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April 26, 2021

Good morning Senator Luchini and Representative Caiazzo.
Members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee

My name is Sue Ellen Bordwell. I reside in Yarmouth and am a volunteer speaking for the Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network (MUUSAN). I am testifying our support for LD 1417 An Act Regarding Campaign Finance Reform.

MUUSAN is a faith-based network of Unitarian Universalists committed to electoral justice. Our faith calls us to promote, encourage and protect democracy. As Unitarian Universalists, our commitment to democracy is not just political or moral, it grows from our affirmation of the inherent worth and dignity of every person. Dignity grows from having a voice in matters that affect our lives (Rev Susan Gray).

Whether by perception or fact, a political system that appears to be unfair is corrosive. Corporate money in elections is corrosive. It corrodes citizens faith that their vote matters and that they matter. Those of us at this hearing – whether elected or unelected – know the power and dignity of self-determination: the power of we – “we, the people” at the ballot box and at the legislature. Every citizen in Maine has the right to that same knowledge and trust in our electoral system.

As Unitarian Universalists, we want our neighbors to participant in our democracy knowing that the playing field is level and that their vote or their political contribution is equal to every other contribution. When we ask our neighbors and friends to participate in our democratic society, we want to invite them to a fair, clean, transparent and equal process.

Last spring, summer and fall, UUs throughout Maine and the country participated in UUthe VOTE. This was a novel experience for many. One of the joys for Maine UUs was an appreciation of how clean, fair and transparent Maine’s electoral structure is: **But the arc toward electoral justice in Maine has more bending to do.**

As Maine Unitarian Universalists continue covenanting to affirm and promote the use of the democratic process in society at large, we ask you to pass LD 1417 An Act Regarding Campaign Finance Reform.

Thank you for your time.