



STATE OF MAINE  
COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENTAL ETHICS  
AND ELECTION PRACTICES  
135 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE  
04333-0135

**LD 255 – An Act to Require Campaign Finance Reports for State and County Candidates  
Other than Governor to be Filed on the 42<sup>nd</sup> Day Before Any Election**

**Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs**

**February 6, 2023**

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and members of the committee – my name is Martha Currier, and I am the Assistant Director of the Maine Ethics Commission. The Commission is neither for nor against LD 255.

The Legislature has made clear that timely disclosure of campaign activity is critically important to Maine's elections. This bill would create one additional report for all Maine Clean Election Act (MCEA) and traditionally financed legislative, and county candidates 42 days before a primary or special election. Below are two reporting tables – one for MCEA candidates and one for all other candidates (excluding the governor). This testimony is intended to explain how the additional report would affect roughly 450 candidates and our administration of their financial reporting by demonstrating how LD 255 would have impacted the 2022 election cycle.

Traditionally Financed Legislative and County Candidates. LD 255 shortens the length of time between the current January Semiannual and the 11-Day Pre-Primary Reports for these candidates by adding a report to the statute in May. Currently, traditionally financed candidates file their initial report in January of an election year if they've had financial activity over \$500, or 11 days before the primary, which covers the first five months of their campaign.

Commission staff note that most candidates may file little or no financial activity on the proposed 42-day pre-primary report because most campaigns, in our experience, do not have much activity until immediately before the primary. Also, some of these candidates do not have an opponent in the primary election.

**Traditionally Financed Legislative and County Candidates**

<i>TYPE OF REPORT</i>	<i>DUE</i>	<i>REPORTING PERIOD</i>
2022 January Semiannual	1/18/2022	Beginning of Campaign – 12/31/2021
<b>42-Day Pre-Primary (Proposed)</b>	<b>5/3/2022</b>	<b>1/1/2022 – 4/26/2022</b>
11-Day Pre-Primary	6/3/2022	Beginning of Campaign – 5/31/2022
42-Day Post-Primary	7/26/2022	6/1/2022 – 7/19/2022
42-Day Pre-General	9/27/2022	7/20/2022 – 9/20/2022
11-Day Pre-General	10/28/2022	9/21/2022 – 10/25/2022
42-Day Post-General	12/20/2022	10/26/2022 – 12/13/2022

\* 2022 Primary Filers: 183 legislative and 122 county candidates  
2022 General Filers: 145 legislative, and 107 county candidates

**MCEA Candidates.** Candidates intending to qualify for MCEA funds file a Seed Money Report outlining their initial contributions and expenditures since their registration. Seed money is a provision in the law that allows candidates to collect a small number of private contributions to start their campaigns. Typically, the report is filed around April 20 or within the next week if the candidate requests additional time to spend down their seed money.

As shown in the chart below, the introduction of a campaign finance report 42 days before a primary election for MCEA candidates would result in an additional report that has a very short time period (in many cases, less than ten days). If the committee is generally in favor of requiring a 42-day pre-primary report, please consider exempting MCEA candidates or adjusting their reporting schedule in other ways.

**Maine Clean Election Act Candidates**

<i>TYPE OF REPORT</i>	<i>DUE</i>	<i>REPORTING PERIOD</i>
Seed Money Report	4/20/2022	Date of Registration – Date of SMR Filing
<b>42-Day Pre-Primary (Proposed)</b>	<b>5/3/2022</b>	<b>Approx. 4/20/2022 – 4/26/2022</b>
11-Day Pre-Primary	6/3/2022	5/1/2022 – 5/31/2022
42-Day Post-Primary	7/26/2022	6/1/2022 – 7/19/2022
11-Day Pre-General	10/28/2022	9/21/2022 – 10/25/2022
42-Day Post-General	12/20/2022	10/26/2022 – 12/13/2022

\* 2022 Primary Filers: 219 MCEA candidates  
2022 General Filers: 214 MCEA candidates

Thank you for your time to hear my testimony, I would be glad to answer any questions you have at this time.