

Legislative Update 2017: 5

**Rapid Response Team**  
April 17, 2017

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

What a week behind us and what a week to come! Now's the time to dig in, build our skills, and keep up the pressure. So. let's get right to it!

**Last week on...**

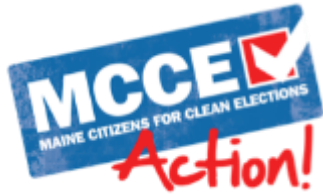
On Monday, we testified on [LD1211: An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Legislative Political Action Committees](#). This bill would ban legislators from controlling their own so-called 'leadership' PACs. Maine voters set low contribution limits for privately-financed candidates, because they don't want 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. It was great to see strong support for this bill from the public (thanks Cush, Carol, Tim, and Linda for your testimony)! [See news coverage here](#). [Read our testimony here](#).

On Wednesday, we followed the work session on [LD413, the ban on lobbyist contributions](#). There was a complex process involving last-minute amendments, which unfortunately left the bill with a majority Ought-Not-to-Pass. We thank Representatives Hickman and Casas for standing strong in support of the bill. I'll post the full committee vote once members have a chance to register their vote. The bill will likely still have a floor vote.



On Thursday, the Maine Supreme Court heard oral arguments on the solemn occasion request on Ranked Choice Voting. It was a fascinating debate, with a packed court room and overflow rooms. You can hear the arguments [here](#), or read [coverage](#). We expect to hear decisions from the justices within the next couple of weeks.

**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



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committee work session on [LD1033](#), which we oppose because it would eliminate 24-hour reports, harming transparency and disclosure. *There is still time to contact your lawmakers on these bills!*

### Coming this week

Tomorrow, **Tuesday April 18** at 1pm, we have a public hearing in the VLA committee on an exciting new reform: Automatic Voter Registration. MCCE is joining other democracy advocates, as well as Mainers who have struggled to register to vote, in [testifying in support of LD1232](#). 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!

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

### April 23 - Stronger Democracy Volunteer Convention

It's almost time! 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!' The convention is free; breakfast, lunch, and Ben & Jerry's are provided. [Click here to register.](#)

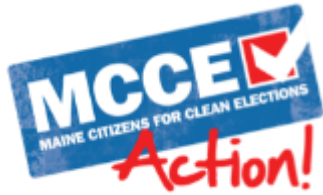


**I am so excited for this convention and can't wait to see many of you there!**

### 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!



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**30 minutes:** Write a Letter to the Editor in support of Ranked Choice Voting. With all the coverage about the solemn occasion, 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.](#)

**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**

**May 11 - Lobby Day!**

Save the date – lots more info coming soon.

I hope you get outside this week, listen to the bird song, and then get back to the good fight!

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.](#)

*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.](#)*