

Maine Citizens for Clean Elections

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TO: The Honorable Senator Lisa T. Marraché, Senate Chair
The Honorable Representative John L. Patrick, House Chair
The Joint Standing Committee on Legal and Veterans Affairs

DATE: April 18, 2007

RE: **LD 1136** "An Act to Amend the Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices' Appointment Process"

Maine Citizens for Clean Elections (MCCE) testifies in support of LD 1136.

MCCE is grateful to Rep. Canavan for submitting a bill to solve the problem of long vacancies on the Ethics Commission.

We agree that when Commission seats become empty, they should be filled in a timely way. Putting a time limit on the leadership offices and the governor will prevent a repeat of the year and a half long vacancy we recently experienced for one of the Commission's five seats.

Certainly, having a full contingent on the commission is a benefit to the Commission itself, candidates, legislators, lobbyists and the general public: first, the Commission is more likely to have a quorum in order to meet and conduct business; and second, more people with different points of view will hear complaints and make decisions.

In addition to replacing Commissioners who are unable to serve until the end of their terms, Representative Canavan's bill also forces legislative leaders and the governor to deal with expired terms in a timely way. This will help to prevent Commissioners from being in the awkward position of serving without appointment for long periods.

We urge you to vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 1136.