



Testimony before the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

LD 256, An Act To Ban the Use of Leadership Political Action Committees for Personal Profit

February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Senator Luchini, Representative Schneck, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on LD 256, An Act To Ban the Use of Leadership Political Action Committees for Personal Profit

My name is Anna Kellar. I am the Executive Director of Maine Citizens for Clean Elections.

Maine Citizens for Clean Elections has been the leading campaign finance organization in Maine for over twenty years, and one of the nation's most respected state-based organizations advocating for democratically funded elections. We are proud of our national reputation. But we are all Mainers, and our mission has always been with and for the people of this state.

Maine Citizens for Clean Elections strongly supports LD 256.

A fundamental and important concept underlying campaign finance laws is the need to prevent corruption and the appearance of corruption. Political funds must never be a vehicle for a candidate's own enrichment.

LD 256 fine-tunes the statute barring candidates from benefitting personally from funds raised in political action committees (PACs) in which the candidate is involved. It reduces the potential for self-dealing by disallowing loans or gifts to a candidate's business and preventing the commingling of PAC funds with personal funds.

Political funds must be used only for the legitimate purposes for which they are raised. PAC funds should never be viewed as a pot of money for candidates or legislators to use for personal or business purposes.

We encourage all committee members to vote Ought to Pass on LD 456.