



OVERVIEW

We need Mainers from every corner of the state to submit testimony to the Maine Ethics Commission in support of an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that will allow states and Congress to set reasonable limits on campaign spending.

Maine has twice affirmed its support for this amendment – in 2013 with a bipartisan resolution in the State Legislature and again in 2023 at the ballot box with a record breaking 86% support!

The ballot measure passed in 2023 calls upon “each member of Maine’s Congressional Delegation to actively support and promote an effective anti corruption amendment to the United States Constitution[.]” The 2023 measure also requires the Maine Ethics Commission to report annually on what Maine’s Congressional Delegation is doing to advance such an amendment.

The Commission is now accepting public comments to be included in their report.

DEADLINE TO SUBMIT: May 30th, 2025

HOW TO SUBMIT COMMENT: Email your comment to volunteer@americanpromise.net for review.

GUIDE TO WRITING TESTIMONY

In preparing testimony, make sure you introduce yourself and, if you represent an organization, give the name of the organization. State that you support the anti-corruption amendment to the U.S. Constitution to allow Congress and states like Maine to set reasonable limits on campaign spending, and then explain your reasoning. Respectfully encourage our Members of Congress to lead on this effort.

We suggest drafting your comment in a word or google document, saving as a PDF, and emailing to volunteer@americanpromise.net for review. However, you can also simply include your public comment in the body of the email if it is easier.

Email Subject Line: Public Comment on Proposals to Amend the United States Constitution regarding Regulation of Campaign Finance Activity

Header:

Jonathan Wayne, Executive Director
State of Maine
Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices
135 State House Station
August, Maine 04333-0135
Jonathan.Wayne@maine.gov

[Date]

Opening: *“Dear honorable members of The Maine Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices:”*

Body: The first couple of sentences of testimony should include your name, the town you live in, and your relationship to the issue. You should also mention your stance on the amendment, and why the issue is important to you. Feel free to include relevant personal stories about how the amendment would affect you and your community. If you helped collect signatures or volunteered for American Promise or Protect Maine Election in some capacity, please be sure to mention that.

Example: *My name is John and I live in Skowhegan, Maine. I proudly volunteered on the Protect Maine Elections campaign and helped collect signatures for Question 2, which passed in 2023 with overwhelming support. I'm submitting this testimony to express my support for a constitutional amendment that restores the ability of states and Congress to set reasonable limits on campaign spending and shut the door on foreign interference in our elections.*

While working on the campaign, I talked to thousands of Mainers, and nearly everyone I spoke to, regardless of political affiliation, was deeply concerned about the role of money in our elections.

Between 2020 and 2023, entities owned, influenced, or controlled by foreign governments spent more than \$100 million to influence Maine's ballot initiatives. These weren't donations from people who live and vote here. These were dollars from foreign corporations looking to shape our laws to serve their bottom line — and we had no legal mechanism to stop them.

Closing: The last paragraph should reiterate your position and sum up your points.

Example: *States are currently powerless to protect their elections from dark money and foreign interference. Maine should be able to ban foreign money in its own democratic processes but we can't do that until we pass a constitutional amendment.*

I respectfully call on our Members of Congress to work to advance an anti-corruption amendment to the U.S. Constitution that will allow States and Congress to set reasonable limits on campaign spending.

*Sincerely,
John Smith
jsmith@gmail.com
207-555-5555*

ADDITIONAL TALKING POINTS

- Maine has twice affirmed its support for a constitutional amendment that would allow Americans to limit campaign contributions and undisclosed political spending – first [in 2013 with a bipartisan resolution in the State Legislature](#) and again in [2023 at the ballot box with a record breaking 86% support](#). The ballot measure passed in 2023 calls upon “each member of Maine’s Congressional Delegation to actively support and promote an effective anti-corruption amendment to the United States Constitution[.]”
- In 2023, Maine passed a historic referendum to ban foreign government spending in state elections and call on Congress to pass the For Our Freedom amendment. The bill passed with 86% support, the largest margin of victory of any initiative in state history.

- Four lawsuits were filed in federal court in 2024 challenging the foreign government spending ban. The lawsuits were filed by CMP and Versant, two foreign government entities, as well as the Maine Associations of Broadcasters, Maine Press Association, and a group of former lawmakers.
- The lawsuits claim that the 2023 referendum violates the first amendment rights of big corporations and foreign government entities, highlighting the need for a constitutional amendment.
- Incorrect Supreme Court decisions over the past 50 years have degraded our campaign finance system into an unworkable mess that does not permit even the most basic transparency and regulation regarding foreign money influence in our elections.
- The Maine Ethics Commission released their first annual report on July 24, 2024 containing public testimony from dozens of Mainers in support of a constitutional amendment that would restore the ability of States and Congress to set reasonable limits on campaign spending. Forty-two comments were submitted, a record for the Commission on any area of public policy, and 40 out of the 42 comments were in favor of the amendment.
- There is strong support for an anti-corruption amendment nationally. [Republicans and Democrats alike list reducing the influence of money in politics as a top policy priority for 2024](#), third only to strengthening the economy and defending against terrorism
- [American Promise polling](#) shows that 82.4% of voters believe that influence of money is a threat to our democracy and 77.1% of voters support a constitutional amendment.
- Nationally, [\\$16 billion was spent](#) in the 2024 election cycle.
- An [OpenSecrets analysis](#) found dark money groups spent \$615 million in 2022. [That number rose to \\$1.9 Billion in 2024, a record high.](#)
- Over \$200 Million was spent in Maine's 2020 US Senate race, shattering previous spending records in the state. [93% came from outside of Maine.](#)
- Outside groups, which are not allowed to coordinate with candidates, poured money into Maine's 2020 US Senate race, contributing \$113 million. Those outside groups put [\\$8 of every \\$10](#) toward attack, or opposition, ads.
- Entities that are owned, controlled, and/or influenced by foreign governments spent more than \$100 million on Maine ballot initiatives between 2020 - 2023. In 2023, such entities were responsible for 83% of total referendum spending.
- For too long, the voices of Maine voters have been silenced by dark money special interest groups. With a Constitutional Amendment, we have an opportunity to stop corruption, protect election integrity, and to restore confidence in our democracy. **We ask that our Congressional Delegation stand with Maine voters and support an anti-corruption amendment to the U.S. Constitution.**

QUESTIONS & SUPPORT

As you are preparing your testimony, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. You can contact us at volunteer@americanpromise.net.

PUBLIC COMMENT TEMPLATES

To help you get started with your public testimony, consider reviewing the templates below. Each template has a different angle and talking points. Feel free to make a copy of the template and edit as needed.

TEMPLATE 1 - Concerned Citizen

Jonathan Wayne, Executive Director
State of Maine
Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices
135 State House Station
August, Maine 04333-0135
Jonathan.Wayne@maine.gov

[Date]

Dear Honorable Members of the Maine Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices:

My name is [Full Name] and I live in [Town]. I'm writing as a lifelong voter, a community volunteer, and a deeply concerned citizen to express my support for a constitutional amendment to reform our broken campaign finance system.

I believe the American democratic system is at a crossroads — and that unchecked political spending is one of the greatest threats we face. Voters across the political spectrum are becoming increasingly disillusioned with our political system. The people of Maine are tired of being outspent, outshouted, and overshadowed by billionaires and dark money groups with no ties to our state.

The facts speak for themselves: in the 2020 U.S. Senate race here in Maine, more than \$200 million was spent, 93% of it from outside the state. In the 2022 midterms, dark money groups nationally spent \$615 million. By 2024, that figure exploded to \$1.9 billion. These groups aren't just pushing ads — they're pushing us out of our own democracy.

People across the political spectrum are sounding the alarm. According to American Promise's polling, 82.4% of voters believe that the influence of money is a threat to our democracy, and 77.1% support a constitutional amendment to fix it.

That's why I joined the 86% of Maine voters who supported Question 2 in 2023. We sent a clear message: it's time to restore the power of the people.

We need a constitutional amendment that restores the ability of Congress and the States to enact commonsense, reasonable limits on political spending and protects our elections from dark money and foreign interference.

I respectfully call on our Members of Congress to work to advance an anti-corruption amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

TEMPLATE 2 - Foreign Money

Jonathan Wayne, Executive Director
State of Maine
Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices
135 State House Station
August, Maine 04333-0135
Jonathan.Wayne@maine.gov

[Date]

Dear Honorable Members of the Maine Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices:

My name is [Full Name] and I live in [Town], Maine. I'm writing as a deeply concerned citizen who believes we have a growing national security crisis disguised as a campaign finance problem. I support an anti-corruption amendment to the U.S. Constitution to give Congress and the States the power to set reasonable limits on campaign spending and, more importantly, to stop foreign interference in our democratic process.

According to data presented in a report by American Promise, foreign government-influenced entities spent more than \$100 million on Maine ballot initiatives between 2020 and 2023. In 2023 alone, they were responsible for 83% of all referendum spending in our state. These are foreign governments — or companies they own or control — shaping our laws and policies through massive advertising and lobbying campaigns.

This is not hypothetical. It's already happened repeatedly in recent referendum campaigns. When foreign-controlled entities spend tens of millions to influence what happens at the ballot box in Maine, that's not democracy. That's foreign manipulation of American self-government.

What's even more disturbing is that despite our recent success in passing Question 2 — where 86% of Mainers voted to ban foreign political spending in our elections — our will is being challenged in court. Why? Because a series of misguided U.S. Supreme Court decisions have left states powerless to defend themselves against this type of influence.

This is unacceptable.

This isn't about partisan politics. This is about sovereignty. This is about national security. This is about standing up and saying: "Only the people of Maine should decide what happens in Maine."

The only viable path forward is a constitutional amendment. It's the only solution strong enough to override decades of legal precedent that currently protects foreign money under the guise of free speech.

We cannot wait for another election cycle. The threat is already here.

I respectfully call on our Members of Congress to work to advance an anti-corruption amendment to the U.S. Constitution that will allow States and Congress to set reasonable limits on campaign spending.

TEMPLATE 3 - Signature Collector & Volunteer

Jonathan Wayne, Executive Director
State of Maine
Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices
135 State House Station
August, Maine 04333-0135
Jonathan.Wayne@maine.gov

[Date]

Dear Honorable Members of the Maine Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices:

My name is [Full Name] and I live in [Town], Maine. I proudly volunteered on the Protect Maine Elections campaign and helped collect signatures for Question 2, which passed in 2023 with overwhelming support. I'm submitting this testimony to urge action on the next step: securing a constitutional amendment that restores the ability of states and Congress to set reasonable limits on campaign spending and shut the door on foreign interference in our elections.

While working on the campaign, I talked to thousands of Mainers, and nearly everyone I spoke to — regardless of political affiliation — was deeply concerned about the role of money in our democracy. The issue resonated not because it was partisan, but because it was personal. People could feel how out-of-control the system had become.

Between 2020 and 2023, entities owned, influenced, or controlled by foreign governments spent more than \$100 million to influence Maine's ballot initiatives. In 2023 alone, they accounted for 83% of total referendum spending in the state. These weren't donations from people who live and vote here. These were dollars from foreign corporations looking to shape our laws to serve their bottom line — and we had no legal mechanism to stop them.

Mainers stood up and passed Question 2 with 86% support, the highest margin for any initiative in state history. That should have been the end of the story. But now, that voter-approved reform is being challenged in court by foreign-funded utilities and media associations claiming that foreign corporations have First Amendment rights. That is why we need a constitutional amendment.

Federal court decisions have left the states powerless to protect the integrity of their elections. Maine should be able to ban foreign interference in its own democratic processes. But we can't do that unless Congress acts to fix the Constitution.

I respectfully call on our Members of Congress to work to advance an anti-corruption amendment to the U.S. Constitution that will allow States and Congress to set reasonable limits on campaign spending.