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2018 CANDIDATES SURVEYED ON MONEY IN POLITICS
Opposition to Citizens United Declared

Minneapolis, MN. July 18, 2018

Minnesota Citizens for Clean Elections.

A survey of this year's Minnesota Congressional candidates, state Constitutional Officer candidates, the Senate special election candidates and candidates for the Minnesota House of Representatives has shown strong support for reversing the 2010 *Citizens United* decision by the U.S. Supreme Court. This decision has allowed millions of dollars to be added to political campaigns and permitted special interests to obtain favorable legislation through contributions. Support was also expressed for full disclosure of all political contributions and for public financing of political campaigns.

Minnesota Citizens for Clean Elections (MnCCE) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization concerned with the inherent conflict of interest our politicians have in accepting large donations from individuals, unions and corporations seeking political influence. In June, MnCCE attempted to make the survey available to the approximately 400 candidates in the August primary as listed by the Secretary of State, for all elective offices excluding judicial.

We sought their opinions on three key elements of campaign financing: unlimited donations as allowed by the 2010 U.S. Supreme Court Decision *Citizens United vs. FEC*; timely disclosure of all donors and the role of public financing. Here is a summary of the survey results:

We received 136 survey responses for a rate of 34%, usually considered an excellent response rate.

- 86% of respondents support reversing the *Citizens United* decision by Constitutional amendment. (Nineteen other states have petitioned Congress to do so.)
- 96% support full disclosure of campaign contributions, including the top three contributors.
- 93% support some component of public funding (full or partial).

Here are some observations that MnCCE drew from this data:

As noted above, of those that responded there is strong support for all of the initiatives proposed by MnCCE and, in fact, candidate response reflects the general public view. Issue One is a nonprofit, political reform group in Washington with a track record of uniting Democrats and Republicans. In their 2016 poll, "An overwhelming majority - 78 percent of respondents - say we need sweeping new laws to reduce the influence of money in politics. Eighty-five percent of individuals age 55 and older, who witnessed passage of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 and the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002, believe sweeping changes are necessary," and " Seven in 10 respondentssaid that if we don't take action to reform the influence of money over our politics, then our democracy is at risk." (See www.issueone.org/new-poll-shows-money-in-politics-is-a-top-voting-concern/ for methodology).

Interestingly, the MnCCE polling also discovered that some candidates were not aware of the *Citizens United* ruling and were unfamiliar with other key campaign finance issues.

With this information in mind we urge all constituents to review their candidates' response to the survey (see: <https://cleanelectionsmn.org/wp-content/uploads/Candidate-Survey-June-2018-1.xlsx>) and where they stand on these important issues – our democracy depends on informed voters.

Please visit our site (www.cleanelectionsmn.org) for more information about the organization.