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Clean Election Participation and Success Detailed in New Report

AUGUSTA – Maine Citizens for Clean Elections (MCCE) released the fifth in its series of Money in Politics reports today.

2012 Legislative Elections: An Analysis of Clean Election Participation and Outcomes compares the participation and success rates of candidates using Clean Election funding and private funding with prior election cycles. It presents raw data and observes that, while overall participation declined in the Clean Election program in 2012, success rates remained high.

The report found:

- **The success rate for all Clean Election candidates was 54%, the highest rate in the history of the program. In comparison, just 39% of privately funded candidates won their races.**
- **Clean Election candidates won 65% of the races that pitted a Clean Election candidate against one using private funding.**
- **88% of the Clean Election candidates who challenged incumbent legislators won their races.**
- **The drop-off in participation was most pronounced among male candidates and Republican candidates for the House of Representatives.**
- **Consistent with prior election cycles, women candidates used Clean Elections at a higher rate than their male counterparts.**
- **Three of the four major party caucuses in the 126th Maine Legislature include strong majorities of lawmakers who used Clean Elections. Senate Democrats: 89%, Senate Republicans: 80%; House Democrats: 85%; and House Republicans: 40%.**

“While it appears that Clean Election candidates did more than hold their own in the 2012 elections, these races took place in the context of unprecedented independent spending,” said Andrew Bossie, Executive Director of MCCE. “Correlation is not causation. While the high success rate is heartening, it needs to be put in perspective once we have the final spending numbers for all of the entities that spent money to influence the outcome of these contests.”

MCCE will do a more comprehensive analysis of spending in the legislative election after the final reports are filed this month. The reporting deadline for both candidates and PACs is December 18th.

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