

Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce: Wisconsin employers cite worker shortage as top public policy concern

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MADISON – A new survey of Wisconsin businesses found that nearly 80 percent of employers support a taxpayer-funded talent attraction campaign amidst the persistent and wide-spread workforce shortage. According to the Wisconsin Employer Survey, 70 percent of Wisconsin businesses cite the labor shortage and lack of qualified applicants as the top public policy issue facing the state.

In addition to creating a talent attraction campaign, businesses are looking to invest in retention efforts in Wisconsin's K-12 system, with 70 percent of employers in favor of requiring career counselors in high schools. The survey also revealed that nine in 10 businesses support increased K-12 education funding specifically aimed at expanding STEM, industrial arts and technical training programming; while nearly all employers responded in support of expanding Wisconsin's Youth & Registered Apprenticeships Program.

Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce (WMC) – the combined state chambers and manufacturers' association – conducted the survey in January on a variety of topics. This week, WMC released data focused specifically on state and federal policy. "Wisconsin is in desperate need of policy solutions to address the persistent and wide-spread workforce shortage," said WMC President & CEO Kurt R. Bauer. "We need policymakers to work with the business community to invest in a talent attraction campaign and improve our retention efforts so that we can highlight all of the family-supporting career opportunities that exist within the state."

While the results of the survey highlighted challenges the business community faces in Wisconsin, it also exposed employers' overwhelming disapproval of federal policies that are negatively impacting the economy.

Eight in 10 businesses oppose the Biden Administration's plan to extend the COVID-19-era Child Tax Credit and 84 percent of employers said they do not support President Biden's Build Back Better Plan. In addition, nearly 90 percent of businesses surveyed, oppose President Biden's policies that have reduced domestic energy production like cancelling the Keystone XL pipeline and rescinding permits to drill on federal land.

"Businesses have been through enough challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic without the Biden Administration creating additional obstacles," added Bauer.

"Unfortunately, President Biden's policies will just continue to drive up inflation, keep workers on the sidelines and ultimately hurt our economy."

The Wisconsin Employer Survey is conducted twice a year by WMC. The assessment provides a snapshot of where Wisconsin's employers stand on a number of important issues and outlines their economic outlook for both Wisconsin and the United States. For the Winter 2022 edition, WMC surveyed 265 employers to make up a representative sample of its membership. Businesses of all sizes, industries and geographic locations in Wisconsin participated. This is the final installment of the survey results.

[Click here to download the entire Wisconsin Employer Survey - Winter 2022 report on state and federal policy.](#)