



Testimony before the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs  
LD 411 - Resolve, Directing the Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices To  
Allow Maine Clean Election Act Funds To Be Used for Election Recounts

February 11, 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 411 Resolve, Directing the Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices To Allow Maine Clean Election Act Funds To Be Used for Election Recounts

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 testifies neither for nor against LD 411.

This bill concerns recounts and what funds candidates may use to pay for related expenses.

At present, all candidates, whether privately funded or in the Clean Election program, may raise additional private funds after the election specifically for a recount. Individual contributions are subject to the regular contribution limits. The law specifies that Clean Election funds may not be used.

We are generally in agreement with rules that treat Clean Election candidates the same as those who use private funding. Today, the recount funding rules do that.

We are also supportive of rules that allow Clean Election candidates to eschew private fundraising. The recount rules do not allow this.

Most Clean Election candidates choose this funding option at least in part because they do not wish to raise private money. The choice to reject private fundraising is deliberate. In the unlikely event that a candidate's race ended up in a recount and the candidate had not spent all the available Clean Election funds, we see little harm in allowing that candidate to use Clean Election funds for recount expenses.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views.