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**The Truth-O-Meter Says:**



**Sharron Angle "would eliminate the Department of Education."**

Harry Reid on Thursday, September 23rd, 2010 in a campaign commercial

**Harry Reid says Sharron Angle wants to eliminate the Education Department**

The Nevada Senate race between incumbent Democrat Harry Reid and Republican challenger Sharron Angle has become one of the nation's most bitter, with Angle seeking to make Reid the poster child for the poor national and Nevada economies and Reid trying to portray Angle's staunchly conservative views as out of the mainstream.

In a [television ad](#) released Aug. 23, 2010, Reid's campaign says that Angle wants to eliminate the U.S. Department of Education. The ad relies on a clip from an interview Angle did with radio station KNPR, the NPR affiliate in Nevada, on May 19, 2010, when she was running in the GOP primary.

The exchange quoted in the ad begins with the host asking Angle, "Would you eliminate the Department of Education or simply cut it back?" Angle replies, "I would like to go through to the elimination."

We wanted to look through the rest of the interview to make sure that Angle really does believe that the department should be eliminated.

First, a little background on the Education Department. Its [budget](#) for fiscal year 2010 is about \$64 billion. Of this, nearly \$27 billion consists of Pell Grants, which fund disadvantaged students in college and graduate school. Another \$25 billion is authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, including funding to K-12 school systems around the country. An additional \$12 billion comes from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which helps fund education for disabled K-12 students. Much of the remainder is spent on educational research.

We went to the [archived interview](#) and found that the ad doesn't distort her view. Here's a transcript of the relevant portion of the interview:

"I believe that anything that isn't a federally governed, enumerated power in the Constitution, which means the federal government should be paying out on this, is up for grabs here," she said. "And we have some departments like the Department of Education that passes down policy, one-size-fits-all, that fits no one. Like No Child Left Behind. We need to keep those education dollars right here in the state and put them where they will do the most good, which is right in that classroom, with that classroom teacher. We need to cut down on those bureaucracies that take those educational dollars that should be going into that classroom.

"And it angers me every time I hear (politicians) say we're going to cut teachers," she continued. "What about the agencies that never see a child, never have been in a classroom, that are passing down policy that actually overburdens our classrooms. What about those? Why don't we cut there?"

That's when the host interjects. "Would you eliminate the Department of Education or simply cut it back?"

Angle responds, "I would like to go through to the elimination. I think we start by defunding it, and the reason that we should eliminate it is because its not the federal government's job to provide education for our children. It's a 10th Amendment right. It should be done here in the



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Harry Reid attacks his GOP challenger, Sharron Angle, on her plans to dismantle the U.S. Department of Education

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**About this statement:**

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**Sources:**

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E-mail interview with Erwin Chemerinsky, dean of the law school at the University of California (Irvine), Sep. 1, 2010

E-mail interview with Ilya Shapiro, senior fellow in constitutional studies at the Cato Institute, Sep. 1, 2010

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state, and it should be done as close to the local as possible."

Reviewing the exchange on KNPR, it seems to us that the ad portrayed Angle's stance accurately. She did not hesitate, backtrack or give any indication that she misspoke, even when the host gave her the opportunity to roll back the scope of her proposal.

She's expressed that position before, in a Mar. 22, 2010, [interview](#) with the conservative website Nevada News & Views, when she said she would like to eliminate not just the Education Department but the Energy Department and the Environmental Protection Agency as well.

It's worth noting that there's been a long-running constitutional debate about whether the Education Department is legitimate. Erwin Chemerinsky, the liberal dean of the University of California (Irvine) law school, argues that it's proper because of Congress' spending power. Ilya Shapiro of the libertarian Cato Institute counters that the 10th Amendment's assigning of all unlisted powers to the states makes it "plain and obvious that there is no constitutional authority" for it.

Regardless, on the issue raised by Reid's ad -- whether Sharron Angle "would eliminate the Department of Education" -- we found that yes, she did say she wanted to do so in several public forums. So we rate the Reid ad True.

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The advertisement features the Pulte Homes logo on the left, followed by the slogan "More natural light." in a large, bold font. To the right of the text is a photograph of a modern living room with large windows. On the far right, there are three blue buttons with white text: "> Discover more details", "> Homes ready now", and "> Where we build".



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