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# Mainers support Maine Clean Elections Act

## LETTER

I recently joined volunteers across the state and collected signatures for a citizen-initiated petition to put on the ballot legislation that will strengthen the Maine Clean Elections Act (MCEA), the program that provides a modest amount of public funding to candidates who chose to use it to fund their campaigns in lieu of funds from private donations. While speaking with Maine voters about the initiative, I was not surprised to discover that many of them are frustrated with the influence money has on our elections.

Several of the people I spoke with were already familiar with the MCEA, and everyone who was said that they supported it. Convincing them that action should be taken to strengthen it was easy. They want, as I want, to see stricter penalties for campaign finance violations. They want, as I want, to know when a PAC helps put a politician in office,

whom that candidate has to thank for his or her election. The proposed legislation will help by requiring third-party groups to list their top funders on political ads.

The MCEA program has been very popular, with more than 80 percent of state legislative candidates running as MCEA candidates in 2006 and 2008. Just think of all those politicians listening to their constituents rather than private donors who helped put them in office! Unfortunately, recent court decisions have made it easier for big money to influence political campaigns, and Clean Elections laws are weakened as a result.

To fight back, Maine Citizens for Clean Elections is trying to collect the 70,000 signatures needed to get an initiative to strengthen the MCEA on the ballot in November 2015, and they need our help. To learn more, please visit [mainecleanelections.org](http://mainecleanelections.org).

*Lauren Gosster*  
Georgetown