



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**WESTMARC expresses concern, urgency on state budget; will recommend solutions.**

The WESTMARC Board of Directors today expressed serious concern over the state budget crisis and a strong sense of urgency to resolve it in both the short and long terms.

Consistent with WESTMARC's Key Initiatives, the Board's concerns centered on possible budget cuts to education, municipalities and healthcare, the impact of cuts to the economy and our workforce preparedness, and the potential impacts of revenue increases.

"Today the WESTMARC Board voted to support a holistic approach to solving the immediate and future state budget problems, especially in conjunction with strengthening our economy," said Mike Woodard, WESTMARC Chairman. "The Board also committed to work diligently toward more specific recommendations by May 15<sup>th</sup>."

According to Jack Lunsford, WESTMARC President & CEO, recommendations could include general support of the Governor's 5-Point Plan, state budget balancing alternatives and recommendations, and revenue increases.

He said they could also be separated between short term and long term, with the short term addressing the immediate state budget concerns over the next three years. Long term recommendations would likely be general with the specifics developed during the three years of the economic downturn.

Lunsford said that WESTMARC wants all options---including tax cuts, revenue enhancements, and tax reform---to remain on the table for discussion in resolving the state budget crisis.

The final state budget solution will likely be one nobody likes and will have a little pain for everyone," Lunsford said. "But in terms of our state's economic future we can't have a state budget solution so severe that it makes the recovery worse than the surgery itself."

**About WESTMARC** WESTMARC is the regional coalition of business, government, and education that promotes the West Valley and advocates on its behalf. WESTMARC was founded in 1990 to promote a positive image for Western Maricopa County. WESTMARC promotes public policies leading to responsible growth, a positive quality of life, a healthy environment, strong community development and a favorable public image. WESTMARC is dedicated to the principle that we accomplish more by working together, and represents 35 percent of the population of the county. WESTMARC's region includes the cities of Avondale, Buckeye, El Mirage, Gila Bend, Glendale, Goodyear, Litchfield Park, Peoria, West Phoenix, Sun City, Sun City West, Surprise, Tolleson, Wickenburg and Youngtown.