Citizen Action Records
11 linear feet
1979-1993 (bulk 1980s)

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Finding aid written by Aimee Ergas on February 14, 2011.

Accession Number: 1636

Creator: Citizen Action

Acquisition: The records of Citizen Action were placed in the Walter P. Reuther Library on October 15, 1995.

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Access: Collection is open for research.

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Notes: Citation style: “Citizen Action Records, Box [#], Folder [#], Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University”

Related Material: Student Activists Records

PLEASE NOTE: Material in this collection has been arranged by series ONLY. Folders are not arranged within each series – we have provided an inventory based on their original order. Subjects may be dispersed throughout several boxes within any given series.
Abstract
Citizen Action (CA) was founded in 1979 by former members of Students for a Democratic Society and the Indochina Peace Campaign as a coalition of state and national liberal consumer and activist groups. At its height in the early 1990s, CA had 34 state affiliates and allied organizations and approximately 2.5 million members, with 75 offices around the country and 1,200 staff members. Its main offices were in Washington, DC, and Chicago. It organized door-to-door canvassers to work on the state level promoting CA membership and educating the public on issues such as health care, energy, environmental concerns, and auto insurance. Citizen Action was also active in election campaigns on the local, state and national level to recruit and support candidates who espoused the same ideas on various issues. Citizen Action affiliates, such as Ohio Citizen Action and Connecticut Citizen Action Group, played a key role in get-out-the-vote campaigns and issue-specific canvassing and lobbying, especially regarding health care. On the national level, Citizen Action lobbied Congress and the federal government, often testifying before committees, working to introduce bills and interacting with federal departments and commissions. Citizen Action was shut down in 1997 after a scandal emerged involving illegal funds from the Teamsters.

The records in this collection are primarily from the national office of Citizen Action, though there are documents dealing with issues and activities in specific states. Also among these records are documents from affiliate organizations: Citizens/Labor Energy Coalition (C/LEC) and Energy Action.

Important Subjects:
Auto insurance
Citizens Fund
Citizens/Labor Energy Coalition
Elections, local, state and federal
Energy issues
Energy Action
Environment and pollution
Health care
Health insurance
Oil distribution and pricing
Political activism
Natural gas distribution and pricing

Important Correspondents:
Heather Booth
Robert Brandon
Michael Podhorzer
Edward Rothschild
Arrangement
The records are arranged in three series.

Folders in each series are simply listed by their location within each box. They are not arranged, so any given subject may be dispersed throughout several boxes within each series.

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Series II: State Activities & Research, 1980s-1990s (Boxes 4-8)

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30. Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition, State Department document on oil price crash, 1986 February
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