



# Understanding Maine Clean Elections

## **What is Clean Elections?**

The Maine Clean Election Act (MCEA) created a voluntary system of public campaign financing for candidates for the Legislature and for Governor.

Clean Elections enables qualified people to run for office without needing deep pockets or high-powered connections.

During their campaigns, Clean Election candidates spend less time fundraising and more time knocking on doors and talking about issues. When they get to Augusta, Clean Elections candidates aren't beholden to anyone but their voters. With Clean Elections, our elected officials are accountable to the people of Maine, rather than wealthy contributors or special interests.

## **How Does Clean Elections Work?**

Candidates for State Representative, State Senator, and Governor can choose to run using Clean Elections.

To qualify for Clean Election funding, candidates must collect a designated number of \$5 qualifying contributions by knocking on the doors of friends, neighbors, and community members in the district where they are running. Only voters registered in the district can contribute a qualifying contribution on behalf of a participating candidate.

The \$5 qualifying contributions serve as a way for candidates to demonstrate community support from individuals in their district – not from out-of-state interests.

The number of \$5 qualifying contributions depends upon which office they're running for.

- House candidates must collect 60 qualifying contributions and, if certified, receive an initial \$5,000 grant of public funds for their race in a contested general election.
- State senate candidates must collect 175 qualifying contributions and, if certified, receive an initial \$20,000 grant of public funds for their race in a contested general election.
- Candidates for governor must collect 3,250 qualifying contributions and, if certified, receive an initial \$1.8 million for their race.

Candidates who need additional funding in competitive races can collect additional Qualifying Contributions, and receive limited supplemental funding.

Once certified, Clean Election candidates agree to strict spending limits and are not allowed to take any private donations or spend their own money on their campaign. The spending and fundraising limits keep politicians accountable to us and keep control of elections in the hands of the voters.

See [www.mainecelelections.org](http://www.mainecelelections.org) for more information