



Contacts:  
Anna Kellar  
207-252-9248  
John Brautigam  
207-831-6223

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## Court Hears Arguments in Clean Elections Lawsuit

Auburn, ME – Today Superior Court judge, Hon. William R. Stokes heard oral arguments in the lawsuit ordering the governor to release Clean Elections funds for which candidates have qualified and which the legislature has appropriated.

Lawyers for the plaintiffs argued that the role of the governor is clear. He must do the job required by the constitution, respect the will of the people and uphold the rule of law. He must stop the obstruction and stop causing chaos in our elections.

“The position taken by the governor in this case is extraordinary,” said John Brautigam, counsel for Maine Citizens for Clean Elections. “He says he has the freedom to ignore the will of the voters. He says he has power to block funding for Clean Elections -- even though the legislature has already appropriated the money. He says he doesn’t owe anyone an explanation for the extraordinary disruption he is causing. He says he has no obligation to implement the law. None of these things are true.”

Maine voters have twice supported Clean Elections, 221 candidates are using Clean Elections, and over 45,000 citizens have given qualifying contributions. Every governor since 2000 has followed the law and released the funds. Despite all this, Governor LePage has chosen to ignore the law.

The implications of this case go beyond Clean Elections, and touch on the power of the executive and rule of law.

“The governor has talked about going to jail in order to get his way,” said Brautigam. “This case is about whether we have the rule of law, or rule by an outlaw who wants to go to jail.”

We are confident that the court will stop this lawless conduct. A decision is expected as soon as next week.

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