



Press Release
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Maine Citizens Mark 4th Anniversary of *Citizens United* Ruling
Group Unveils Spending Prediction for 2014 State Races at State House Event

Augusta - Maine Citizens for Clean Elections (MCCE) gathered in Augusta today to mark the 4th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's controversial *Citizens United* ruling. The group announced its prediction that Maine's 2014 state elections would be fueled with \$26.6 million in private money. That surpasses the amount spent in 2010, the last gubernatorial election year, by more than 80%.

"Thanks to *Citizens United*, other court rulings, and subsequent changes to our campaign finance laws, there is more private money than ever flooding Maine's elections. 2014 will attract more money from outside interests than ever before," said Andrew Bossie, MCCE's Executive Director. "While we predict the amount of private money in the 2014 election will be nearly twice that of 2010, the good news is that citizens are mobilizing to make sure that Maine voices are heard in our elections and in our government."

Two of MCCE's grassroots leaders, Emma Halas-O'Connor and Carmen Lavertu, spoke at the event.

"Unless we work to undo the damage of *Citizens United* and strengthen Maine's Clean Election system, the influence of large corporations on our legislators and policy outcomes will only increase," said Halas-O'Connor, who is the Grassroots Advocacy Coordinator at the Environmental Health Strategy Center. "The voice of Maine parents and consumers should be heard just as loudly in the Maine legislature as the voice of the national trade association. We can only ensure that happens if we restore a robust Clean Election system in Maine, and work to increase transparency and accountability in the legislature and the Governor's office."

Lavertu, a retired educator from Thomaston, said, "I was here last year with a resolve to overturn *Citizens United*. In the long term, I hope we will do that. But, today my focus is on what citizens can do to take back our democracy, despite *Citizens United*. We need to have a public dialogue, led by citizens, and we must build a movement to ensure that we have a government that depends on voters, not big money." Lavertu is hosting a gathering in Damariscotta this evening that will bring local people together with others around the country

who are working on campaign finance reform. Similar gatherings will be held in Auburn and Portland.

Bossie concluded with, "In spite of *Citizens United* and the other rulings that favor big money over ordinary citizens, Maine can have a robust public funding system and greater transparency, and we can begin to close some of the loopholes that provide avenues for big money in elections. Nothing could be more important than keeping voters at the center of elections. Maine people have led before, and we are up to the challenge today."

In January 2010, the Supreme Court issued its 5-4 *Citizens United v F.E.C.* decision, allowing unlimited political spending by corporations and unions in elections, striking down controls on political giving that had been in place for decades. Since the ruling, spending by outside groups in elections has exploded in state and national elections.

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