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MEDIA ALERT

First Western Advisors, Four Brokers charged with Securities Fraud

"Clients' money put into funds with higher commissions and fees without disclosure"
(For immediate release...)

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah – The Division of Securities announced today that a Petition to Revoke and Bar Licensees and Impose Fines has been filed against First Western Advisors, Inc. and two current and two former brokers Gary W. Teran, Carl A. Page, David A. Russon, and Brian G. Kasteler. The Petition alleges eight counts of violating securities laws, including securities fraud for failing to disclose material facts to clients, recommending unsuitable investments, giving false account information to clients, and attempting to change client testimony to the Securities Exchange Commission all of which violated the *Utah Securities Act*.

According to the Petition, the four agents invested in "Class B" shares, which have higher expenses and paid the agents higher commissions than "Class A" shares of the same funds. Some clients believed they owned "Class A" shares based upon Morningstar "Snapshot" reports received from the respondents which reflected mutual fund performance for "Class A" shares. The nine Utah victims invested a total of \$20,671,750 with First Western Advisors and the four brokers.

Following the nine investors' sworn testimony to the Securities Exchange Commission, the respondents attempted to contradict their clients' statements by having them sign "Mutual Fund Disclosure Statements" and "Declarations" to suggest their clients were fully aware of the brokers' actions all along. First Western Advisors is also charged with failing to maintain accurate books and records and for failing to supervise the activities of the four named brokers. First Western Advisors and the respondents have 30 days from the filing date to respond to the Division of Securities.

Investors are urged to contact the Division of Securities to make sure anyone offering investments is licensed, by calling (801) 530.6600, toll free at 1.800.721.7233 or logging on to www.securities.utah.gov.

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