



For Immediate Release

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Maine People Unite for Strong Campaign Finance Laws at State House

A diverse group of Maine people will rally today in support of campaign finance reform in the Hall of Flags at the State House beginning at 10:15 a.m.

“We’re Mainers First” is the theme of the event, which is organized by the nonpartisan Maine Citizens for Clean Elections (MCCE).

“Whether Republican, Democrat, Green or independent, Maine people have a shared interest in government that is transparent, accountable, effective, and truly representative,” said Andrew Bossie, Executive Director of MCCE. “Today’s rally celebrates the fact that people from across the political spectrum support and use Maine’s Clean Election Act, and we urge lawmakers to move forward on meaningful reforms that put people first.”

Speakers at the rally will address three areas of reform that have garnered bipartisan support in the 126th Maine Legislature: strengthening Clean Elections, enhancing disclosure laws, and advancing a U.S. Constitutional Amendment on Campaign Finance.

Senator Ed Youngblood (R-Penobscot) will talk about LD 1309, An Act to Strengthen the Maine Clean Election Act, which aims to replace the matching funds system that was struck down by the courts. “Maine citizens initiated this law, voters passed it, and until the court struck down matching funds, it worked just fine. My constituents have a right to expect that this legislature will make the necessary repairs so that Clean Elections is a viable alternative for candidate in all races, even the most hotly contested ones.”

Rep. Mike Carey (D-Lewiston) will explain LD 1271 An Act To Increase Transparency in Reporting of Party Committees, Political Action Committees and Ballot Question Committees, which calls for increased transparency and accountability. “Voters have a right to know who is asking for their vote, and this bill shines a bright light on campaign money – who gives it, who raises it, and who receives it,” said Rep. Carey. “Disclosure is the foundation of democratic elections, and we need more of it.”

Sen. Dick Woodbury, (U-Cumberland) will speak about LR 66, a Joint Resolution Memorializing the United States Congress to Pass a Constitutional Amendment to Reverse the Ruling of The United States Supreme Court in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*. “The massive spending in elections in recent years has drowned out and distorted the balanced discussion of issues and candidates that should define our elections,” Woodbury remarked. “We need to be able to regulate campaign finances, and the *Citizens United* decision has constrained our ability to do this.”

Citizens from around Maine will also speak. Carmen Lavertu of Thomaston was involved in a local effort to pass a resolution calling for a Constitutional Amendment. “Our politics may be mostly polarized, but fair campaign finance rules are something on which we can all agree,” she said. “And if Maine is to continue to lead the nation, we must amend our Clean Election law so that it works well for future candidates.”

A recent poll commissioned by MCCE and conducted by the Maine People’s Resource Center showed that nearly 70% of Maine people support the idea of a Constitutional Amendment on campaign finance. “It should be no surprise that resolutions calling for a U.S. Constitutional Amendment to overturn *Citizens United* are being advanced in states around the country,” said Senator Woodbury.

“One month ago, Maine people filled a hearing room to oppose the governor’s proposed budget cuts that would gut Clean Elections,” said Bossie. “We expect to see Maine people return to the State House when the important bills discussed today are heard. Lawmakers should get the message: “We’re Mainers first. Let’s get the big money out of politics, reduce the influence of special interests, and strengthen the voices of ordinary Maine people in our elections.”

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