

Hebert, Michelle

From: Cloutier, Kristen
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 2:52 PM
To: Cmte VLA; Hickman, Craig; Supica, Laura
Subject: Follow Up to Questions on LD 818

Hi Michelle,

I am hoping you can share this email with the members of the VLA committee in response to the questions I was asked in the public hearing on LD 818 this morning.

Honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs:

First off, I would like to thank you for service in the legislature and the committee, and for the engaged questions that you asked in the public hearing on my bill, LD 818: An Act to Allow Expenditure of Maine Clean Election Act Funding for the Care of Candidates' Dependents.

I wanted to provide additional context to my responses on the questions that were asked of me.

1. In regard to how I would respond to folks who simply don't agree with the Maine Clean Elections program, I would just add that my bill merely adds equity and parity between the two campaign financing programs that ALREADY EXIST in the state. Not supporting my bill does nothing to eliminate the Maine Clean Elections program. Even if you disagree with the policy of public campaign financing, I hope that you agree that everyone to who runs for office should be able to pay for the same things with their campaign funds. Currently that ability does not exist.
2. As far as setting a cap on how much can be spent on caregiving expenses, I would reiterate that caps do not exist for any other type of campaign expenditure, whether financed traditionally or through Clean Elections. Many members choose to spend their funds on branded water bottles and vests. Currently, those folks could spend ALL their campaign funding on branded water bottles and vests. I would argue that caregiving expenses are a much more valid and appropriate use of campaign funds, that allow candidates a greater opportunity to engage with voters (do their work) than a water bottle or vest ever could.
3. And lastly, as my intent was never to use campaign funds to reimburse parents for caring for their own children, it was never my intent to allow the use of campaign funds to pay for pet care.

I am happy to answer any other questions you may have and look forward to seeing you all again at the work session.

Thanks again for your service, time and consideration,
Kristen