



PRESS RELEASE

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Bipartisan Group of Lawmakers Say Yes to Gubernatorial Clean Elections

Augusta - In a bipartisan vote, the Maine Senate today voted 18-16 to pass [LD1210](#): An Act Regarding the Maine Clean Election Fund. This bill, put forward by the Ethics Commission, would restore \$1.7 million previously raided from the Clean Election Fund, and advance \$3 million from 2019 to 2018, ensuring adequate funding for both legislative and gubernatorial Clean Elections in 2018.

On Thursday, LD 1210 passed the House in a 77 – 70 bipartisan vote.

The Senate also concurred today with the House vote against [LD300](#): An Act To Preserve Funding for the Maine Clean Election Act by Removing Gubernatorial Candidates from Eligibility. This action defeats a bill which would have eliminated the public financing option for gubernatorial candidates.

“We welcome this bipartisan support for Clean Elections, and strongly urge the legislature to ensure the full amount of funding that voters approved so that House, Senate and Gubernatorial candidates can be confident that the funding for which they qualify will be there for them” said Andrew Bossie, Executive Director of Maine Citizens for Clean Elections.

The budget released by the governor earlier this year would provide \$2 million per each year of the biennium; however, Maine voters approved \$3 million per year of the biennium in the 2015 citizen-initiated referendum.

If the full statutory amount had been budgeted each year, and no funds removed, there would be no need for additional funding for the next election cycle. However, over several years, the legislature has not provided the funding set forth in the Clean Election Act. A total of \$12.7 million has been “de-appropriated” from the Fund. A total of \$6.1 million was returned to the

Fund, leaving it currently short by \$6.6 million. MCCE advocates for the full \$6.6 million to be returned to the fund, and welcomes LD 1210, which would repay \$1.7 million.

“The funding required for Clean Elections is a small price to pay for citizen ownership of our democracy,” said Bossie. “Clean Elections helps keep the cost of campaigns down, and it has proven to be a very efficient and thrifty program. Most important, it keeps the voters in the driver’s seat.”

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