

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

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Legislative Document

No. 390

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S.P. 176

In Senate, February 4, 2025

### An Act to Raise the Contribution Cap for Unenrolled Candidates

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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.