



# ON THE ROAD TO CLEAN ELECTIONS

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## FIRST STOP MAINE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 10, 2010

(Portland, Maine) --- Maine Citizens for Clean Elections (MCCE) will wrap up its 10 year anniversary celebration with two significant events on Thursday, November 18th. One will look at the accomplishments of the last 10 years since Clean Elections became law. The gala event will be held at Port City Music Hall beginning at 6pm.

“We’re gathering the movers and the shakers, the pioneers and many former skeptics, to celebrate the tremendous success of the Maine Clean Election system’s first ten years,” said Alison Smith, Co-chair of MCCE. “Last week we elected 186 Representatives and Senators, 80% of whom used the Clean Election system. This is the way we do elections in Maine.”

Tickets for the celebration are \$35 and are available online at [www.mainelection.org](http://www.mainelection.org).

Earlier in that same day, a panel discussion moderated by former Governor Angus King will put the Maine Clean Election system in a national context. Led by Professor Lawrence Lessig of Harvard University, a diverse panel of experts will explore the current political and legal landscape for campaign finance reform, including the outlook for the Fair Elections Now Act, a voluntary public funding system for candidates for Congress. Panelists will discuss the long term implications of this year’s Supreme Court decision in Citizens United, possible remedies, and the ongoing challenges to Maine’s and other states’ campaign finance laws. It will be held from 3:30-4:45pm at the Maine Historical Society at 489 Congress Street in Portland. This event is free and open to the public.

Participating in the panel discussion will be:

Nick Nyhart co- founder, president and CEO of Public Campaign. Since the early 1990’s Nyhart has worked with reformers and their allies across the country in pursuit of publicly financed elections. Prior to his work at Public Campaign, Nyhart worked with money and politics activists across the Northeast and

directed a six-state campaign finance organizing project that put the region in the national spotlight with its cutting edge reform measures.

Lawrence Lessig is the director of the Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics and a Professor of Law at Harvard Law School. Prior to returning to Harvard, he was a professor at Stanford Law School, where he founded the Center for Internet and Society. He also clerked for Judge Richard Posner on the 7th Circuit of Appeals and Justice Antonin Scalia on the United States Supreme Court. Lessig founded Change Congress which works to build support for public funding of Congressional campaigns.

Ellen S. Miller is cofounder and director of the Sunlight Foundation. The Sunlight Foundation uses cutting-edge technology and ideas to make government transparent and accountable. Ellen founded the Center for Responsive Politics and Public Campaign and is a recognized leader in the related fields of government transparency and campaign finance policy. Back in the early 1990's, Ellen advised the Maine activists as they studied the issue of money in Maine politics and crafted the Maine Clean Election Act.

Brenda Wright is legal counsel to Maine Citizens for Clean Elections and director of the Democracy Project at Demos. Brenda joined Demos in January 2007 with 18 years of experience in litigation, public education, advocacy and media appearances on voting rights, campaign finance reform, and election reform issues. Before joining Demos, Brenda served as Managing Attorney at the National Voting Rights Institute in Boston. Brenda also served previously as Director of the Voting Rights Project at the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law in Washington, D.C.

“Understanding where our democracy is heading is important for everyone who cares about good government and public policy,” said MCCE Co-Chair Ann Luther. “How we elect our representatives matters not just at election time, but in between elections, too. We’re thrilled to have these nationally-known experts in campaign finance come to Maine to share their thoughts and celebrate with us.”

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