



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Nearly Two-Thirds of Incoming Legislature Elected Using Clean Elections**

**PORTLAND, ME** – Sixty-four percent of incoming lawmakers to the Maine legislature were elected using Clean Elections, an increase from the 2014 election according to Maine Citizens for Clean Elections (MCCE). While results from Secretary of State are not yet final, it appears that 93 Representatives and 26 Senators – 64% of lawmakers – were elected with public financing in the 128<sup>th</sup> Legislature, up from 58% of lawmakers in the 127<sup>th</sup> legislature. The election of the 128<sup>th</sup> Legislature is the first to be held under changes to the Maine Clean Election Act passed by voters at referendum in 2015.

“Maine voters want lawmakers in Augusta who work for them, not wealthy special interest and out-of-state donors,” said Andrew Bossie, Executive Director of MCCE. “Because voters stood up for our Clean Election laws with a decisive vote in 2015, the next legislature will have fewer ties to big-money donors and be able to more fully represent the interest of their constituents when it comes to important votes.”

The tally of Clean Elections legislators equals 61.6% of the House of Representatives and 74.3% of the Senate.

The Maine Clean Election Act, the first system of full public financing for state candidates in the country, was passed by Maine voters at referendum in 1996. Clean Elections grew in popularity among candidates across the political spectrum through several election cycles, peaking in 2008, when 85% of legislators funded their campaigns using Clean Elections.

In order to qualify for Clean Elections, candidates must demonstrate support within their districts by collecting a requisite number of \$5 checks from registered voters. Once qualified, Clean Election candidates agree to strict spending limits and are not allowed to raise private donations or spend their own money on their campaign. In return, candidates receive a limited

amount of public funding. Changes enacted through the 2015 citizen initiative enable candidates to obtain additional funding upon collecting additional \$5 checks, making it possible for Clean Elections candidates to remain competitive when facing high-spending, privately financed opponents.

A full report on the 2016 Election is forthcoming.

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