

Legislative Update 2017: 4

Rapid Response Team
April 10, 2017

Welcome to the fourth edition of MCCE Action's Rapid Response Team Weekly Update!

I want to open this edition by letting you know about a new issue that MCCE has started to work on: automatic voter registration.

Automatic voter registration (AVR) is a commonsense modernization to our voter registration process. With this system, eligible citizens are automatically registered to vote unless they decline. Voter registration information is transmitted electronically from state government agencies to election officials through a secure, encrypted process. As a result, AVR safeguards our rolls, allows us to maintain more up-to-date voter information, and makes voting more efficient for eligible citizens. With AVR, we can continue to ensure that all eligible voters are able to have their voices heard in our elections and a stake in our government. You can read more about the details on AVR policy [here](#).

MCCE is excited to be working with Secretary of State Matt Dunlap and Rep. Jared Golden to promote this reform.

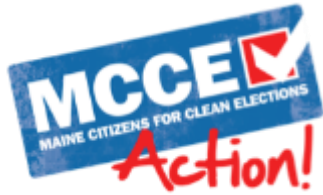
Keep reading for more about ways to get involved in the AVR campaign by sharing your voter registration story (and come to the Stronger Democracy Convention on the 23rd to learn lots more)!

You're getting this email because you indicated you'd like to be informed about Clean Elections, Ranked Choice Voting and other democracy issues in front of the Maine legislature. If you'd like to opt-out of this email, you can [click here](#).

Last week on...

We continue to be waiting for news on several of our biggest priorities – but that's okay, because the next 2 weeks are going to be jam-packed.

Ongoing priorities: We continue to wait for [LD300](#), which would eliminate the gubernatorial program from the Clean Election statute, to come in front of the legislature for a full vote. We strongly oppose this attempt by Clean Elections opponents to undermine our law. We are also still waiting for a committee work session on [LD413](#) - The bill to prohibit contributions from lobbyists to candidates and lawmakers. See our testimony [here](#), and Senator



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Justin Chenette's Op-Ed [here](#). There is still time to contact your lawmakers on these bills!

Coming this week

Today, Monday, April 10th, the last of MCCE's priority bills is coming up for its public hearing: [LD1211: An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Legislative Political Action Committees](#). This bill would ban legislators from controlling their own so-called 'leadership' PACs. Maine voters set low contribution limits for privately-financed candidates, because they don't want any one individual or special interest to have too much influence over their representatives. When legislators maintain their own PACs, taking unlimited contributions from any source, it's a mockery of those contribution limits, and ignores what Maine people want to see from their leaders. We excited to stand with Senator Ben Chipman and co-sponsors to support LD1211. Read our testimony [here](#).

On Thursday April 13th, the Maine Supreme Court will hear oral arguments on the solemn occasion request on Ranked Choice Voting. Can you join us to support RCV? Oral arguments will be heard in the historic ceremonial Courtroom 7 (in Augusta) at 8:30 AM. Supporters are encouraged to arrive by 8:00 AM to secure limited seating. Please give yourself an extra 10 minutes to make it through security. Arguments are expected to take one hour, and then we'll head over to the legislature to lobby for RCV implementation. [Sign up here to let us know you'll be joining us!](#)

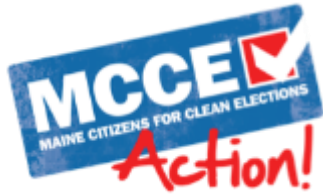
You can see all the bills coming up before Veterans and Legal Affairs, and listen to live audio from hearings [here](#).

What can you do?

If you have...

5 minutes: Contact your legislator and tell them to vote YES on LD1211. Legislators shouldn't be able to avoid contribution limits by controlling their own PACs. You can find your legislators and their phone numbers [here](#). Let me know when you contact them, and any response you receive!

30 minutes: Write a Letter to the Editor in support of Ranked Choice Voting. With the solemn occasion oral arguments coming up, it is all the more important that positive messages about Ranked Choice Voting and the ways it will improve our elections and politics get into the public debate. [Click here to sign up to write a letter.](#)



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A few hours: Join one of our weekly phone banks, and talk to other Clean Elections supporters about reaching out to their legislators! Contact Dash for information about mid-coast phone banks, and Sarah for information about Portland phone banks.

Keep on your calendar

April 18 – Public Hearing on Automatic Voter Registration

Do you or someone you know have a voter registration horror story? Have you moved frequently, lived in a town with limited clerk hours, or waited in a long line for same day voter registration? Maybe you have a family member who struggled to stay registered while going in and out assisted living and nursing homes. Automatic Voter registration would help Maine voters avoid these problems and make voting – our right – less of a hassle. We're looking to gather stories like these ahead of the public hearing – shoot me an email if you, or someone you know, has one!

April 23 - Stronger Democracy Volunteer Convention

On Sunday, April 23rd, 9:30-3:30 MCCE supporters from around the state will gather in Waterville to build stronger advocacy, organizing and communication skills, and discuss what comes next for Maine's democracy. Meet activists from around the state and learn about the strategies and tactics that make change as we build our 'citizen's toolkit!' [Click here to register.](#)

I am so excited for this convention and can't wait to see many of you there!

Anna Kellar, Program Director

PS - If you had this message forwarded to you, and would like to receive Rapid Response Team messages in the future, you can [sign up here.](#)