

California's small businesses worried about state's economy

By Darrell Smith, Sacramento Bee

A majority of small-business executives remain pessimistic about California's prospects, weighed down by concern about the economy, education and health care, a new survey found.

Nearly two-thirds of executives surveyed by Small Business California, a San Francisco advocacy group, said the state is headed in the wrong direction.

Fifty-six percent of respondents said they think California's economy will either remain unchanged or grow worse in the next three years.

"Clearly, they don't think the climate is very good," said Scott Hauge, Small Business California president. "The silver lining is that it's a little better than last year."

Small-business owners' pessimism reached its height in the 2009 survey, when more than 80 percent of respondents said California was on the wrong course.

That sentiment has steadily decreased in the three polls since, and some businesses are hopeful amid the anxiety.

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