

Letters to the Editor June 12, 2008

June 11, 2008 - 10:20PM

With all this talk about a bad economy, record-high energy prices and Ameren's push for a \$247 million rate hike, I'm writing to give fellow consumers some hope. There is one monthly bill you can cut: your phone bill.

There's good reason why people dread the arrival of the phone bill each month. Most are paying far too much for calling plans and services they just don't need. That's why the Citizens Utility Board (CUB) started sponsoring free phone-bill clinics.

CUB is a nonprofit consumer group that holds these clinics across Illinois and shows people how to cut an average of \$200 off their phone bills. And here's the best part: It's free!

The next clinic, co-sponsored by state Rep. Dan Beiser, is from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., Tuesday, June 17, at Alton Square Mall, 200 Alton Square. Just go to the upper level, near the escalators and Vitamin World.

Bring your phone bills so you can sit down with a CUB expert. It's a good bet CUB can show you how to save some money. Isn't it time you had some good news for a change?

TERRYL W. FRANCIS

19th Congressional District Representative

Citizens Utility Board

Glen Carbon

The state's budget for 2008-2009 has been sent to the governor for approval. A fund for low-cost spay and neuter contains \$414,000, but only \$250,000 has been appropriated. Last year only \$100,000 was appropriated, even though this fund can only be used for low-cost spay and neuter. The fund was created to subsidize the spay and neuter of dogs and cats owned by those on food stamps or Social Security Disability and recognized feral cat caretakers.

Because SNIP Alliance values the humane treatment of all animals, we would like to see all the money generated for the fund to be appropriated. Ironically, one of the findings of the General Assembly when developing the program was that it is more cost-effective to fund low-cost spay and neuter programs because it decreases the number of animals handled by county and municipal animal control agencies. Another finding was that there is a significant public health and safety benefit by controlling the pet population, thereby reducing the number of dog attacks, dog and cat bite cases involving children and decreasing the number of automobile accidents caused by stray dogs and cats.

Over \$1 million is budgeted for animal control by Madison County and municipalities. The spay and neuter program that is properly funded and utilized by Madison County citizens

would ultimately decrease this tax burden and reduce the number of unwanted animals euthanized yearly in our county.

SANDRA EAVES

SNIP Alliance

Alhambra