The 128th Legislature of the State of Maine  
State House  
Augusta, ME  

Dear Honorable Members of the 128th Legislature:  

Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing LD 1122, “An Act To Amend the Campaign Reports and Finances Law and the Maine Clean Election Act.”  

Because our system of government depends on the electoral process, I am of the opinion that election law should be very clear and easy to understand. I also think election law should not favor one candidate over another. This bill violates these two preferences.  

This bill purports to add ballot questions to the statutory definition of “election.” However, the actual language of the bill simply adds “any referendum” to the definition. Citizen initiatives are different from referenda. Are citizen initiatives going to be included in the definition of “election”? Were they intended to be? The plain language of the bill suggests they will not be included. This bill presents confusion as to the most fundamental question in election law: “What is the meaning of ‘election’?” As such, the bill fails to meet the standard of being clear and easy to understand.  

The bill also removes a reporting requirement for those who run unopposed in primary elections. As everyone knows, primary elections are by their nature contentious. This bill would present an uneven playing field for those who have primary opponents and those who do not. It is easy to imagine a scenario whereby two candidates are on the primary ballot, one opposed and one unopposed. Both could be late meeting the mandatory 24-hour reporting rule. Under current law, they would be held to the same standard, and both would have to deal with the attendant penalties and public reaction. Under the terms of this bill, only the candidate running in the opposed primary would have to worry about the 24-hour reporting rule. This bill provides for inequality before the law and is fundamentally unfair.  

For these reasons, I return LD 1122 unsigned and vetoed. I strongly urge the Legislature to sustain it.  

Sincerely,  

[Signature]  
Paul R. LePage  
Governor