

Utah Survey: Small Businesses Need Healthcare Reform

The high cost of health insurance is a financial burden for Utah small businesses.

Small Business Majority carried out a telephone survey of 300 small business owners in Utah in June 2009. The survey finds that 40% offer health insurance coverage to their workers; of the 60% who don't, 88% say it's because they can't afford it. Other findings:

- Of the businesses that offer insurance, 78% say they're struggling to do so.
- 64% agree that healthcare reform is needed to improve the economy.

Employers accept responsibility to help provide employee health coverage.

- When asked if their company has a responsibility to offer health insurance to employees, 57% of Utah respondents said yes.
- 67% say it's important for individuals, employers, insurers, the government and healthcare providers to share the responsibility for making healthcare more affordable.
- 46% say that employers should pay some percentage of their payroll toward their employees' insurance if they don't offer a plan themselves.

Small businesses want reform in many parts of the system.

- Small business owners in Utah appreciate choice—69% say they want to be able to choose between private and public health plans.
- 80% support the establishment of a health insurance pool to create a marketplace where small businesses and individuals choose their coverage.
- 79% of respondents agree that people should be able to buy health insurance without regard to any past health problems, and 74% say more entrepreneurs would start businesses if they didn't face those obstacles to coverage.
- The number one goal for Utah's small businesses in healthcare reform is controlling costs.

Respondents are politically varied.

- 49% of respondents identified themselves as Republican, 14% as Democrat and 24% as independent.

About this research: This is a telephone poll of 300 randomly selected small business owners in Utah conducted by the national public opinion firm Lake Research in June 2009. The survey included owners of companies with fewer than 100 employees as well as sole proprietors. It has a margin of error of 5.7%