

BANGOR DAILY NEWS

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Keep clean elections

The BDN's Aug. 14-15 editorial "Rethink Clean Elections" seems to be straining at gnats and swallowing camels. It rightly points out the value of the clean elections law in making our legislature more accessible to women and those without lots of money. But you think things are different in the governor's race.

It's interesting to note that two of the best and most experienced legislators who were candidates for governor, Libby Mitchell and Peter Mills, chose the clean-elections route.

You seem to have swallowed the warped logic of the Maine Heritage Policy Center and Indiana attorney James Bopp who argue that candidates with lots of money have a constitutional right to outspend publicly funded candidates. This is the same James Bopp who argued unsuccessfully against Maine's then-new Clean Elections Law in 1996 and who supported the effort in the U.S. Supreme Court in the Citizens United case that allows corporate money to flood federal elections.

We need less corporate money in elections, not more. We need the transparency that disclosure laws provide. We need contribution limits so that no one can wield undue influence.

We need the clean election system to provide matching funds to keep a level playing field for candidates for the state's highest office.

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