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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 2, 2018

## Victory for Clean Elections

Auburn – VICTORY FOR CLEAN ELECTIONS!

Today, Superior Court Justice William Stokes ordered Governor LePage’s administration to release Clean Elections funds for which candidates have qualified and which the legislature has appropriated.

The court ordered the administration to release the funds within three business days. The funds must be made available to the Ethics Commission for distribution to candidates.

Over 175 certified candidates are waiting for funding withheld in June when the governor rejected the Ethics Commission’s requests to release funding.

“The implications of this case go beyond Clean Elections, and touch on the power of the executive and rule of law,” said attorney John Brautigam, who brought the suit on behalf of MCCE as well as candidates and contributors who gave qualifying contributions.

“The governor does not have the freedom to ignore the will of the voters, or block funding for Clean Elections when the legislature has already appropriated the money. As Justice Stokes concluded, the administration has an obligation to uphold the law and release the funds,” said Brautigam.

Justice Stokes wrote that the three-day deadline “is necessary and proper in this case because the candidate-Plaintiffs are involved in campaigns for election and time is of the essence . . . Failure to make the distributions as required by law and by this Court’s order could, over time, frustrate the very purpose” of the Clean Election Act.

“We urge the administration to release the funds immediately now that the court has ruled. If the administration still resists, we will be there to fight every step of the way, defending our democracy from a governor who is increasingly not interested in following the will of Maine people,” said Anna Kellar, Executive Director of Maine Citizens for Clean Elections.