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Plurality of Virginia Small Business Owners Want Healthcare Law Upheld

Opinion polling released today shows 49 percent of Virginia small businesses believe the Supreme Court should uphold the Affordable Care Act, either as is or with minor changes; poll also finds strong support for key provisions in the law

June 14, 2012 – Nearly half (49 percent) of small business owners in Virginia want the healthcare reform law upheld—either as is or with only minor changes—while 37 percent want the Supreme Court to overturn it, according to opinion polling released today by Small Business Majority. However, once small business owners in Virginia learn more about the law, their support for keeping it intact—either as is or with minor changes—rises to 54 percent, while opposition falls to 28 percent.

The Supreme Court is expected to hand down its decision any day in the case against the healthcare reform law, filed by the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) and state attorneys general.

“Contrary to popular belief, small business owners in Virginia do not want the high court to throw out the Affordable Care Act,” said John Arensmeyer, Founder & CEO of Small Business Majority. “They see this law as helping everyone have coverage and bringing down healthcare costs—something that has been one of their top concerns for years. We hope Supreme Court justices understand how important this law is to small businesses who need relief from high healthcare costs.”

Key provisions of the law also have strong small business support, including one of the most crucial components for small businesses—the health insurance exchanges. The Affordable Care Act calls for exchanges—online marketplaces where small businesses can pool their buying power when purchasing coverage—to be up and running in every state by 2014. Seventy-two percent of owners in Virginia say they would use their state exchange or consider using it to provide their employees with health benefits. The majority of entrepreneurs find potential features of the exchange very appealing, including employee choice (82 percent), the exchange educating employees about plans (78 percent), and the exchange providing plans that offer prevention and wellness programs (82 percent). Additionally, the vast majority (68 percent) supports Virginia applying for federal funds to set one up.

"Small businesses have been a huge focus in discussions of this lawsuit. So many imply that they want it overturned. I don't and I bet many of my fellow business owners feel the same way," said Jen Sterling, owner of Red Thinking LLC in Reston, Virginia. "I sincerely hope that the Supreme Court listens to what real small businesses are saying about this law—and not to the political groups pretending they represent us. It needs to be upheld. I can't imagine stepping backwards."

Other key findings from the poll:

- 57 percent of small businesses who support upholding the law believe it should be kept because we need to make sure everyone has health coverage; 34 percent say it's because it will make it easier to purchase insurance
- 76 percent support the medical loss ratio requirement, where insurers are required to spend at least 80 percent of premiums on healthcare claims and quality improvement efforts
- 60 percent support "rate review," where state regulators are allowed to review and approve or reject insurers' increases they deem excessive
- 81 percent support prohibiting insurers from denying coverage based on preexisting conditions
- 72 percent support preventing insurance companies from basing insurance rates on health status; 74 percent support preventing insurers from charging women higher rates than men
- 70 percent favor allowing young people up to age 26 to stay on their parents' plans
- 64 percent of small business owners provide insurance to at least some of their employees, but of those who don't offer it, 71 percent say it's because they can't afford it
- Of small businesses who do offer benefits, respondents said the two most compelling reasons to offer were because it helps retain good employees (50 percent) and they felt they had a responsibility to offer it (48 percent)
- Of the small businesses who qualify for a tax credit under the law but were not taking advantage of it, the majority (52 percent) said they weren't taking advantage of it because they weren't aware it existed
- More than half of all small businesses (51 percent) said they'd be more likely to offer insurance if they qualified for a tax credit and 62 percent said they'd be more likely to purchase insurance through an exchange if they could receive a tax credit

To read the full report go online to <http://www.smallbusinessmajority.org/small-business-research/healthcare/index.php>

To schedule an interview with John Arensmeyer or a small business owner in your area, call or email Erin Musgrave at (831) 477-0453 or emusgrave@smallbusinessmajority.org.

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[Who is the Small Business Majority?](#)

Small Business Majority is a national small business advocacy organization, founded and run by small business owners, to support America's 28 million small businesses. We conduct extensive opinion and economic research and work with our rapidly growing network of small business owners across the country to ensure their voices are an integral part of the public policy debate. Learn more about us on [Wikipedia](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). We also host the [Health Coverage Guide](#), an independent, unbiased source of information for small businesses about health insurance.