



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 390

S.P. 176

In Senate, February 4, 2025

An Act to Raise the Contribution Cap for Unenrolled Candidates

Reference to the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator BRENNER of Cumberland.
Cosponsored by Senator: HICKMAN of Kennebec.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 21-A MRSA §1004-A, sub-§2**, as amended by PL 2023, c. 244, §1, is
3 further amended to read:

4 **2. Contribution in excess of limitations.** A person that accepts or makes a
5 contribution that exceeds the limitations set out in section 1015, subsections 1 and, 1-A,
6 2-B and 2-C may be assessed a penalty of no more than the amount by which the
7 contribution exceeded the limitation.

8 **Sec. 2. 21-A MRSA §1015, sub-§1**, as amended by PL 2023, c. 244, §4, is further
9 amended to read:

10 **1. Contributions by individuals to a candidate nominated by primary election.**
11 An individual may not make contributions to a candidate nominated by primary election in
12 support of the candidacy of one person aggregating more than \$1,950 in any election for a
13 gubernatorial candidate, more than \$475 for a legislative candidate, more than \$575 for a
14 candidate for municipal office and more than \$975 in any election for any other candidate.
15 This limitation does not apply to contributions in support of a candidate by that candidate
16 or that candidate's spouse or domestic partner. Beginning December 1, 2024, contribution
17 limits in accordance with this subsection are adjusted every 2 years based on the Consumer
18 Price Index as reported by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor
19 Statistics and rounded to the nearest amount divisible by \$25. The commission shall post
20 the current contribution limit and the amount of the next adjustment and the date that it will
21 become effective on its publicly accessible website and include this information with any
22 publication to be used as a guide for candidates.

23 **Sec. 3. 21-A MRSA §1015, sub-§1-A** is enacted to read:

24 **1-A. Contributions by individuals to a candidate nominated by petition.** An
25 individual may not make contributions to a candidate nominated by petition in support of
26 the candidacy of one person aggregating more than \$3,900 in any election for a
27 gubernatorial candidate, more than \$950 for a legislative candidate, more than \$1,150 for
28 a candidate for municipal office and more than \$1,950 in any election for any other
29 candidate. This limitation does not apply to contributions in support of a candidate by that
30 candidate or that candidate's spouse or domestic partner. Beginning December 1, 2026,
31 contribution limits in accordance with this subsection are adjusted every 2 years based on
32 the Consumer Price Index as reported by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau
33 of Labor Statistics and rounded to the nearest amount divisible by \$25. The commission
34 shall post the current contribution limit and the amount of the next adjustment and the date
35 that it will become effective on its publicly accessible website and include this information
36 with any publication to be used as a guide for candidates.

37 **Sec. 4. 21-A MRSA §1015, sub-§2-B**, as enacted by PL 2023, c. 244, §7, is
38 amended to read:

39 **2-B. Committees; corporations; associations; candidate nominated by primary**
40 **election.** A political committee, political action committee, ballot question committee or
41 other committee, firm, partnership, corporation, association or organization may not make
42 contributions to a candidate nominated by primary election in support of the candidacy of
43 one person aggregating more than \$1,950 in any election for a gubernatorial candidate,
44 more than \$475 for a legislative candidate, more than \$575 for a candidate for municipal

1 office and more than \$975 in any election for any other candidate. Beginning December
2 1, 2024, contribution limits in accordance with this subsection are adjusted every 2 years
3 based on the Consumer Price Index as reported by the United States Department of Labor,
4 Bureau of Labor Statistics and rounded to the nearest amount divisible by \$25. The
5 commission shall post the current contribution limit and the amount of the next adjustment
6 and the date that it will become effective on its publicly accessible website and include this
7 information with any publication to be used as a guide for candidates.

8 **Sec. 5. 21-A MRSA §1015, sub-§2-C** is enacted to read:

9 **2-C. Committees; corporations; associations; candidate nominated by petition.**
10 A political committee, political action committee, ballot question committee or other
11 committee, firm, partnership, corporation, association or organization may not make
12 contributions to a candidate nominated by petition in support of the candidacy of one person
13 aggregating more than \$3,900 in any election for a gubernatorial candidate, more than \$950
14 for a legislative candidate, more than \$1,150 for a candidate for municipal office and more
15 than \$1,950 in any election for any other candidate. Beginning December 1, 2026,
16 contribution limits in accordance with this subsection are adjusted every 2 years based on
17 the Consumer Price Index as reported by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau
18 of Labor Statistics and rounded to the nearest amount divisible by \$25. The commission
19 shall post the current contribution limit and the amount of the next adjustment and the date
20 that it will become effective on its publicly accessible website and include this information
21 with any publication to be used as a guide for candidates.

22 **Sec. 6. 21-A MRSA §1015-B**, as amended by PL 2023, c. 244, §10, is further
23 amended to read:

24 **§1015-B. Donations to an individual considering whether to become a candidate**

25 If an individual receives funds, goods or services for the purpose of deciding whether
26 to become a candidate, the funds, goods or services may not exceed the limitations in
27 section 1015, subsections 1 ~~and~~, 1-A, 2-B ~~and~~ 2-C. The individual shall keep an account
28 of such funds, goods or services received and all payments and obligations incurred in
29 deciding whether to become a candidate. If the individual becomes a candidate, the funds,
30 goods and services received are contributions and the payments and obligations are
31 expenditures. The candidate shall disclose the contributions and expenditures in the first
32 report filed by the candidate or the candidate's authorized campaign committee, in
33 accordance with the commission's procedures.

34 SUMMARY

35 This bill distinguishes contribution limits for a party candidate nominated by primary
36 election and an unenrolled candidate nominated by petition. The bill doubles the
37 contribution limit an individual or a political committee, political action committee, ballot
38 question committee or other committee, firm, partnership, corporation, association or
39 organization is allowed to contribute to an unenrolled candidate.