

Mixed ratings for Nevada by small business owners

By Sean Whaley, Nevada News Bureau

CARSON CITY – A national survey of 6,000 small businesses has generated mixed ratings for Nevada, with high marks for its regulations and tax code but also showing one of the least healthy climates overall among the states.

The survey, conducted by Thumbtack.com in partnership with the Kauffman Foundation, found Nevada's businesses are healthier only than those of Maine and Connecticut.

Some of the key findings for Nevada include:

- Nevada soared above its rivals in one category where it excelled – the state achieved an A+ grade for having the third friendliest business tax code nationwide.
- The survey also found that male-owned small businesses in Nevada felt significantly more supported by the state than their female counterparts. Male entrepreneurs were 13 percent more likely than female entrepreneurs to rate Nevada as supportive or very supportive of small business.
- Although Nevada ranked reasonably well overall, it struggled in two very important categories. Of all small businesses in the West, Nevada's small businesses ranked first for least healthy and second for slowest-growing.
- Conservative small business owners felt significantly more supported by the Nevada state government than did liberal small business owners. Conservative entrepreneurs were 71 percent more likely than liberal small business owners to rate their state as "supportive" or "very supportive" of small business.

– Small businesses run by liberals seem to be doing significantly better than small businesses run by conservatives. Liberal entrepreneurs in Nevada were 75 percent more likely than the state’s conservative entrepreneurs to rate their business’s financial situation as “good” or “very good”.

“There are a lot of business climate rankings but there aren’t any that draw upon considerable data from small business owners themselves, said Sander Daniels, co-founder of Thumbtack.com. “The Thumbtack.com Small Business Survey is the only survey to draw data from an extensive, nationwide universe of job creators and entrepreneurs themselves in order to investigate the best places in the country to do business.”

Thumbtack.com surveyed 6,022 small businesses across the United States. The survey asked questions about the friendliness of states towards small business and about small business finances, such as:

- “In general, how would you rate your state’s support of small business owners?”
- “Would you discourage or encourage someone from starting a new business in your state?” and
- “How would you rate your company’s financial situation today?”

Thumbtack.com and Kauffman then ranked states and cities against one another along 15 metrics.

One small business owner surveyed, a Las Vegas massage therapist, said: “Nevada is very tax friendly to small business, but it’s extremely difficult to obtain a small business loan to grow your small business or create jobs.”

A Sparks home inspector said: “With the economy here, it is very difficult to get people to spend money. Some businesses

cut costs. Some also cut quality and ethics.”

“After a two-month survey of over 6,000 small business owners nationwide, it’s clear that Nevada’s small businesses are struggling in the down economy,” Daniels said. “Nevada’s entrepreneurs want to get back on their feet, and it appears that they believe Nevada is a setting where they can do just that.”