



**For Immediate Release**

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**Maine Citizens for Clean Elections Calls for Override of Gubernatorial Vetoes**

*Group says two modest transparency bills should become law.*

Augusta, ME - Maine Citizens for Clean Elections (MCCE) today launched an effort to override Governor LePage's veto of two bills that increase the transparency of Maine's campaign finance system.

"Maine people have the right to know who is making political contributions," said Andrew Bossie, MCCE's Executive Director. "Disclosure is the foundation of campaign finance law and important to every Mainer."

The two bills are relatively modest in scope. LD 1271, which was unanimously endorsed by members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee and passed without controversy in both the House and Senate, calls for higher penalties of campaign finance reporting violations in the weeks leading up to the election.

"This bill would do nothing more than encourage compliance with existing reporting requirements so that voters have critical information before, not after, Election Day," said Bossie. "The potential for significant penalties means that few campaigns would ever consider the fine for late reporting a mere cost of doing business."

The second bill, LD 1023, brings transparency to post-election fundraising by a governor-elect. Today this fundraising is completely unregulated.

"Maine people have no way of knowing who contributes, how much they contribute, or how much is spent for transition and inaugural expenses," said Bossie. "There is no contribution limit in place, there are no expenditure guidelines, no source limit, no required accounting of money raised or spent, and no accounting of where surplus funds end up. This bill would only require the most basic reporting so that people can see who is giving and how money is spent."

The bill includes a provision disallowing the governor-elect from directly soliciting donations and expands the ban on lobbyist contributions during the legislative session to this post-election fundraising.

The vetoes run contrary to the governor's oft-stated support for transparency. Just a year ago, before signing a bill increasing disclosure of state contracts that go to executive branch officials and legislators, Governor LePage stated:

“It is reasonable to ask our elected leaders to disclose who is paying them. It is good for the health of our democracy and the people of Maine... This will increase trust in the system and ensure that people have the opportunity to take appropriate action and make decisions accordingly.”

“Maine people want to move forward, not backward, when it comes to reducing the influence of big money in elections and in government,” concluded Bossie. “These bills are good for democracy, and they should become law. We ask each and every legislator to carefully consider the benefits of voting to override Governor LePage’s ill-advised vetoes of these modest but important bills.”

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