



## Opinion Poll

### Wisconsin Small Business Owners Support Reforming U.S. Elections

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October 30, 2014

**Small Business Majority**

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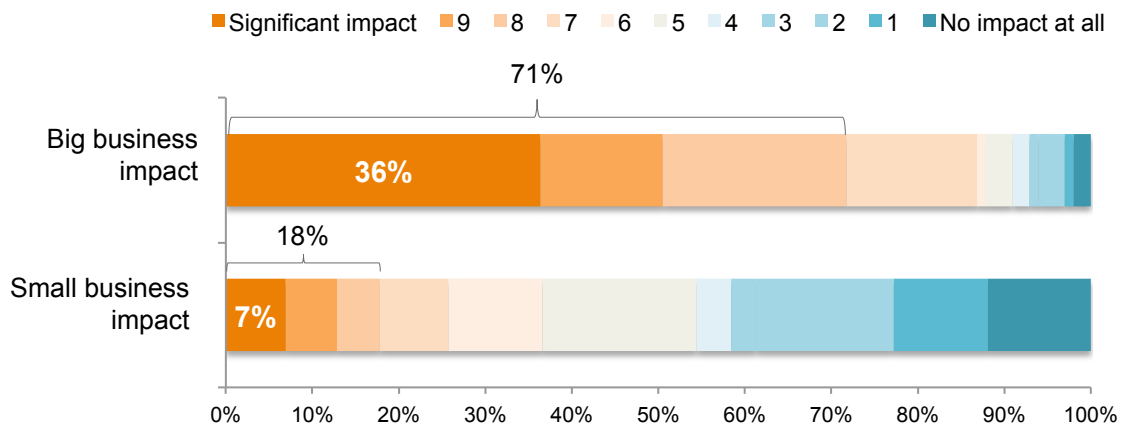
[www.smallbusinessmajority.org](http://www.smallbusinessmajority.org)

## Main Findings

- Wisconsin entrepreneurs believe big businesses have an unfair influence on government decisions and the political process:** 71% of small employers say big businesses have a significant impact on government decisions and the political process. In comparison, a mere 18% say small businesses have a significant impact on the process.

**Figure 1: Entrepreneurs believe big business has significantly more impact over political process than small business.**

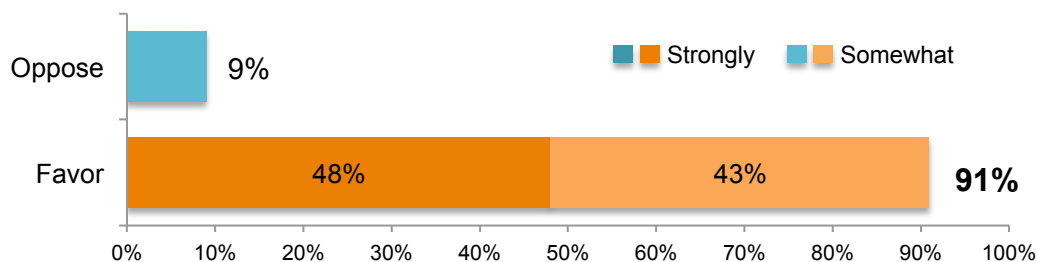
Please rate on scale from 0 to 10 how much of an impact big businesses and small businesses can have on government decisions and the political process. A 10 would mean a significant impact and a 0 would mean not impact at all. You can use any number between 0 and 10.



- Small employers believe we need significant changes to the way election campaigns are financed:** Two-thirds (66%) of Wisconsin small business owners say major changes are needed to our campaign finance system, with a mere 7% who say no changes are needed.
- Small businesses support publicly-financed campaigns:** 91% of entrepreneurs support changing the way we finance election campaigns to using only small contributions from voters and a limited amount of public funds. Nearly half (48%) of small businesses *strongly favor* this provision.

**Figure 2: Small businesses support financing campaigns through small contributions from voters and a limited amount of public funds**

Please indicate whether you would favor or oppose the following steps to improve our democracy and the way elections are conducted: Finance campaigns using only small contributions from voters and a limited amount of public funds.



- **Small employers overwhelmingly believe we need more transparency from special interest groups that finance election campaigns:** A vast 89% of small business owners in Wisconsin support requiring special interest groups that use paid TV and mail ads during elections to publicly disclose where their money comes from; nearly two-thirds (63%) say they *strongly favor* this.
- **Small employers support a merit selection process for state Supreme Court seats:** 70% of small business owners support selecting judges for state Supreme Court seats by a non-partisan, independent panel of lawyers and non-lawyers appointed by the governor and the state bar association that interviews applicants for state Supreme Court seats. The panel would identify several of the most qualified applicants, and send a list of finalists to the governor. The governor would then appoint one of the finalists to fill the vacancy. The selected judges would also have to face what is known as a retention election after their first term, where voters vote yes or no on whether to keep them.
- **Vast majority of Wisconsin small businesses support taking the redistricting process out of the hands of legislators:** 86% of small business owners favor having district boundaries drawn by a non-partisan independent citizens' commission of informed voters, rather than by elected officials. This constitutional amendment would also require that districts be drawn using neutral criteria so that one political party or politician is not favored over others. Forty-five percent *strongly favor* this step to improve the election process.
- **Small businesses support moving towards a multiparty system:** 86% of small business owners believe we should change our current election system to one that allows for multiparty representation, a system that could lead to election of parties other than the Republican and Democratic parties.
- **Majority of Wisconsin entrepreneurs are ready for ranked choice voting:** 57% of small business owners support eliminating primary elections and switch to ranked choice voting. With ranked choice voting, voters rank their choices—first, second, third and so on—instead of only choosing one candidate on the ballot. If a candidate receives more than 50 percent first choice votes, that candidate wins. If not, the candidates with the fewest votes are eliminated and their votes are reallocated to remaining choices based on the voters' next choices until one candidate receives a majority of the ballots.
- **Respondents were politically diverse:** 36% identified as Republican, 40% as Democrat, 20% as independent or other and 4% chose not to identify party affiliation.

## Methodology

This poll reflects an Internet survey of 900 small business owners. It includes a national survey of 400 small business owners with oversamples of 100 small business owners in Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin that contributed to a survey sample size of 900 participants. The poll was conducted by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner for Small Business Majority with a margin of error of +/-3.27. The survey was conducted from September 5-18, 2014.

## Poll Toplines

September 5-18, 2014

### 100 Wisconsin small business employers

Q.1 Do you own your own business?

	WI
Yes .....	100
No.....	-
Not sure.....	-

Q.2 How many people are directly employed by your business or company, including yourself?

	WI
1 .....	-
2-5 .....	64
6-10 .....	14
11-25 .....	8
26-50.....	4
51-100.....	10
More than 100 .....	-

Q.3 Which ONE of the following categories best describes your business?

	WI
Administrative support and accounting .....	2
Agriculture .....	7
Arts, entertainment and recreation.....	6
Construction .....	11
Finance and insurance.....	9
Information technology.....	2
Legal.....	1
Manufacturing .....	9
Medical or dental.....	2
Real estate.....	10
Restaurant .....	6
Retail (such as a shop or store) .....	7
Retail services (such as car repair, home repair, landscaping).....	5
Scientific and technical services .....	3
Service industry .....	5
Whole sale trade .....	2
Other .....	15
(Prefer not to say) .....	-

Q.4 Please rate on scale from 0 to 10 how much of an impact small businesses can have on government decisions and the political process. A 10 would mean a significant impact and a 0 zero mean no impact at all. You can use any number between 0 and 10.

	<b>WI</b>
10.....	7
9.....	6
8.....	5
7.....	8
6.....	11
5.....	18
4.....	4
3.....	3
2.....	16
1.....	11
0.....	12
Mean.....	4.4
<b>10.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8-10.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>6-10.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>0-5.....</b>	<b>63</b>

Q.5 Please rate on scale from 0 to 10 how much of an impact big businesses can have on government decisions and the political process. A 10 would mean a significant impact and a 0 zero mean no impact at all. You can use any number between 0 and 10.

	<b>WI</b>
10.....	36
9.....	14
8.....	21
7.....	15
6.....	1
5.....	3
4.....	2
3.....	1
2.....	3
1.....	1
0.....	2
Mean.....	8.0
<b>10.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>8-10.....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>6-10.....</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>0-5.....</b>	<b>13</b>

Q.6 When it comes to the way election campaigns are financed, do you think we need to make major changes, minor changes, or should we not make any changes to the way election campaigns are financed, or are you not sure?

	<b>WI</b>
Major changes.....	66
Minor changes.....	23
No changes.....	7
Not sure.....	5
<b>Total changes.....</b>	<b>88</b>

Please indicate whether you would favor or oppose the following steps to improve our democracy and the way elections are conducted.

	<b>Strng Fav</b>	<b>Smwt Fav</b>	<b>Smwt Opp</b>	<b>Strng Opp</b>	<b>Total Fav</b>	<b>Total Opp</b>	<b>Fav - Opp</b>
Q.7 Instead of having elected officials draw the district boundaries, they would be drawn by a non-partisan independent citizens' commission of informed voters. This constitutional amendment would also require that districts be drawn using neutral criteria so that one political party or politician is not favored over others. WI .....	45	40	9	5	<b>86</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>71</b>
Q.8 Give every citizen the choice to be registered to vote when they interact with any government agency. WI .....	42	44	9	4	<b>86</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>72</b>
Q.9 Change our current electoral system to one that allows for multiparty representation, a system that could lead to election of parties other than the Republican and Democratic parties. WI .....	36	50	10	4	<b>86</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>72</b>
Q.10 Allow same day registration so that eligible citizens could register to vote anytime up to and including election day. WI .....	42	28	18	13	<b>69</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>38</b>
Q.11 Judges would be selected by establishing a non-partisan, independent panel of lawyers and non-lawyers appointed by the Governor and the state bar association that interviews applicants for (STATE) Supreme Court seats. The panel would identify several of the most qualified applicants, and send a list of finalists to the governor. The governor would then appoint one of the finalists to fill the vacancy. The selected judges would also have to face what is known as a retention election after their first term, where voters vote yes or no on whether to keep them. WI .....	33	38	18	11	<b>70</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>41</b>
Q.12 Judges would be selected by establishing a non-partisan, independent panel of lawyers and non-lawyers appointed by the Governor and the state bar association that interviews applicants for (STATE) Supreme Court seats. The panel would identify several of the most qualified applicants, and send a list of finalists to the governor. The governor would then appoint one of the finalists to fill the vacancy. WI .....	29	39	24	8	<b>68</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>35</b>

	<b>Strng Fav</b>	<b>Smwt Fav</b>	<b>Smwt Opp</b>	<b>Strng Opp</b>	<b>Total Fav</b>	<b>Total Opp</b>	<b>Fav - Opp</b>
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Q.13 Eliminate primary elections and switch to ranked choice voting. With ranked choice voting, voters to rank their choices--first, second, third, and so on--instead of choosing only one candidate on the ballot. If a candidate receives more than 50 percent first choice votes, that candidate wins. If not, the candidates with the fewest votes are eliminated and their votes are reallocated to remaining choices based on the voters' next choices until one candidate receives a majority of ballots.

WI .....	21	35	28	16	57	43	13
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Please indicate whether you would favor or oppose the following steps to improve our democracy and the way elections are conducted.

Q.14 Requiring special interest groups that use paid TV and mail ads during elections to publicly disclose where their money comes from.

WI .....	63	26	5	6	89	11	78
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Q.15 Finance campaigns using only small contributions from voters and a limited amount of public funds.

WI .....	48	43	9	-	91	9	82
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Q.16 Publicly finance campaigns, allowing citizens to make small contributions which would then be matched by a limited amount of public funding, and not allowing candidates to take money from special interests.

WI .....	58	28	7	8	85	15	71
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Q.17 Would you favor or oppose establishing the right to vote in (STATE)'s constitution.

**WI**

Strongly favor .....	44
Somewhat favor .....	47
Somewhat oppose .....	7
Strongly oppose .....	2

<b>Total Favor .....</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>Total Oppose .....</b>	<b>9</b>

<b>Favor - Oppose .....</b>	<b>82</b>
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Q.18 In what year were you born?

	WI
18 - 24 .....	2
25 - 29 .....	4
30 - 34 .....	4
35 - 39 .....	18
40 - 44 .....	11
45 - 49 .....	13
50 - 54 .....	22
55 - 59 .....	13
60 - 64 .....	9
65 and over .....	5
(No answer) .....	-

Q.19 Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or something else?

	WI
Democrat .....	29
Independent-lean Democrat .....	11
Independent.....	11
Independent-lean Republican.....	12
Republican .....	24
Other .....	9
Don't know/Refused.....	4

Q.20 For statistical purposes only, which of these categories best describes the gross revenue of your business in 2013?

	WI
Less than \$100,000 .....	29
\$100,000 to under \$250,000 .....	17
\$250,000 to under \$500,000 .....	19
\$500,000 to under \$1 million.....	16
\$1 million to under \$2 million .....	7
\$2 million or under \$5 million.....	2
\$5 million or more.....	1
Don't know.....	1
Prefer not to say.....	7

**Under \$500K .....** **65**  
**\$500K or more.....** **27**

Q.21 What is your race?

	WI
White.....	86
African American or Black .....	4
Hispanic or Latino .....	4
Asian or Pacific Islander.....	4
American Indian or Native American .....	0
Other .....	2
Biracial or multiracial.....	-
Prefer not to say.....	-

Q.22 What is your gender?

	WI
Male .....	62
Female.....	38