



CRITICAL INSIGHTS
RESEARCH FOR PRECISE PRAGMATIC DIRECTION

Critical Insights on Maine™ Tracking Survey

~ Spring 2012 ~

Summary Report of Findings from Proprietary Items

Prepared for:



May 2012

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 2nd to 7th, 2012.
 - With a sample of 600 interviews, results presented here have an associated sampling error of ± 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 20 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.

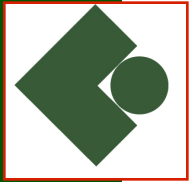


Research Results



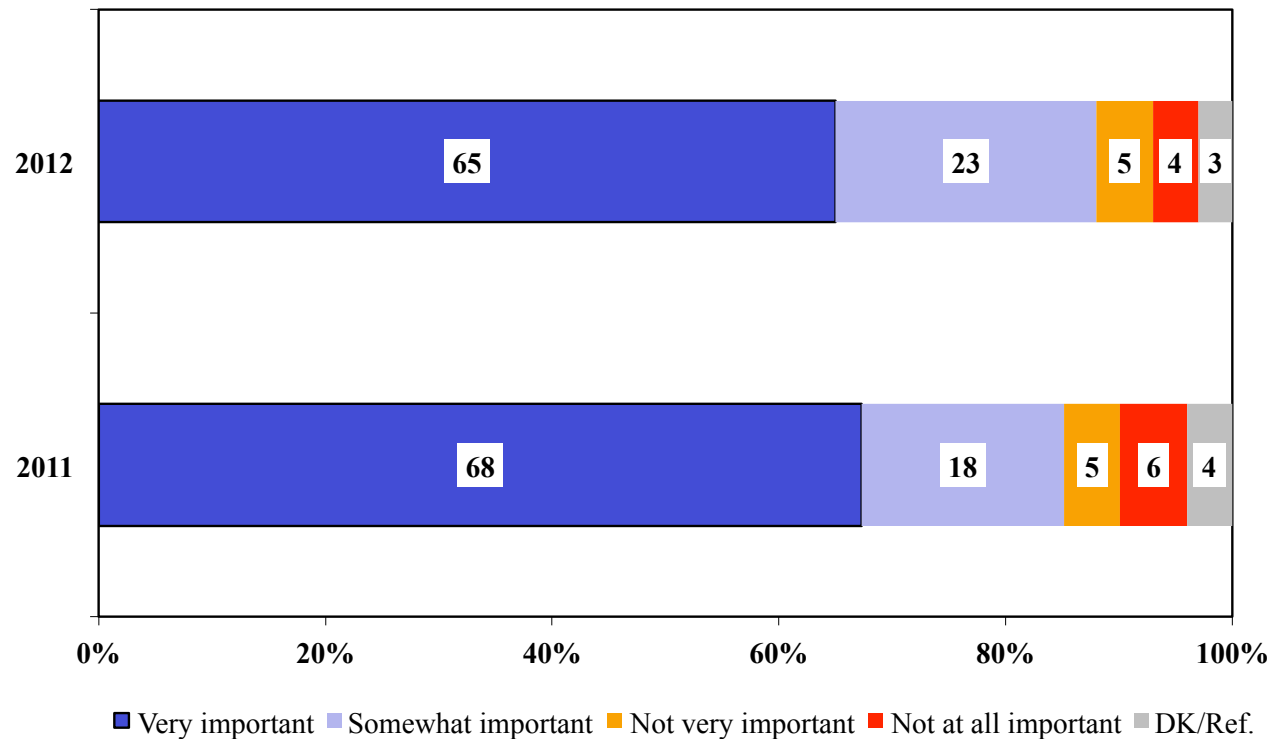
Residents' Perspectives on Maine's Clean Election Law

- Similar to the 2011 survey, the vast majority (88%) of residents polled for *Critical Insights on Maine™* say that Clean Elections in Maine are important.
 - Indeed, two-thirds of respondents (65%) cite that Clean Elections are “very important.”
- When asked to state the most important goals of Clean Elections, more than a third of Maine residents polled ranked reducing the influence of special interest money as most important, with fully half ranking this issue as most or second most important.
 - One-in-five respondents ranked the ability to level the playing field for candidates as most important, with nearly half citing the importance of this issue overall.



Residents' Views on Importance of Clean Elections in Maine

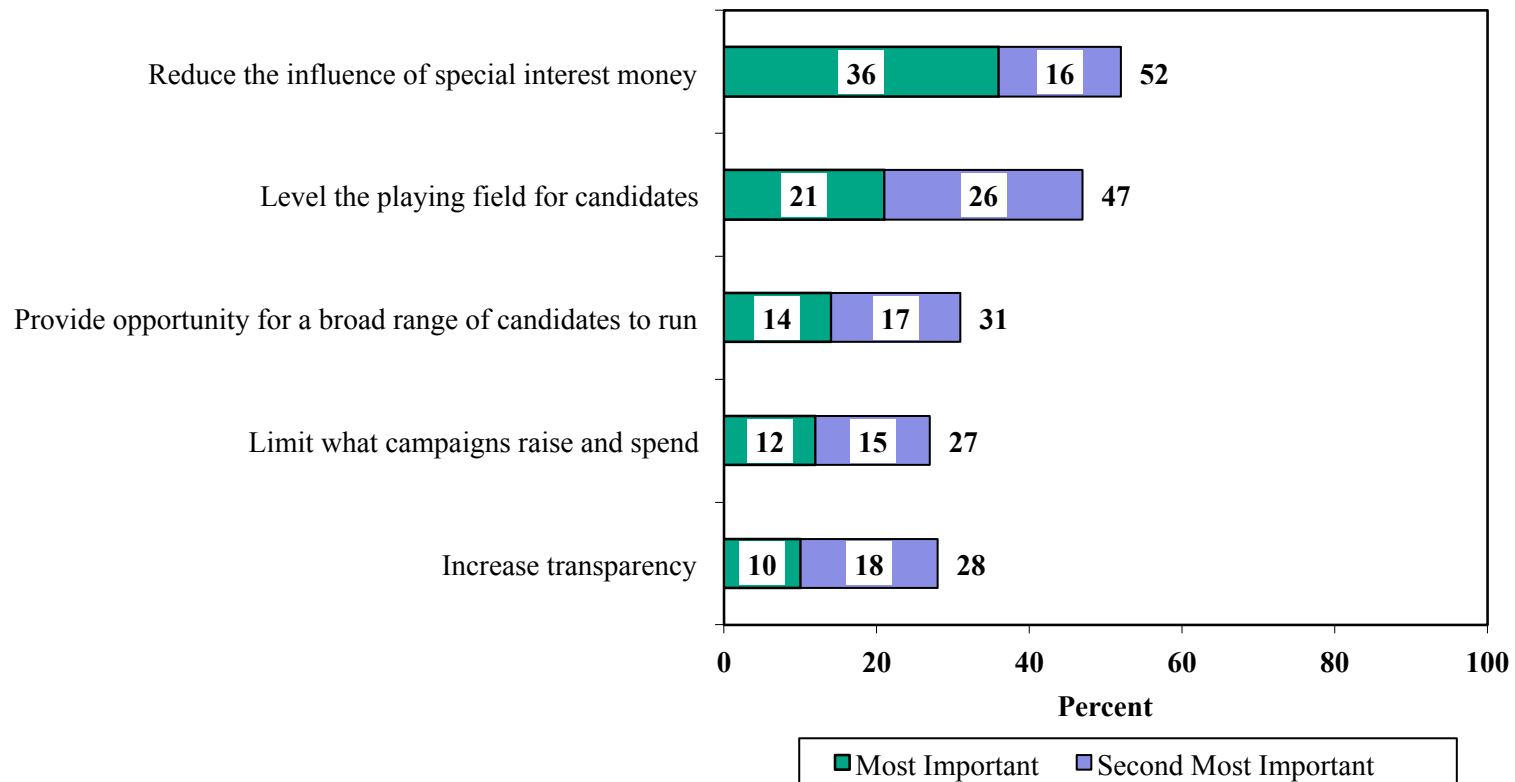
In 1996 Maine voters passed the Maine Clean Election Act into law. Since 2000, qualified candidates for state office who limit their spending receive limited public funds to run for office rather than relying on campaign donations from private sources. In your opinion, how important is it that Maine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





Ranked Importance of Clean Elections Goals

Now I am going to ask you which goals of Clean Elections are most important to you. Once I read the goals, please tell me which one is most important to you and which one is second most important.





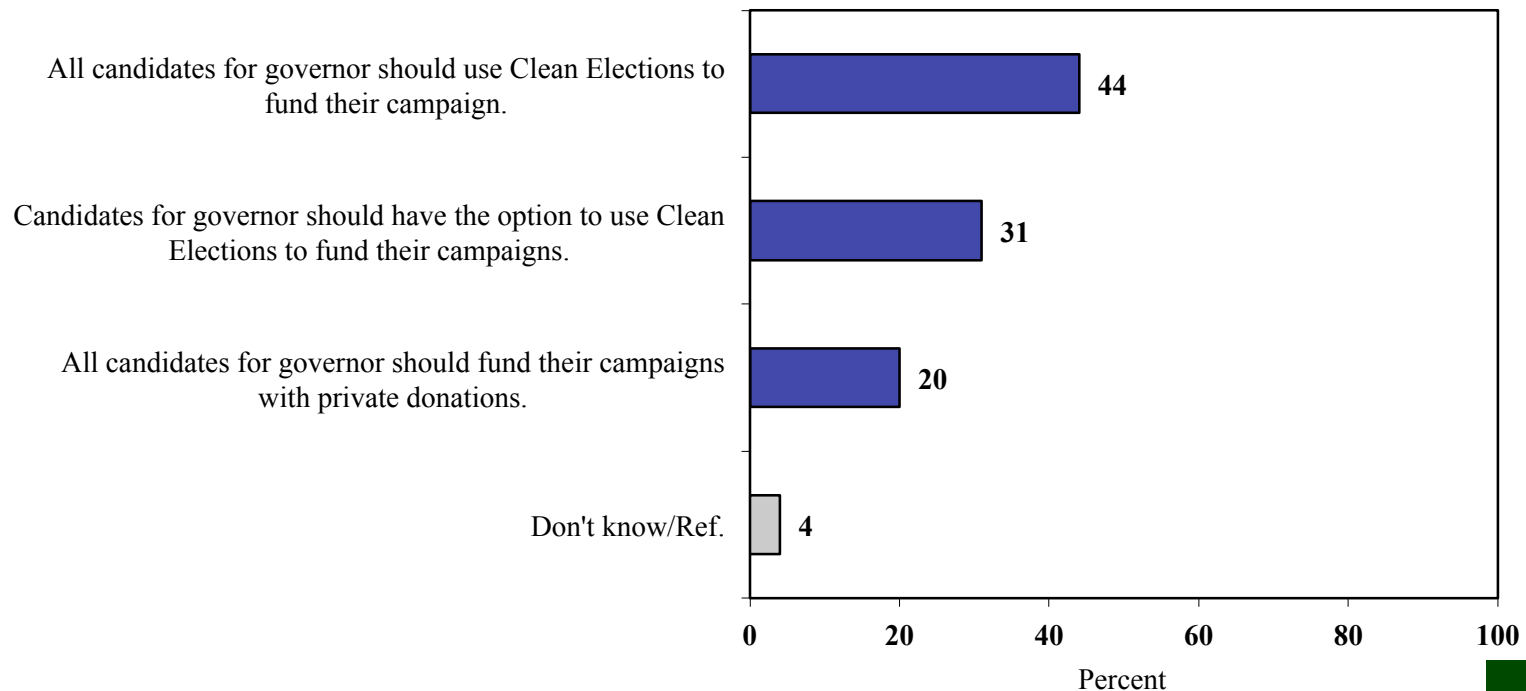
Residents' Perspectives on Gubernatorial Races and Money in Politics

- Notably, a large majority of respondents (75%) hold the view that gubernatorial candidates should use or have the option to use Clean Elections to fund their campaigns.
 - A plurality of 44% state that all gubernatorial candidates should use Clean Elections to fund their campaigns.
- Additionally, fully 8-in-10 respondents to the poll feel that there is too much money in politics and that Maine should push forward with reform.
 - Just 15% of respondents think that we should roll back restrictions on the flow of money.



Residents' Views on Clean Elections in Gubernatorial Races

Governor LePage and some legislators want to eliminate Clean Election funding in future gubernatorial races so that all candidates will raise money in the traditional way – by soliciting contributions from individuals, businesses, and PACs, or spending their own money. They say the state can't afford Clean Elections for candidates for governor. Other legislators feel that reducing reliance on private contributions in the gubernatorial race is most important since the governor is our highest elected state official. They say that since Maine citizens initiated and passed Clean Elections for ALL state races, candidates for governor should continue to have this option. Which one of the following statements comes closest to your own point of view?





Residents' Views on Money in Politics

Now I'm going to read you two statements. Please tell me which one of the following most closely approximates your feelings about money in politics:

There is too much money in politics and wealthy donors are overwhelming elections, drowning out the voices of ordinary citizens. We must push forward with reforms to limit the influence of big money in elections and government.

Campaign finance reform has failed to live up to its promise. We should roll back restrictions on the flow of money and just let donors give as much as they want to whomever they want.

Don't know/Ref.

