



CHANGES TO CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM LAWS ESCALATE ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

BY ROSS MILLER, NEVADA SECRETARY OF STATE

Nevada politics is entering a new era of greater accountability and transparency with the passage of a comprehensive campaign finance reform bill supported by the Secretary of State's office. Effective January 1, 2012, AB 452 will make important changes to Nevada's disclosure laws.

Whether it is a candidate, a Political Action Committee (PAC), a party or any other political group, AB 452 now requires all Contribution & Expense (C&E) Reports and Financial Disclosure Statements (FDS) to be filed electronically. Voters will know who is funding campaigns immediately following information filing with the Secretary of State. Data will be publicly available in a timely manner and in an accessible format.

An exemption will only be granted to filers who submit an affidavit declaring they do not own, have access, or have the financial ability to obtain access to the necessary technology. The exemption cannot be granted to a filer who receives or expends in excess of \$10,000.

The Secretary of State's office will also provide a level of disclosure and transparency to the public not

previously available in Nevada through a user-friendly database. Visitors can modify searches by various criteria including contributions and expenditures (by name, address, amount, date, type), parties, office and political groups.

AB 452 also changes reporting deadlines so additional and more relevant reports will be available to the public leading up to an election. Reports are due four days before the beginning of early voting and four days before Election Day for both the Primary and the General Election. Previously, reports were only filed seven days before the election days.

Under AB 452, the Secretary of State becomes the sole filing office for every race, regardless of the office the candidate is seeking or where the declaration of candidacy is filed. The public can easily obtain campaign finance information without having to go to multiple locations for information related to municipal and county elections and candidates.

AB 452 gives the public a level of disclosure and transparency it has never seen before in Nevada. With more timely data in a searchable user-friendly format, Nevadans will know who is funding the candidates' campaigns prior to early voting and election day. AB 452 has ushered in a new era of transparency in Nevada's

electoral process and will ultimately strengthen the public's faith in the electoral process. ■

As a former criminal prosecutor, **SECRETARY OF STATE ROSS MILLER** has made it a top priority during his two terms in office to restore Nevada's faith in the electoral process. He is successfully pursuing campaign finance reform laws and has established the Election Integrity Task Force, a multi-jurisdictional task force recognized by the Department of Justice as a model for protecting the integrity of elections. With a Master of Business Administration degree and a law degree from Loyola Marymount University, as well as a Bachelor of Arts degree from Stanford University, Miller brings a valuable mix of pro-business perspective and legal background to the office of Secretary of State.