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An alarming number of employees are working two or more jobs to survive the current economy. Plus, there's a dramatic split between red states and blue states when it comes to business relocations, and the Great Resignation continues unabated, according to employers.

These are among the findings of the newly completed February edition of the Freedom Economy Index (FEI), a survey of over 80,000 small businesses jointly conducted by PublicSquare and RedBalloon.work.

"Now in our seventh month of surveying America's small business community, we're seeing interesting trends emerge," said PublicSquare CEO Michael Seifert. "This economy has been difficult on employers and employees alike. And, while some of the big corporations may be thriving in this environment, small businesses are feeling the continued weight of inflation and high interest rates."

"Now we know one reason why there was a big job creation number in the January government jobs report," added RedBalloon CEO Andrew Crapuchettes. "Wages and spending power are being undercut by inflation, so there's a lot of people working two or three part-time jobs just to survive. And that's not showing signs of changing anytime soon."

Key Findings

1. An alarmingly high rate of employees work two or more jobs. Nearly 4 in 10 small business employers said that "30% or more" of their workforce is doubling up with a second or even a third job.
2. Job hoppers are still job hopping. 39.7% of employers said there was still a robust job musical chairs, while 11% say things have settled down.
3. Businesses are eager to check out of Hotel California. Only 13% of California small businesses are happy with their location, and 67% are either planning a move, considering a move, or want to move but can't afford it.
4. Crime continues to undercut business. Over 70% say crime has either increased significantly (32.2%) or slightly increased (38.2%). Another 25.6% say crime has neither increased or decreased.

5. Preview of the State of the Union. 46.1% of small business owners say US border security is the most important issue for President Biden to address.

Data

Nearly 4 in 10 small business employers said that “30% or more” of their workforce is doubling up with a second or even a third job. And, interestingly, this dynamic was more pronounced among younger companies.

There’s a split between employers who have been around less than 10 years, and those whose businesses are 10 years or older, with the older, more established companies having less moonlighting employees.

We also asked employers if the “Great Resignation” job-hopping trend was still ongoing, or if employee tenure was settling down in this uncertain environment. 39.7% said there was still a robust job musical-chairs, while 11% say things have settled down.

We asked employers if they were considering moving their business headquarters to another state, and if so, why? Nationwide, nearly half of all small business employers (47.7%) say they are happy with their current location and have no plans to move.

But when looking just at California, nearly a third of businesses (27.1%) feel they are trapped, wanting to move but unable to afford the costs. Apparently, “they can check out anytime they like, but they can never leave.” Only 13% of California small businesses are happy with their location, and 67% are either planning a move (10%), considering a move (30%) or want to move but can’t afford it.

We asked small business owners if crime had increased or decreased over the past 12 months. Over 70% say crime has either increased significantly (32.2%) or slightly increased (38.2%). Another 25.6% say crime has neither increased or decreased.

When asked how they’ve responded to crime in their area, 1 in 4 say they’ve either closed a location (1.4%) and/or moved (3.6%), or they considered moving (22.4%). Most have sought other solutions.

46.1% of small business owners say US border security is the most important issue for President Biden to address. 13% said government spending and debt, 10.2% said election and government integrity, 2.8% said inflation, and 1.7% said foreign

policy/Ukraine/Israel/China.

Methodology

The Freedom Economy Index surveyed a universe of over 80,000 small business owners throughout the United States, fielding the questionnaire from February 6 to 9, 2024, with 840 respondents. The survey has a margin of error of +/-3.0% at the 95% confidence level.

For the media download of the February report click [here](#).

To schedule an interview with PublicSquare CEO Michael Seifert and RedBalloon CEO Andrew Crapuchettes, contact Isaac Lopez at (208) 997-8013 or isaac@redballoon.work.

PublicSquare Is America's largest nonwoke marketplace app with over 70,000 businesses and over 1.6 million active consumer members. They empower the consumers to put purpose behind every purchase, from daily essentials to non-woke restaurants in their area.

Founded In 2021, RedBalloon has quickly become America's largest woke-free job board, connecting employers and employees who prioritize a positive workplace culture free from the divisiveness of cancel-culture mandates.



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