



For Immediate Release

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Contact:

Andrew Bossie
MCCE Executive Director
207-831-6223

Poll Finds Strong Support for Clean Elections and Campaign Finance Reform

Maine Citizens for Clean Elections released a poll today showing overwhelming support for the citizen-initiated Clean Election Act. According to the poll, 69.3% of likely Maine voters believe that Maine should continue to have Clean Elections.

The results are being released just as a bill to weaken Clean Elections (LD 1774) awaits Governor LePage's signature. Both the House and Senate rejected alternatives to the matching funds portion of the law after the US Supreme Court struck down a similar provision in Arizona last spring. Advocates strongly supported the "requalifying option" which was recommended by the nonpartisan Ethics Commission, saying it would keep Clean Elections strong by allowing candidates in all types of races to use Clean Elections and stay competitive. After collecting additional \$5 Qualifying Contributions from in-district voters, candidates would have been eligible for supplemental funds later in the campaign. But, rather than replace matching funds, the legislature simply deleted the provision from the statute.

"Our lawmakers had the responsibility to comply with the court ruling and keep Clean Elections strong. Instead, they opted to significantly weaken a law that puts voters, not big campaign donors, first," said Andrew Bossie, Executive Director of Maine Citizens for Clean Elections. "The legislature is out of touch with a vast majority of Maine people who want strong Clean Elections. We're very disappointed that they failed to uphold the will of Maine people, and acted to weaken our law and increase the influence of wealthy special interests in our elections and government instead," he continued.

The poll also found that 64% of Maine people oppose the US Supreme Court's infamous ruling in *Citizens United vs. FEC*. That decision allowed corporations and unions to spend unlimited amounts of money to influence elections.

The poll, conducted by Maine People's Resource Center, includes six questions about money in politics that were asked of 475 likely Maine voters. The poll took place between March 17 and March 19. The questions were sponsored by Maine Citizens for Clean Elections, a nonpartisan nonprofit organization that advocates for Maine's Clean Election law.

A link to the full results of the poll can be found at: <http://www.maineclanelections.org/polling.html> and at <http://www.maineclanelections.org/assets/files/MPRC%20Poll%20March%202012.pdf>

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