



For Immediate Release

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Maine Legislature Calls on Congress to Pass Constitutional Amendment to Reverse Citizens United

Augusta, ME - Noting that "the current legal landscape severely constrains the range of options available to citizens, frustrating efforts to reduce the influence of moneyed interest in elections and in government," a resolution to overturn the Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision was passed today by both the Maine State House and State Senate.

A total 111 members of the house voted for the measure, with 25 Republicans joining unanimous support from the Democratic (82) and the unrolled (4) caucuses. In the Senate, 25 Senators voted affirmative, with 5 Republicans joining all Democrats (19) and the lone independent. Sen. Richard Woodbury (U – Yarmouth) sponsored the resolution that memorializes Congress to pass a constitutional amendment to reverse the ruling of the United States Supreme Court in *Citizens United v. FEC*.

Maine now becomes the thirteenth state to call for such a constitutional amendment to overturn *Citizens United*, following closely on the heels of passage of a similar resolution passed by West Virginia earlier this month. New Hampshire, which is currently considering a similar measure, is now the only New England state government that has not directed Congress to take action in the three years since the ruling.

"The *Citizens United* and other Supreme Court rulings have elevated the role outside special interest money in our elections, while diminishing the voices of everyday people in Augusta and Washington," said Andrew Bossie, Executive Director of Maine Citizens for Clean Elections. "For the past three years Maine people have taken action by passing town resolutions, signing petitions, and contacting lawmakers calling for a constitutional amendment that ensures government is accountable to voters, not campaign donors. With Maine's leadership, we are one step closer to making this a reality."

Sen. Dick Woodbury (U-Cumberland) remarked, "We've seen campaigns in Maine so inundated with distortionary advertising, robotic phone calls, push polls, attack ads and substance-less mass mailings that the genuine views, character, experience, record and vision of candidates are overshadowed and obscured." He continued, "This is not reasonable debate of issues, not respectable difference of opinion, this is not informed and thoughtful advocacy, and it is certainly not good democracy. It's something much closer to the buying of elections."

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.

In a floor speech Rep. Dennis Keschl (R-Belgrade) said, "Unions, corporations, and other wealthy special interest groups should not be able to use their money to drown out the voices of the people."

Groups working on a national level hailed the vote. "This terrific bi-partisan vote is a huge win, not only for Maine, but for all Americans," said Peter Schurman, Campaign Director at Free Speech For People. "Republicans, independents, and Democrats alike are clamoring for a constitutional amendment to reverse *Citizens United* and bring back real democracy. We're thrilled that Maine is now helping lead the way forward."

The language and votes on the resolution can be found here:

http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_126th/billtexts/SP054801.asp

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