



THE BEAR FACTS

The Citizens' Utility Board of Oregon
newsletter for members and friends

2637 S.W. WATER
PORTLAND, OR 97201

P.O. BOX 6345
PORTLAND, OR 97228

(503) 227-1984

April 17, 1987



CUB Wins Phone Victory!



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CUB Wins Biggest Victory! **Phone rates slashed by \$45 million**

Because of a year's worth of hard work by CUB volunteer attorneys and experts, and the support of CUB members, Oregon telephone consumers will be paying over \$50 million dollars less in telephone rates per year!

CUB's work fighting these soaring phone rates helped prompt Public Utility Commissioner Charles Davis to order Pacific Northwest Bell and all independent Oregon telephone companies to cut their rates back to their 1985 levels.

For most ratepayers around the state, the Commissioner's order means that you will be paying \$2 less each month on your phone bill. In addition, customers of Pacific Northwest Bell will be receiving a refund check in the mail for \$13.86. **(See additional details in the box at right.)**

The Citizens' Utility Board, represented by Attorneys Rion Bourgeois and Simon ffitch, and consultants Bill Woodburn and Bob Woodburn, was the only party (intervenor) which protested these unfair rates in rate proceedings before the PUC. CUB argued that the PUC should overturn former Commissioner Maudlin's "interim" rate increase granted to telephone companies in January of 1986. CUB also argued that PNB was earning \$36 million over its authorized rate of return, and demanded that this money be returned to ratepayers.

"I think this order shows that

have made the final decision (in favor of the telephone companies), and Commissioner Davis would not have had the chance to make this decision. CUB deserves to take credit for turning this case around!"

Bourgeois continued, "CUB has fulfilled the role for which it was created. We prevented the utilities from taking advantage of ratepayers. If we had not intervened and protested, Oregon ratepayers would be paying \$2 more per month, and they would not have received a refund."

CUB Vice-Chair Eric Stachon said that CUB also worked with the PUC staff in arguing for the rate reduction. "We look forward to a better working relationship with the staff under the new Commission."

Winning this telephone case is CUB's biggest victory to date. However, it is not our first victory. Bourgeois commented, "Our first victory was the withdrawal of the United telephone rate increase request, and the next was the defeat of Maudlin's Universal Service Protection Plan (USPP)."

Consumers can enjoy these reduced rates for some time to come. The rate reduction for PNB means a loss of

PHONE RATE REDUCTIONS AND REFUNDS

Pacific Northwest Bell

★ **\$13.86** one-time refund to all residential customers. Expect a refund check in the mail in early May.

★ Monthly phone rates will decrease by **\$2 per month**.

★ Extra charges for touch tone service have been eliminated.

★ Service connection charges have been reduced from **\$30 to \$12**.

★ Extended area service charge for the Portland area will be come optional. This will save some customers an additional **\$2.28 per month**.

Independent Phone Companies

★ All other phone companies in Oregon are required to cut their rates back to 1985 levels. For the majority





Attorney Rion Bourgeois volunteered long hours to help win CUB's largest victory for Oregon telephone consumers.

"I think this order shows that Commissioner Davis is not going to be a pawn of the utilities." CUB attorney Rion Bourgeois said. "But most significantly, if CUB had not gotten involved and intervened at the time it did, Commissioner Maudlin would

reduction for PNB means a loss of revenue of \$45 million per year. PNB would have to prove its case in another general rate proceeding before the new PUC in order to recover any of this lost revenue from ratepayers.

Oregon are required to cut their rates back to 1985 levels. For the majority of Oregonians, this means a \$2 per month rate decrease.

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Legislative Update

Intervenor Funding rewards CUB for job well done

Utility consumers in Oregon have good reason to be happy these days. Recently, we won a major victory when local phone rates were rolled back and Pacific Northwest Bell was ordered to make refunds to its customers. In addition, the 3-person PUC will soon begin a new era in utility rate and policy setting.

However, there's still one key ingredient missing in the recipe for

utility reform in Oregon and that is funding for consumer representation in utility rate hearings.

Fighting a utility rate hike is an expensive proposition. No consumer group in Oregon — including CUB — has the financial resources to hire attorney and expert witnesses to fight every rate hike proposal.

Senate Bill 708 will help solve this critical problem by allowing the Public Utility Commission to provide

"intervenor funding" to CUB and other groups for their attorney and expert witness expenses. This funding would be contingent on a determination that the group made a substantial contribution to the final decision made by the PUC.

Oregon is one of only a handful of states that does not have a funded consumer representation program in utility rate cases. Several states, including Idaho and California, use

intervenor funding programs similar to this proposal. 35 states have an independent agency or division of the Attorney General's office which represents consumers in utility rate proceedings. (See table on page 2.)

The Citizens Utility Board of Oregon was created by the voters at the November 84 election. We believe we've done an excellent job on a meager budget. Unfortunately, we cannot provide consistent, effective consumer representation with limited financial resources.

Intervenor funding is a fair and reasonable approach to this problem. It's a proven success in other states. The cost to consumers is minimal and the returns are significant. Let me give just one example.

CUB is involved in a Portland General Electric rate proceeding that is over one year old. We have invested over \$35,000 in attorney and expert witness fees to date. Approximately \$140 million is at stake in the issues CUB is fighting. If CUB's expenses were spread across residential ratepayers of PGE, the cost would be less than 8 cents per customer.

Intervenor funding is part of the Governor's "Oregon Comeback" plan. Everyone agrees that utility rates are a significant economic concern for consumers and businesses alike. Intervenor funding provides another tool for Oregon to help keep utility rates low while, at the same time, making the rate-making process fairer and more accountable.

CUB's Legislative Agenda

CUB Funding

SB 708: Authorizes the Public Utility Commission to reimburse CUB and other groups for their costs to participate in utility rate hearings. Costs include attorney and expert witness fees.

Funding for CUB's work against utility rate hikes is our top legislative priority. *All CUB members are urged to write to their Senators and Representatives in support of SB708. (See accompanying article.)*

Incentive Energy Rates

HB 2144: This bill allows electric and natural gas utilities to offer "incentive" rates. Incentive rates are discount rates primarily offered to large industrial users.

Pacific Power & Light, Portland General Electric, NW Natural Gas and most large industries in the state support incentive rates. CUB sees this

as a dangerous proposal and opposes any attempt to have residential and small business customers subsidize large industries.

Interim Rate Hikes

SB 757: Prohibits the Public Utility Commission from approving "interim" or temporary rate hikes without holding public hearings.

Former PUC Gene Maudlin often used interim rate hike authority to speed up rate increase approval and deny consumers fair representation. CUB supports SB757.

Least Cost Energy Planning

SB 1000: Requires electric and natural gas utilities to file comprehensive "least cost" energy plans with the PUC.

The concept behind least-cost planning is simple and sound — plan an energy future that relies on the

cheapest, most environmentally sound resources. Least cost energy planning would better coordinate the work of utilities, the PUC, and the Oregon Department of Energy. CUB supports this bill.

Revolving Door

HB 2629: Prohibits Public Utility Commissioners from going to work for a regulated utility for a two-year period upon leaving office.

Telephone Shutoffs

HB 2663: CUB is working with the PUC, other organizations, and the phone companies to create a comprehensive "lifeline" phone program. The program would include reduced deposits and installation charges, time payment plans, and reduced monthly rates.

SB = Senate Bill

HB = House Bill

CUB thrives on work of dedicated volunteers

Who can balance CUB's books, seal thousands of envelopes, enter data into a computer, and give expert testimony at a rate hearing? It's not superwoman or superman. Not He-Man or She-Ra. These amazing feats are all performed by CUB volunteers who dedicate their time and skills to help Oregon ratepayers.

"Volunteers are CUB's backbone. If it weren't for their hard work, you wouldn't be reading this newsletter right now," CUB Executive Director Barbara Head commented. "Without our volunteers, consumers would be paying higher telephone bills as well."

CUB's volunteers represent many different ages and talents. "Some of our volunteers like to help with mailings, stuffing & sealing envelopes, or helping out around the office. Others are professionals, such as accountants, attorneys, and consultants who have a specific skill that they would like to share." Head said. Currently, CUB volunteers work a total of about 100 hours per month.

Volunteers can choose to work out of their homes or offices, or can come

to the CUB office and work together with other volunteers. Dorothy Krogh, a teacher who is currently raising her 18 month old son, creates drawings for CUB at home in her spare time. Simon Ffitch, attorney, works from his law office and also at rate hearings and public meetings.

"As a volunteer I found that all the work I have put into CUB really pays off when I see the results such as the refund that all customers will be getting from Pacific NW Bell," said Kathy Hammock. "It makes me excited to be a part of a movement like CUB."

Volunteer Ben Bishoff said, "I like to help with CUB mailings because it gives me a chance to meet new people and socialize. At the same time I'm doing something that is good for Oregon ratepayers, including myself."

New volunteers are needed to help with mailings, office work, data entry, research, and publications. No matter what a person's skills are, there is a place for you as a CUB volunteer. Anyone who is interested in volunteering should contact the state office by

calling Barbara at 227-1984 or writing to: CUB; 2637 SW Water Ave.; Portland, OR 97201.

CUB also wishes to thank all of its volunteers not pictured: Simon Fitch, Ben Bishoff, Rhys Scholes, Lisa Coburn, Louise Tippens, Terry Anderson, George Starr, Irene Starr, Miriam Quaranto, Steve Manthe, Kristie Duyckink, Dorothy Krogh, and Austin Collins.



Volunteer bookkeeper Bill Leidy reviews CUB's financial statement with Executive Director Barbara Head.

You can volunteer to help with:

- Mailings
- Data entry
- Publications
- Legal research
- Office work
- Phone banks
- Graphic design

To volunteer, please call Barbara Head at 227-1984 or write to CUB at 2637 S.W. Water Ave, Portland, OR 97201.



Alice Wayne Boaz prepares letters for a CUB mailing.

CUB's wish list

Do you have some items around the house or office that might be of use to CUB? If so, you may be able to make a tax-deductible contribution to the CUB Educational Fund. Here is CUB's wish list:

- File cabinets
- Small Desk
- Calculator with tape
- Display rack for literature
- Paper goods
- Envelope sealing devices

Also, CUB occasionally asks businesses to donate refreshments for volunteer events. If you own or manage a restaurant, deli, or catering business, please add CUB to your list.



Kathy Hammock, Richard Melling, and Karen McCracken help prepare a mailing to

CONSUMER REPRESENTATION BY STATE

The following table shows how utility consumers are represented in each state and how that representation is funded. For example, Alabama has a Consumers Utility Counsel which is funded by general fund tax dollars. CUB is sponsoring Senate Bill 708 which would establish intervenor funding (see article on page 1).

STATE	TITLE	FUNDING SOURCE	STATE	TITLE	FUNDING SOURCE
Alabama	**Consumers Utility Counsel	General Fund	Minnesota	**Office of Attorney General	General Fund
Alaska	Info not available		Mississippi	**Special Assistant to AG	General Fund
Arizona	*Residential Utility Consumers Office	Assessments on utilities	Missouri	*Office of Public Counsel	General Fund
Arkansas	**Consumer Utilities Rate Advocacy Division	General Fund	Montana	Info not available	
California	#Public Advisor Intervenor Funding	PUC Budget	Nebraska	###	
Colorado	**Office of Consumer Counsel Intervenor Funding	Assessments	Nevada	**Utility Consumer Advocate	Assessments
Connecticut	*Division of Consumer Counsel	Assessments	New Hampshire	#Consumer Advocate	PUC Budget
Delaware	*Public Advocate	Assessments	New Jersey	*Public Advocate Division of Rate Counsel	Assessments
DC	*Office of Peoples Counsel	Assessments	New Mexico	Info not available	
Florida	*Office of Public Counsel	General Fund	New York	*Consumer Protection Board	Assessments
Georgia	*Consumers Utility Counsel	General Fund	N. Carolina	Info not available	
Hawaii	*Division of Consumer Advocacy	General Fund	N. Dakota	Info not available	
Idaho	Intervenor Funding		Ohio	*Office of Consumers Counsel	Assessments
Illinois	*Office of Consumer Services Governor's Office	General Fund	Oklahoma	Attorney General	
	**Public Utilities Division	General Fund	Oregon	*CUB	Member Contributions
	*CUB	Member Contributions	Pennsylvania	**Office of Consumer Advocate	Assessments
Indiana	*Office of Utility Consumer Counsel	Assessments	Rhode Island	RI Consumers Counsel	General Fund
Iowa	*Consumer Advocate	Assessments	S. Carolina	*Office of Consumer Advocate	General Fund
Kansas	Intervenor Funding		S. Dakota	Info not available	
Kentucky	**Division of Consumer Protection	General Fund	Tennessee	Info not available	
Louisiana	Attorney General	General Fund	Texas	*Public Utility Counsel	General Fund
Maine	*Public Advocate	General Fund	Utah	*Utah Committee of Consumer Services	Assessments
Maryland	*Maryland People's Counsel	Assessments	Vermont	Info not available	
Massachusetts	**Utilities Division Public Protection Bureau	Assessments	Virginia	**Section of Consumers Counsel	General Fund
Michigan	**Special Litigation Division Attorney General	General Fund	Washington	**Public Counsel	Assessments
			W. Virginia	*Consumer Advocate	Assessments
			Wisconsin	*CUB Intervenor Funding	Member Contributions
			Wyoming	#Consumer Representative	PUC Budget

Footnotes:

* Denotes a member of National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (NASUCA). NASUCA members are responsible for representing the public in utility rate proceedings. All NASUCA members are independent of the public utility commissions in their state.

** Denotes a member of NASUCA that is a division of the state Attorney General's office. References to funding source are for that portion of the AG's budget delegated to participation in utility rate proceedings.

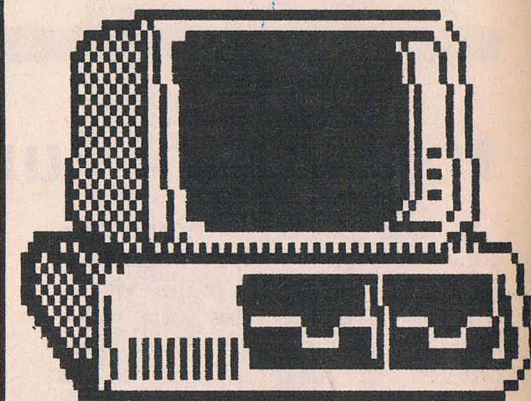
Denotes a position or office that is a part of the public utility commission in that state.

Nebraska has no investor-owned electric utilities and recently passed a telecommunications deregulation law which severely restricts PUC rate authority.

Sources of Information: NASUCA Membership Directory and a CUB telephone survey of PUC offices in 12 states.

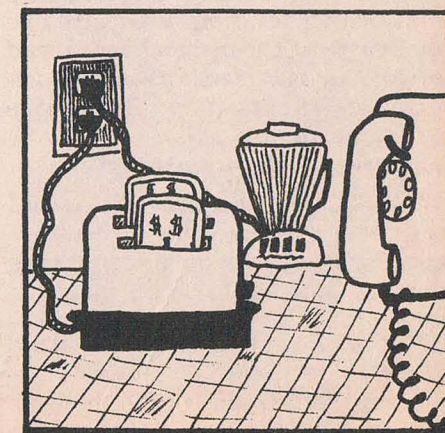
business, please add CUB to your list of organizations to donate to.

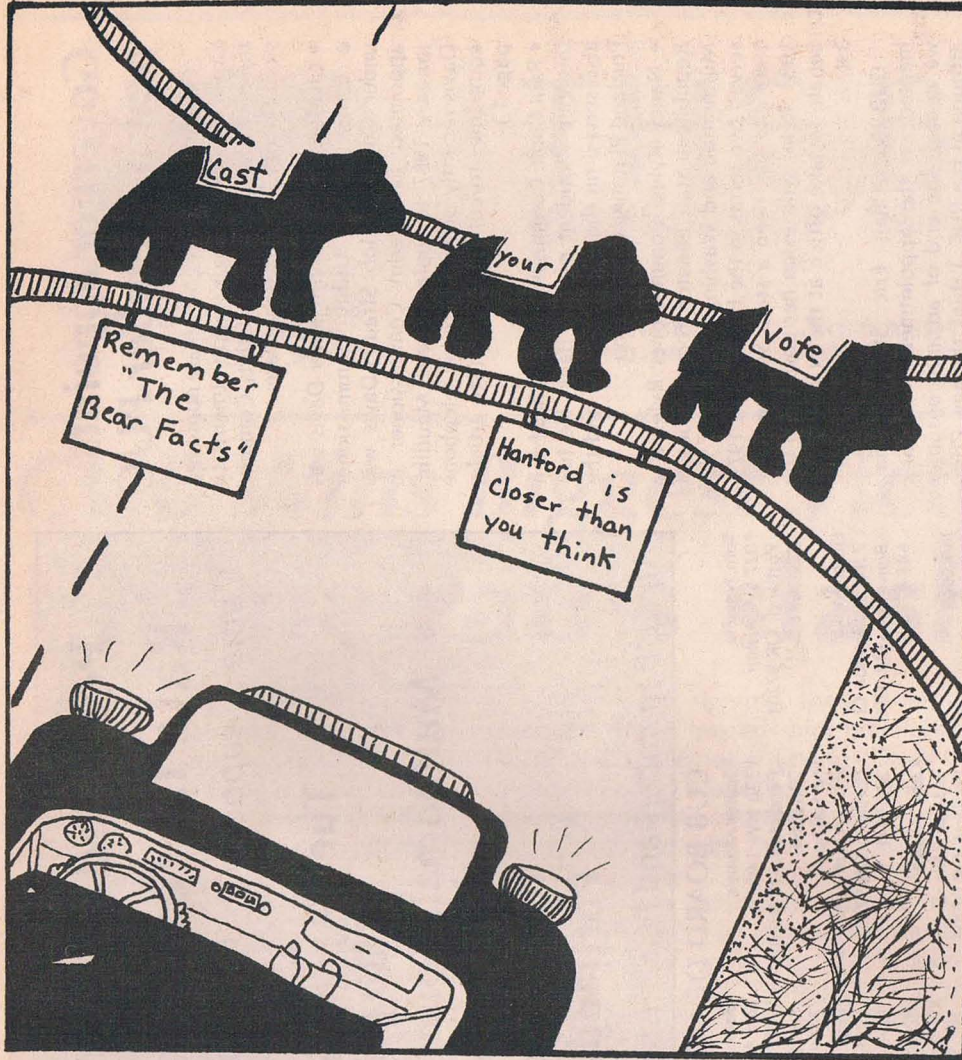
If you would like to make a donation, or if you have any questions, please contact Barbara Head at 227-1984.



New computer

After struggling with managing CUB's membership list on a borrowed, outdated computer system, CUB has purchased its own IBM compatible computer. This computer will allow CUB to keep more accurate records, avoid sending duplicate newsletters, and will also save a lot of time. If you are caused any inconvenience in the coming month, please bear with us as we learn how to use the new computer system.





Measure #1 urges safety, not politics, at Hanford

A coalition of thirty citizen groups, including CUB and supportive elected officials, has announced the formation of the Oregon Committee to Stop Hanford. The group, which includes co-chairs Senator Mark O. Hatfield, Governor Neil Goldschmidt and Congressman Les Aucoin, will be working to pass Ballot Measure 1 on May 19th.

Measure 1 was referred to the May ballot by the Oregon Legislature, and directs the state to continue challenging the site selection process by which the Hanford Nuclear Reservation was selected as one of the potential sites for a permanent high-level nuclear waste dump. The measure also requires state officials to attempt to obtain "affected state status" for Oregon, which would give Oregon veto power over a federal siting decision.

Oregonians must turn out in force on May 19th to pass this referendum by the same overwhelming margin as it passed in Washington state last November. Such a mandate will make Oregonians' views known loud and clear to Congress when they consider bills which would make Hanford the most politically attractive site, rather

than the safest site.

Every time consumers pay their electric bills, we are charged a disposal fee for radioactive waste produced at Trojan and at the WPPSS Nuclear Plant 2. Oregon taxpayers and utility consumers are not getting their money's worth! We are helping to pay for a waste disposal site selection which has been politically manipulated by the Federal Department of Energy (DOE) in an effort to bring 70,000 tons of high-level nuclear waste to Hanford. Eighty percent of this waste comes from nuclear power plants east of the Mississippi!

The Hanford site ranked last for long-term containment of deadly radioactive waste because of its geological structure and its close distance to the Columbia River. There are already problems at Hanford with the leaking storage of radioactive defense waste.

Oregonians have a responsibility to find a safe solution to the nuclear waste problem. The nuclear waste produced at Trojan in Oregon and at the more than 100 nuclear power plants in this country must be disposed of safely.

CUB urges all Oregonians to vote yes on Measure 1 to send a strong message to Congress and the Federal DOE that Oregon will not be a dumping ground for our nation's high level radioactive waste.

If you are interested in volunteering your time to support the campaign, here's who to call: In Portland, John Higgins at 242-9360; in Salem, Pietra Geiling at 371-8002; in Eugene, Dave Zupan at 343-8548; in Ashland, call Shel Anderson at 482-9625. For other areas of the state, contact Don Skinner at 371-8002 in Salem.

Rate Case Update

PGE rate hearings to Begin in May

The following is a summary of the electric and natural gas rate proceedings which CUB is involved in.

Portland General Electric: Two rate cases involving PGE are moving along to the hearing stage. The general rate case (Docket No. UE 48) involves a number of expensive accounting changes and other issues. The second rate case (UE 47) seeks the authority to place PGE's Coalstrip No. 4 plant in Montana into the rate base. CUB has

CP National Corporation: In 1986, CP National Corporation filed three rate cases for a total increase of 36.23 percent. In November of 1986, the company was authorized to recover 17.74 percent on an "interim" basis subject to a refund. Public hearings will now be held on the proposed rate increase.

CUB encourages its members to attend the hearing in your area: LaGrande: Tuesday, April 21, 7:30

dent studies were submitted by a representative group of Northwest customers seeking a reduction in the increase. As a result of these studies, the BPA reduced the increase to 9 percent. Clarification hearings have been held and rebuttal testimony has been filed. The final hearings are scheduled to end on April 24th. A final decision is expected by July 31, 1987.

Montana into the rate base. CUB has been intervening in these cases for the past year, demanding that PGE reduce their rates by approximately \$100 million. PGE has already agreed to reduce its revenue requirement by \$45 million in part as a result of CUB's intervention.

A Public Forum hearing is scheduled at 7:30 p.m. in Room 602 of the Multnomah County Courthouse, 1021 SW 4th in Portland. All CUB members are urged to attend this public forum to support CUB's fight to lower PGE's rates. Full hearings before the PUC are scheduled to start on May 12th in Salem.

LaGrande: Tuesday, April 21, 7:30 p.m. Eastern Oregon State College, Amanda Zable Hall, Room 142.
Baker: Wednesday, April 22, 1:30 p.m., County Extension Building, Meeting Room, 2610 Grove Street.
John Day: Wednesday, April 22, 7:30 p.m., American Legion Hall, S.E. Dayton St.
Burns: Thursday, April 23, 1:30 p.m., Burns High School Cafeteria, 1100 Oregon Avenue.

Bonneville Power Administration:
In December 1986, the BPA started proceedings for an overall rate increase of 14 percent on its wholesale power rates for the two-year period beginning October 1, 1987. Indepen-

JOIN CUB

I want to join CUB and help fight unfair utility rate increases. Enclosed is my annual membership contribution.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ **ZIP:** _____

TELEPHONE _____

Amount of Annual Membership:

- ☐ \$25.00 Regular
☐ \$50.00 Contributing
☐ \$100.00 Sustaining
☐ \$5.00 Basic *
☐ _____ Other

*Can be waived in cases of financial hardship.

- ☐ I AM ALREADY A CUB MEMBER, PLEASE ACCEPT MY ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTION OF \$_____.
☐ PLEASE ACCEPT THE ENCLOSED CONTRIBUTION AS MY ANNUAL CUB MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL.

**Please make your check payable to Citizens' Utility Board
P.O. Box 6345; Portland, OR 97228**



More mail means more members

Why do I keep getting mail from CUB asking me to join when I'm already a member? In case you find yourself asking this question, let us take a moment to explain. As a member of the Citizens' Utility Board, you know how important it is for CUB to recruit new members. Not only does CUB's sole source of funding come from our members, but also, CUB members play an essential role in supporting our work in the state legislature.

In order to build our membership, CUB has begun a direct mail campaign. CUB has requested mailing lists from other organizations, and has been sending out letters to these people asking them to become members of CUB. So, like many of CUB's members, if you are active in

other public interest organizations around the state, you may receive one or more of these letters, even though you have already sent in your membership dues.

Isn't that a waste of money?

If there were an easy way to separate out all the duplicate labels among mailing lists, CUB would certainly do that. However, since there is no easy way, it is actually less expensive to send all of the letters (even though we have to pay postage costs), than it would be to spend hours checking for duplicate names.

So, if you are already a member and you receive a letter asking you to join CUB, please consider passing the information on to a friend!

Board adopts mail list trading policy

Due to CUB's efforts to recruit new members, the Board of Governors has adopted a policy of trading CUB's mailing list to other public interest organizations. What this means is that when CUB asks another organization for permission to borrow its list for a one-time mailing, CUB will then trade our membership list to that organization for a one-time use. As a

protection for CUB members, each trade must be approved by the Executive Committee of the CUB Board of Governors.

If you do not want your name to be a part of the traded list, please fill out the form below and send it to: CUB List; P.O. Box 6345; Portland, OR 97228. CUB will honor your request by removing your name from our traded mailing list.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ **ZIP** _____

Governor appoints new 3-Member PUC

On April 9, the Oregon Senate approved Governor Goldschmidt's appointments to the new 3-member Public Utility Commission. The new Commissioners are:

- **Charles Davis:** Commissioner Davis was a former Public Utility Commissioner under Governor Bob Straub. Davis was appointed as Interim Commissioner in January 1987 to replace Gene Maudlin. Davis recently ordered Oregon telephone companies to cut their rates. (See article, page 1.)

- **Paul Cook:** Commissioner Cook has been the Vice President of Key Bank. He has also served on the Tri-Met Board and the Portland Planning Commission.

- **Nancy Ryles:** Commissioner Ryles is a Republican State Senator from portions of Multnomah and Washington County. She served two terms in the House from 1979-1983 and has been a state Senator since 1983. Ryles will resign her position in the Senate to take office at the PUC on May 1st.

CUB Vice-Chair Eric Stachon commented on the appointments. "I think we've seen the end of an anti-consumer attitude at the PUC. I think the new Commission has opened the doors to consumer advocates."



Portland General Electric Rate Increase Public Forum

Come to support CUB's fight to lower PGE's rates!

Tuesday, May 5, 1987

7:30 p.m.

Multnomah County Courthouse

Room 602

1021 S.W. 4th

Portland, OR

All CUB members and PGE customers are urged to attend!

CUB BOARD OF GOVERNORS

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The Bear Facts

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Rhys Scholes

Drawings by Dorothy Krogh

Printing: The Sellwood Bee

Cover Photo: CUB Board members Robert Ackerman (Chairperson) and Lloyd Marbet (Secretary) talk with Secretary of State Barbara Roberts at a Salem reception hosted by CUB.