



Press Release
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MECEP Endorses Campaign Finance Referendum

Joins Mainers for Accountable Elections coalition

Augusta, Maine (Thursday, July 2, 2015) The Maine Center for Economic Policy (MECEP), a nonpartisan research and policy organization dedicated to improving economic well-being for low- and moderate-income Mainers, is joining the Mainers for Accountable Elections Coalition.

Mainers for Accountable Elections is a broad, grassroots coalition, made up of Democrats, Republican, Greens, Independents and grassroots organizations from throughout Maine that is leading the campaign in support of this year's referendum to limit the influence that "big money" can have on Maine's elected official by reforming Maine's campaign finance and disclosure laws.

More than 80,000 Mainers signed petitions to place the measure on the ballot. Voters now have a chance to vote on this measure this November.

"In order to truly strengthen this state's economy we need to ensure that politicians are accountable to everyday, middle-class Mainers who are struggling to get by, pay their bills and keep food on the table - not wealthy individuals and big corporations that can write big campaign checks," said MECEP Executive Director Garrett Martin. "These reforms will also make it possible for anyone to run for office- not just the independently wealthy, those dependent on the existing political infrastructure, or people beholden to moneyed interests.

Until we limit the influence of big money on our representatives and increase transparency in Maine elections, special interests will continue to block progress on issues that impact Mainers throughout this state."

This November's referendum will:

- Increase transparency and disclosure by requiring special interest groups to list their top three donors on all political ads so that voters know right away who is paying for them.
- Increase accountability by toughening penalties and fines for candidates and special interest groups that break our campaign finance laws. Right now, Maine's penalties are so small they are merely a cost of doing business. This referendum increases penalties and fines up to 100% of

what the wrong-doer spent on the election.

- Give everyone a chance to participate, and allow candidates to run for office without being dependent on contributions from special interests. This referendum strengthens Maine's landmark Clean Elections Act so that everyone can be represented in our democracy, not just the ultra-wealthy.

"This referendum gives Mainers an opportunity to take back control of our elections and hold politicians and big-moneyed interests in check," Martin said. "Until we do, issues Maine families care about most - access to affordable health care, financial security, good jobs, and opportunities to get ahead -will suffer. That's why MECEP enthusiastically supports the efforts of Mainers from across this state to ensure this referendum's success on November 3."

About the Maine Center for Economic Policy

The Maine Center for Economic Policy advances public policies that help Maine people prosper in a strong, fair and sustainable economy. We advance this mission through high-quality research, analysis, citizen education, and coalition building. MECEP is an independent, nonpartisan organization.

To learn more about what we do, visit www.mecep.org.