

## Nevada Influencers

As published in *Campaigns & Elections* in February, 2011, excerpted and reprinted and/or posted with permission.

In the lead-up to the 2010 election, many in the GOP targeted Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada as Public Enemy No. 1. The state's Republican primary voters chose Tea Party-favorite Sharron Angle to oppose him, but her extreme views alienated some moderates in her own party and, in the end, she proved no match for Reid's well-oiled political machine. While a Republican tsunami washed over much of the nation, it made only partial landfall in Nevada. Republicans picked up a seat in Congress and held the governorship, but both houses of the legislature remained in Democratic hands.

Regardless of party affiliation, though, this is a difficult time to hold public office in Nevada. The Great Recession has hit the Silver State hard, sending its once booming gaming and construction industries into free fall. It has the nation's highest unemployment rate at 14 percent, and its Medicaid caseload has skyrocketed to almost 300,000. The new Republican governor, Brian Sandoval, has called economic development his top objective, but he won't have an easy time of it in a state that can't meet its current expenses and in which the two parties can't agree on anything—even the size of the state's deficit.

Here is our list of Nevada's most influential political players, who will be tasked with finding a way past the state's troubles....

### Sam McMullen

The lobbyist and lawyer from Henderson is one of the heaviest hitters in the Nevada legislature and is still remembered for helping beat back the gross-receipts tax promoted by gaming interests in the great tax battle of 2003. His clients have included tobacco giant Philip Morris, gold-mining concerns and Nevada's gambling-industrial complex.



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Sam McMullen's practice is concentrated in governmental law, strategic positioning, lobbying, and political strategy. He represents business and political clients for maximum positive effect in legal and strategic positioning, governmental relations, and public affairs. Sam is skilled in multiple governmental and regulatory agencies including gaming, state and local, taxation, licensing and permitting, insurance, health, utility, environmental, energy, land use and planning, among others. He specializes in initiative and referendum, law and litigation, campaign and election, political contributions, and PAC laws and regulation.

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