

PRESS RELEASE
04/14/2020

Contact: Jen Lancaster, Communications Manager
Jen@DemocracyMaine.org | 859.753.0425

NEW REPORT ON THE STATE OF OUR DEMOCRACY

[PORTLAND, ME] – Democracy Maine just released a [new report](#) that assesses the health of the state’s democracy. The report uses indicators based on publicly-available data, published reports, and research.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted Maine’s government, with the early conclusion of the second session of the 129th legislature. The state faces challenges of conducting elections while practicing social distancing. Even in the midst of a crisis, our democracy remains vital. The report offers a timely, objective, and informative portrait of Maine’s government.

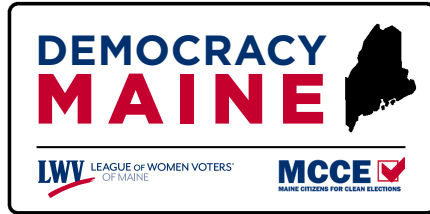
Maine has a solid democracy, with high voter participation, strong voting rights, and healthy freedom of information laws. Nonetheless, Maine falls short on key measures. This includes aspects of representative government, the influence of money in politics, and the conduct of elections.

Mainers’ experience of democracy also varies widely based on location, age, race, gender and income. The most marginalized communities often face obstacles to full participation.

The [Maine: State of our Democracy](#) report offers a perspective in several areas: representative government, voter and civic participation, money in politics, voting rights and barriers to voting, election methods, conduct of elections, freedom of information, newspapers and media access, and the impact of poverty on voting.

In each chapter, key indicators study whether certain trends in Maine are positive or negative. Where possible, the report compares Maine with other states to provide a larger context. Each topic includes an overview of why the subject matters to democracy, analysis, visuals, summary, methodology, future research, and reference and resource materials.

Research was conducted by Democracy Maine, a collaboration between the League of Women Voters of Maine and Maine Citizens for Clean Elections. Democracy Maine will publish updated reports in odd-numbered years beginning in 2021.



REVIEWS:

"This report Provides a great snapshot of the state of our Democracy in Maine. It is both an affirmation of what we are doing well and a challenge for where we can do better."

— Hon. Roger Katz, former State Senator

"This report is Democracy Maine's latest contribution in nudging our systems of democracy in positive directions in representative government, civic participation, citizen voice, electoral integrity, and transparency in governance. It draws attention to both Maine's achievements and the areas where we can and must strive to do better."

— Dick Woodbury, former State Senator

"Maine's democracy is vibrant but requires vigilance to remain so. At a time when many of us have grown weary of the rigid ideologies and cancerous partisanship that defines our politics, we cannot retreat. An engaged, civil, respectful, and active citizenry is the best , and perhaps only, inoculation against the erosion of our democratic values. Please read this report and remain engaged on behalf of all of us."

— Kay Rand, former Chief of Staff for U.S Senator Angus King

The League of Women Voters of Maine (LWVME) and Maine Citizens for Clean Elections (MCCE), in collaboration as Democracy Maine, work together to make government more equitable, inclusive, and accessible by improving elections, protecting and engaging voters, and reducing the influence of private money in politics.

###