



**FOR RELEASE: April 16, 2010**

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**WESTMARC endorses temporary sales tax; Yes on 100 campaign**

The WESTMARC Board of Directors recently endorsed without opposition Proposition 100, the temporary increase of one cent in the state sales tax. Last year WESTMARC had expressed serious concern over the state budget crisis and a strong sense of urgency to resolve it in both the short and long terms, and believes this is a necessary step to accomplish both.

“This is truly a temporary tax,” explained Jack Lunsford, President & CEO of WESTMARC and a member of the Yes on 100 Steering Committee. “The temporary tax authorization goes into the state constitution and self repeals in three years. The only way it can be reinstated is to be voted on again by the people or passed by the Legislature on a 2/3 vote.”

WESTMARC believes the temporary tax increase should be coupled with comprehensive tax reform to aid in job retention and creation, and it is committed to being part of the leadership that resolves the state’s budget crisis for the betterment of the state.

“Our members have expressed strong support for a long-term economic and tax policy that builds a stronger knowledge-based economy and funds a more educated workforce to support that economy,” Lunsford said. “We need an economy that has a more diversified core and has a stronger base in products and services that we can export from the state.”

WESTMARC’s Key Initiatives center on economic development, education and workforce preparedness, healthcare, transportation infrastructure, and the protection of the mission of Luke Air Force Base.

“Without this short-term state budget solution for the next three years we will not have time to address the long term solutions,” Lunsford said, “and the state will face draconian cuts to education, healthcare, and public safety. 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, so we strongly encourage voters to say Yes on 100.”

The special election will be held on May 18, 2010 and early ballots will be mailed April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**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 represents 35 percent of the population of the County, including the cities of Avondale, Buckeye, El Mirage, Gila Bend, Glendale, Goodyear, Litchfield Park, Peoria, West Phoenix, Surprise, Tolleson, Wickenburg and Youngtown and the communities of Sun City and Sun City West.