



**For Immediate Release**

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**Legislature Fails to Override Gubernatorial Vetoes of Transparency Laws**

*Campaign finance reform advocates disappointed in legislature's flip flop*

Augusta, ME - Maine Citizens for Clean Elections (MCCE) today condemned the Maine Legislature and Governor LePage for undermining the modest progress made toward greater disclosure during the 126<sup>th</sup> Maine Legislature after the legislature failed to override the governor's veto on two transparency bills late last night.

"Two common-sense bills would have improved financial transparency in our politics but were killed for no good reason," said Andrew Bossie, MCCE's Executive Director. "Disclosure is the foundation of campaign finance law and important to every Mainer, and these bills should have become law."

LD 1271, which calls for higher potential penalties of campaign finance reporting violations in the weeks leading up to the election, was unanimously endorsed by members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee and passed without controversy in both the House and Senate before the governor vetoed it. On Wednesday, the House voted 104 – 43 to override the governor's veto, but the Senate fell short by one vote, 23 - 12. In recent elections, political action committees that have failed to report accurately have been subject to paltry fines that have been referred to as "the cost of doing business" among political operatives.

"This bill would have done nothing more than encourage compliance with existing reporting requirements so that voters have critical information before, not after, Election Day," said Bossie. "We don't understand the rationale for vetoing this modest bill."

The second bill, LD 1023, would have brought 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 limits, no required accounting of money raised or spent, and no accounting of where surplus funds end up. This bill would require the most basic reporting so that people can see who is giving and how money is spent."

LD 1023 also contained a provision barring the governor-elect from directly soliciting donations for the transition and inaugural expenses. "The Legislature's flip flop means that Maine people will remain in

the dark when the winner of the 2014 gubernatorial election picks up the phone and starts dialing for dollars,” continued Bossie.

The override votes closely tracked, with one exception, the original votes on LD 1023 which passed without Republican support. On Wednesday, Senator Ed Youngblood (R-Penobscot) voted to override the governor’s veto.

“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 were modest in scope, but they moved Maine law in the right direction. The failure to override these misguided vetoes is extremely disappointing. Maine people will keep fighting for these and other reforms that protect and enhance our democratic process.”

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LD 1271 Roll calls <http://www.mainelegislature.org/LawMakerWeb/rollcalls.asp?ID=280048192>

LD 1023 Roll Calls <http://www.mainelegislature.org/LawMakerWeb/rollcalls.asp?ID=280047722>