



Minnesota Citizens for Clean Elections

June 2018 – Newsletter No. 2

Welcome to the second issue of the MnCCE newsletter!

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MnCCE in Action

Long Term: Supporting a 28th Amendment

Our May newsletter promised to say more about MnCCE's strategy to persuade the Minnesota Legislature to support the 28th Amendment. The legislature has had a bill before it for the last two years with an increasing number of sponsors, but powerful committee chairs have not allowed hearings or a vote. We are concerned about the influence big money buys. But, many elected officials enjoy and encourage the big donations coming in, and the TV exposure the money provides.

The only means to change that attitude is to elect people who decline big donor offers and/ or demonstrate a grass roots support to reverse the Supreme Court *Citizens United* decision. One of our initiatives is to get grass roots support via involving local municipalities.

Jim Herrick leads MnCCE's effort, together with over 25 MnCCE volunteers, plus coordinating with Vicki Barnes and American Promise. They all work with city and county governments to petition the MN Legislature to move a bill forward.

A number of local governing bodies share our fear of big money coming from outside the local district. These moneyed entities

often promote policy that supports their selfish interests, but may not be in the best interests of local citizens.

When meeting with local governments we first describe the problem: *Money has a corrupting influence in politics*. In 2016 almost two-thirds of all the campaign money came from just 0.5% of the people. We acknowledge this is a cross-partisan problem. Both sides accept escalating sums of money, which is a form of legal bribery.

Second, we present the solution: *The 28th Amendment*. This is the only way to reverse a Supreme Court ruling. Without this reversal, laws and rules to limit the size of donations and their source (corporations/unions/etc.) will be considered unconstitutional.

To date these municipalities passed resolutions asking the MN Legislature to petition Congress for the 28th amendment: Minneapolis, St. Paul, Sherburne County, Duluth, Lauderdale and New Brighton. Three other municipalities are now considering action.

Roseville, Falcon Heights, and Minnetonka have declined to take action at this time; they feel it does not relate specifically to their city.

Early discussions are underway with the counties of Ramsey, Hennepin, Crow Wing, Wright, and Dakota.

We want to enroll other municipalities, too. If you would like to become involved, contact Jim Herrick (jherrick512@gmail.com) to learn more. He can provide you with materials to help win over your city council or county.

To see a sample resolution, go to: <https://cleanelectionsmn.org/model-resolution-for-constitution-amendment-to-overturn-citizens-united/>

Shorter Term Projects Underway

This month we held a working session on June 14th instead of our normal monthly meeting.

Jim Herrick led us through a process for asking MN state and federal candidates to vote 'yes' or 'no' on three money-in-politics questions:

1. "Do you support a Constitutional Amendment to reverse the *Citizens United vs. FEC* Supreme Court decision?"
2. "Do you support full disclosure of political contributions including PAC's and Super PAC's? "Full disclosure" shall mean that advertisements, promotions, and endorsements shall effectively display at least the top three (3) contributors."
3. "Do you support partly or fully publically-funded political campaigns?"

Seventeen of us divided a list of over 400 state and federal candidates to whom to send surveys. It is our intent to share survey results with local media markets before elections to make voters better informed on the thinking of their candidates. See our survey ballot on page 4.



The meeting on 6/17 to learn how to contact candidates state-wide, asking them to complete our money-in-politics survey by late June.

Education Corner

How to contact your elected officials

At times you will get a request from MnCCE to contact your elected officials - MN and/or U.S. - to voice your concern about pending legislation, urging them to support bills that counteract big money influence, or to oppose bills that support big money interests at our expense.

So how can you contact elected officials, be they senators, representatives, governor, etc.?

First you need to know who represents you. Go to: <https://www.gis.leg.mn/iMaps/>

districts/. At the left center of the page, enter your address and click on the magnifying glass. A list of who represents you will appear. If you want a map of their districts, click “Show District” link. To get their contact info click on their name.

Second, prepare what you want to tell them. Typically MnCCE will give you sample wording. To be most effective, revise the sample, using your own words and/or examples, while not diminishing the core message or bringing up other unrelated issues (stay focused!).

Third, determine how elected official prefer to receive input. Some will provide an email address and/or phone; some provide an on-line form to fill out. Since each official’s website is structured differently, you may have to search. It is best to look for a “Contact” icon to click on.

Fourth, and finally, contact the officials - send an email, fill out an online form, call or text them, or go in person to deliver your message.

Carrying out our responsibility as constituents takes effort. But, that is a small price to pay to be responsible citizens. A responsive elected official *should* want to hear their constituents’ input, so contacting them benefits them as well as us. If they don’t want citizen input, do your best to get someone who cares about their constituents’ concerns elected in the next election cycle.

Upcoming Events

June:

6/30, 11 am - 2 pm - "Filing Extension: Tax Rally 2018." Event sponsored by Tax March MN. Scheduled speakers - MnCCE Chair George Beck, Ben Gubits of American Promise, and Reverend Nancy Nord Bence of Protect MN. More info at: <https://cleanelectionsmn.org/> (Scroll down to "June 30...") or see www.taxmarchmn.org.

July:

7/12, 1:30 pm: MnCCE Board of Directors meeting at the Edina Library conference room.

July 19, 1:30 p.m. – Working session at Lund's &

Byerly's: 7171 France Ave. S., Edina.

7/24 - 7/25, at The University of Chicago – Represent-Us small donor financing conference.

August:

No MnCCE monthly meeting in August.

8/14 – Primary elections – Get out and VOTE!

Announcements

Filing for state offices closed June 5th. You can see the names of candidates registered at this website: <https://candidates.sos.state.mn.us/> Click on "state and federal offices."

Help Needed

Membership Team:

We are looking for someone with experience in writing newsletters to organize/lay-out/format the MnCCE newsletters. (MnCCE members will provide the content.) Time commitment: 4- 5 hours a month (only a guess since I am new at this). Contact: Ron Bardal - 651-633-9238 or rbardal@hotmail.com.

Communicating candidate survey results:

For the July 19 meeting (Byerly's at 7171 France Ave. So.), people with experience in writing and/or generating news releases are needed. If you have such skills, please

come - you will be a big help for Clean Elections Minnesota!

Editorial section

Editor's comments:

MnCCE's major emphasis is to reduce impact of big money in our election processes. We could become discouraged when facing the daunting task of combating billions of dollars spent to influence the electorate when we know we cannot compete financially.

However, we need to keep in mind that voters have the final say via the voting booth. Our best chance of success comes through informing the electorate regarding what is going on - warning them to not blindly accept what the media (social and professional) tells them. They must keep their eyes and minds open to campaign advertising realities. Most of what they will hear is biased, and much is blatantly untrue.



Educating voters is a MnCCE objective. Only when voters are aware of what's happening, can they make *informed* choices in the voting booth.

Your editor, Ron Bardal

Letters to the Editor:

Letters to the editor are welcome (reserving the right to edit for sake of space, if necessary).

Send letters to rbardal@hotmail.com



CANDIDATE SURVEY

June 2018
For
Minnesota Election - November 2018

Minnesota Citizens for Clean Elections (MnCCE) is concerned about Big Money and Dark Money influencing both our upcoming elections and policy support that follows. Voters are concerned about the dramatic growth of money in elections and need to know candidates' position on financing political campaigns.

MnCCE is soliciting the answers to the following three questions from all candidates. Please indicate your position and return to MnCCE in the self-addressed enclosed envelope. Non-responders by June 29, 2018 will be considered as answering "no".

1. Do you support a Constitutional Amendment to reverse the *Citizens United vs. FEC* Supreme Court decision?

Yes

No

2. Do you support full disclosure of political contributions including PAC's and Super PAC's? "Full disclosure" shall mean advertisements, promotions and endorsements shall effectively display at least the top three (3) contributors.

Yes

No

3. Do you support partly or fully publically funded political campaigns?

Yes

No

Results will be published before the election.

Print Name

Sign

Date

Election District: _____

