

Opinion Survey: Colorado small businesses identify priorities for the Colorado General Assembly

Executive Summary

As entrepreneurs continue to navigate business and economic challenges stemming from pandemic, Small Business Majority surveyed small business owners and operators in Colorado to assess business conditions and the rising costs of healthcare.

The survey, which was fielded between January 21, 2022 through February 21, 2022, found that nearly half (45%) of Colorado small businesses felt more optimistic about their business prospects over the next quarter despite rising inflation, supply chain and hiring challenges, and pandemic-induced struggles. Despite this general optimism, **38% of small businesses reported that conditions greatly or somewhat declined over the past quarter**, while 32% said conditions have neither improved nor declined, and only 30% have seen somewhat or greatly improved conditions.

The survey also gauged respondents' views on healthcare, and the findings indicate the need to make healthcare more accessible and affordable. When asked about which issue should be the top priority for the Colorado Legislature, **one-third of Colorado small business owners said policymakers should prioritize bringing down the cost of healthcare during the 2022 legislative session.** Additional priorities include distributing COVID-19 stimulus funds to best support small businesses (36% support), simplifying the sales tax code (20% support), and improving accessibility and affordability of childcare (10% support).

Small business owners identified additional challenges with accessing healthcare. More than 1 in 10 (11%) are not able to access a primary care provider in their area, and 7% of Colorado entrepreneurs are currently uninsured.

As these findings reveal, a number of small businesses in Colorado are still struggling to navigate financial challenges from the pandemic. Small business owners are looking to policymakers for solutions, and they want the state legislature to prioritize bringing down healthcare costs and utilizing pandemic relief dollars to support local businesses.

Methodology

This poll reflects a survey of 130 small business owners and managers with up to 100 employees in the state of Colorado. The poll was an online survey conducted through Small Business Majority's internal network and SurveyMonkey between January 21, 2022 through February 21, 2022. The margin of error is +/-8.6%. Most respondents (72%) are microbusinesses with 10 or fewer employees or self-employed entrepreneurs.

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1. Are you the owner of a small business, or do you manage the business' operations?

Yes, owner.....	93%
Yes, manage operations	7%
No.....	0%

2. In what industry do you operate your business?

Agriculture and Mining.....	0%
Consulting and Business Services.....	8%
Education and Youth Services	5%
Energy and Utilities	1%
Engineering.....	3%
Food and Beverage.....	4%
Healthcare, Pharmaceuticals and Biotech	4%
Insurance and Financial Services	2%
Manufacturing	3%
Media and Entertainment.....	6%
Nonprofit	3%
Real Estate and Construction	9%
Retail.....	12%
Service and Consumer Services	8%
Software and Internet	2%
Technology, Computers and Electronics	1%
Telecommunications.....	1%
Transportation and Storage.....	2%
Travel, Recreation and Leisure.....	5%
Wholesale and Distributors	2%
Other	19%

3. How many people do you employ including yourself? Please include full-time and part-time employees, but do not include independent contractors.

Self-Employed.....	47%
Small Business, fewer than 10 employees.....	35%
Small Business, 10-24 employees	14%
Small Business, 25-49 employees	2%
Small Business, 50-74 employees	2%
Small Business, 75-100 employees	1%

- 4. Generally speaking, not taking into account seasonality, have business conditions improved or declined over the past quarter?**
- Greatly declined/somewhat declined 38%
 - Neither improved nor declined..... 32%
 - Somewhat/greatly improved 30%
- 5. How optimistic are you about your business prospects over the next quarter, where 10 is very optimistic and 1 is not optimistic at all?**
- Not optimistic 20%
 - Neutral 35%
 - Very optimistic 45%
- 6. The Colorado Legislature’s 2022 session began in January. The following are currently being discussed among policymakers. Of these, which should be the top priority for the Legislature? (choose one)**
- Bringing down the cost of healthcare 33%
 - Simplifying the sales tax code 20%
 - How to distribute Covid-19 stimulus funds to best support small business 36%
 - Accessibility and affordability of childcare 10%
- 7. Are you able to access a primary care provider for healthcare in your area?**
- Yes..... 89%
 - No..... 11%
- 8. Which of the following best matches your situation when it comes to health insurance?**
- I get health insurance through my business 16%
 - I get health insurance through your spouse..... 16%
 - I get my health insurance individually on the private marketplace 20%
 - I participate in a healthcare sharing arrangement or healthcare sharing ministry 0%
 - I participate in a government program 36%
 - I don't have health insurance..... 7%
 - Other (please specify) 5%
- 9. What is your race?**
- Asian or Asian American 4%
 - Black, African or African American 4%
 - Hispanic, Latino/a or Spanish Origin 13%
 - Middle Eastern or North African 1%
 - Native American or Alaska Native 1%
 - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander 0%
 - White or Caucasian 70%
 - Some other race, ethnicity or origin 2%
 - Prefer not to answer..... 6%

10. What is your gender?

Male	44%
Female.....	55%
Prefer to self-identify	1%

11. Household Income

\$0-\$9,999	7%
\$10,000-\$24,999.....	9%
\$25,000-\$49,999.....	26%
\$50,000-\$74,999.....	21%
\$75,000-\$99,999.....	20%
\$100,000-\$124,999	4%
\$125,000-\$149,999	1%
\$150,000-\$174,999	0%
\$175,000-\$199,999.....	0%
\$200,000+.....	5%
Prefer not to answer.....	6%

12. Age

< 18	0%
18-29	13%
30-44.....	34%
45-60.....	24%
> 60.....	29%