

# State Board of Examiners Approves Contract with Weber Shandwick for 2010 Census Marketing and Outreach Plan

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## Secretary of State Ross Miller says effort is sound investment for Nevada

(Carson City, NV – December 18, 2009) – The State Board of Examiners today unanimously approved a contract with the public relations firm Weber Shandwick to implement a public outreach program designed to ensure a complete and accurate 2010 Census count in Nevada. The firm, whose Minneapolis office in particular, has extensive expertise in census outreach, will subcontract with The Ferraro Group of Reno and Las Vegas to assist in executing the plan. The \$886,000 contract with the Secretary of State's Office runs from today through the end of April, 2010.

The Nevada Legislature approved spending up to \$960,000 on 2010 Census outreach, having seen the return on the successful 2000 campaign that positioned the Census as a community-based project rather than a federal program. Nevada had the most improved response rate of any state in 2000 after finishing in the bottom five in 1990, when the state made little or no effort to encourage Nevadans to respond. Officials estimated the state lost tens of millions of federal dollars as a result of the poor response 20 years ago. The U.S. Census Bureau says the information it collects helps determine how more than \$400 billion of federal funding is spent each year on infrastructure and services like hospitals, schools, senior centers, emergency services, job training, and a variety of transportation projects.

Census results also determine how many seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives and the number of electoral votes in Presidential elections.

“Nevada simply cannot afford to throw away precious federal dollars just because somebody isn't counted,” Secretary Miller said. “We estimate the state would lose \$917 for every man, woman, and child missed, so people in this state have every reason to respond when asked to be counted. The questionnaire is short and simple, the information is completely confidential and by law can not be shared with other government agencies, and it gives us all an opportunity to make significant investments in our own communities.”

“We are thrilled to have been awarded this contract because we know how important a complete count is in Nevada,” said Barb Iverson, President of Financial Services for Weber Shandwick. “We were chosen by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2007 to handle public relations, partnerships and social media for the national 2010 Census, so our knowledge and rich experience will bring added value to Nevada's efforts. Our first step will be to meet with our partners in the state to finalize a strategic plan for Nevada that will complement the national effort.”

Weber Shandwick has been responsible for numerous award-winning federal and state government campaigns, including high-profile work for the U.S. Treasury, the U.S. Army, the Internal Revenue Service and the FDIC, all aimed at changing the behavior of resident, hard-to-reach people. Weber Shandwick also has strong Hispanic credentials, which will be particularly important for Nevada's 2010 Census campaign.

"We are pleased to partner with the Secretary of State's Office and Weber Shandwick to help send a positive message that will motivate all Nevadans to respond and be counted," added Greg Ferraro, President of the Ferraro Group.

The marketing and outreach plan is a multi-media effort to reach everyone living in the state, particularly populations that are traditionally undercounted. The final details will be developed in consultation with the Secretary of State's Office, the statewide and local Complete Count Committees, and U.S Census officials based in Nevada.

The census forms will be sent to every household in Nevada in March of 2010. For more information about the 2010 Census, visit [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).

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