



PRESS RELEASE
5/20/20

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A New Report on Corporate Contributions in Maine Elections

[PORTLAND, ME] — Maine Citizens for Clean Elections published new data in a series of biennial reports. [Report #16 on Corporate Contributions](#) analyses corporate money in Maine political campaigns over recent election years.

Since the landmark [Citizens United decision in 2010](#), politicians and activists alike have denounced the rise of big money – and corporate money – in American politics. Corporate influence in the electoral process can overpower the voices of voters and warp the legislative process.

“Corporate political spending takes power away from voters,” said Anna Kellar, Executive Director of Maine Citizens for Clean Elections. “Our economy and our democracy both suffer when buying influence in Augusta is a cost of doing business.”

The Corporate Contributions report is based on a review of contributions given to state-level candidates, political parties, Caucus PACs, and Leadership PACs. Contributions were reviewed directly from corporate or commercial sources, as well as from PACs operated by corporations.

Candidates, parties, and PACs are legally required to report campaign finance data to the Maine Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices (Ethics Commission). Data was obtained directly from the [Ethics Commission](#) and additional data through the nonpartisan [FollowTheMoney.org](#) website, operated by the National Institute on Money in Politics.

This data shines a light on the industries and individual corporate donors that have put the most money into the political system. This includes 5 industries, which have contributed to the electoral fortunes of Maine candidates, political parties, and their PACs.

Substantial contributions from industries reveal strong vested interests in public policy decisions. These decisions will be made by the recipients of those contributions. Like all contributors, these corporate interests are participating in a system of mutual benefit.



Leadership PACs and Caucus PACs spend these contributions to build political power — usually by supporting candidates in their respective parties. Thus, even if certain candidates expressly state that they do not accept money from certain industries, it is possible that they benefit indirectly from political allies who raise and spend money to help them get elected.

The imbalance this money brings to the law-making process and the indirect effect it has on Maine citizens are topics of considerable public importance. If Maine intends to maintain a democracy of the people, by the people, and for the people, the state should carefully consider whether contributions from corporate interests merit the same privileged legal status as contributions made by real people.

[Read the report here.](#)

Maine Citizens for Clean Elections is a nonpartisan nonprofit organization working to ensure that Maine's campaign finance laws, elections, and government serve the public interest, both in principle and in practice. We engage Maine people from across the political spectrum, using research, education, and outreach to further fairness, inclusion, and opportunity in our politics.

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