



## What Maine Legislators are saying about Clean Elections



"I decided to use Clean Elections because I philosophically believe in not having private funding as a big part of our election process. I want to be beholden to the people who elected me, not special interests."

— Sen. Beth Edmonds, (D) Freeport



"I would not run for office unless I was a Clean Elections candidate. Under the Clean Election system, I can focus entirely on knocking on the doors of my constituents."

— Sen. Chandler Woodcock, (R) Farmington



"Using Clean Elections impacted how I spent my campaign funds. There was an additional responsibility to spend it wisely as it is taxpayer money. I am a farmer and a forester. I ran for office because I want to make a difference. I see public service as a responsibility."

— Rep. Nancy Smith, (D) Monmouth



"Most of the people in my district can't afford to give a candidate \$250 to run for office, but they can participate in the five dollar Qualifying Contribution effort. By contributing \$5, my constituents can invest in Maine's democratic process, and free me up to do what I enjoy most about campaigning: meeting with voters on their doorstep to discuss the issues that are important to them."

— Rep. James Annis, (R) Dover-Foxcroft



"Clean Elections has been great for democracy in Maine. It allows any individual with community support to run for office, it has increased voter choice, and increased competition while at the same time leveling the playing field for all candidates."

— Rep. Chris Rector, (R) Thomaston



"As a Clean Election legislator, I find myself being lobbied a lot less than traditional candidates. It's a lot easier if someone's trying to pressure you to say, 'I owe my allegiance to the taxpayers of the State of Maine and not to any special interest group.'"

— Rep. John Patrick, (D) Rumford

## Support Maine Clean Elections

**If Maine is to continue to be the national leader in reclaiming democracy from the special interests, The Maine Clean Election Act needs your active support.**

The legislature has drained \$6.75 million from the Clean Election Fund reserves in the last three years. **If the funding is not restored, the Clean Election Fund may not have enough money for the 2006 elections.**

Clean Elections can only be effective if there is enough funding for it. To help Clean Elections, here are some steps to take:

- **Check the "YES" box for Clean Elections on your state income tax return.**
- **Join the Maine Citizens for Clean Elections e-mail alert network so you will know when action needs to be taken.**

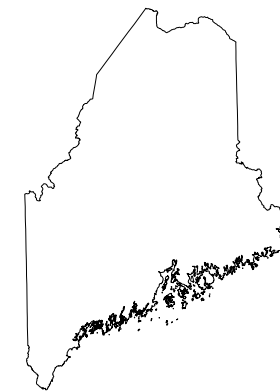
To join the MCCE e-mail alert network, please send us an e-mail at [info@mainecleanelections.org](mailto:info@mainecleanelections.org) with your name, address and phone number and we will send you regular alerts about what you can do to protect The Maine Clean Election Act.

**For more information, visit: [www.mainecleanelections.org](http://www.mainecleanelections.org) and [www.publiccampaign.org](http://www.publiccampaign.org).**

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 Maine Citizens for Clean Elections  
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# Maine Clean Elections



## Reclaiming our Democracy





## What is the Maine Clean Election Act?

There is a common perception that in politics, only people with money matter. Mainers decided in 1996 that they did not want that to be the case in Augusta, and overwhelmingly passed the Maine Clean Election Act by citizen initiative.

**The Maine Clean Election Act is a voluntary full public funding system for candidates for all state offices. The idea behind it is to sever the connection between private money and public office. It allows candidates to run for office without engaging in extensive fundraising or spending their own money, thus making a run for office accessible to the broadest array of Maine citizens.**

In order to receive public funds, candidates must prove they have grassroots support in their district by collecting a set number of \$5 Qualifying Contributions from voters in their district. Candidates also agree to limit their spending to the amount received from the Clean Election Fund.

**In effect since the 2000 election, Clean Elections has opened the door to legislative service to many people who would never consider running before. Maine voters now have more choices at the polls, and Maine candidates spend more time listening and talking with voters.**

Since Maine voters enacted the Maine Clean Election Act, it has served as a model for other states struggling to improve their democracies.

**The Maine Clean Elections system is landmark American democracy in action, giving our government back to the voters from the control of the special interests.**

## How it works

**Candidates who voluntarily choose to participate in Maine’s Clean Election system follow three simple steps to qualify for public funds:**

- 1] Demonstrate their grassroots support by collecting \$5 Qualifying Contributions from voters in their district (50 for House, 150 for Senate).**
- 2] Agree not to raise or spend any private money.**
- 3] Limit spending to the amount received from the Maine Clean Election Fund.**

Candidates who qualify successfully receive an equal and limited amount of public funds with which to run their campaigns. If they are outspent by their opponents or by others trying to influence the campaign, they will receive more funds to keep them competitive.

In years past, all candidates would either spend their own money or raise funds from those willing and interested in funding a political campaign. Today, even those without personal wealth or connections can run viable campaigns.

The Maine Clean Election Act has seen positive changes over the last few years. Thanks to overwhelming bipartisan support, the legislature passed a first-in-the-nation, landmark law that requires the full disclosure of “sham issue ads,” and mandates the provision of matching funds to Clean Election candidates targeted by the ads. The system is constantly being improved to prevent electoral abuse, make it work more smoothly and preserve the spirit of the original citizens’ initiative.

## Changing the Face of Politics in Maine

**The Maine Clean Election Act allows anyone with enough community support to run for office, regardless of economic background or access to wealth.**

Candidates for the Maine Legislature had their first chance to use Clean Elections in 2000. One-third of candidates participated, and more than half of them won their races. In 2002, twice as many candidates opted to use Clean Elections - a majority of all candidates who ran for legislative seats. For the first time, gubernatorial candidates also had a public funding option, and two of them used it.

**Maine is the first state in the nation to have a majority of legislators in office who took no special interest money. Clean Election legislators make up over half of the Maine House, and three-quarters of the Senate. In 2004, more candidates are using Clean Elections than ever before.**

Maine Clean Elections has also increased voter choice by making the playing field more level. The number of contested races in both general and primary elections is up and the total number of candidates has increased.

Many candidates say they never would have been able to run if it were not for Clean Elections. More people and different kinds of people are using the Clean Elections program to run for office. Voters and candidates agree: The Maine Clean Election Act is good for democracy.

**Maine Clean Elections is working to bring government back to the people of Maine, but if it is to continue to be effective, we need to protect it from attack.**

