



**From the U.S. Chamber of Commerce
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Survey Shows Small Businesses' Economic Outlook Not Improving

*As Election Year Begins, Poll Shows Small Businesses Want
Lawmakers Held Accountable for Votes on Economic Issues*

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Small businesses' outlook for the national economy showed that the vast majority think our country is on the wrong track and nearly two out of three do not plan to hire in the year ahead, according to a poll conducted for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce by Harris Interactive.

"The policies coming out of Washington are only exacerbating the economic uncertainty that small businesses continue to cite as their greatest challenge," said U.S. Chamber President and CEO Thomas J. Donohue. "Heading into an election year, our country's job creators are speaking with a unified voice in saying that we need a change of course in Washington. With government spending and regulations out of control, small businesses don't know what's going to hit them next."

The poll of 1,322 small business executives – conducted between December 30, 2011 and January 6, 2012 – found that more than eight out of ten (85%) now believe the U.S. economy is on the wrong track. Eight out of ten say they would rather have Washington stay out of the way than provide a helping hand. Similarly, nearly nine out of ten (86%) say they would rather have more certainty from Washington than more assistance (6%) to deal with the economy. The survey defined a small business as a company with fewer than 500 employees and annual revenues of less than \$25 million.

As the election year begins, small businesses offered a clear recognition of the importance of politics in policies that impact their businesses. The vast majority of small business members surveyed (93%) find the Chamber's work in educating the public on political issues and candidates valuable. Nearly all of the small businesses polled (98%) consider a candidate's position on free enterprise and business issues as important in how they vote.

"It's clear that small business owners want lawmakers to be held accountable for how they voted on critical business issues," said the Chamber's Senior Vice

President and National Political Director, Rob Engstrom. “That’s why this year the Chamber is committing to launch our most aggressive voter education effort in this institution’s 100 year history.”

To read a complete copy of the Q4 Small Business Outlook Survey, please visit:

<http://www.uschambersmallbusinessnation.com/community/quarterly-survey-2>

Survey Methodology

The Q4 U.S. Chamber of Commerce Small Business Study was conducted online between December 30, 2011 and January 6, 2012 by Harris Interactive among 1,322 U.S. Chamber of Commerce members and non-U.S. Chamber members. Data was weighted to be representative of the small business population. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no estimate of theoretical sampling error can be calculated. This report contains data from this survey and references data collected in the Q2 and Q3 U.S. Chamber of Commerce Small Business Study.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world’s largest business federation representing the interests of more than 3 million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations.