

April 12, 2013  
Letters to the Editor

## **Clean Elections a valuable part of Maine democracy**

I appreciate the article about the bipartisan bill moving through the Legislature to restore Maine's Clean Elections law.

It is not often that Republicans, Democrats and independents are able to agree about something. This shows how important the issue of clean elections is in this state.

There aren't many places where regular people can run for state offices without lining up a bunch of big donors to pay the bills. Thanks to Clean Elections, qualified candidates can leverage the power of many small donors to run credible campaigns.

We used to have matching funds for candidates who were outspent by well-funded opponents, but the court overturned that part of the law. Today, Clean Election candidates do not run on a level playing field, and that's a problem.

Reformers have come up with a new plan that will give Clean Election candidates a fighting chance against big money. It relies on candidates collecting more \$5 donations from local voters, and it will provide additional funding so the candidate can stay competitive.

Our Clean Election program is a valuable part of Maine's democracy. We must work to keep it strong.

Trudy Ferland  
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