

Poll: Voters See Jobs As Top Priority for Washington

Scott Paul, Director



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WASHINGTON, DC. - [A new, bipartisan national poll](#) [1] conducted by The Mellman Group and Ayres, McHenry & Associates shows that voters want Washington to act on jobs, especially in manufacturing, which they believe will help restore America's lost status as the world's number one economy. Despite overwhelming public concern about these issues, fewer voters now believe the President or either party in Congress are focused on them than thought so in 2010.

"This poll is a stark reminder that while official Washington goes back and forth in our newest crisis, Americans still feel no one is focusing on the real problems that matter to them: losing jobs, losing our manufacturing base, and the decline of our position in the world," said Scott Paul, Executive Director of the Alliance for American Manufacturing (AAM).

The study which included eight focus groups nationwide, along with a random national survey of 1,202 likely voters, finds that across the partisan spectrum, Democratic and Republican voters ranked job creation and rebuilding the nation's manufacturing base at the top of their list of priorities. In fact, when asked to select the most important task for Congress and the President, "creating new manufacturing jobs," which ranked just below creating jobs more generally, saw a

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bigger gain from 2010 (up 9%) than any other option, including deficit reduction, lower government spending, immigration reform, or addressing healthcare. Indeed, by a more than two-to-one margin (67% to 29%), voters prefer that Washington focus on job creation rather than deficit reduction.

Most significantly, voters are less convinced than a year ago that Congress and the Administration are doing anything to create manufacturing jobs or to enforce fair trade. Although manufacturing was again ranked as the most important source of economic strength (by a wide margin over both healthcare and high tech), voters gave both Congress and the President lower marks on creating manufacturing jobs or addressing trade issues than they did in 2010.

[AAM's 2010 poll](#) [2] first demonstrated serious voter concern over factory closings and job loss. The results of that poll were widely credited with spurring key political efforts, including President Obama's subsequent push for "Made in America," and a House Democratic "Make it in America" agenda led by Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer.

Said Paul, "Voters see manufacturing as the key to recovery, and though it may surprise some pundits, this is the clear message from every voting demographic, including Tea Party and Republican voters."

Along with manufacturing's rising profile, support for "Made in America" has also skyrocketed since 2010. Pollster Whit Ayres explains, "Americans strongly believe that we cannot be the world's leading economy and job creator without manufacturing. They want to be able to buy top-quality products that say 'Made in America.'"

The poll also found concern over America's lost standing in the world. Pollster Mark Mellman says, "Americans no longer believe we have the world's strongest economy. But they do believe that a renewed focus on manufacturing jobs can turn things around. Americans understand that manufacturing is central to creating jobs and getting the economy back on track."

AAM's poll is being presented in briefings this week to bipartisan groups of elected officials throughout Washington.

Some key findings from the poll include:

- When given an "either/or" choice, just 29 percent want Washington to focus on deficit reduction while 67 percent favor job creation.
- "Creating manufacturing jobs in the U.S." and "strengthening manufacturing in this country" are the top voter priorities for the President.
- Only 50 percent of voters believe that the President is working to create manufacturing jobs – an 11 percent drop from 2010. Congress fares even worse – 41 percent say Democrats in Congress are working to create jobs,

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and 32 percent see the GOP working to create jobs.

- 90 percent have a favorable view of American manufacturing companies – up 22 points from 2010.
- 97 percent have a favorable view of U.S.-made goods – up 5 points from 2010.
- 94 percent of voters say creating manufacturing jobs is either “one of the most important” things government can do or “very important.”
- 90 percent support Buy American policies “to ensure that taxpayer funded government projects use only U.S.-made goods and supplies wherever possible.”
- 95 percent favor keeping “America’s trade laws strong and strictly enforced to provide a level playing field for our workers and businesses.”
- 59 percent say we need to “get tough with China and use every possible means to stop their unfair trade practices...” – only 34 percent say we need to “be careful...because they own such a significant portion of our debt.”

The poll results are available at www.americanmanufacturing.org [3].

The Alliance for American Manufacturing (AAM) is a unique non-partisan, non-profit partnership forged to strengthen manufacturing in the United States. AAM brings together a select group of America’s leading manufacturers and the United Steelworkers. Our mission is to promote creative policy solutions on such priorities as international trade, energy security, health care, retirement security, currency manipulation and other issues of mutual concern.

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[1]

<http://americanmanufacturing.org/files/AAM%20Poll%20Presentation%202011.pdf>

[2] <http://americanmanufacturing.org/content/aam-national-economic-poll>

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