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ABI Survey Finds Iowa Employers Focused on Workforce

DES MOINES, Iowa — Results from the Iowa Association of Business and Industry's (ABI) third quarter 2026 Quarterly Business Survey show Iowa employers continuing to invest in their businesses while taking a more cautious view of the economy heading into the second half of the year.

Key survey findings include:

- **62%** expect sales to expand over the next quarter.
- **62%** expect employment levels to remain stable, while nearly one-third anticipate workforce growth.
- **85%** plan to make capital expenditures, with most respondents planning modest investments.
- **46%** report an optimistic outlook for the economy.

Despite differing views on the broader economy, respondents continue to prioritize long-term investment and business stability. Workforce and talent remain the most frequently identified business challenge, followed by health care costs and property taxes.

When asked what the top priority for Iowa's next governor should be, respondents consistently emphasized strengthening Iowa's workforce development and talent attraction initiatives. Additional priorities included maintaining a competitive tax and regulatory environment, supporting economic development and encouraging bipartisan solutions that strengthen Iowa's business climate.

The findings align closely with themes identified in ABI's recent CEO Survey, where business leaders also highlighted workforce availability, health care costs and policy certainty as critical factors affecting long-term growth and investment decisions.

"Iowa employers continue to invest in their businesses and communities," said Nicole Crain, ABI President. "As ABI develops its policy priorities for the 2027 legislative session, we look forward to advancing member-driven solutions that address the current and future workforce needs of Iowa employers."

ABI surveys its board of directors each quarter to track business sentiment, identify common concerns, and inform advocacy and programming priorities. For previous survey results, business resources, and upcoming events, visit www.iowaabi.org.

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The Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI) has been the voice of Iowa business since 1903. Its mission is to provide a strong, unified voice to business and industry on issues affecting Iowa employers. ABI is comprised of member companies representing all industries and sizes in Iowa's 99 counties. ABI members employ more than 330,000 Iowans.