



For Immediate Release

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Voters Submit Signatures to Qualify the Clean Elections Initiative for the 2015 Ballot

The Measure Will Bolster Accountability, Increase Transparency, and Restore the Maine Clean Election Act.

AUGUSTA - Over two hundred Maine voters gathered in the Hall of Flags at the State House this morning at 10:30 to announce the successful collection of 85,185 signatures to qualify the Clean Elections Initiative for the ballot. After a brief press conference, the group delivered boxes of petitions to the Secretary of State's office in the Cross State Office Building.

"We are here to celebrate a remarkable and important citizen-led effort to shine the light on dark money, keep politicians accountable and restore Maine's Clean Election law," declared Andrew Bossie, Executive Director of Maine Citizens for Clean Elections (MCCE), the nonpartisan group that organized the event and the signature collection. "This is an effort of, by and for Maine people. We're here today because we want a government that works for everyday voters, not one bought and paid for by wealthy special interests. We're here today because when our democracy is threatened, we the people, will fight to keep it strong."

Joining Bossie were several voters who volunteered on the signature-gathering effort. Ann Luther, a longtime leader in both MCCE and the League of Women Voters of Maine, addressed the crowd, saying, "Today is about Maine people leading on one of the most important issues of our time. We will simply not back down when it comes to strengthening our democracy and the role of everyday people just like us within it."

Luther explained that the initiative will increase transparency through new disclosure requirements, bolster accountability, and strengthen Clean Elections.

Recently retired Senator Ed Youngblood of Brewer spoke of his experience talking with voters at the polls on Election Day. "The Clean Election Initiative is all about making sure that Maine people have the opportunity to step up, run for office, and serve their constituents without relying on big-money special interests," he said. "So much about politics is about divisions, but in this Clean Election endeavor, we are Mainers first. Republicans like me worked alongside Democrats, Greens, and unenrolled voters to collect these signatures. That is a reflection of the widespread concern about the skyrocketing cost of elections and the growing role of big money."

MCCE began the petition drive in May, mobilizing hundreds of Maine voters to collect signatures at the polls on both Primary Day in June and Election Day in November. Additional signatures were collected during local gatherings and community events through the summer and fall.

To qualify the Clean Elections Initiative, a minimum of 61,123 valid signatures from Maine voters are required. Town and city clerks validated more than 98% of the signatures submitted today.

“It’s clear that Maine people want to enhance disclosure, hold politicians accountable and restore their first-in-the-nation Clean Election law,” said Bossie. “Today’s delivery gets us one step closer to the day when voters will reaffirm that at the polls, and one step closer to a government that is truly of, by, and for the people.”

MCCE is a nonpartisan organization that 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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