has contracts with 43 corporate criminals

If you've ever applied for a job, you probably know that it's standard practice to be asked whether or not you have a criminal record. And you probably can understand why most employers might be skittish to hire convicted felons.

But if you were a large corporation applying for a government contract, a criminal record would be no big deal.

According to a report by the Project on Government Oversight (POGO), since 1990, 43 of the U.S. government's top contractors (companies all with more than \$100 million in annual contracts) paid \$3.4 billion in fines/penalties, restitution, and settlements for criminal activity. Of the top ten, four have at least two criminal convictions.

In 2001, the U.S. government spent approximately \$235 billion of your tax dollars on goods and services, making it the largest consumer in the world. Almost half (45 %) of that money went into the coffers of convicted corporate criminals, the report notes.

Of the 43 contracts, only one was even suspended, and only for five days – General Electric. GE was also the worst offender, committing 63 violations and alleged violations. It has paid approximately \$982.9 million in fines/penalties, restitution, and settlements.

POGO concludes that Congress needs to create a centralized database of criminal information on government contractors, improve contractor disclosure, and use suspension and debarment actions fairly and equally regardless of size.

For more information, visit www.pogo.org or call 202-347-1122.

NBEJN details the disturbing scope of environmental racism

Racism is indeed a well-discussed issue these days.

But most discussion fails to address environmental racism.

A new report by the National Black Environmental Justice Network (NBEJN), "Combating Environmental Racism with Sustainable Development in the U.S. and Around the World – The Time is Now!," offers a startling picture of the disproportionate burden of the world's environmental problems people of color bear.

Some key facts about the U.S.:

- ◆ 71% of African Americans and 50% of Hispanics live in areas with the most polluted air. Just 34% of whites do.

- ◆ 28.4% of low-income African American children are lead poisoned in the U.S., as compared to 9.8% of low-income whites.

- ◆ 870,000 of the 1.9 million (46 percent) of U.S. federally subsidized housing units for the poor — mostly people of color — are located within one mile of factories that report toxic emissions.

- ◆ More than 600,000 students (predominantly students of color) attend 1,200 public schools located within a half-mile of federal Superfund or state-identified contaminated sites.

- ◆ African Americans and Latinos are almost three times more likely than whites to die from asthma. Asthma hits poor, inner-city dwellers the hardest.

- ◆ 60% of African Americans live in communities with controlled toxic waste sites.

The report was prepared for the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

For more, visit www.ejrc.cau.edu (click on NBEJN) or call 202-265-5422.

At the Roots

A look at grassroots activism across the country

A quest for better corporate disclosure goes to the movies

Sometimes it takes a 30-minute video to get noticed.

At least, that's how Sanford Lewis saw it. The Boston-based attorney had spent four years seeking proper disclosure on the environmental and social liabilities of copper mining, oil refining, and medical device companies, but the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) was unresponsive.

So he decided to make a movie to educate the public. The result was "Off the Books," a film about the "many corporate lawyers and accountants (who) are cooking the books by hiding environmental violations, product hazards and human rights abuses from investors."

"Like financial debt, these represent hundreds of billions of dollars in hidden liabilities – leaving us all in the dark as to how much a company is worth and whether its leaders are ethical," Lewis said.

With help from the Corporate Sunshine Working Group (a national coalition of investors and activists who are seeking better SEC enforcement and standards on environmental and social disclosure) and a spur from Enron, Lewis completed production this spring. So far, "Off the Books" has been shown at ten conferences and in a Boston theater. It was broadcast on the Free Speech TV network during September and October.

"People really understand and resonate with the issues," he said. "And recently there has been increased activity by foundations and social investors who are asking the SEC to set additional disclosure standards on these issues."

For more info, visit, <http://www.foe.org/corporatesunshine>.

To order the video, visit <http://www.offthebooks.org> or write to Friends of the Earth/OTB Video Project, 1025 Vermont Ave., NW #300, Washington, DC 20005.

An insatiable hunger for justice outside Dow

Activist Diane Wilson is not particularly pleased with the Dow Chemical company. She is angered by its stubborn refusal to apologize for its 1984 Bhopal, India accident, which resulted in 20,000 deaths and 150,000 injuries. She is fed up with the company's refusal to sign a zero-discharge promise.

And she is not shy about letting Dow know. On August 15, Wilson concluded 30 days of a hunger strike outside Dow's Seadrift, Texas plant. Sitting in the flatbed of her rusty blue pick-up truck, Wilson had pestered Dow daily, handing out flyers, stating her demands, and reminding Dow of sayings found in its own conference room, like "If you make a mess, please clean it up," and "No one should be a safety statistic."

In an August 15 letter to Dow CEO Michael Parker, Wilson wrote, "For the last 30 days, I have conducted a hunger strike on behalf of the people of Bhopal and the bays and people of Calhoun County,



Texas. Search your heart and not just the bottom line. Consider how to care for your company's future and the victims of Bhopal...What poisons one, poisons us all."

More than 1,000 people around the world, from Italy to India, joined Wilson in solidarity. (see <http://www.bhopal.net>) She received letters of support from Marlo Thomas and Danny Glover. She was joined in Seadrift by rotating representatives from UnReasonable Women for the Earth.

After her 30-day fast, Wilson climbed a 70-foot Dow tower and hung her 12-foot yellow banner that read: "DOW: RESPONSIBLE FOR BHOPAL."

For more info call Jodie Evans at 310-827-3046 or e-mail thebadbabes@aol.com.

Seizing on the Enron moment in Texas

These may be tough times in Texas, but when it comes to organizing around Enron and corporate greed, "it's a pretty fertile environment," says David Martin, organizer of the Texas Enron Accountability Campaign.

"There's so much discontent, it's very easy to mobilize people,"



Martin adds.

There have also been ample opportunities. When Vice President Dick Cheney came to Houston in support of Senate candidate John Cornyn, who received \$193,000 in contributions from Enron as state attorney general and has failed to take action against Enron. This past summer President Bush also came to Waco for an economic summit. At both events, Martin and friends were there with costumes and props to question where America is being run by corporate crooks.

"We've been using humor elements and that's been quite well-received," Martin said.

For more info, e-mail corpcrooks@yahoo.com or call 210-736-9416

At the Roots

A look at grassroots activism across the country

WILPF campaign aims to redefine, not reform corporations

For some, corporate reform is not enough.

"Everyone is so focused on punishing the wrongdoers, but our campaign is looking at the entire form," says Jan Edwards, a member Women's International League for Peace and Freedom's (WILPF) Abolish Corporate Personhood campaign. "They're not people, so we're a little less focused on the wrongs corporations do. We're more focused on what the corporation is, how it's defined in the law."

Though most people aren't familiar with the way corporations use the Constitution to appropriate rights intended for people (free

speech, freedom from searches and seizures, etc.), WILPF is doing its best to educate. Edwards and others have been doing speaking events and radio shows all over the country, leaving materials, posters, and t-shirts in their wake.

"We're beginning to open up a discussion, and now it's a question thoughtful people are having to think about," Edwards said. "Do we just regulate corporations or do we redefine them?"

Though the ultimate goal would be to abolish corporate personhood by Constitutional amendment, the campaign is focusing on a few more immediate goals, including forcing candidates to address the issue, changing the ACLU's position (it has supported

corporate free speech), and getting resolutions passed.

So far, Edward and others made hometown of Point Arena, Calif. the only town to have passed a resolution saying corporations aren't persons. Now they're bringing the issue to San Francisco, where city supervisor Matt Gonzalez is working on a draft resolution.

"We're trying to create awareness," said Kirsten Lambertsen, who is organizing a city-wide campaign to support the resolution. "We hope it will get really good national press coverage and encourage people around the country to do the same things and go from there."

For more information, visit www.wilpf.org. For info on the San Francisco campaign, call 866-280-1409 x600.



Why corporate personhood matters and what it means

An interview with Molly Morgan, a member of the leadership team for the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom's campaign to abolish corporate personhood

CITIZENS WORKING: What does it mean to talk about corporate personhood? Is the problem that corporations are treated like people or is the problem that corporations are not treated like regular people? For example, corporate criminals are rarely punished like street criminals.

MOLLY MORGAN: Corporations were given the legal rights of people for the purpose of thwarting democracy and maintaining minority rule. That was the drive behind legal strategies of railroad barons and lawyers, and it has worked well. But unlike a human being engaging in corporate crime, the corporation can't go to jail. It's not a thing, it's just an abstraction and that's part of reason that the strategy of corporate personhood

was a brilliant one - they created this artificial thing that could be endowed with any kind of powers and any kind of characteristics. Corporations can live forever and live in many nations of once and cut off parts of themselves and this is the entity they have given legal rights and personhood to.

CW: Corporate reform is a mainstream political issue these days, but there are a growing number of people who think we have to go deeper and look at some of the fundamental reasons behind why corporations got so powerful. Can you explain how looking at the legal doctrine of corporate personhood would accomplish that?



MM: We appreciate people looking at reform, but we think it needs to go much deeper. We're using corporate personhood as a way to go deeper into changing the system of corporate power. We're trying to examine our society and see what's

happened as a result of decisions made, to give people a better handle on the history. We chose corporate personhood because it was not difficult for the average person to understand and we're hoping that's a way to get people to look at the system more broadly and deeply, once they see how corporate personhood came to be and how it allowed corporations to gain so much wealth and

See **MORGAN** on page 7

Isaac BenEzra

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50 times, and I still just get choked up when he says the same message," Stone says. "Hearing from him somehow is very inspiring. It's just his emotional presence. You know he feels strongly."

"I think you have to care," says BenEzra, who has been advocating better health care for 50 years. "It has to be real."

BenEzra also talks a lot about CanadaRx.net, a website where Americans can get drugs at Canadian prices. But he is careful to point out why the price disparity exists.

"It opens up the issue of why they have national health insurance and their government uses a population of 30 million to negotiate lower prices," he says. "If we could do the same thing with 280 million people, imagine the savings."

Typically, BenEzra will also pass out a Mass Senior Action petition that calls upon the Congress of the United States to enact legislation that will establish a universal prescription benefit and price controls on all prescription medicines. He's hoping for 60,000 signatures. The petition has 8,000 so far. He talks about building a movement, what he calls "the first civil rights movement of the 21st century."

"We are talking about saving lives, members of families this has impacted on, a government that is insensitive, and corporate greed," says BenEzra. "And when you talk the talk and walk the walk, we can organize."

The response? "This is the hottest issue since white bread politically," he says.

BenEzra has been active on health care issues for a long time, dating back to the early 60s when he organized the first public polio clinics in Bucks County, PA, just outside of Philadelphia.

Growing up in the Lower East Side of Manhattan during the Great Depression as a child with rheumatic fever, he observed firsthand how the welfare system worked.

But his culminating experience came in 1952, when he went to visit his mother one day and instead found a pool of blood on the kitchen floor. He later found his mother in the waiting room of a hospital that had neither a bed for a woman on welfare nor an available ambulance to take her elsewhere for care.

BenEzra finally took his mother by cab to another hospital. She died two weeks later.

"It had a profound impact on my own value system, and how I look at the issue of injustice as a universal problem," BenEzra said. "In order to be able to realize your potential, you have to have your health. It's an issue of justice, because there are millions of people who never realize their potential because they don't have their health."

BenEzra's most recent spate of activism got started about three years ago, when Kaiser Permanente, the only HMO in Hampshire County, Mass., left the East Coast, creating a crisis in affordable healthcare. Distributing

"I'm saying to my peers, this will be our last battle, the battle that brings universal healthcare. This will really be our legacy."

flyers for a rally while standing outside of a supermarket, BenEzra was told to leave. He refused and was arrested. When asked his name by the officer, he identified himself as Rosa Parks.

Following the Kaiser Permanente departure, BenEzra helped organize a local chapter of Mass Senior Action and has been an active member ever since, going around the state giving talks, recruiting members, and bending the ears of policymakers.

"Working with people is my medium," he says. "Shaping ideas, changing them, finding a way to make things better...I think we've contributed much in the way of dialogue to create demand in the public for a prescription plan."

But BenEzra hasn't focused

solely on prescription drugs. When a local hospital announced plans to lay off 50 nurses a few years ago, he helped distribute flyers, organize a group, and held a series of community meetings on the impact. As a result, the lay-off announcement was withdrawn.

While BenEzra uses his people skills to organize, he also tries to teach people the importance of motivating themselves.

"I work as hard as anybody else building an organization, but I'm also teaching people how to be empowered," he says. "We can learn so much if we empower each other. That's what's making a movement, to learn that you can make change, you can make a movement, and you don't have to be alone and learning how to get together."

Though he reaches out to people of all ages in his talks and hopes for an intergenerational solution, he ultimately sees the fight for universal healthcare as the final victory for the generation that won World War II more than five decades ago.

"My generation has been called 'the greatest generation'," he says. "But I'm saying to my peers, this will be our last battle, the battle that brings universal healthcare. This will really be our legacy."

For more info, visit www.masssenioraction.org or call 413-533-9235.

Reform

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board created by the new law, former SEC chair Harvey Pitt went with former FBI and CIA head William Webster, the pick of the accounting industry. Webster, as it turned out, had been the head of the audit committee at a company with accounting troubles, U.S. Technologies Inc. He also lacked any real accounting knowledge.

Congress, meanwhile, largely abandoned its efforts to push for further reforms, despite specific promises to fix a broken pension system and stop corporations from moving their headquarters to offshore tax havens. Instead, reform was beaten back by corpo-

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Reform

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rate lobbyists and distracted by a possible war.

Citizen groups, however, are not giving up. Instead, they are gaining momentum on corporate reform issues.

In October, more than 200 groups, including Citizen Works, got together to release the Unity Platform on Corporate Accountability, a comprehensive outline of specific proposals designed to significantly transform the relationship between corporations and society. The platform can be viewed on our website, <http://www.citizenworks.org>.

The Unity Platform “represents a cohesive analysis shared by diverse strands of the grassroots corporate accountability movement,” said Charlie Cray, director of the Corporate Reform Campaign at Citizen Works. “Despite the inertia in Washington, it reflects the popular view that there needs to be further and deeper change in how we govern corporations.”

Citizen Works, meanwhile, has been hard at work on its own as well.

Sticking with the core mission of “giving people the tools and opportunities to build democracy,” Citizen Works has been sending out a weekly e-mail digest called the Corporate Reform Weekly, a compendium of corporate reform news, resources, and action items on all the latest corporate reform news. The list has ballooned to almost 7,000 subscribers in just a few months. You can sign up on our website.

Citizen Works has also been compiling an extensive list of reforms, which can be found on our website. The list has become a clearinghouse of ideas as Citizen Works and other groups plan the next round of reforms.

Some highlights:

■ Congress needs to expand the sanctions for corporate criminals. Corporations that repeatedly break the law should be barred from receiving government contracts and in extreme cases, have their charters revoked and be placed into receivership

■ The FBI should be directed to start tracking corporate crime the way it tracks street crime so that citizens can judge for themselves whether the rhetoric about cracking down on corporate crime has been translated into action.

■ The Justice Department and the SEC should make white-collar crime prosecution a priority so that the securities fraud provisions of the new law are matched with the resources and personnel to prosecute them.

■ Fraud victims — the investors, workers, and retirees — deserve a fair shot at regaining their losses by being able to pursue all the participants in the fraud — accountants, bankers, lawyers, directors — in a court of law. The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 — which gave perpetrators of financial fraud a legal shield against civil prosecution — needs to be repealed.

■ Congress should also go after runaway CEO compensation. CEO pay rose 571% between 1990 and 2000 to reach 531 times that of the average worker. Congress should back a proposal to cap the ratio at 25 to 1.

■ Finally, the country could also benefit from a congressional investigation into the problems created by excessive corporate power, including a blue-ribbon commission as well as district hearings where people can provide real-world evidence of corporate damage. It’s time for Congress to examine the corporate chartering system and how corporate legal doctrines confer unequal privileges and immunities to corporations.

CW: Corporate personhood is not something many people are talking about right now. How do you build a movement and make it part of the debate?

MM: Making it part of the debate is the first step, just letting people know it exists. Most people have never heard of corporate personhood. One of the things we’ve done is to design a basic flyer that explains corporate personhood in the simplest ways, so people can start to understand what that is, and people can start to talk about it, on the street, on the train, with their family. A century ago, corporate personhood was something people all over the country talked about. This part of the campaign is relatively new.

CW One of the critiques against altering corporate personhood is that legal protections for corporations are necessary to conduct business and without them, the economy would grind to a halt. What do you think would happen if the constitution were altered so that corporations no longer enjoyed the same legal protections as natural persons?

MM: This kind of scare mongering is a routine threat used by capitalists and power mongers for centuries, that the economy would collapse was used to say we can’t get rid of slavery, can’t give workers a 10 hour working day, and we can’t have trade unions. This is a hollow argument. If the constitution were altered by amendment, the next day things wouldn’t immediately change. People with a constitutional amendment would be able to challenge laws and practices on the books, the ways that corporations participate in lawsuits and public processes would change. People, generally speaking, have an interest in living a satisfying life and living in healthy communities and the business world is part of that. The vast majority of business is small business, the percentage that giant corporations employ is a single digit, and small businesses don’t have any real benefits from corporate personhood.

Morgan

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power, people will look at the whole system and see what can we do differently to get different outcomes.

Staying Active

Advice and tips on activating for democracy

Dear Activist Abby,

I'm part of a local activist group. We've been around for a few years. We have regular discussion meetings and occasionally hold rallies or participate in larger events. But even though we've been around for a little while, people don't seem to know who we are. Any suggestions to get noticed?

- **Notice me!**

Dear Notice me!,

Like it or not, to get noticed you are going to have to work with the media. That means letting your local newspapers, TV and radio know about your events. Besides informing a larger public, the media can empower residents, nudge politicians, and add momentum to a grassroots initiative. Be careful, however, if you are not used to dealing with the media. Many journalists look for stories rooted in conflict, error and injustice. They may impose a confrontational agenda that can actually make it more difficult for you to resolve your issue. For

more advice, read *Making the News* by Jason Salzman.

- **Activist Abby**

Dear Activist Abby,

There is some debate among the ranks of my group. We are trying to stop sprawl. We are up against big-time developers with a lot of money and a lot of lawyers. We are mobilizing against a current project to build condos on what is now open space, which is something we probably could stop with enough pressure. But there are some among us who think we need to get a town-wide initiative to buy up lots of open space. There seems to be little broader support for this. But we just don't have the people to pursue both. What should we do?

- **Stumped by Sprawl**

Dear Stumped by Sprawl,

Success breeds success, and if you can win one victory against these condos and for open space, you will empower your members to take on larger tasks, like tackling a town-

wide initiative. For more on sprawl, contact Sprawl Watch (202-332-7000 (www.sprawlwatch.org), or Sprawl Busters (413- 772-6289, www.sprawl-busters.com).

- **Activist Abby**



Dear Activist Abby,

I'm trying to convince ordinary people of why we need higher fuel emission standards. What do you think is a good way to reach folks?

- **Concerned about Cars,**

Dear Concerned about Cars,

One good way to reach people is to approach local groups about speaking before them. Any group that meets regularly, be it Lions or Rotary, a church or a synagogue, a Chamber of Commerce or a political party, is often looking for speakers. Chances are they'll be happy to have you come speak. For more on cleaner cars, see the Sierra Club's clean car campaign (www.sierraclub.org/planet/200206/carmakers.asp or 202-675-2388).

- **Activist Abby**

THANK YOU...

Citizen Works would like to thank the advocates who participated in our summer series for nonprofit interns: Joe Leonard (Rainbow/PUSH Coalition), Charles Lewis (The Center for Public Integrity), Anna Aurilio (US Public Interest Research Group), Kim Gandy (National Organization for Women), Lori Wallach (Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch), John Passacantando (Greenpeace USA), Bill Fletcher (TransAfrica Forum). We would also like to thank all of our First Thursday Forum speakers for 2002: Dan Coughlin (Pacifica Campaign), Steve Shafarman (Citizen Policies Institute), Bill Fletcher (TransAfrica Forum), Karen Friedman (Pension Rights Center), Dean Baker (Center for Economic Policy Research), Karen Dolan and Amy Quinn (Progressive Challenge Project), Mildred Brown and Christopher Saffert (ACORN), David Bollier (author, *Silent Theft: The Private Plunder of our Common Wealth*), The Honorable Bob Filner, D-CA (50), The Honorable Barbara Lee, D-CA (9), John Cavanagh (Institute for Policy Studies), Tom Devine (Government Accountability Project), Marcus Raskin (Institute for Policy Studies), Njoki Njoroge Njehû (50 Years is Enough), and William Greider (*The Nation*).

But what can I do?

Call up your elected officials and ask them where they stand on the reforms mentioned in "Citizen Works pushes ideas..." (page 1). Tell them that you are fed up with how greedy corporations dominate your lives and the political process, and that these are important common sense reforms to help reverse that trend.

Educate your friends and family about the need for real corporate reforms and the systemic problems that the recent scandals have illuminated. Tell them to contact their elected officials and ask for reform, too.