

Bipartisan National Economic Poll

February 2014

Conducted by the Mellman Group and North Star Opinion Research

ALLIANCE FOR
american
manufacturing

Voters blame lawmakers for weak job growth and overwhelmingly favor a national jobs strategy with a focus on manufacturing to strengthen the economy.

Summary of Findings:

- Jobs, particularly in manufacturing, top voters' agendas.
- Voters see their leaders as more of an obstacle to job growth than a help.
- Manufacturing is seen as the most critical component of our economy.
- Support for American manufacturing and manufacturers is nearly universal.
- China is a serious problem that needs to be addressed, not ignored.
- Outsourcing is the most important cause of lost manufacturing jobs.
- Tax dollars spent on infrastructure should stay here.
- Voters support a manufacturing agenda, including worker training programs, tougher trade policies, keeping tax dollars here, and incentivizing companies to move jobs back to the U.S.
- Most support a career in manufacturing; but uncertainty about the future is an impediment.

Manufacturing job loss is the top concern among voters.

- Voters see **manufacturing as the single most important sector in the American economy**, surpassing high tech, healthcare, and financial services.
- Voters reject the idea that manufacturing jobs can be replaced by high tech and service jobs by a 62-34 margin.
- 72% of likely voters are “worried the most” or a “great deal” about manufacturing job loss, a level of concern matched only by the federal budget deficit.
- **By a 2-1 margin, voters favor a focus on job creation** over deficit reduction.
 - Support for job creation has increased by 5 percentage points among all voters since 2012 (rising from 60% to 65%).
 - Republican voters are nearly evenly split between job creation (47%) and deficit reduction (48%).

Voters see U.S. policies as the #1 obstacle to manufacturing job creation.

- By more than 20 percentage points, voters see these government policies as the main obstacle to manufacturing job creation:
 - 30% of voters blame U.S. economic policies that encourage outsourcing.
 - 15% of voters blame the lack of a national manufacturing strategy to compete with China and other countries.
- **Voters see the President as doing even less for manufacturing in 2014 than he did in 2012:**
 - Voters who believe President Obama is doing “some” or “a great deal” to create manufacturing jobs fell from 56% to 47%.
 - Voters who believe President Obama is doing “some” or “a great deal” to enforce trade also fell from 52% to 44%.
- **Voters see Congress as doing even less in 2014 for manufacturing than they did in 2012:**
 - Voters who believe Congressional Democrats are doing “some” or “a great deal” to create manufacturing jobs fell from 46% to 40%; on trade enforcement it declined from 47% to 38%.
 - Voters who believe Congressional Republicans are doing “some” or “a great deal” to create manufacturing jobs dropped from 39% to 28%; on trade enforcement it fell from 37% to 34%.

New National Poll

Voters are focused on manufacturing jobs, and overwhelmingly support a national manufacturing strategy

Outsourcing, not a skills shortage, is seen as the most important cause of lost manufacturing jobs.

- 65% of voters consider outsourcing as the reason for a lack of new manufacturing jobs. **Only 28% of voters cite a potential shortage of skilled workers for the lack of new manufacturing jobs in the U.S.**, and only 25% say it is too expensive to manufacture in America.
- 50% of voters say more manufacturing jobs are leaving the country than returning, 13% say there is a “reshoring” trend, and 27% say manufacturing jobs are returning and leaving at the same rate.

Voters overwhelmingly support Buy-American policies and a national manufacturing strategy.

- 4 out of 5 voters favor spending state and federal tax dollars on American-made goods whenever possible, with 67% strongly in favor.
- **60% of voters say the U.S. needs to “get tough” with countries like China** in order to halt “unfair trade practices, including currency manipulation, which will keep undermining our economy,” A 2-1 margin over “being cautious.” Among Republican voters, the number saying “get tough” rises to 64%.
- **84% of voters support a national manufacturing strategy to “make sure that economic, tax, education and trade policies in this country work together to help support manufacturing”:**
 - This includes 87% of Democrats, 82% of independents, and 82% of Republicans.
- Across the political spectrum, voters strongly support:
 - Federal and state worker training programs (82%).
 - Enforcing trade agreements (79%).
 - Cracking down on unfairly subsidized imports (79%).
 - Tax incentives for manufacturer investments (77%).

Voters universally value American manufacturing, its workers and products.

- 95% of voters have a favorable view of American-made products.
 - In contrast, only 23% have a favorable view of products made in China.
- 44% of voters favor strengthening the *entire* U.S. manufacturing sector.
 - Favorability of American manufacturing drops 20% points when the term “advanced” is included.
 - **A majority thinks we should focus on all of manufacturing rather than just advanced manufacturing.**

Voters recognize the benefits of a career in manufacturing.

- 65% of voters would encourage manufacturing as a career choice, though only 25% strongly encourage such a career choice.
- Among voters who would not encourage manufacturing is a career choice, the top reasons cited were the desire to get a four year college degree and *the belief that those jobs won't be there in the future.*

**Findings based on a bipartisan survey of 1,200 likely 2014 general election voters conducted January 6-9, 2014 by the Mellman Group and North Star Opinion Research.