



**28<sup>th</sup> Annual  
National Conference  
Boston, MA**

## **2012 Professional Practices Program**

# **CUTTING SAMPLE BALLOT PRODUCTION COSTS: From Complexity to Simplicity**

**Submitted by:**

**Daniel Burk**

**Registrar of Voters, Washoe County, NV**

**1001 E. Ninth St.**

**Reno, NV 89512**

**775-328-3683**

**[dburk@washoecounty.us](mailto:dburk@washoecounty.us)**

**[www.washoecounty.us/voters](http://www.washoecounty.us/voters)**

## **CUTTING SAMPLE BALLOT PRODUCTION COSTS: From Complexity to Simplicity**

### **The Issue:**

Nevada law requires that a “sample ballot” (referred to in some jurisdictions as a “voter pamphlet”, “voter booklet” or “voter guide”) be sent to every active registered voter prior to each election; Washoe County has approximately 225,000 active registered voters.

Sample ballots inform voters regarding the dates, locations and hours of operation for early voting and instructions on how to request an absent ballot. In addition, the sample ballot includes the explanation of ballot questions to be voted on, with “fiscal impact statements”, arguments for and against passage and other election-related information deemed helpful to voters. The indispensable aspect of the sample ballot is a facsimile of the ballot a voter will see when he/she votes; provided in order for the voter to be better informed in advance of going to the polls. Finally, the back of the sample ballot contains information added by the County’s mailing house vendor after-production; to include the voter’s name, residence address, precinct number, assigned Election Day polling place and unique voter ID number (in Arabic numerals and barcode formats).

Because the ballot facsimiles reflect the different ballot styles (i.e. combination of offices, candidates and questions on the ballots and political parties [primary only]), the County’s print vendor, prior to 2010, was required to set-up and print a different version of the sample ballot for each ballot style. In addition, the sample ballots were produced using 60lb paper with saddle stitching for durability and then delivered to the County’s mailing house vendor for addressing and adding of the voter-specific information listed above, prior to being mailed.

Since the County had as many as 200 or more ballot styles in a Primary Election and as many as 165 ballot styles in a General Election, an equal number of sample ballot versions had to be produced and the cost for paper, ink and print vendor staff time continued to escalate to the point that by 2008 the cost to the County for printing and addressing its sample ballots for the Primary and General Elections reached \$721,408. An expenditure of this magnitude was not sustainable. Consequently, a new approach to sample ballot production had to be found.

### **The Change:**

In 2010 the County changed the production of the sample ballots from a traditionally-printed product (using individually-created plates) to a computer-generated, direct-load web press print product and moved from the 60lb. paper used previously to 27.7 weight paper (i.e. newspaper).

Also, since the overwhelming majority of data on the sample ballots was identical, with the exception of the ballot facsimiles and the fact that not all voters in the County were eligible to vote on every ballot question, it made sense to move to a generic version of the sample ballot, to the extent possible. .

## **CUTTING SAMPLE BALLOT PRODUCTION COSTS**

Early in 2010 the County did, in fact, change from producing multiple versions of the sample ballots that were based, primarily, on the various ballot styles, to a generic version of the sample ballot and contracted with a mailing house vendor to insert the ballot facsimiles in the sample ballots and, for the first time, printed the ballot facsimiles at the County's Reprographics Division.

Moreover, to indicate when a ballot question was limited to some voters but not others, the following statement was added to the front of voter-limited questions:

***"Not all voters are eligible to vote this question.  
See your inserted ballot facsimile"***

Finally, to ensure the inserted ballot facsimiles remained in the sample ballots during shipping and to meet postal requirements, the mailing house vendor was instructed to apply a tab (1" circular) on the outside ("open edge") of the web press sample ballots.

### **The Payoff:**

The move to web press printing of sample ballots on 27.7 weight paper (i.e. newspaper) for the 2010 Primary and General Elections saved Washoe County over \$63,000. However, the bigger savings came as a result of the move to a generic sample ballot for all voters, printing the ballot facsimiles in-house and then having the unique ballot facsimiles inserted into the generic sample ballots.

Initially, there was concern that a separately-produced and inserted ballot facsimile process might result in the wrong ballot style being inserted into a voter's sample ballot. To avoid this possibility the County required its mailing house vendor to work with only one ballot style at a time, before beginning the processes of insertion, tabbing and addressing with the next ballot style. Although this requirement slowed the overall production process by two days, it was deemed essential to ensuring that the correct facsimile was provided to each voter in his/her sample ballot.

With the change to a generic sample ballot printed on newspaper quality paper, along with the move to print ballot facsimiles in-house at the County's Reprographics Division and inserting these into tabbed sample ballots at the point of addressing by the mailing house vendor, the total cost for sample ballot production and addressing for the Primary and General Elections in 2010 was \$140,672. These changes resulted in a net savings to the County of \$580,736 for sample ballot printing and mailing house services in 2010; when compared with the cost for sample ballot production and mailing house services in 2008 (\$721,408).

“CUTTING SAMPLE BALLOT PRODUCTION COSTS: From Complexity to Simplicity”

**Supportive Documents:**

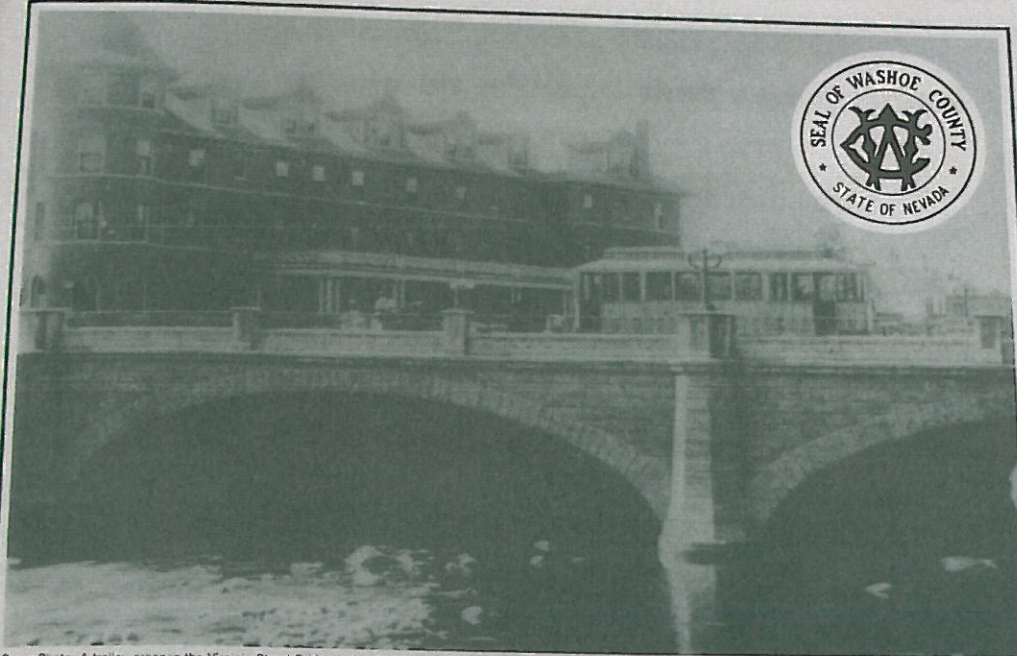
**A.**

2006 Sample Ballot with integral Ballot Facsimile. Printed on 60lb. bond paper and center stitched

**B.**

2010 Sample Ballot with inserted Ballot Facsimile. Printed on 27.7 weight paper (l.e. newspaper) and tabbed





Cover Photo: A trolley crosses the Virginia Street Bridge in front of the old Riverside Hotel in downtown Reno (circa 1914). Photo provided by the Nevada Historical Society.

# OFFICIAL GENERAL ELECTION SAMPLE BALLOT

## *Oficial Muestra de la Papeleta para la Elección General*

For Election Day TUESDAY NOVEMBER 7, 2006

*Para el Día de Elecciones MARTES EL 7 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 2006*

Polls Open 7:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M.

*Urnas Electorales Están Abiertas desde las 7:00 de la mañana hasta las 7:00 de la noche.*

Compiled and Distributed by the Washoe County Registrar of Voters. If you have any questions phone (775) 328-3670.

*Compilado y Distribuido por el Washoe County Registrar of Voters. Si Ud. tiene preguntas, llame al (775) 328-3670.*

REGISTRAR OF VOTERS  
1001 E. NINTH STREET  
BUILDING A, ROOM A135  
P.O. BOX 11130, RENO, NV 89520  
FAX: (775) 328-3747  
Website: [www.washoecounty.us/voters](http://www.washoecounty.us/voters)

**NOTICE: To Receive a Sample Ballot in Large Type Call (775) 328-3670**

***Aviso: Para Recibir una Papeleta de Votación de Muestra en Letra Grande, Llame al (775) 328-3670***

★ BRING THIS SAMPLE BALLOT TO THE POLLS ★ TRAIGA ESTA PAPELETA ELECTORAL DE MUESTRA A LAS URNAS ★

★ BRING THIS SAMPLE BALLOT TO THE POLLS ★ TRAIGA ESTA PAPELETA ELECTORAL DE MUESTRA A LAS URNAS ★



## Instructions

de elector ausente

AL  
ON BALLOT

A LA ELECCIÓN GENERAL

NEVADA

NOVIEMBRE 2006

## INSTRUCTIONS

choice, complete the arrow  
ice.

## PAPELETA ELECTORAL

ta de su Preferencia,  
su elección.mark your ballot  
ately (775) 328-3670.papeleta electoral llame  
otantes (775) 328-3670.

FEDERAL OFFICES OFICINAS FEDERALES	STATE PARTISAN OFFICES OFICINAS DE PARTIDO DEL ESTADO	STATEWIDE NONPARTISAN OFFICES OFICINAS INDEPENDIENTES ESTATALES
U.S. SENATOR Six Year Term VOTE FOR ONE SENADOR DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS Período de Seis Años VOTE FOR ONE	ATTORNEY GENERAL Four Year Term VOTE FOR ONE FISCAL GENERAL DEL ESTADO Período de Cuatro Años VOTE FOR ONE	SUPREME COURT JUSTICE SEAT 1 Six Year Term JUEZ DE LA CORTE SUPREMA PLAZA A Período de Seis Años VOTE FOR ONE
CARTER, JACK DEM	CHAREZ, DON REP	DOUGLAS, MICHAEL L. DEM
ENGLISH, JOHN REP	CORTEZ MASTO, CATHERINE DEM	STEEL, CYNTHIA "DIANNE" DEM
SCHUMANN, DAVID K. IA	NONE OF THESE CANDIDATES	NONE OF THESE CANDIDATES
TRAINOR, BRENDAN LIB	STATE SENATE DISTRICT 2 Four Year Term SENADO DEL ESTADO DISTRITO 2 Período de Cuatro Años VOTE FOR ONE	SUPREME COURT JUSTICE SEAT 2 Six Year Term JUEZ DE LA CORTE SUPREMA PLAZA B Período de Seis Años VOTE FOR ONE
NONE OF THESE CANDIDATES	EMERSON, JOHN H. DEM	BECKER, NANCY REP
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS DISTRICT 2 Two Year Term VOTE FOR ONE DIPUTADO DEL CONGRESO DISTRITO 2 Período de Dos Años VOTE FOR ONE	WASHINGTON, MAURICE REP	SAITTA, NANCY M. REP
DERBY, JILL DEM	STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 32 Four Year Term VOTE FOR ONE ASAMBLEA DEL ESTADO DISTRITO 32 Período de Cuatro Años VOTE FOR ONE	NONE OF THESE CANDIDATES
HELLER, DEAN REP	MAVEL, JOHN REP	DISTRICT NONPARTISAN OFFICES OFICINAS INDEPENDIENTES DISTRITALES
KROSHUS, JAMES C. IA	SPRINCLE, MIKE DEM	DISTRICT COURT JUDGE DEPARTMENT 7 Two Year Term JUEZ DE LA CORTE DEL DISTRITO DEPARTAMENTO 7 Período de Dos Años VOTE FOR ONE
ROSEN, DANIEL IND	COUNTY PARTISAN OFFICES OFICINAS DE PARTIDO DEL CONDADO	FLANAGAN, PATRICK REP
GOVERNOR Four Year Term VOTE FOR ONE GOBERNADOR Período de Cuatro Años VOTE FOR ONE	COUNTY ASSESSOR Four Year Term VOTE FOR ONE ASESOR DEL CONDADO Período de Cuatro Años VOTE FOR ONE	PECK, BRIDGET ROSS REP
BERGLAND, CRAIG O. GRN	KOZIOL, THOMAS "TOM" LIB	SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEE DISTRICT D Four Year Term VOTE FOR ONE FIDEICOMISARIO, JUNTA DE EDUCACIÓN DISTRITO D Período de Cuatro Años VOTE FOR ONE
GIBBONS, JIM REP	MCEILL, ERNE DEM	HOLLINGER, NANCY J. REP
HANSEN, CHRISTOPHER H. IA	OSGILVE, BRIET W. IA	PRITTS, CHRIS REP
TITUS, DINA DEM	WILSON, JOSHUA G. REP	SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEE DISTRICT E Four Year Term VOTE FOR ONE FIDEICOMISARIO, JUNTA DE EDUCACIÓN DISTRITO E Período de Cuatro Años VOTE FOR ONE
NONE OF THESE CANDIDATES	COUNTY CLERK Four Year Term VOTE FOR ONE SECRETARIO DEL CONDADO Período de Cuatro Años VOTE FOR ONE	PORTER, LIZIE REP
LEUTENANT GOVERNOR Four Year Term VOTE FOR ONE VICE GOBERNADOR Período de Cuatro Años VOTE FOR ONE	GILLING, RUTH IA	WILSON, LARRY REP
JEFFERSON, THOMAS IA	HARVEY, AMY REP	COUNTY NONPARTISAN OFFICES OFICINAS INDEPENDIENTES DEL CONDADO
KROICK, BRIAN REP	DISTRICT ATTORNEY Four Year Term VOTE FOR ONE FISCAL DEL DISTRITO Período de Cuatro Años VOTE FOR ONE	SHERIFF Four Year Term VOTE FOR ONE JEFES DE POLICIA Período de Cuatro Años VOTE FOR ONE
UNGER, ROBERT "BOB" DEM	GAMMICK, RICHARD A. "DICK" REP	HALEY, MIKE REP
NONE OF THESE CANDIDATES	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR Four Year Term VOTE FOR ONE ADMINISTRADOR PUBLICO Período de Cuatro Años VOTE FOR ONE	HARRISON, JOE REP
SECRETARY OF STATE Four Year Term VOTE FOR ONE SECRETARIO DE ESTADO Período de Cuatro Años VOTE FOR ONE	CAVALLO, DON REP	TOWNSHIP NONPARTISAN OFFICES OFICINAS INDEPENDIENTES MUNICIPALES
HANSEN, JANINE IA	CHAPMAN, LYNN IA	JUSTICE OF THE PEACE SPARKS DEPARTMENT 1 Six Year Term VOTE FOR ONE JUEZ DE PAZ, SPARKS DEPARTAMENTO 1 Período de Seis Años VOTE FOR ONE
MILLER, ROSS DEM	COUNTY RECORDER Four Year Term VOTE FOR ONE REGISTRADOR DEL CONDADO Período de Cuatro Años VOTE FOR ONE	DERISO, SUSAN REP
TARKANIAN, DANNY REP	BURKE, KATHRYN L. "KATHY" REP	SINCLAIR, DAVID E. REP
NONE OF THESE CANDIDATES	MILLER, GREGORY IA	
STATE TREASURER Four Year Term VOTE FOR ONE TESORERO DEL ESTADO Período de Cuatro Años VOTE FOR ONE	COUNTY TREASURER Four Year Term VOTE FOR ONE TESORERO DEL CONDADO Período de Cuatro Años VOTE FOR ONE	
ANDREWS, MARK IA	BERNUM, BILL REP	
DESTEFANO, MARK REP	JOSEPH, DAN IA	
MARSHALL, KATE DEM	STATEWIDE NONPARTISAN OFFICES OFICINAS INDEPENDIENTES ESTATALES	
NONE OF THESE CANDIDATES	SUPREME COURT JUSTICE SEAT 3 Six Year Term JUEZ DE LA CORTE SUPREMA PLAZA C Período de Seis Años VOTE FOR ONE	
STATE CONTROLLER Four Year Term VOTE FOR ONE CONTADOR DEL ESTADO Período de Cuatro Años VOTE FOR ONE	CHERRY, MICHAEL A. REP	
FITZGIBBONS, FLOYD IA	NONE OF THESE CANDIDATES	
MARTIN, STEVE REP		
WALLIN, KIM DEM		
NONE OF THESE CANDIDATES		

79

OFFICIAL GENERAL ELECTION SAMPLE BALLOT  
OFICIAL MUESTRA DE LA PAPELETA PARA LA ELECCION GENERAL

VOTE BOTH SIDES OF BALLOT



Official 2010  
General Election Sample Ballot  
Election Day Tuesday November 2, 2010  
Polls Open 7:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M.



Compiled And Distributed By  
The Washoe County Registrar Of Voters Department  
If You Have Any Questions Phone (775) 328-3670

Registrar of Voters  
1001 E. Ninth Street  
Building A, Room A135  
P.O. Box 11130, Reno, NV 89520  
FAX: (775) 328-3747  
Website: [www.washoecounty.us/voters](http://www.washoecounty.us/voters)

De Conformidad Con La Ley Federal,  
La Versión Completa En Español  
De Esta Papeleta De Muestra  
Se Encuentra Incluida.

Your assigned Polling Place and Precinct Number  
appear on the back cover of your Sample Ballot.



## THREE WAYS



1 Go To the Polls  
(Your polling place)

2 Vote  
(Sample Ballot)

3 Vote  
(Sample Ballot)

# STATEWIDE MEASURES AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS MEDIDAS ESTATALES Y CONSTITUCIONALES

**QUESTION NO. 1**  
Amendment to the Nevada Constitution  
Shall the Nevada Constitution be amended to  
provide for the appointment of judges by the  
Nevada State Judicial Council?

**PREGUNTA NO. 1**  
¿Debe ser enmendada la Constitución de  
Nevada para permitir que los jueces sean  
designados por el Consejo Judicial del Estado?

**QUESTION NO. 2**  
Amendment to the Nevada Constitution  
Shall the Nevada Constitution be amended to  
allow for the establishment of an independent  
judicial council?

**PREGUNTA NO. 2**  
¿Debe ser enmendada la Constitución de  
Nevada para permitir la creación de un consejo  
judicial independiente?

**QUESTION NO. 3**  
Amendment to the Nevada Constitution  
Shall the Nevada Constitution be amended to  
allow for the establishment of a judicial  
branch?

**PREGUNTA NO. 3**  
¿Debe ser enmendada la Constitución de  
Nevada para permitir la creación de una  
rama judicial?

**QUESTION NO. 4**  
Amendment to the Nevada Constitution  
Shall the Nevada Constitution be amended to  
allow for the establishment of a judicial  
branch?

**PREGUNTA NO. 4**  
¿Debe ser enmendada la Constitución de  
Nevada para permitir la creación de una  
rama judicial?

**QUESTION NO. 5**  
Amendment to the Nevada Constitution  
Shall the Nevada Constitution be amended to  
allow for the establishment of a judicial  
branch?

**PREGUNTA NO. 5**  
¿Debe ser enmendada la Constitución de  
Nevada para permitir la creación de una  
rama judicial?

**QUESTION NO. 6**  
Amendment to the Nevada Constitution  
Shall the Nevada Constitution be amended to  
allow for the establishment of a judicial  
branch?

**PREGUNTA NO. 6**  
¿Debe ser enmendada la Constitución de  
Nevada para permitir la creación de una  
rama judicial?

# BALLOT