

**129th MAINE LEGISLATURE****LD 1583****LR 284(02)****An Act To Enact the Maine Citizens' Initiatives Clean Election Act****Fiscal Note for Bill as Amended by Committee Amendment " "****Committee: Veterans and Legal Affairs****Fiscal Note Required: Yes****Fiscal Note**

	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21	Projections FY 2021-22	Projections FY 2022-23
Net Cost (Savings)				
General Fund	\$3,022,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
Appropriations/Allocations				
General Fund	\$22,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Special Revenue Funds	\$773,614	\$1,524,270	\$1,524,945	\$1,525,638
Transfers				
General Fund	(\$3,000,000)	(\$3,000,000)	(\$3,000,000)	(\$3,000,000)
Other Special Revenue Funds	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000

Correctional and Judicial Impact Statements

The additional workload associated with the minimal number of new cases filed in the court system does not require additional funding at this time.

The collection of additional fine revenue will increase General Fund and dedicated revenue by minor amounts.

Fiscal Detail and Notes

This bill establishes the Maine Citizens' Initiatives Clean Election Fund (the fund) within the Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices (CGEEP) to provide a public financing mechanism for groups that meet specific criteria to support or oppose a direct initiative of legislation or a people's veto or to support a competing measure to a direct initiative of legislation. A group must collect 2,500 qualifying contributions to receive an initial distribution of \$600,000; for each additional 240 qualifying contributions the group will receive an additional \$50,000 up to a maximum amount of \$1,000,000 per group. The fund will receive an annual transfer of \$3,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund on or before January 1st of each year beginning January 1, 2020. Other funding will come from qualifying contributions raised by committees, voluntary contributions through a tax checkoff program, seed money contributions remaining unspent after a ballot question committee becomes a certified committee, fund revenues unspent after a referendum on a ballot question and certain fines collected related to the bill.

The bill includes a one-time General Fund appropriation of \$22,000 to the Department of Administrative and Financial Services in fiscal year 2019-20 for programming costs to add two new voluntary checkoffs to the individual income tax return. The bill also includes allocations to the GCEEP of \$750,000 in fiscal year 2019-20 and \$1,500,000 in fiscal year 2020-21 for distribution of funds to certified committees and \$23,614 in fiscal year 2019-20 and \$24,270 in fiscal year 2020-21 for one limited-period position to process additional qualifying contributions and to assist with compliance monitoring.

The bill requires that the annual \$3,000,000 transfers from the General Fund be offset by equivalent reductions in tax expenditures as defined in Title 36, section 199-A, subsection 2. As no guidance is provided in the bill on which tax expenditures will be eliminated nor on who will make that decision, and with no notwithstanding language to allow tax expenditures described in current statute to be eliminated, this fiscal note does not reflect any \$3,000,000 offset to the transfers.