



Joseph Baldacci
Senator, District 9

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, Esteemed members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee my name is Joseph Baldacci. I serve as State Senator in Senate District 9 which is comprised of the City of Bangor and the Town of Hermon.

LD 454 is about political reform. Political reform is about making government accountable to the people and making the political process not the province of the rich and powerful.

I am very much a proponent of , not only political reform generally, but of electing our constitutional officers directly by popular vote and not by a handful of my fellow legislators no matter how wise and good they are, we live in a democracy and the system for electing constitutional officers was put in place in 1820 and at the time it was very Jeffersonian of our early founders. But time s change and we now elect US Senators directly instead of by state legislatures, that change was made slightly over a century ago. It is now time to infuse democracy into the election of our constitutional officers. It will be better for the political system and it will actually strengthen these officers in the execution of their public responsibilities.

But no matter how you may feel on that issue this bill asks you to ensure that if that reform is enacted that concurrently with its enactment a system of public finance, based on the Maine Clean Election Act will be similarly available to candidates in order to ensure that the playing field is more equitable.

We can never lose when we put our trust in the people. We may dislike election results, but the process of election, democracy and campaigning is one where the people are directly involved and engaged. And where the elected officials are directly accountable.

I would ask both my Republican and Democratic colleagues to support this bill to allow a playing field if the reforms of electing constitutional officers is able to at some point succeed. I would hope my Republican friends realize passage of this bill may strengthen the arguments for popular election and I would hope my Democratic friends would realize that this bill will make the process of campaigning and raising money more equitable if these reforms are enacted.

Thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions

Joseph Baldacci