

# UCS Should Rename Itself UCL: Union of Cowardly Luddites



By Alex Berezow — September 25, 2018

*GMOs. Nuclear power. Self-driving cars. Why all the fearmongering? Because doing so produces an awful lot of money. Telling people that technology is bad generates roughly \$30 million every single year. Meanwhile, UCS really ought to consider renaming itself.*



Credit: Public Domain/Wikipedia [1]

Several years ago, when I was still at RealClearScience, I had the misfortune of meeting some people who worked for the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS).

They had just attended a talk I gave in Washington, DC -- probably the most science they have ever been exposed to -- and they came up afterward to introduce themselves. I was having none of it, and they walked away dejected, saddened to know that actual scientists think rather poorly of them.

UCS is one of those organizations that has a nice and friendly sounding name. It's a *union of scientists who are concerned*. Of course, what they don't tell you is that it's more akin to a union of fundraisers, PR people, political hacks, communications majors, and lawyers, and the things they are concerned about consists almost exclusively of stuff they made up.

For example, [UCS is anti-GMO](#) [2]. No self-respecting science advocate can take that position, but UCS does. They wrote a thoroughly discredited report called "[Failure to Yield](#) [3]," in which they

claimed that GMOs do not increase crop yields. [That's a lie](#) [4].

The organization pretends to favor nuclear power, but they [raise objections to every single nuclear technology](#) [5]. Therefore, in practice, UCS is anti-nuclear. Self-driving cars? [UCS doesn't like those either](#) [6]. Weapons in space? Nope. They are even [opposed to the U.S. developing defensive weapons](#) [7], while we already have evidence that [Russia may be actively weaponizing space](#) [8]. U.S. intelligence believes [China might, too, in the near future](#) [9]. It's in America's national security interest to be technologically ready.

But the technophobes at UCS aren't interested in that. Indeed, UCS really ought to rename itself UCL -- Union of Cowardly Luddites.

## Union of Cowardly Luddites

GMOs. Nuclear power. Self-driving cars. Military defense. Why all the fearmongering? Because they make an awful lot of money telling people that technology is bad -- to the tune of [\\$30 million every single year](#) [10].

		Prior Year	Current Year
Revenue	8 Contributions and grants (Part VIII, line 1h) .....	29,661,136.	36,524,506.
	9 Program service revenue (Part VIII, line 2g) .....	0.	0.
	10 Investment income (Part VIII, column (A), lines 3, 4, and 7d) .....	443,404.	622,501.
	11 Other revenue (Part VIII, column (A), lines 5, 6d, 8c, 9c, 10c, and 11e) .....	321,212.	149,997.
	12 Total revenue - add lines 8 through 11 (must equal Part VIII, column (A), line 12) .....	30,425,752.	37,297,004.

Like Scrooge McDuck, UCS is swimming in cash. ACSH, by comparison, brings in about [\\$1 million each year](#) [11]. Despite that, they have the audacity to accuse ACSH of being an industry front group. That's right. UCS brings in 30 times more money than ACSH, yet *we're* the corporate front group.

UCS's latest [smear](#) [12] against us was written by [Michael Halpern](#) [13], a blogger with no training in science. (He does, however, proudly boast of his sociology and communications degrees!) As usual, the smear does not even attempt to address any scientific matters. Halpern simply dismisses us as a bunch of corporate stooges. Why? Because other bloggers like him say so.

## Why Donate to UCS?

If you're the sort of person who donates to UCS, then you aren't going to give us a nickel. But here's a legitimate question: Why give UCS any money at all? Its sole mission is to scare people about really great technologies and to destroy the hard work of actual scientists.

Wouldn't it be better to give your money to a local charity -- or perhaps just burn it in a giant bonfire?

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**Links**

- [1] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cowardice#/media/File:Cowardly\\_lion2.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cowardice#/media/File:Cowardly_lion2.jpg)
- [2] <https://geneticliteracyproject.org/glp-facts/union-concerned-scientists-advocacy-group-promotes-unscientific-views-gmos/>
- [3] [https://www.ucsusa.org/food\\_and\\_agriculture/our-failing-food-system/genetic-engineering/failure-to-yield.html#.W6rbyxNKgWo](https://www.ucsusa.org/food_and_agriculture/our-failing-food-system/genetic-engineering/failure-to-yield.html#.W6rbyxNKgWo)
- [4] <https://allianceforscience.cornell.edu/blog/2018/02/gmo-crops-increasing-yield-20-years-progress-ahead/>
- [5] <https://www.ucsusa.org/nuclear-power/nuclear-power-technology/small-modular-reactors#.W6rcRRNKgWo>
- [6] [https://blog.ucsusa.org/jeremy-martin/when-will-autonomous-vehicles-be-safe-enough-an-interview-with-professor-missy-cummings?\\_ga=2.189139947.1726958019.1537921438-1951909055.1537921438](https://blog.ucsusa.org/jeremy-martin/when-will-autonomous-vehicles-be-safe-enough-an-interview-with-professor-missy-cummings?_ga=2.189139947.1726958019.1537921438-1951909055.1537921438)
- [7] <https://www.ucsusa.org/sites/default/files/legacy/assets/documents/nwgs/securing-the-skies-exec-summary.pdf>
- [8] <https://www.space.com/41503-russian-satellite-possible-space-weapon.html>
- [9] <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/02/14/russia-china-developing-destructive-space-weapons-us-intelligence.html>
- [10] <https://www.ucsusa.org/sites/default/files/attach/2018/03/UCS-2016-form-990.pdf>
- [11] <https://www.acsh.org/sites/default/files/ACSH%20990%20FYE%20Jun%202017.pdf>
- [12] <https://blog.ucsusa.org/michael-halpern/what-is-the-responsible-science-policy-coalition-here-are-some-clues>
- [13] <https://www.ucsusa.org/bio/michael-halpern.html#.W6rofS-ZMWO>