

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 Amend the Maine Clean Election Act

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

Sec. 1. 21-A MRSA §1125, sub-§2, ¶B, as enacted by IB 1995, c. 1, §17, is amended to read:

B. ~~One thousand five hundred~~Two thousand dollars for a candidate for the State Senate; or

Sec. 2. 21-A MRSA §1125, sub-§2, ¶C, as enacted by IB 1995, c. 1, §17, is amended to read:

C. ~~Five hundred~~Seven hundred fifty dollars for a candidate for the State House of Representatives.

Sec. 3. 21-A MRSA §1125, sub-§3, as amended by PL 2007, c. 571, §11, is further amended to read:

3. Qualifying contributions. Participating candidates must obtain qualifying contributions during the qualifying period as follows:

A. For a gubernatorial candidate, at least 3,250 verified registered voters of this State must support the candidacy by providing a qualifying contribution to that candidate;

B. For a candidate for the State Senate, at least 150 verified registered voters from the candidate's electoral division must support the candidacy by providing a qualifying contribution to that candidate; or

C. For a candidate for the State House of Representatives, at least 50 verified registered voters from the candidate's electoral division must support the candidacy by providing a qualifying contribution to that candidate.

A payment, gift or anything of value may not be given in exchange for a qualifying contribution. A candidate may pay the fee for a money order that is a qualifying contribution in the amount of \$5 or \$10 as long as the donor making the qualifying contribution pays the \$5 or \$10 amount reflected on the money order. Any money order fees paid by a participating candidate must be paid for with seed money and reported in accordance with commission rules. A money order must be signed by the contributor to be a valid qualifying contribution. The commission may establish by routine technical rule, adopted in accordance with Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A, a procedure for a qualifying contribution to be made by a credit or debit transaction and by electronic funds transfer over the Internet. Records containing information provided by individuals who have made qualifying contributions over the Internet are confidential, except for the name of the individual making the contribution, the date of the contribution, the individual's residential address and the name and office sought of the candidate in whose support the contribution was made.

It is a violation of this chapter for a participating candidate or an agent of the participating candidate to misrepresent the purpose of soliciting qualifying contributions and obtaining the contributor's signed acknowledgement.

SUMMARY

This bill increases the amount of seed money contributions that Maine Clean Election Act candidates may receive from \$1,500 to \$2,000 for candidates for the State Senate and from \$500 to \$750 for candidates for the State House of Representatives. The bill also allows qualifying contributions to be in the amount of \$5 or \$10.