

Winner & Mandabach Wins 5 of 6 Campaigns in 2005-2006

In the 2005-06 election cycle, Winner & Mandabach Campaigns continued its successful track record, winning five major ballot measure campaigns in four states. In the prior cycle, 2003-04, the firm won all five of the campaigns in which it was involved.

The firm also extended its winning track record on “YES” campaigns, which are generally more difficult to win than “NO” campaigns. In the past two cycles, the firm was successful in passing seven measures, and has won 38 “YES” campaigns in states throughout the country since 1990. Overall, Winner & Mandabach has more ballot measure experience than any firm in the nation, having consulted on more than 140 ballot measure campaigns in 23 different states, with a 90 percent success rate.

Winner & Mandabach’s wins this cycle included the passage of a Missouri state constitutional amendment to protect stem cell research – one of the nation’s most watched, most heated ballot measure fights. The firm successfully managed two major ballot measure campaigns in California: the passage of the largest natural resource conservation bond in U.S. history and the defeat of a measure designed to limit eminent domain and government regulatory actions. The firm also expanded its successful track record on gaming measures, with wins on gaming campaigns in Rhode Island and Arkansas.

During the past year, the firm was also retained by a coalition of leading businesses in Nevada to defeat a measure severely restricting government spending and taxation that was ultimately struck from the ballot by the state supreme court in September 2006.

Below are brief descriptions of the firm’s winning campaigns in the 2005-2006 election cycle.

Passage Of Missouri Amendment 2: Stem Cell Research Initiative



Amendment 2 was developed to prevent the Missouri legislature from restricting stem cell research and treatments in the state. For several years, serious efforts had been made to pass state laws banning embryonic stem cell research – threatening future patient access to cures and research efforts at the Stowers Institute for Medical Research, Washington University in St. Louis and other Missouri research centers. The firm worked with these institutions and patient groups to develop a state constitutional amendment designed to ensure that any stem cell research allowed under federal law would be allowed in Missouri.

In the campaign, Winner & Mandabach needed to address the fact that Amendment 2 was strongly opposed by powerful state and national conservative, “pro-life” organizations that had longstanding grassroots networks and considerable funding. Thus, the campaign plan included not only major paid media elements but also major grassroots recruitment and activation efforts which included over 100 different organizations and 60,000 committee members.

In the final month, stem cell research opponents launched an aggressive scare tactic campaign that included earned media, extensive grassroots and multi-million dollar advertising efforts.

Another issue was a commercial featuring Michael J. Fox endorsing U.S. Senate candidate Claire McCaskill, a Democrat, and attacking incumbent Republican Jim Talent on the stem cell issue. The resulting media frenzy created the misimpression that the ad was about Amendment 2 and that the vote on the amendment was about partisan politics. This increased the polarization of the vote on Amendment 2 along party lines, far beyond what had previously been shown in surveys.

To address the resulting tightening in poll numbers, the YES on 2 campaign developed effective rebuttal ads and implemented an expanded on-the-ground canvassing campaign. With the added boost of this final push, the amendment passed. The fact that a pro-stem cell measure was approved in the conservative bellwether state of Missouri has been hailed as a major victory by stem cell supporters nationwide.

Passage Of California Prop 84: \$5.4 Billion Natural Resources Bond



In California, 2006 was a unique election year that posed major challenges for Prop 84, a \$5.4 billion bond initiative to protect California's water, land, coastline and other natural resources.

The ballot was crowded with 12 other statewide ballot measures – including a separate package of several infrastructure bond measures put on the ballot by the state legislature, as well as several contentious tax measures that led to unprecedented amounts of ballot measure advertising.

Prop 84 also faced challenging ballot wording. In fact, prior to the advertising and grassroots campaign, internal polling showed Prop 84 behind by 14 points.

The campaign that overcame these challenges included a highly successful grassroots outreach effort that led to one of the largest coalitions in California history. As Election Day approached, supporting third party groups executed a major viral email program to their members. The coalition was also featured in earned media events to raise awareness of the measure.

A four-week paid communications campaign – utilizing television, targeted cable, direct mail and phone contact – created steady improvement in the campaign's internal polling numbers. While the television ads maintained a consistent frame and tone, the specific visuals in the ads, the blend of commercials used, and the commercial lengths (:30 versus :15) were adjusted on a weekly basis, based upon polling and the nature of advertisements run by other campaigns.

The final election results showed that the campaign's strategy, tactics and activities had overcome the initial deficit to garner a 54-46 victory.

[Defeat Of California Prop 90: Eminent Domain and Regulatory Action](#)



Prop 90 was part of a national effort by libertarians and others to use the public's anger over eminent domain and the US Supreme Court's "*Kelo*" decision to advance a broad property rights agenda. Prop 90 contained provisions restricting the use of eminent domain. It also contained far-reaching "regulatory takings" and compensation provisions related to zoning and environmental laws.

Initial surveys showed the campaign would be extremely difficult because of the public's desire for eminent domain reform and because the messages available to the "YES" campaign were simpler and more emotional.

A major step in overcoming these challenges was for the outreach consulting/client team to build one of the largest and most unique "strange bedfellows" coalitions in California history – including major taxpayer, environmental, business, labor, agriculture and good government groups.

The decision was made early to frame Prop 90 as a "Taxpayer Trap." This frame – delivered throughout the campaign in paid and earned media – helped overcome the public's enthusiasm for eminent domain reform by tapping into inherent skepticism of ballot measures in general and the costs related to the hidden provisions in Prop 90 specifically.

A multi-phased advertising campaign in the final weeks emphasized the coalition and labeled Prop 90 as anti-homeowner and anti-taxpayer – essentially flipping the proponents' "protect our homes" rhetoric. The campaign also featured targeted cable advertising aimed at progressive voters, emphasizing the detrimental impacts Prop 90 would have on the environment. An extensive viral email and web advertising effort also delivered tailored messages to Californians statewide. These strategies proved successful, as voters rejected Prop 90 on Election Day.

[Defeat Of Rhode Island Question 1: Casino In West Warwick](#)



Question 1 would have allowed a large new casino in the town of West Warwick, Rhode Island. Seven weeks before Election Day, when the firm was brought into the Question 1 campaign by the committee of local racetracks opposing the measure, the measure was ahead in the polls by 12 points.

The firm provided guidance that helped shift the campaign strategy and the messages used in an advertising campaign with a limited budget. Despite the fact that the "NO" campaign was outspent by a six to one margin, on Election Day, Question One was defeated by a 25-point margin, 37% YES to 63% NO.

Passage Of Arkansas Gaming Measure: Expanded Gaming at Oaklawn



In 2005, the Arkansas state legislature passed a bill that would allow new electronic gaming machines to be installed at the Oaklawn Park thoroughbred racetrack in Hot Springs, subject to approval by a local vote of the people. Winner & Mandabach was hired by Oaklawn to develop and oversee the implementation of a plan to pass the local ballot question.

Initial surveys showed that the effort to pass the measure faced major obstacles. Baseline support for the measure was less than 45% and, after years of debates about gaming at Oaklawn, there were few undecided voters. Gaming campaigns are typically won by holding on to an initial lead, so it was clear that an extremely effective campaign would be necessary to achieve success at the ballot box.

With few “persuadable” voters, the campaign plan emphasized a major grassroots effort to identify and turn out supporters. To avoid activating opponents, paid communications were targeted to likely supporters. After a final GOTV blitz featuring targeted door-to-door, phones and direct mail, the measure passed on Election Day.

Overview of Winner & Mandabach’s 2005-2006 Campaigns

State	Issue	W&M Client Position	Final Vote – With W&M % Shown First
Missouri	Amendment 2: Stem Cell Research	YES	51% YES 49% NO
California	Proposition 84: Natural Resources Bond	YES	54% YES 46% NO
California	Proposition 90: Eminent Domain and Regulatory Actions	NO	52% NO 48% YES
Rhode Island	Question 1: Casino Gambling	NO	64% NO 36% YES
Massachusetts	Question 1: Expanded Wine Sales	YES	44% YES 56% NO
Arkansas	Racetrack Gaming Referendum	YES	51% YES 49% NO

For more information, please contact:
Paul Mandabach, President
Winner & Mandabach Campaigns (310) 576-4800
Email: info@wmcampaigns.com
Web Site: www.wmcampaigns.com