



Opinion

Letter: Legislature drops the ball on special interests

Monday, March 4, 2013

Thank you for printing [Orlando Delogu's columns](#) exposing the issue of corporate welfare in our state. I do not want to subsidize big-box stores like Wal-Mart with my tax dollars, especially when they do not pay a living wage or provide health benefits to employees (ultimately receiving another subsidy when their employees go on government assistance to make ends meet). Giving away a fifth of Maine's annual budget to pad these multinational corporations' profit margins is outrageous, especially when so many Mainers are hurting. The ongoing transfer of public funds to private corporations must be stopped.

Unfortunately, action taken by the Legislature last year paves the way for special interests to perpetuate this type of corporate welfare in our state. In 2011, the Supreme Court struck down part of Maine's Clean Elections Act. Maine's 125th Legislature had a responsibility to keep clean elections strong with a replacement for matching funds. However, the Legislature did not act, thus weakening the law and inviting special interests to exert more influence in our elections and government. The Clean Elections Act was initiated and passed by voters to ensure the public's interests are first and foremost in Augusta. To ensure that our elected officials put Mainers before wealthy special interests, we must strengthen our Clean Elections law.

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