



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

**Testimony of Jonathan Wayne, Executive Director of the  
Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices  
before the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs  
April 26, 2021**

Senator Luchini, Representative Caiazzo, and distinguished members of the committee: my name is Jonathan Wayne, and I am the Executive Director of the Maine Ethics Commission. Thank you for the opportunity to testify concerning L.D. 1442. The Commission is neither for nor against the bill.

The Commission staff believes we could implement L.D. 1442, but we have some concerns about the impact of reviewing the additional qualifying contributions from primary election candidates during April-May of the election year. The deadline for legislative candidates to apply for MCEA funding is April 20. We receive thousands of qualifying contributions just before that deadline. Once a candidate's request for MCEA funding is complete, our staff has three business days within which to decide whether the candidate has met the qualifications to receive MCEA funding. (21-A M.R.S. § 1125(5)) Our Candidate Registrars look at every qualifying contribution, and make sure each contribution is documented just the right way and that all signatures match.

Consequently, most Commission employees (particularly our two Candidate Registrars) are very busy in the last two weeks of April and the early May. The Commission staff is concerned that reviewing several hundred additional qualifying contributions from primary election candidates will make this period even more challenging, and it will be harder for us to meet the three business day deadline for certifying candidates.

We appreciate all the outreach to our office by the sponsor of the bill. I will confer with my colleagues soon after the public hearing to determine if we would like to suggest any changes in the time periods in existing law or in L.D. 1442. Regardless, we want to cooperate with legislative improvements to the Maine Clean Election Act program and will do our best to comply with all deadlines in the law.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.