

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

An Act To Change the Campaign Finance Laws Pertaining to Campaign Contributions To Allow for Increases Indexed to Inflation

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 21-A MRSA §1015, sub-§1, as amended by PL 2007, c. 443, Pt. A, §10, is further amended to read:

1. Individuals. An individual may not make contributions to a candidate in support of the candidacy of one person aggregating more than ~~\$500 in any election~~ \$1,000 for a primary election and \$1,000 for a general election for a gubernatorial candidate or more than ~~\$250 in any election~~ \$350 for a primary election and \$350 for a general election for any other candidate. A candidate may raise the funds for a primary election and a general election at the same time as long as the candidate deposits the funds raised into 2 separate accounts. A portion of the funds not to exceed \$1,000 for a gubernatorial candidate or \$350 for any other candidate must be deposited in an account to be used for the primary election, and a portion of the funds not to exceed \$1,000 for a gubernatorial candidate or \$350 for any other candidate must be deposited in an account to be used for the general election. ~~This limitationsubsection~~ does not apply to contributions in support of a candidate by that candidate or that candidate's spouse or domestic partner. Every 2 years beginning on September 1, 2011, the commission shall calculate an adjustment to the contribution limits listed in this subsection to the Consumer Price Index published monthly by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. The adjustment must be based on the difference between the price index on the date of comparison and the price index on the base period. The base period is the price index on September 1, 2009. In the event that this adjustment leads to an amount that is not a multiple of \$25, the amount must be rounded to the nearest multiple of \$25. The commission has the authority to submit legislation to adjust the contribution limits to reflect the indexing.

Sec. 2. 21-A MRSA §1015, sub-§2, as amended by PL 2007, c. 443, Pt. A, §11, is further amended to read:

2. Committees; corporations; associations. A political committee, political action committee, other committee, firm, partnership, corporation, association or organization may not make contributions to a candidate in support of the candidacy of one person aggregating more than ~~\$500 in any election~~ \$1,000 for the primary election and \$1,000 for the general election for a gubernatorial candidate or more than ~~\$250 in any election~~ \$350 for a primary election and \$350 for a general election for any other candidate. A candidate may raise the funds for a primary election and a general election at the same time as long as the candidate deposits the funds raised into 2 separate accounts. A portion of the funds not to exceed \$1,000 for a gubernatorial candidate or \$350 for any other candidate must be deposited in an account to be used for the primary election, and a portion of the funds not to exceed \$1,000 for a gubernatorial candidate or \$350 for any other candidate must be deposited in an account to be used for the general election. Every 2 years beginning September 1, 2011, the commission shall calculate an adjustment to the contribution limits listed in this subsection to the Consumer Price Index published monthly by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. The adjustment must be

based on the difference between the price index on the date of comparison and the price index on the base period. The base period is the price on September 1, 2009. In the event that this adjustment leads to an amount that is not a multiple of \$25, the amount must be rounded to the nearest multiple of \$25. The commission has the authority to submit legislation to adjust the contribution limits to reflect the indexing.

SUMMARY

This bill raises the gubernatorial campaign contribution limit from \$500 to \$1,000 for any election. It also raises the campaign contribution limit for all other candidates from \$250 to \$350 for any election. This bill also allows a candidate to raise money for a primary and a general election at the same time as long as the contribution is distributed into 2 separate accounts and that the total contribution does not exceed the total contribution limit of \$2,000 for a gubernatorial candidate, not to exceed \$1,000 for the primary election and \$1,000 for the general election, or \$700 for any other candidate, not to exceed \$350 for the primary election and \$350 for the general election. The bill also ties the contribution limits to the Consumer Price Index published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics every 2 years, with the calculations beginning in September 2011. An adjustment will be made based on the difference between the Consumer Price Index on the date of calculation and the Consumer Price Index on the date of the base period, September 1, 2009. If this adjustment does not create an amount that is a multiple of \$25, it will be rounded to the nearest multiple of \$25. The bill also authorizes the commission to submit legislation to adjust the contribution limits to reflect the indexing.