



The Chamber

of Commerce ♦ *Murray-Calloway County*

2016 PUBLIC POLICY SURVEY RESULTS



UNITED STATES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
ACCREDITED



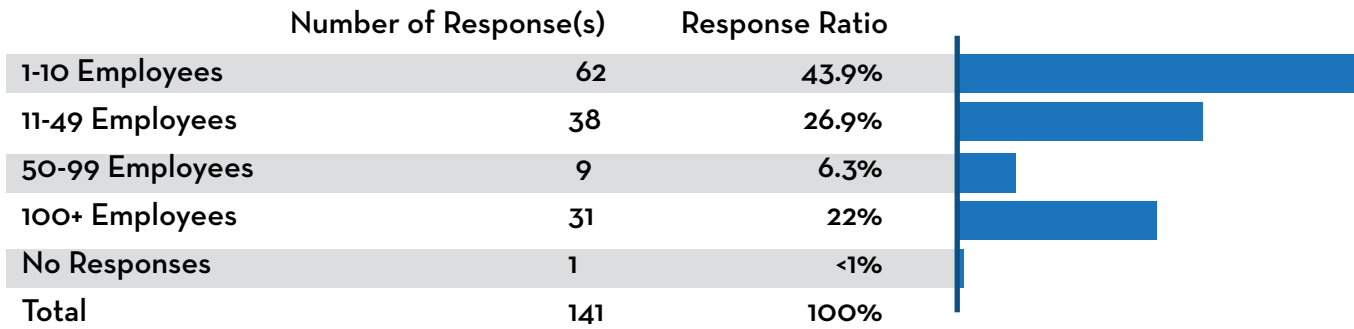
Public Policy Survey Results

The Murray-Calloway County Chamber of Commerce is the region's second-largest business advocacy organization and is the 9th largest Chamber in the state of Kentucky. It is governed by a 20-member Board of Directors, run by a staff of 4, and supported by community investors.

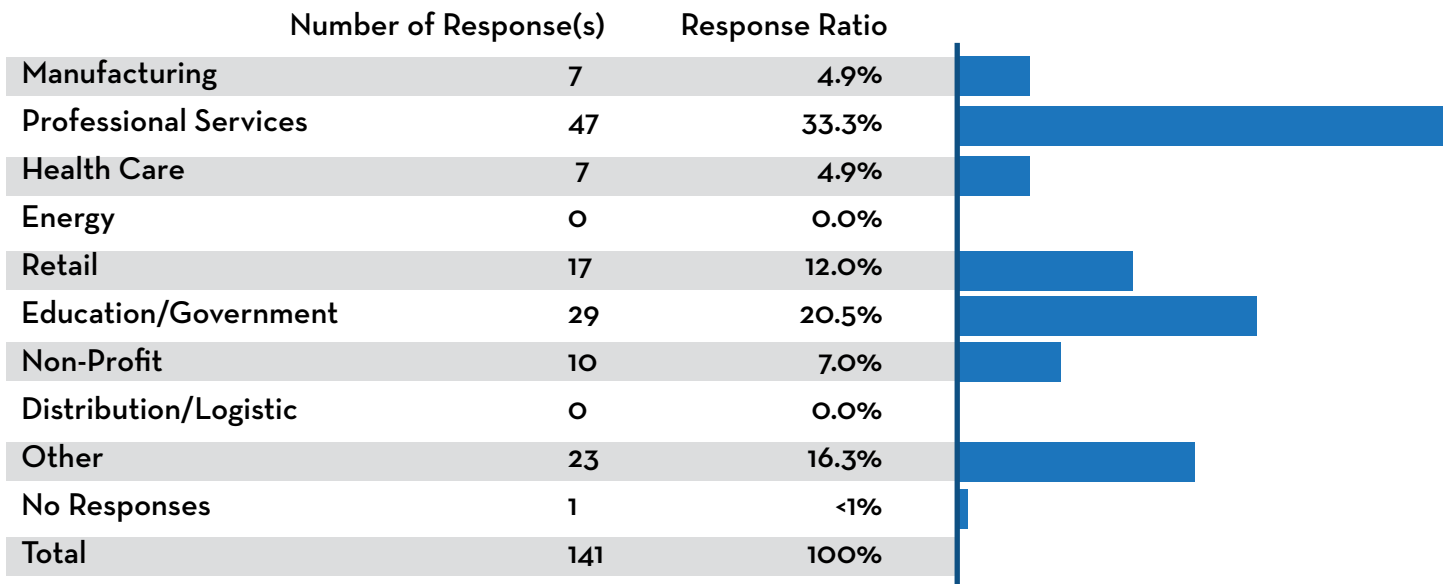
The Murray-Calloway County Chamber of Commerce surveyed its membership and the business community from September 27th – October 11th, 2016. The responses below reflect the opinions and feedback of that survey. The survey had a response rate of 21.5% with 142 respondents taking the survey.



1. What is the size of your company's workforce in Calloway County?



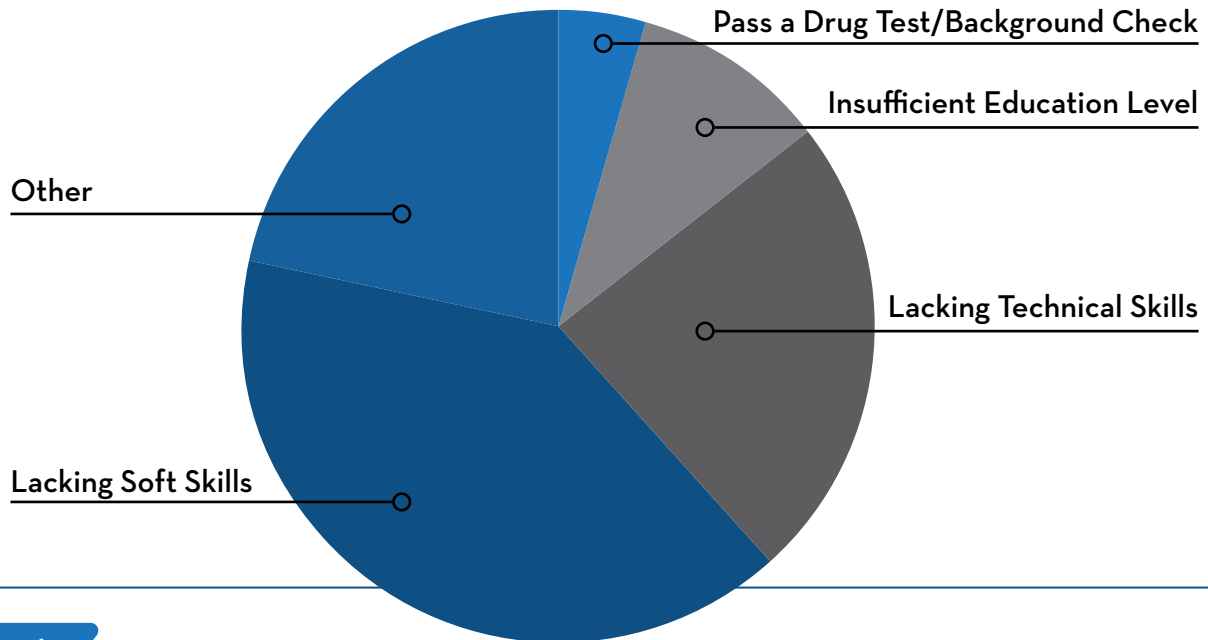
2. With which industry does your company most strongly affiliate?



3.

What are the biggest obstacles your company faces when hiring?

Finding employees who can pass a drug test/background check	8	5.7%
Applicants with insufficient education level (i.e., lack of specific degree or certification)	18	12.8%
Applicants lacking technical skills	42	30.0%
Applicants lacking soft skills (i.e., reliability, professionalism, etc.)..	71	50.7%
Other	38	27.1%
Total	140	100%



Comments

- Lack of opportunity for professional spouses
- Competing salaries with larger healthcare agencies
- Desire to work full time
- Offering competitive wages
- Finding anyone willing to work
- I have never hired anyone and don't feel comfortable answering.
- I have not had to hire in the last 7 years
- The right fit within our organization
- No one is willing to do farm work
- Commitment of volunteers
- Our pay is not competitive enough to recruit quality employees
- Lacking relevant sales experience
- None... Plenty of good applicants
- Not hr
- Employees that will work outside in weather conditions. Coming to work on time.
- Don't have enough money to pay them
- No need for hiring right now
- Diversity
- Lack of usable, affordable office spaces
- Office space for new hires
- No issues yet
- Applicants lacking solid financial skills and good credit
- Not an issue
- Salaries and benefits - have gone down
- Inordinate practices with internal hiring, inconsistent external hiring policies
- People that want to work and come to work
- Attracting applicants to move into the area
- Salary levels
- Sales skills
- Moving to a small town
- No obstacles
- I work alone
- Willing to get up early!
- Just showing up for work
- Diversity

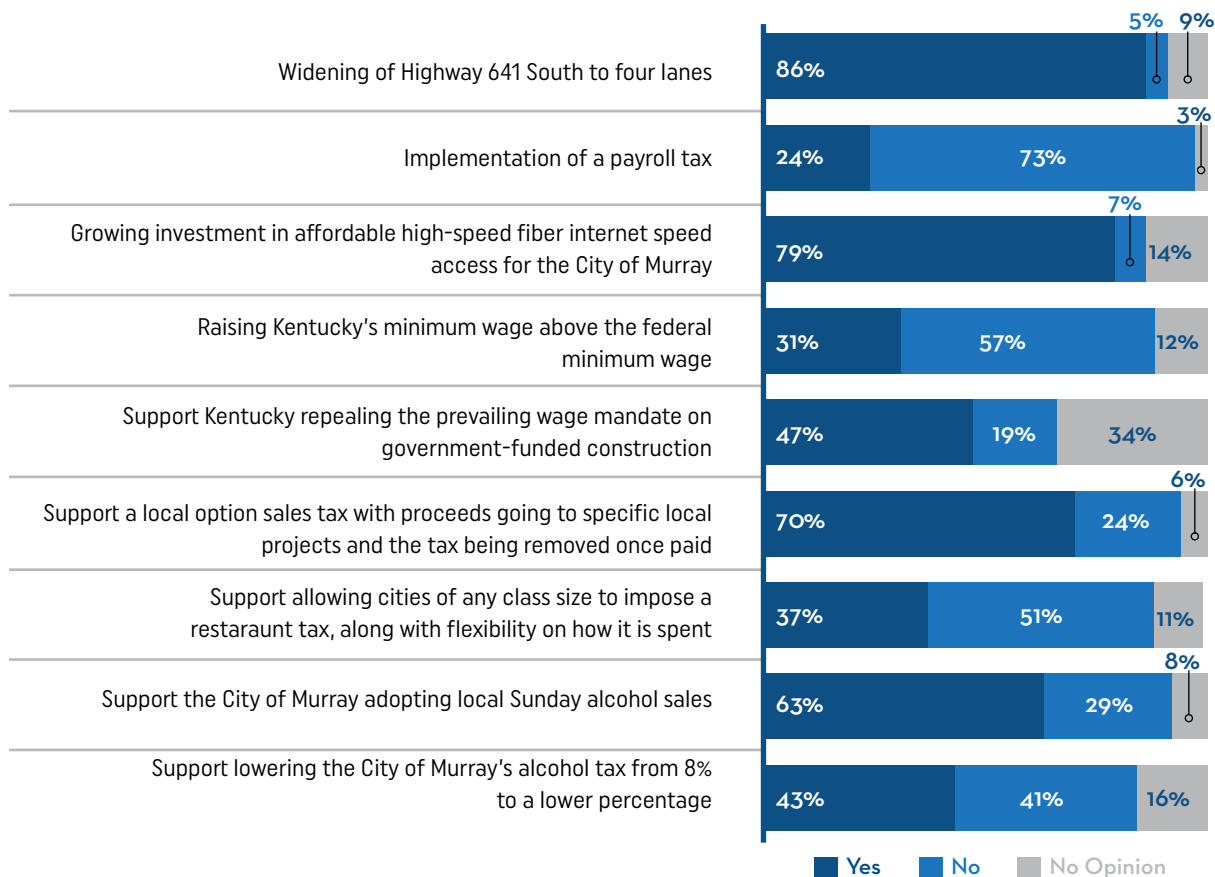
4. How do the City of Murray and Calloway County's legal climate impact your ability to do business?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Positively	41	29.0%
Negatively	15	10.6%
Not At All	25	17.7%
No Opinion	58	41.1%
No Responses	2	1.4%
Total	141	100%

Top Comment Areas

- Expensive to operate a business
- Would like to see collaboration between City and County governments
- Conflict between City/County is counterproductive.

5. Improving the competitiveness of Murray and Calloway County's business community is a top priority of the Chamber. Do you support the following public policy areas that have been discussed by community leaders?



	Yes	No	No Opinion
Widening of Highway 641 South to four lanes	121	7	12
	86%	5%	9%
Implementation of a payroll tax.....	34	102	4
	24%	73%	3%
Growing investment in affordable high-speed fiber internet speed access for the City of Murray.....	110	10	20
	79%	7%	14%
Raising Kentucky’s minimum wage above the federal minimum wage	43	80	17
	31%	57%	12%
Support Kentucky repealing the prevailing wage mandate on government-funded construction.....	66	27	47
	47%	19%	34%
Support a local option sales tax that would be enacted for a city/county by popular vote with proceeds going to specific local projects and the tax being removed once paid.....	98	34	8
	70%	24%	6%
Support allowing cities of any class size to impose a restaurant tax, along with flexibility on how it is spent.....	52	72	16
	37%	51%	11%
Support the City of Murray adopting local Sunday alcohol sales	88	41	11
	63%	29%	8%
Support lowering the City of Murray’s alcohol tax from 8% to a lower percentage.....	60	58	22
	43%	41%	16%

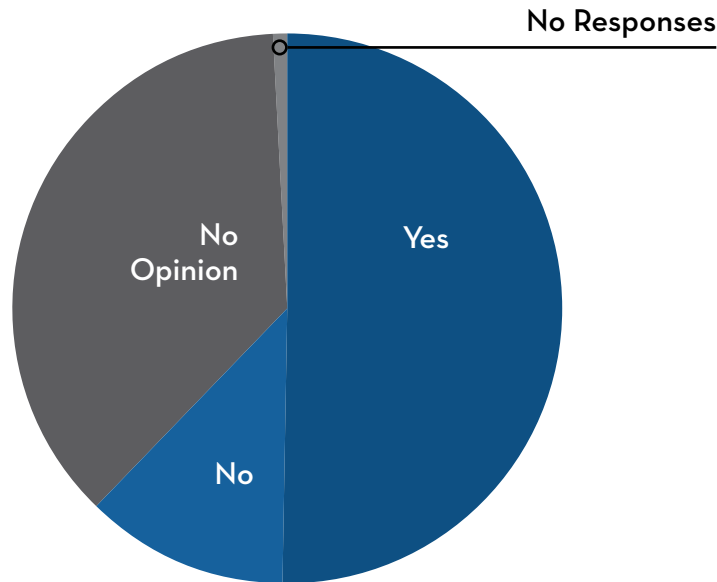
Top Comment Areas

- Support for a strong and progressive library
- A past study showed 40% of the City’s workforce does not live in Murray, if so payroll tax could be justified
- Opposition to payroll tax as it will hurt amount individuals spend in our community
- Clarity on why a payroll tax is necessary
- Alcohol tax should be similar to our neighboring counties
- What taxes would be lowered or taken away if payroll tax implemented?
- Support for Sunday Sales as economic development
- Bypass in Murray would alleviate traffic congestion
- Review alcohol tax and Sunday sales of alcohol

6. Do you feel the Chamber is obligated to make a stance on the issues in Question #5 above on behalf of its members?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	92	65.2%
No	35	24.8%
No opinion	13	9.2%
No Responses	1	<1%
Total	141	100%

7. The Chamber, along with several partners, worked in 2015-2016 to improve business friendliness by reviewing and recommending updates to the City of Murray's ordinances, processes, and business licensing procedures. Would you say that business friendliness has improved in the past year based on those efforts?

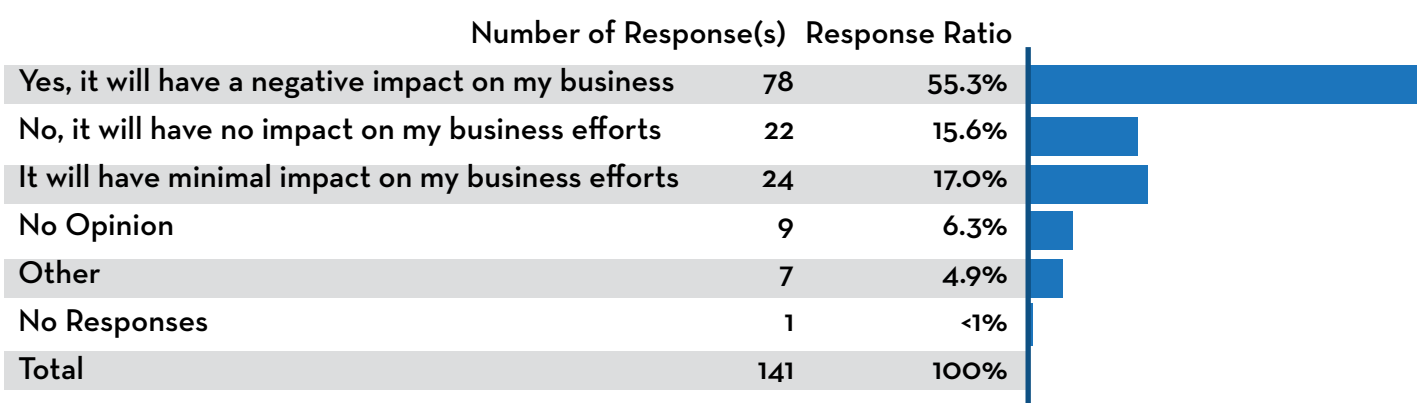


	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	71	50.3%
No	17	12.0%
No opinion	52	36.8%
No Responses	1	<1%
Total	141	100%

Comments

- Nickel and dime taxes and fees. Talk of payroll tax is regressive and small minded. Mayor is little better than the judge. Represent small, extreme factions.
- I appreciate that a thorough study was done and that changes were made but I have not been through the new process so I don't know if it has improved.
- It has improved but still needs improvements.
- definitely
- "The mayor has tried and has been somewhat successful; however the city council members unfortunately do not have the reputation of moving forward with the mayor and chamber in a business friendly manner and in a timely manner.
- One would think that the chamber and the city council members would be on the same team. Hopefully the council members will recognize they are on the same team as the chamber."
- Still has room for improvement but city taxes are high
- There is still much room for improvement.
- This program was a huge success. somewhat....
- I believe the Architectural Review Board has run its course, especially when they can not get a quorum for three straight meetings!
- I'd say there seems to be a lot more businesses coming in and breaking ground. Now, if they would stop being gas stations and banks, that would be nice.
- I am unaware of this. I do find it difficult for budding entrepreneurs to initiate the process of forming a business in the city.
- Very slightly.
- The fact that this started with a study, followed by recommendations -- some of which have been implemented -- is a good thing. I don't know if there is yet tangible evidence that things have improved, but am glad that we are moving in the right direction to make it easier to do business in Murray/Calloway County.
- I find businesses to be very closed and unwelcoming in Murray.

8. The City of Murray does not currently have a payroll tax; will the implementation of a payroll tax on your employees negatively impact your business efforts?



Top Comment Areas

- Negatively impacts my staff's buying power
- Lean wages in our community already
- It would be difficult to recruit and hire talented individuals considering we have lower wages in the region
- Higher amounts of accounting time and work to calculate
- Does this payroll tax also bring a net profit tax?
- Impact is hard to determine without knowing what other taxes would be offset

9. What alternatives to a payroll tax would you suggest to Murray City Council members?

Top Comment Areas

- Increasing taxes on "sin" items (alcohol and cigarettes)
- Offset payroll tax by looking into restaurant tax or local option sales tax
- Allow Sunday sales which opens a new revenue day for taxable items
- What other taxes would be offset? Property, Insurance, City Sticker?
- Where is the City's need or desire for more revenue?
- Place a limit on the tax (first \$5000 is X amount, next \$50,000 is XY amount, anything above is XYZ)
- No alternative – every city our size should have a payroll tax
- Clearer communication on the needs and City priorities
- Education, town forums, surveys and discussions with business leaders
- Reduction of City Council size from 12 to 6 which would save \$21,600

10. What do you think is the top issue facing the Murray-Calloway business community?

Top Comment Areas

- Business retention and expansion
- Recruitment of higher paying jobs and companies that pay higher wages
- Funding of economic development efforts
- Taxes – specifically property
- Traffic congestion and need for a bypass
- Investing in access to KY Lake via roads, marinas, resorts
- Lack of long term planning and collaboration among our various industry, educational, governmental and non-profit leaders.....we have a silo approach
- Zoning benefits large business but not small
- Helping MSU retain and grow its funding
- Adopting Sunday alcohol sales
- The payroll tax, it is a major decision and very little factual discussions have occurred
- Retention of employees due to higher wages in other communities
- Internet speed/access is a business deterrent

11. Do you think the Murray-Calloway County Chamber has the appropriate tone when advocating for business in Murray-Calloway County?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes, the tone is appropriate	100	70.9%
The tone needs to be more aggressive	22	15.6%
The Chamber is too aggressive	3	2.1%
No Opinion	16	11.3%
No Responses	0	0.0%
Total	141	100%

12. What activities, business types, community offerings, do you believe we need in the Murray and Calloway County community to acquire/build to enhance our “Quality of Place” attributes?

Top Comment Areas

- More jobs that pay higher wages through manufacturing, recruiting suppliers of Briggs and other industry
- Retail development of anchor stores like Hobby Lobby, TJ Maxx, Dick’s Sporting Goods
- Investment in the park system to increase walkability and activity
- Activities for 12-18 year olds
- Continued food and dining options that are not fast food
- Convention Center, minor league baseball team, activities to do
- A Friday at 5 type event downtown for people to do during summer/spring
- A green way that has a bike path and running trails



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