



# Maine Clean Elections News

P.O. Box 18187, Portland, ME 04112

[www.mainecelelections.org](http://www.mainecelelections.org)

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Clean Elections Supporters Gather for the Question 1 Campaign Kickoff

## Voting, Victory, and Vigilance

### The Fight for Clean Elections Continues

Sometimes progress can be elusive. With shortsighted legislators, powerful lobbyists, and a Supreme Court that believes money talks, it's all too easy to be cynical. But when fixing our democracy seems like an impossible task, remember the Clean Elections Initiative and what can happen when a small, passionate group turns to their fellow citizens to take control of their future.

Five years ago, the U.S. Supreme Court dealt a near fatal blow to the Maine Clean Election Act. When our legislature failed to pass measures necessary to repair our law, Maine people took matters into our own hands. We reached out to everyone

sick of big money in politics and built a movement!

In 2014, 60 Mainers attended the Clean Election Convention. They recruited 740 volunteers, who, in turn, talked to over 80,000 voters, who then signed petitions placing the Clean Election Initiative on the ballot. Ultimately 55% of Mainers voted Yes on Question 1; a 10-point margin of victory for the Clean Elections Initiative.

With our votes, we the people changed our laws in favor of a more representative government. The initiative has made a difference. Clean Elections is strong again. Candidates can run for office without being beholden to special interests, and

transparency and accountability in our election laws are stronger. Participation in Clean Elections, which had declined precipitously, has increased in this year's legislative elections.

Ensuring full funding and implementation of the new law requires vigilance. With your help, MCCE made sure the full \$3 million required by statute was transferred into the Clean Election Fund. We insisted the administration respect the new law and the will of voters. And it worked.

As Mainers were circulating and signing petitions, a raid on the Clean Elections last year created an additional funding challenge. The administration and legislature short-changed Clean Elections by \$1.7 million. The 2016 cycle started with

## National Spotlight: Maine Leads State Efforts for Stronger Democracy

The movement to get big money out of politics is building, and Maine can be proud for helping to jump-start it with our successful initiative last November.

Election Day brought victory not just to Maine, but also to Seattle. Citizens there mounted a winning campaign that includes an innovative public funding system. All residents will receive four \$25 "democracy vouchers" to use in support of candidates for city council who agree to accept lower contribution and spending limits, and who must participate in public debates. Their aim is to mitigate the impact of big donors and increase the importance of everyday citizens.

Inspired by these victories, six states and municipalities have reform initiatives on the ballot in 2016, including Arizona, where MCCE's Executive Director, Andrew Bossie, traveled in January to share our experience developing and passing Question 1. In April, Arizona activists announced their own initiative to increase transparency, reduce the influence of big money and lobbyists, and modernize the state's Clean Elections system. At the campaign launch, leader Sam Pstross said, "I want my representatives to be thinking about me and my family and average Arizonans and not their donors."

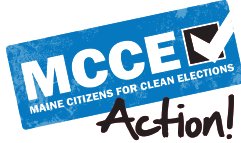
Movements have many faces, voices, and tactics. In April, thousands of Americans took to the streets in Washington, DC, many risking arrest, in order to "end the corruption of big money in our politics and ensure free and fair elections in which every American has an equal voice." This mass gathering, with its peaceful protest, civil disobedience, and forthright advocacy captures the urgency that so many Ameri-

Voting, Victory ... (continues page 2)

Maine Leads (continues page 2)



Maine Citizens for Clean Elections is a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating and engaging the public on matters of money in politics and campaign finance law, and to encouraging citizens to participate in our electoral system and in government to make ours a more politically responsive democracy.



MCCE Action works in the public interest to advocate for, increase public support for, defend and improve the Maine Clean Election Act and related campaign finance law.

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# THANK YOU!

To the thousands of Mainers who worked tirelessly to pass the Clean Elections Initiative, a sincere thank you from MCCE, for the remarkable effort that inspired people across the nation; an effort made possible because of you.

This legislative session brought trials, and thanks to many of you and our grassroots network, MCCE met those challenges! Earlier this year, we welcomed Michelle Fournier and Ginny Schneider to our Outreach Team to work directly with MCCE supporters during the legislative session. Our Outreach Team connected with hundreds of Mainers, providing them with legislative updates and opportunities to ensure their voices were heard during the policy debate.

This year, MCCE's board said good-bye to two long-time members, Jill Ward, the current President of the League of Women Voters of Maine, and Jesse Graham, Executive Director of Maine People's Alliance. Big thanks to Jill and Jesse for their tremendous contributions to our work.

We recently welcomed two new board members, Jolene Lovejoy of Rumford and Jamie Kilbreth of Portland. Jolene, an advocate for Clean Elections since her 2000 campaign

for the Maine legislature, is a Clean Election pioneer, and if you've been to one of our rallies lately, you've witnessed Jolene's passion for and commitment to our cause.

Jamie, an attorney with Drummond Woodsum, formerly worked in the Attorney General's office, where he was lead attorney in the state's litigation against the tobacco industry, securing a \$1.5 billion dollar recovery – the largest in Maine's history. We appreciate the addition of Jamie's great legal mind and strategic thinking to our board.

Finally, with an eye on our future, MCCE is currently engaged in an exciting strategic planning process that has involved many MCCE supporters. We are excited to share those results this summer with you, so stay tuned!

**Andrew Bossie**  
*Executive Director*



*ANDY*

## **Voting, Victory, and Vigilance** (from page 1)

a hole in the Fund. Once again, we rallied at the State House, demanding that our representatives repay this IOU.

We were not successful in getting the money repaid, but lawmakers struck a bipartisan compromise to advance \$500,000 of Clean Election funding appropriated for 2017 to ensure the fund does not run dry this year. Unfortunately, the House failed to override Governor LePage's veto of the bill, leaving the larger question of reliable Clean Election funding for another day.

To offset the cost of Clean Elections, the initiative called upon the legislature to eliminate wasteful corporate tax expenditures. There was a sound proposal to offset the \$3

million cost of Clean Elections this year by ending offshore tax havens. We are disappointed the legislature did not fulfill this mandate, but next year, the Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability will produce its report evaluating many tax expenditures, providing an opportunity to revisit this issue.

Our fight for Clean Elections and a government accountable to voters is about more than election victories and grassroots rallies. We must remember that democracy isn't something we achieve, but something we must continually do. We are grateful for the Maine people who continue to make their voices heard. ■

## **Maine Leads**

(from page 1)

cans feel when it comes to taking back their democracy.

The unexpected death of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia means the loss of a vote on the Court. Filing the vacancy could change the pattern of 5-4 decisions that are a hallmark of Roberts Court rulings in campaign finance cases. The Senate majority's refusal to consider President Obama's nominee leaves open the question of when the seat will be filled.

From state referenda to new policy innovations, from direct action to the courts, the movement to restore our democracy is advancing on many fronts. Mainers can be proud of our continuing leadership. ■

**SIGN UP AT [mainecleanelections.org](http://mainecleanelections.org)**





## MCCE's Money in Politics Project: Research and Reporting to Benefit Maine People

MCCE has always considered careful research a cornerstone of our work. Maine people are better off when we have accurate information about how money flows through our political system – where it comes from, who gets it, and what it buys.

That is why transparency is so important. Disclosure laws, which were strengthened in our recent initiative, provide the raw material that allows the people and the press to connect political money to important policy issues that affect our lives.

Between 2012 and 2014, MCCE published a series of 13 reports detailing everything from Leadership PACs to specific policy issues like healthcare and consumer protections, to

the dominance of big money in Maine's gubernatorial campaigns. All are available on our website at [mainecelelections.org/mip](http://mainecelelections.org/mip).

Today, we are fortunate to work with two student interns at Colby College who are working on new research projects. Luke Rector and Kevin Seiler have spent the semester taking full advantage of the resources Maine's transparency laws make possible. Kevin is tracing the political contributions linked to pro- and anti-wind power legislation.

Luke is studying the role of money in Maine's gambling industry. He is probing the topic of lottery, horse racing, and casino revenue, looking at

campaign contributions, bill sponsors, and the state budget. His initial research revealed that the state hires private marketing companies to target individuals who many believe to be at the low end of the socioeconomic ladder, and that funding for this type of marketing increases year after year.

"It has been exciting to move forward on this topic with solid factual evidence rather than speculation," says Luke. "I've never attempted to dive into state-level research before, but with help from staff at MCCE I've had access to some tremendous state resources. The project allows me to probe the issue deeply, and in the process I have come to more tangibly

understand MCCE's mission and purpose."

MCCE loves transparency, and we love our Marion Holshouser Money in Politics Internship program! This summer, we'll host at least three students who will engage in many aspects of our work. We always benefit greatly from the energy, curiosity, and willingness to try new things that interns bring, and we do our best to make sure each one has a valuable experience. Please share this opportunity with the young folks in your life who might like to join us in the fall semester. You can read about the internship program, including testimonials, online at [mainecelelections.org/internships](http://mainecelelections.org/internships) ■

### MCCE in Action!



MCCE Board member Jolene Lovejoy warms up the crowd at our State House rally in April



Volunteers were the backbone of our winning campaign! Here's a crew of canvassers about to talk to voters in Portland.

## Summer Road Show: Invite MCCE to Your Town

Now that the 127th Legislature has adjourned, here's a peek at our summer plans from MCCE's ever-in-motion Outreach Team.

With the 2016 election cycle underway, this summer is a great time to learn more about Clean Elections and ways we can reduce the influence of big money in our elections and government. This summer and fall MCCE's Outreach Team will take to the road with a new educational program about our recently strengthened Clean Elections law, how money in politics affects our lives, and what's next as we work towards a truly representative democracy in Maine. These will be informative, interactive roundtable discussions, and we hope to see

many old and new friends as we travel around the state.

You can help by inviting us to your community! MCCE seeks partners, individuals and organizations, across Maine to help us find the right venues for connecting with local people through these engaging public events.

Maine people are at the very center of the Clean Elections story. We hope you will join MCCE's Outreach Team to contribute your own ideas and hear from others in your community. Why do you want to get big money out of politics? Together we'll explore where we are and where we need to go to keep our government accountable to everyday people. ■

**MCCE is a proud member of MaineShare.  
Support our work through payroll giving.**

**MaineShare**



**OF  
BY  
FOR**

Donate to MCCE by June 30th and your name will be entered in our **Of, By, For** drawing!

**WIN**

Make it a recurring donation, and your name will go into a **BONUS** drawing, too! All winners will be drawn on July 4th

Win 1 of 2 fantastic mini-vacations  
**Acadia Adventure & Experience Portland!**

*Eligibility: any donation before midnight, June 30th!*

**BONUS!**

For recurring donors  
**ONLY! Special drawing for a Taste of Maine Basket**

*Eligibility: become an **Of, By, For** Advocate for as little as \$5 a month for a year!*

Donate with the enclosed envelope or visit MCCE online at [mcce.me/drawing](http://mcce.me/drawing) to find out more about the prize packages

Thanks to the growing list of Maine businesses for offering prizes for the drawings!

Acacia House Inn • Apple Shed Bakery • Bar Harbor Bicycle Shop • Caiola's • Carrabassett Coffee • Choco-Latte • Coffee By Design • Dean's Sweets  
• Empire Chinese Kitchen • Goranson Farm • Hancock Point Kayak and Trail Tours • Havana • Independent Cafe • Mt. Desert Ice Cream  
• Morse's Sauerkraut • Omi's Coffee Shop • Raye's Mustard • Red's Dairy Freeze • Rogue Industries • Rosemont Market & Bakery • Salt Box • Skillin's • Standard Baking Company • Tandem Coffee • Turner Farm • Wicked Whoopies • Wild Blueberry Land

Join MCCE's **Of, By, and For Drawing!** SEE BACK PANEL FOR DETAILS



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