

Morning Sentinel

Letters to the Editor
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[Mainers proud of our clean elections system](#)

Maine citizens, along with town and city councilors around the state and across the nation, are passing resolutions asking Congress to begin the process of amending the U.S. Constitution to make it clear that states can regulate the use of money in elections.

A vote on such a resolution will be held at the Vassalboro Town Meeting, 6:30 p.m. June 11 at the Vassalboro Community School.

The U.S. Supreme Court in a decision called "Citizens United" and in a related decision, ruled that states can't limit the amount of money spent by corporations and special interest groups in election campaigns, because their right of free speech is guaranteed by the Constitution. Money, however, is not speech. It seems necessary to clarify this in the Constitution so the Supreme Court cannot misinterpret it.

Maine citizens are proud of our clean elections law. A large majority of our legislative candidates have run as clean election candidates. After they qualify to do so, they can use only funds appropriated for this purpose by the state. This means that they are not obligated to large donors and after they are in the Legislature they need to consider only what is best for our state, our towns and cities, our environment.

Some other states have clean election laws and more should. We want our clean election law to be effective. To do this we need to clarify the issues raised in the Citizens United decision and other rulings and make it clear that under the U.S. Constitution only human beings are people, money is not speech and states need to be able to regulate the sources of money spent in their elections, as our law does, and require that when donations are made, voters know where the money came from.

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