



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

**LD 1966 – An Act to Allow Candidates for County Office to Participate in the MCEA
 Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs**

May 24, 2023

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and members of the committee – I am Martha Currier, the Assistant Director of the Maine Ethics Commission. The Commission is neither for nor against LD 1966 and submits this testimony for informational purposes.

LD 1966 proposes MCEA campaign financing for county candidates. The Commission can administer this program; however, there is a cost to fund these races and to upgrade our electronic campaign finance reporting system. The chart below provides historical data for county races in 2016-2022. Although it is impossible to know how many county candidates would seek to participate, we estimate the number could fall between 40-50%. Legislative MCEA participation during the 2016-2022 election cycles was 55-64% and county races would be fewer as many are unopposed and candidates may not want to expend the effort to qualify for the program in those instances.

Thank you for considering this information.

	2022		2020		2018		2016	
	Expenditures	# Candidates	Expenditures	# Candidates	Expenditures	# Candidates	Expenditures	# Candidates
District Attorney	\$132,304.46	12			\$314,483.25	21		
County Commissioner	\$91,370.57	50	\$84,599.06	51	\$40,584.45	47	\$37,801.49	49
County Treasurer	\$11,170.93	15			\$12,774.07	21		
Finance Committee	\$0.00	1	\$0.00	1	\$739.14	5	\$0.00	5
Judge of Probate	\$6,888.09	8	\$18,758.47	14	\$30,191.23	11	\$55,641.35	16
Register of Deeds	\$5,658.75	15			\$13,105.75	21	\$2,656.61	2
Register of Probate	\$2,387.27	8	\$1,474.92	14	\$0.00	5	\$21,152.44	18
Sheriff	\$62,882.43	18	\$26,471.27	5	\$77,224.43	18	\$20,812.00	4
Totals								
Total - County	\$312,662.50	127	\$131,303.72	85	\$489,102.32	149	\$138,063.89	94