

Small Businesses Reject Role of Money in Politics; View *Citizens United* Decision as Bad for Business

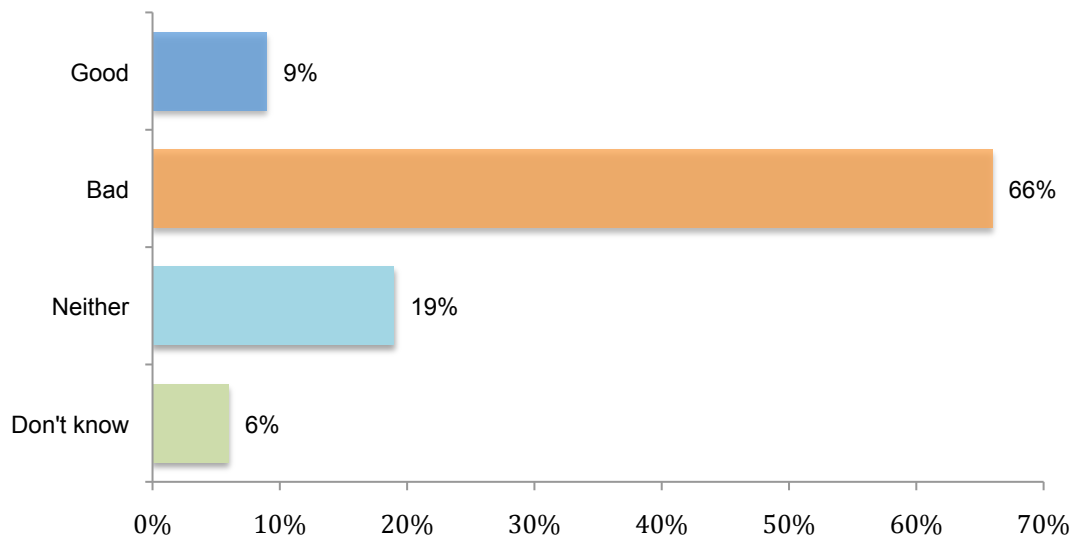
On Jan. 21, 2010, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in its *Citizens United* decision that corporations are free to spend unlimited sums of money in elections. According to opinion polling released by the American Sustainable Business Council, Main Street Alliance and Small Business Majority, two-thirds of small business owners see this decision as bad for small business. The poll also shows small business owners overwhelmingly believe corporations have been given too much freedom to spend money that directly influences political campaigns.

Main Findings

Small business owners view the *Citizens United* decision as bad for small business: 66% of those surveyed said the two-year-old ruling that gives corporations unlimited spending power in elections is bad for small businesses. Only 9% said it was good for small business.

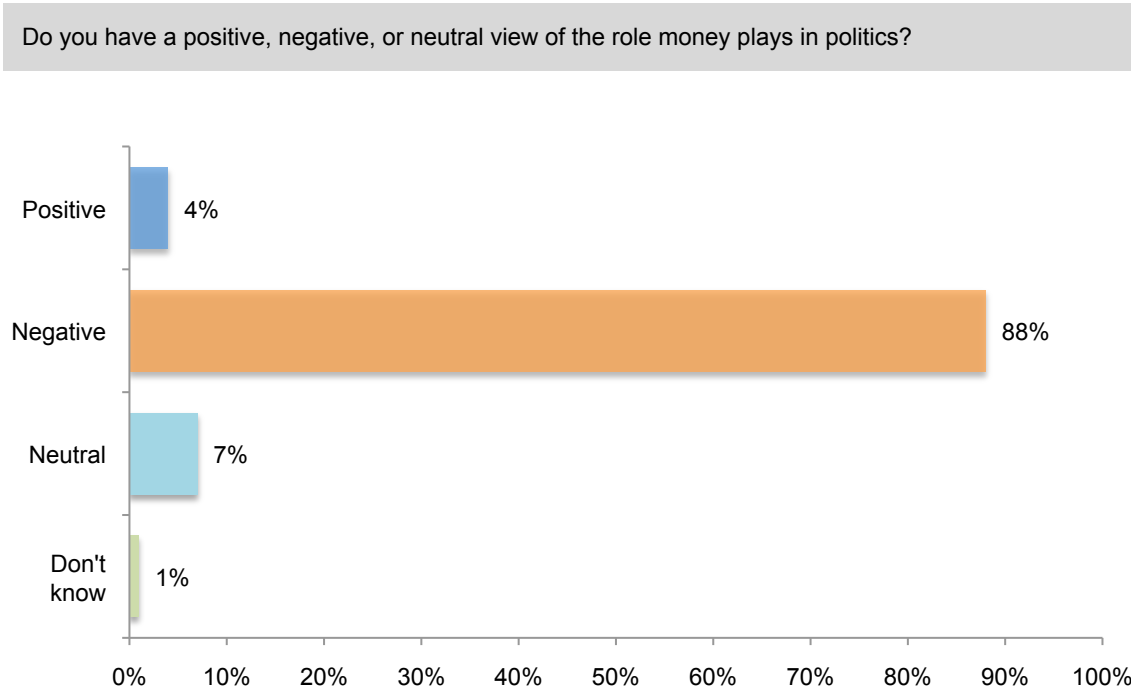
■ **Figure 1: Majority of small businesses don't support *Citizens United* decision**

In January 2010, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in its *Citizens United* decision that corporations are free to spend unlimited sums of money in elections. Do you believe this change is mostly good for small businesses, somewhat good for small businesses, neither good nor bad for small businesses, somewhat bad for small businesses, or mostly bad for small businesses?



Small business owners have a negative view of the role money plays in politics overall: 88% of respondents view the role money plays in politics negatively; 68% view it very negatively.

■ **Figure 2: Small businesses view money's role in politics negatively**



Conclusion

The latest poll results reveal that small business owners believe unlimited corporate political spending in elections is detrimental to small business success. The poll found small business owners across the country are in broad disagreement with the U.S. Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision. With two-thirds of respondents believing this change is bad for small business and another 88% of them negatively viewing the role money plays in politics overall, small business owners' perspectives are clear: Unlimited corporate political spending in elections hurts the interests of small businesses, America's jobs engine.

Methodology

This poll reflects an Internet survey of 500 small business owners across the country, commissioned by the American Sustainable Business Council, Main Street Alliance and Small Business Majority and conducted by Lake Research. It has a margin of error of +/- 4.4%. The survey was conducted between December 8, 2011 and January 4, 2012.

Researchers used a random sample of small business owners obtained from Harris Interactive, with additional samples from InfoUSA.

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1. In January 2010, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in its Citizens United decision that corporations are free to spend unlimited sums of money in elections. Do you believe this change is mostly good for small businesses, somewhat good for small businesses, neither good nor bad for small businesses, somewhat bad for small businesses, or mostly bad for small businesses?

	TOTAL (%)	Business Size (by number of employees, including owner)		
		1	2-9	10+
Mostly good.....	5	2	5	7
Somewhat good.....	5	6	2	8
Neither good nor bad.....	19	12	22	17
Somewhat bad.....	10	11	11	10
Mostly bad.....	56	59	54	56
Don't know.....	6	10	5	3
Good	9	8	8	15
Bad	66	69	65	65

2. Do you have a positive, negative, or neutral view of the role money plays in politics?

		1	2-9	10+
Very positive.....	2	0	2	2
Somewhat positive	2	0	3	4
Neutral	7	6	8	7
Somewhat negative	20	27	21	11
Very negative.....	68	65	67	75
Don't know.....	1	2	0	1
Positive	4	0	5	6
Negative	88	92	87	86

About the Organizations

American Sustainable Business Council

American Sustainable Business Council (ASBC) is a powerful coalition of business networks committed to building a vibrant, just, and sustainable economy. www.asbcouncil.org

Main Street Alliance

The Main Street Alliance is a national network of state-based small business coalitions. MSA creates opportunities for small business owners to speak for themselves on issues that impact their businesses and local economies. www.mainstreetalliance.org

Small Business Majority

Small Business Majority is a national nonpartisan small business advocacy organization, founded and run by small business owners, and focused on solving the biggest problems facing America's 28 million small businesses. We conduct extensive opinion and economic research and work with small business owners, policy experts and elected officials nationwide to bring small business voices to the public policy table. www.smallbusinessmajority.org