

Statement of Civil Rights Attorney for Mark Eves, David Webbert:

Governor LePage has violated our Nation's highest law by using taxpayer money to retaliate against a top leader of Maine's Legislature. The Governor threatened to withhold over \$500,000 in already approved state funding for the Good Will-Hinckley School for at-risk children unless the School fired Mark Eves from his new job as President.

As was his plan, the Governor left the School with no choice but to terminate Mark Eves without cause. In turn, Mark has been forced to hire legal counsel to protect his ability to provide for his three young children.

Under the First Amendment, the Governor is clearly prohibited from using the money of our state government to exact revenge on public officials because they do not vote the way the Governor wants. This is not how Maine's system of government is supposed to work.

The Governor's tyrannical behavior threatens our democratic institutions. Legislators must be able to freely cast their votes in accordance with their best judgment and good conscience, without fear of political interference and intimidation. If the Governor's blatant retaliation goes unchecked, it threatens the independence of Maine's legislature and its ability to serve their critical role as a check on abuse of power by this or any future Governor.

The Governor is not above the law and his illegal use of our government money to retaliate against the Speaker of the House must not be allowed to stand.