



MAINE CITIZENS FOR CLEAN ELECTIONS RELEASES POLL SHOWING WIDESPREAD SUPPORT FOR TRANSPARENCY

June 29, 2010

(Portland, Me) -- Maine Citizens for Clean Elections (MCCE) is releasing a poll it commissioned showing that Maine voters strongly support campaign finance disclosure and transparency. Critical Insights conducted the poll in April, 2010, and the resulting data shows strong support for all dimensions of campaign finance disclosure, even when tested against other values such as confidentiality and privacy.

Among the highlights in the poll:

Voters believe that the names of political groups and donors should be available to the public.

More than 80% of Maine voters believe that having the names of donors to political organizations available to the public is important because it keeps the process open and transparent. Broken down by political party, gender, age, education and income, all voter groups strongly support transparency over confidentiality. Whether or not the voter would use the information her/himself, strong majorities favor public disclosure.

Voters want to know who pays for campaign ads.

85% of voters feel it is important to know who paid for the political campaign communications they see or hear. Knowing the name of an organization is not enough; voters want to know who finances and leads the group. About three quarters of those polled said that knowing who pays and who is behind the organization that pays helps them determine the credibility of the advertisement.

Voters value the information that disclosure provides.

Huge majorities of voters think it is important to know who gives to political campaigns, whether the contributors stand to gain from the result of the election, whether they are from Maine or from out-of-state, and the size of the contributions. For most voters, this information affects what they think and how they choose to vote.

Ann Luther and Alison Smith, co-chairs of MCCE said: "It's clear that whether political spending is for a candidate or a ballot question, Maine voters value their right to information about the source of funding for advertisements and other communications. We believe the results of this poll forcefully underscore the importance of protecting the public interest in campaign finance law."

MCCE chose to release the poll now because of the multiple campaign finance laws currently under attack nationally and here in Maine by the National Organization for Marriage. The entire poll can be viewed at: <http://bit.ly/bys9o9>

Maine Citizens for Clean Elections (MCCE) is a nonpartisan coalition of groups and individuals 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.