



Federal Court Refuses To Block Maine Clean Election Law

October 5, 2010

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Boston, MA) The United States Court of Appeals has rejected a motion for an emergency injunction to block the Maine Clean Election Act. The order was issued early this afternoon following a hearing this morning.

Ann Luther, Co-chair for Maine Citizens for Clean Elections (MCCE), said "We couldn't be more pleased. The Court put the public interest first, which is right where it should be."

"It's a good day when the appeals court stands with Maine people and the Clean Election system that we value so highly," said Alison Smith, Co-chair of MCCE. "The system works, so we are grateful that the Court refused to upend the hundreds of Clean Election campaigns that are underway."

Maine Citizens for Clean Elections together with eight legislative candidates urged the court to allow the program to continue and not to intervene at the height of the election season.

The three-judge panel of the First Circuit concluded that an injunction at this late date would cause "considerable harm . . . to many candidates, both MCEA participants and not, who have relied on" the program. The court was also concerned by the "chaos" that would result from changing the rules at the eleventh hour.

The lawsuit, originally filed in U.S. District Court in Maine, reflects a national strategy to advance the interests of wealthy special interests in campaigns and to thwart the will of the people in Maine and around the country where campaign finance reform enjoys broad support. The plaintiffs are seeking to invalidate the matching funds provision of Maine law, the contribution limit for gubernatorial candidates, and certain public reporting requirements.

Maine was the first state in the nation to pass a Clean Elections law allowing the people to have a significantly greater voice in the democratic process. It was found to be constitutional in a federal court challenge in 2000, and it has enjoyed increasing support and participation in the last ten years.

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Interviews with John Brautigam available on request