

## News from Maine Citizens for Clean Elections

### New Website

Maine Citizens for Clean Elections (MCCE) is pleased to announce the launch of its newly redesigned website, which we hope will serve as an important resource on Clean Elections in Maine. The site includes information about the MCCE coalition, its mission and history, and its advocacy in support of the Maine Clean Election Act (MCEA). The new site also includes information about the MCEA law, rules and other information about its implementation. Check it out at [www.mainecleanelections.org](http://www.mainecleanelections.org).

### 2008 Clean Elections Analysis

The results are in! MCCE recently completed its analysis of use of the Clean Election system from the recent election cycle and found that eighty-one percent (81%) of candidates and a full eighty-five percent (85%) of the newly-elected Maine legislature used the system in 2008. This is a fifty-five percent (55%) increase from 2000 when the MCEA was first implemented. The analysis also shows that the system enjoys broad support across political parties with sixty-seven percent (67%) of unenrolled candidates, seventy-one percent (71%) of Republican candidates, seventy-eight percent (78%) of Green candidates and ninety-one percent (91%) of Democratic candidates using the Clean Election system. Other highlights include a high of eighty-eight percent (88%) of women using Clean Elections last year, up from seventy percent (70%) in 2002. You can download the complete analysis of usage of the Clean Elections system over the past four elections cycles from MCCE's website at [www.mainecleanelections.org](http://www.mainecleanelections.org).

### Clean Elections in the 124<sup>th</sup> Legislature

Maine's first-in-the-nation Clean Election public funding system is a national model, and since its passage in 1996 the law has dramatically decreased the role of private money in our elections, reduced the influence of special interests, and allowed a diverse array of qualified citizens to run and serve in public office.

Despite the success and popularity of Maine's law, it is coming under attack in 2009. To date, one legislator has committed to introducing legislation to eliminate the Clean Elections system for gubernatorial candidates, and Governor Baldacci's proposed biennial budget cuts funding for the program by more than half. In addition to these threats, there is also a bill (LD 205) that would repeal Clean Elections altogether, despite the fact that an overwhelming majority of the current legislature used the system in 2008 and Mainers continue to strongly support the law they passed over a decade ago. In a recent poll commissioned by MCCE, Maine voters were asked whether candidates for governor should use Clean Elections, and 82 percent (82%) said yes, with 61 percent (61%) saying they were more likely to vote for candidates who used the system. Complete poll results are available at [www.mainecleanelections.org/research.html](http://www.mainecleanelections.org/research.html)

We also know that Clean Elections has allowed more and different people to run for office including a higher number of women. Many legislators say they would not have run for office without the opportunity provided by the Clean Election system, and many State House advocates tell us that the industries that hold so much influence in other states simply do not have the same pull here. Public funding is foundational reform; whether the issue is health care, tax reform or the environment, reducing the influence of big money is critical to all future policy victories in our state. Looking forward to 2010, we have a system that allows candidates for state office to run campaigns that are about Maine people and Maine issues and not about special interests. Now is not the time to abandon Clean Elections. There are two ways you can help:

### Contact Your State Representatives

Your elected officials need to hear from you! Call them today, and tell them to stop the attacks on Clean Elections and to stand up for this successful program that Maine people value and want to keep. Visit the **Maine Secretary of State's Elected Official Lookup** website at [www.maine.gov/portal/government/edemocracy/lookup\\_officials.php](http://www.maine.gov/portal/government/edemocracy/lookup_officials.php) for contact information for your elected officials, or call one of the following toll free numbers listed below to leave a message for your legislator:

- To reach your Representative: **1-800-423-2900** (TTY number is 207-287-4469)
- To reach your Senator: **1-800-423-6900** (TTY number is 207-287-1583)

### Join MCCE's Action Network

We know the 124<sup>th</sup> Legislature is going to produce many challenges in the coming months. With your help, MCCE can continue to make sure the citizen voice is heard in the halls of the State House and beyond. Please sign-up for MCCE's Action Network at [www.mainecleanelections.org](http://www.mainecleanelections.org) to receive emails about important news and alerts about Clean Elections in Maine and at the national level.

- Jill Ward, Program Director, MCCE  
and member LWV Portland Area