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**Scientific Opinion Poll Shows Small Businesses Strongly Support Employment Non-Discrimination Laws to Protect Gay, Transgender Workers**

*Majority agrees employers should not be able to fire or refuse to hire someone who is gay, lesbian or transgender based on employer's religious beliefs*

Washington, DC—A scientific opinion [poll](#) released today by Small Business Majority shows entrepreneurs believe federal and state laws should prohibit employment discrimination against gay and transgender people, and that employers should not be able to fire or refuse to hire someone who is gay, lesbian or transgender based on the employer's religious beliefs.

The poll also revealed the majority of small business owners already thought such laws existed, and oppose the federal law requiring employers to treat married same-sex couples as unmarried for benefit and payroll purposes (the Defense of Marriage Act). Nearly seven in 10 small businesses think businesses are hurt by this law.

The poll, conducted April 8-17, 2013 by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research, found more than two-thirds of entrepreneurs believe federal law should prohibit employment discrimination against gay and transgender people, and in states where these laws currently don't exist, seven in 10 believe their state should have a law prohibiting this type of discrimination. A sweeping 81 percent didn't realize it's currently legal under federal law to fire or refuse to hire someone because they are gay, lesbian or transgender.

"Promoting an open and safe environment for all my employees makes good business sense, because happy employees want to come to work each day and are more productive when they're here," said Curt Weiss, president of HandyPro in West Chester, PA. "My company is best served when I can most easily recruit and retain the best talent. That's why I support laws that will allow me to treat all potential employees equally, regardless of sexual orientation. That allows me to select employees from a wider range of prospects, which strengthens my business, and thereby, allows my business to grow."

The majority of small business owners oppose the current federal law allowing employers to deny married same-sex couples the family benefits they offer to heterosexual couples. Another two-thirds oppose employees with a same-sex partner or spouse being taxed for their dependent's health benefits while employees who have heterosexual partners or spouses aren't.

"The right to pursue employment free from discrimination is fundamental, and these poll results show that the small business community understands and supports that," said Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR). "It is time for Congress to catch up to them and pass workplace protections for LGBT workers."

Six in 10 small business owners believe laws that protect against discrimination can improve their bottom line and that these kinds of laws help employers attract the best and brightest employees, regardless of whether an employee is gay or transgender. Additionally, entrepreneurs strongly believe implementing a nondiscrimination policy is the right thing to do. Of employers who have a nondiscrimination policy, 80 percent say it's because they believe all employees should be treated fairly and equally, and 72 percent say they have it because it's the right thing to do.

“Small employers support policies that maximize their ability to attract and retain quality workers and help them grow their businesses. Policies that encourage workplace discrimination introduce inefficiencies and costs that cut into profits and undermine small businesses’ bottom lines,” said John Arensmeyer, Founder & CEO of Small Business Majority. “Implementing nondiscrimination laws that allow employers to treat all people equally, regardless of sexual orientation, will help small businesses retain quality employees and free them from an extra administrative burden.”

The political breakdown of respondents ran the gamut, with 41 percent identifying as Republican, 36 percent as Democrat and 16 percent as independent or other.

For the full report visit: <http://www.smallbusinessmajority.org/small-business-research/workplace-nondiscrimination>

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### ***About Small Business Majority***

Small Business Majority is a national nonpartisan small business advocacy organization founded and run by small business owners and focused on solving the biggest problems facing America's 28 million small businesses. We conduct extensive opinion and economic research and work with small business owners, policy experts and elected officials nationwide to bring small business voices to the public policy table. Learn more about us on [Wikipedia](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).