

WMC: SURVEY: Businesses rate tax reform as top public policy objective

Posted on Wednesday, Jan 25, 2023

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

MADISON – A [new survey](#) of Wisconsin businesses found the workforce shortage to be the top public policy issue facing the state. According to the *Wisconsin Employer Survey*, 66 percent of respondents agreed this was the top issue, and many businesses believe lowering the tax burden will help improve the situation.

When asked what was the one thing government could do to improve the business climate, a plurality of employers (34%) said, “reduce taxes.” Other top responses included making health care more affordable, reducing the regulatory burden and reforming education.

“It is a fact that people are fleeing high tax states in favor of those with lower taxes,” said WMC Executive Vice President of Government Relations Scott Manley. “In order to attract and retain talented workers, Wisconsin cannot continue to be a high-tax state. We now have a tremendous opportunity to significantly lower the tax burden and move the Badger State toward a flat tax.”

According to the *Wisconsin Employer Survey*, roughly nine in 10 businesses support significantly reducing and flattening the state individual income tax. Because more than 90 percent of Wisconsin businesses are pass-through entities who pay the individual income tax instead of the corporate income tax, this type of policy change would allow companies to invest more in capital projects, higher wages for workers and charitable donations within their communities.

To combat the workforce shortage, three-quarters of respondents also support a taxpayer-funded talent attraction campaign to encourage more people to move to Wisconsin for the career opportunities available in the state.

“Not only do we need to bring more people into Wisconsin, we also need to ensure young people are prepared for the workforce,” added Manley. “Roughly two-thirds of Wisconsin students cannot read or do math at grade level, which is making it harder for employers to find high-quality talent. Strengthening school choice will empower parents and ensure we invest equally in students regardless of whether they attend a choice school or a public school.”

Expanding educational options scored high on the *Wisconsin Employer Survey*, as well. Eighty-three percent of businesses said they support universal school choice so any child can attend the school of their choosing, regardless of zip code or income.

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 2023 edition, WMC surveyed 164 employers that make up a representative sample of its membership. Businesses of all sizes, industries and geographic locations in Wisconsin participated.

The survey was released in two separate reports on topics including: the [economy and workforce](#); and [public policy](#).

[Click here](#) to download the entire *Wisconsin Employer Survey - Winter 2023* report on state public policy.