



THE MONEY BEHIND THE MAINE MARRIAGE MEASURE

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ON TUESDAY, MAINE BECAME THE 31ST STATE TO BLOCK GAY MARRIAGE THROUGH A PUBLIC referendum.¹ Voters repealed a state law passed earlier in the year by the legislature that allowed same-sex couples to marry.

The measure, Question 1, attracted national attention. Libertarian-leaning Maine had seemed to offer an excellent chance to gay-rights advocates of reversing the long national trend of voters rejecting marriage equality.² Public opinion surveys had shown the measure in a dead heat right up until the election.³ Question 1 passed with 53 percent of the vote.

The measure pitted conservative groups and churches against gay-rights groups, a few wealthy donors, and more than 10,000 smaller donors from Maine and around the country. Question 1 attracted over \$9 million, or 72 cents of every dollar raised around Maine's seven ballot measures.

Along with the national attention, dollars from around the country flowed into Maine. Sixty percent of the money (\$5.4 million) came from outside Maine. Both proponents and opponents collected out-of-state money in roughly equal proportions.

This report analyzes all money reported by the committees who raised money around Question 1, as of October 23, the due date of the last pre-election report.

Committees opposing Question 1 raised \$5.7 million—68 percent more than the \$3.4 million raised by proponents.

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¹ Abby Goodnough, "Loss in Maine Sets Back Drive for Same-Sex Marriage," *New York Times*, Nov. 4, 2009, available from <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/05/us/05marriage.html?hp>, accessed Nov. 4, 2009.

² *Ibid.*

³ Karl Vick, "Maine set to vote on gay marriage," *Washington Post*, Nov. 2, 2009, available from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/11/02/AR2009110201107.html>, accessed Nov. 3, 2009.

QUESTION 1 COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE	TOTAL
PROPOSERS	
StandForMarriageMaine.com	\$2,650,052
Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland	\$553,608
Focus On The Family Maine Marriage Committee	\$114,500
Family Research Council Action	\$25,000
Maine Marriage PAC	\$11,539
Maine Grassroots Coalition	\$9,410
Marriage Matters in Maine	\$2,678
Maine4Marriage	\$230
Maine Marriage Initiative PAC	\$0
PROPOSERS' TOTAL⁴	\$3,367,018
OPPOSERS	
No On 1 Protect Maine Equality	\$4,464,682
Equality Maine Ballot Committee	\$879,161
Human Rights Campaign Maine Marriage PAC	\$151,141
Equality Maine PAC ⁵	\$65,261
Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders	\$44,000
Maine People's Resource Center*	\$25,000
Mid-Coast for Marriage Equality ⁶	\$13,143
Maine Civil Liberties Union Foundation	\$10,000
TFC Maine PAC	\$9,443
Courage Campaign	\$7,750
Religious Coalition Against Discrimination	\$4,222
Catholics Statement of Conscience	\$2,960
Maine National Organization for Women ⁷	\$1,817
Maine People's Alliance*	\$0
Working Assets Funding Service	\$0
OPPOSERS' TOTAL	\$5,678,579
OVERALL TOTAL	\$9,045,597

*Committee worked on more than one measure

⁴ Transfers from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland and Focus on the Family Maine Marriage Committee to StandForMarriageMaine.com are counted in both committees' totals. The adjusted grand total is \$2,783,757.

⁵ This analysis does not include their pre-general report, which had not been filed with the state as of this report's publication.

⁶ This total does not include the money from the pre-general report, which was filed late.

⁷ This total does not include money from the pre-general report, which had not been filed with the state as of this report's publication.

PROPOSERS

The committees that supported Question 1 got their funding almost entirely from churches and conservative Christian organizations and their employees, who gave \$3 million, which is 89 percent of the proposers' total.

Almost half of proposers' contributions came from the National Organization for Marriage, a conservative Christian group based in New Jersey, which gave \$1.6 million. Focus on the Family gave \$179,500.

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland, another large donor, gave \$285,988—all to its own ballot committee. In total, dioceses and churches provided \$578,904. Out-of-state churches sent in \$269,650.

Out-of-state donors from 45 other states gave \$2.1 million to support the measure. New Jersey topped the list at \$1.6 million. In a distant second place, Colorado donors gave \$143,070, and those from the District of Columbia gave \$75,275.

The committees for Question 1 got their funding almost entirely from churches and conservative Christian organizations and their employees, who gave \$3 million

OPPONENTS

The committees that opposed Question 1 relied less on the support of a few major organizations.

Opponents of the measure raised money from over 10,000 donors—12 times more than proponents reported.

Gay-rights groups and their employees gave \$1.8 million, or 31 percent of the total raised by opponents. The Human Rights Campaign topped the list, giving \$367,067. The Gill Foundation contributed \$275,000. Freedom to Marry gave \$200,000 and another \$30,000 came from the Vermont affiliate. The National Gay & Lesbian Task Force gave \$159,056, and EqualityMaine gave \$152,151.

Four individuals gave more than \$100,000 to oppose Question 1:

- Investment manager S. Donald Sussman of North Haven was the largest donor, contributing \$551,000. Sussman is a part-time Maine resident.⁸ Many of his contributions to other measures have an address of Greenwich, Conn., the headquarters of his business Paloma Partners.
- Paul Singer, an investor with Elliot Associates of New York, N.Y., contributed \$200,000.
- Jon Stryker of Kalamazoo, Mich., heir of the founder of the medical technology firm Stryker Corp., contributed \$75,000. His Arcus Foundation, which supports gay & lesbian rights, contributed another \$97,557.
- Esmond Harmsworth of Boston, Mass., a founding partner at the Zachary Shuster Harmsworth literary agency, contributed \$100,000.

Out-of-state donors contributed \$3.3 million to oppose the measure. Donations came from all 50 states; the top locations were New York (\$761,498), Massachusetts (\$653,889), and the District of Columbia (\$619,566).

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⁸ Susan Young, "Financier steps out of the shadows Millionaire explains why he has pumped money into Maine politics," *Bangor Daily News*, Feb. 16, 2002, available via HighBeam Research at <http://www.communityfundpartners.com/pdf/financier-steps-out-of-the-shadows-maine.pdf>, accessed Nov. 4, 2009.