



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

To: Commission

From: Jonathan Wayne, Executive Director

Date: July 16, 2025

Re: Proposal of Working Group on Campaign Finance Reporting Deadlines

The working group on campaign finance deadlines met twice and considered whether the deadlines and scope of 24-hour and independent expenditure reporting requirements could be made less complicated and burdensome without losing information that is valuable for the public to have before the election. The group hammered out a proposal for the Commission's consideration. If the Commission approves, the staff will draft a bill for consideration in the 2026 legislative session.

Changing 24-Hour Reports to 48-Hour Reports

Under current law, the Commission's regular filers (candidates, PACs, ballot question committees, and party committees) must file a 24-Hour report during the last 13 days before an election if the filer receives large contributions or makes large expenditures during that period. To provide filers with a little more breathing room to file these reports, the working group proposes amending the deadline to within 48 hours of the transaction.

Higher Threshold Amounts for 24-Hour Reports

The contribution/expenditure thresholds that require our filers to submit a 24-Hour Report are \$1,000 or \$5,000. During the last 13 days before an election, contributions and expenditures equal to or greater than these thresholds are disclosed within 24 hours (before the election). Contributions and expenditures below these thresholds are disclosed in the regular campaign finance report due 42 days after the election. Because the \$1,000 and \$5,000 thresholds have remained the same for decades, the working group proposes higher thresholds as shown in this chart:

	Current Threshold	Working Group Proposal
PACs and ballot question committees		
Receiving a contribution	\$5,000 or more	\$10,000 or more
Making an expenditure or incurring an unpaid debt	\$1,000 or more	\$2,500 or more
Party committees (state and local)		
Receiving a contribution	\$5,000 or more	\$10,000 or more
Making an expenditure or incurring an unpaid debt	\$1,000 or more	\$2,500 or more
Candidates (gubernatorial, legislative, county, and municipal)		
Receiving a contribution	\$1,000 or more	\$10,000 Gov \$5,000 Senate \$2,500 County \$2,000 House
Making an expenditure or incurring an unpaid debt	\$1,000 or more	\$10,000 Gov \$5,000 Senate \$2,500 County \$2,000 House

Independent Expenditure Reporting (usually filed by PACs and parties for mailings, ads, etc.)

Current requirement: an independent expenditure report is required by the following deadlines if more than \$250 per candidate is spent on a communication to voters advocating for or against candidates:

Through the 61 st day before election	60 th day before election
60 th - 14 th day before election	within 2 calendar days
13 th - 1 st day before election	within 1 calendar day

Working group proposal: the group agreed to propose an increase in the independent expenditure reporting threshold from spending \$250 per candidate to spending \$1,000 per candidate.

All members at the group's second meeting agreed to propose that the report would be due within 48 hours of the expenditure during the entire 60 days before the election. Hopefully, this would simplify the deadlines. Two members who were unable to attend the second meeting had previously expressed some support for keeping the IE deadline at 24 hours during the last six days before the election. They are okay with the submission of the proposal in this memo, provided that both alternatives for the last six days before the election are aired before the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs.