



**CRITICAL INSIGHTS**

RESEARCH FOR PRECISE PRAGMATIC DIRECTION

***Critical Insights on Maine™ Tracking Survey***

**~ Spring 2011 ~**

**Summary Report of Findings from Proprietary Items**

**Prepared for:**



Focus Groups • Surveys • Public Opinion Polling

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# Introduction



# Background & Methodology

- Each Spring and Fall, Critical Insights conducts the *Critical Insights on Maine™* Tracking Survey, a comprehensive, statewide public opinion survey of registered voters which covers a variety of topics of interest to business, government, and the general public.
  - In addition to general interest items (the results of which are traditionally released to the media as a public service), the survey also includes a number of proprietary items included on behalf of sponsoring entities, with results of those items released only to the sponsors.
- For the current wave of the study, Critical Insights completed a total of 600 telephone interviews with randomly selected voters across the state between May 5-9, 2011.
  - With a sample of 600 interviews, results presented here have an associated sampling error of  $\pm 4$  percentage points at the 95% confidence level.
  - All interviews were conducted with self-reported registered voters; final data was statistically weighted according to relevant demographics to reflect the voter base in Maine.
  - On average, the entire survey instrument – including both general interest items and all subscriber questions – was 18 minutes in administrative length.
- This document presents results of questions proprietary to Maine Citizens for Clean Elections.
  - Where appropriate, comparisons of current results are made with findings from past iterations of the *Critical Insights on Maine™* Tracking Survey.



# Research Results



# Residents' Perspectives on Maine's Clean Election Law

- The vast majority (85%) of residents polled for *Critical Insights on Maine™* say that Clean Elections in Maine are important.
  - Indeed, a robust 68% of respondents cite that Clean Elections are “very important.”
- The value associated with Clean Elections is significantly higher among women, lower income households (i.e. <\$50,000), residents of Northern Maine, and self-identified Democrats and Independents.
  - Conversely, men, more affluent respondents (i.e. \$75,000+), those living in the Southern and Coastal regions of Maine, and self-reported Republicans are more likely to believe that Clean Elections in Maine are less salient.
- When asked whether gubernatorial candidates should use Maine's Clean Election law, results are fairly comparable with previous measurements, with more than three-quarters of Maine residents polled answering “Yes.”
  - Importantly, the current proportion of survey respondents who feel that candidates for Governor should use the law shows a slight directional increase over Spring 2009, narrowing the gap to 5 percentage points below Spring 2008 findings.
  - Again, respondents living in Northern Maine and self-reported Democrats and Independents are significantly more likely than others to favor Clean Elections for gubernatorial candidates, while Coastal Maine residents and Republicans are less likely.



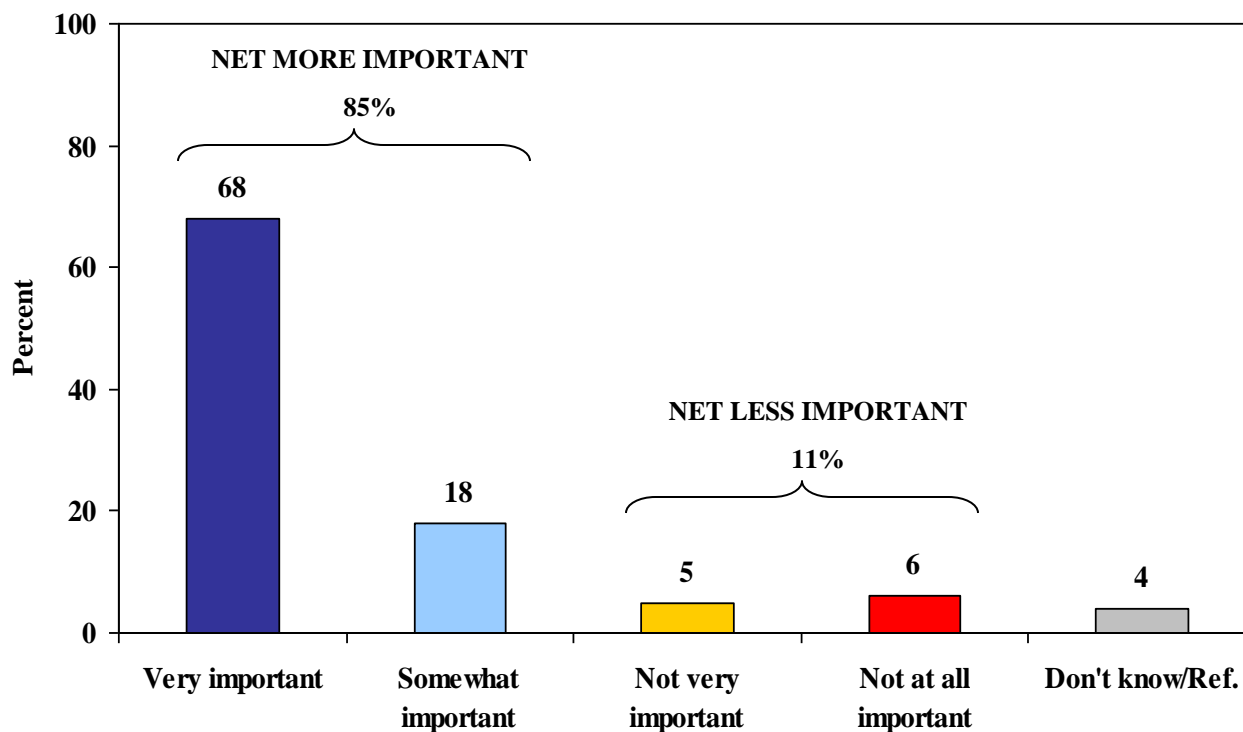
# Residents' Perspectives on Maine's Clean Election Law

- Residents polled feel strongly that Maine's legislature should not repeal Clean Elections (59%).
  - Substantially smaller, but similar proportions of respondents indicate that Clean Elections should be repealed altogether (16%), repealed just for gubernatorial candidates (10%), or that they don't know (14%).
- Consistent with a general theme noted throughout this report, respondents identifying themselves as registered Democrats or Independents are significantly more likely than others to show support for Clean Elections, saying that the law should not be repealed.
  - Notably, although residents living in the Southern region of Maine are less likely to view Clean Elections as important as reported previously, they are significantly more likely than others to oppose repealing the law.
  - Men are more likely to believe that Clean Elections should be repealed altogether, while self-identified Republicans tend to believe that the law should be repealed for gubernatorial candidates only.



# Residents' Views on Importance of Clean Elections in Maine

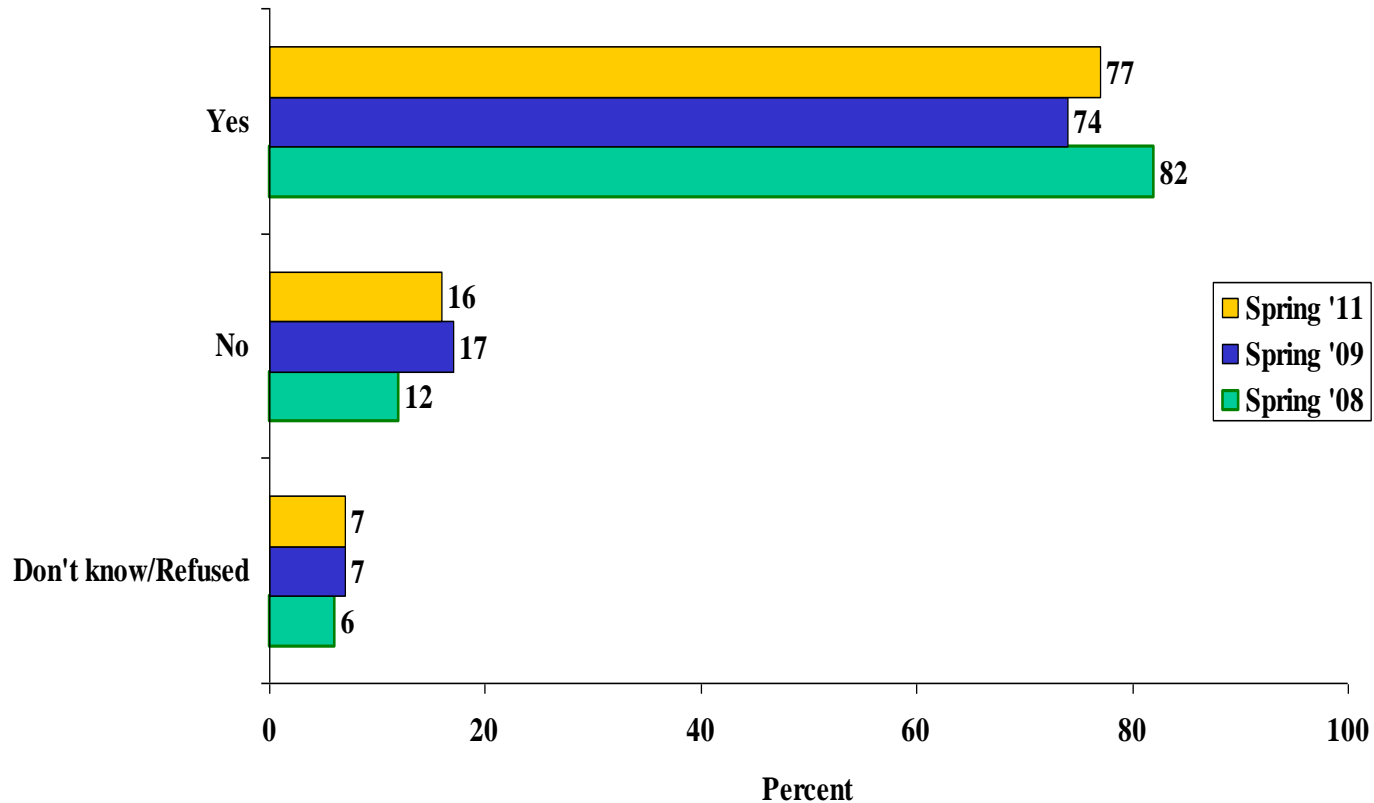
*In 1996 Maine voters passed the Maine Clean Election Act into law. Since 2000, qualified candidates for state office who limit their spending receive limited public funds to run for office rather than relying on campaign donations from private sources. In your opinion, how important is it that Maine continue to have Clean Elections? Would you say...*





# Residents' Views on Maine Gubernatorial Candidates Using Maine's Clean Election Law

*Do you think candidates for governor should use Maine's Clean Election law, which provides public campaign funds for candidates who agree to spending limits and accept only small contributions from individuals?*







# Residents' Views on Possible Repeal of Maine's Clean Election Law

*Some members of Maine's legislature oppose the Clean Election Act and have proposed legislation to repeal or partially repeal the law. Which one of the following statements comes closest to your own point of view?*

