



**IOWA  
ASSOCIATION  
OF BUSINESS  
AND INDUSTRY**

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# **CEO SURVEY**

Insights from Iowa Business  
Leaders

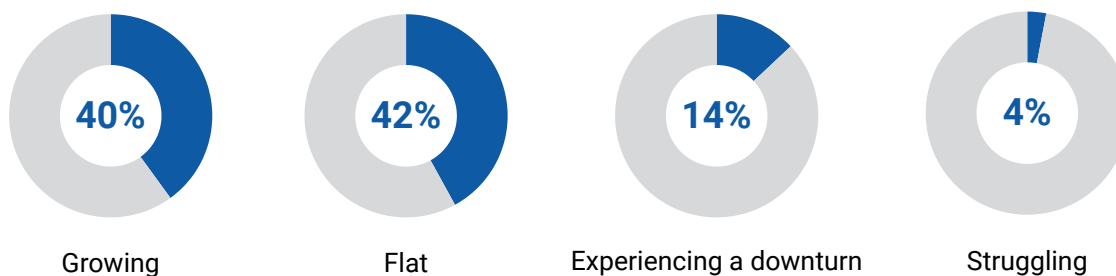
**2025**

[www.iowaabi.org](http://www.iowaabi.org)

## BUSINESS HEALTH SNAPSHOT

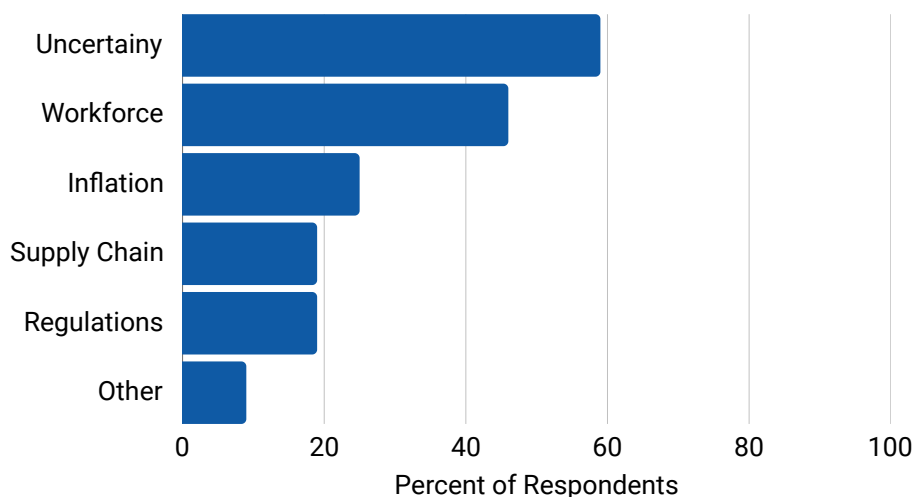
### How healthy would you say your business is at the moment?

Nearly half of survey respondents report stable performance, while 40% are growing.



### What are the biggest challenges facing your company? (Select all that apply.)

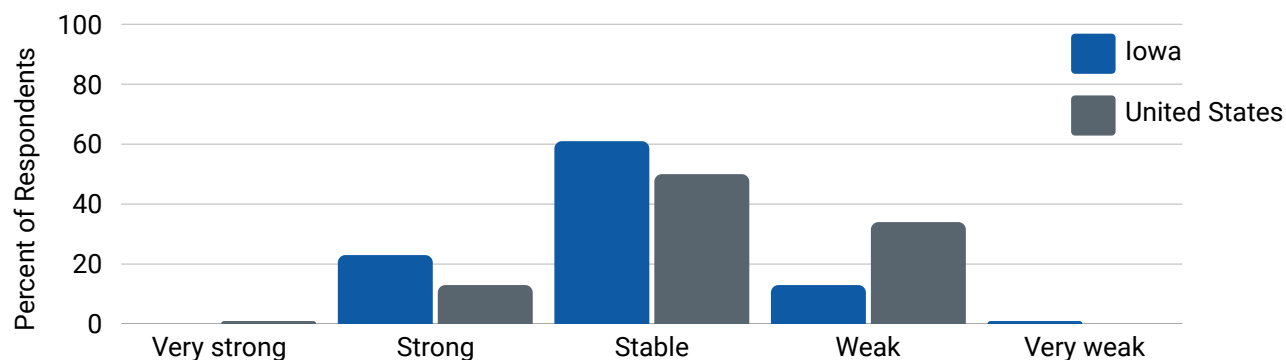
Uncertainty leads all business concerns at 59%.



## ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

### How would you rate the current economy?

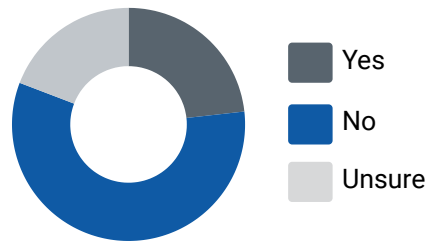
The majority of respondents feel that both the Iowa and United States economies are stable.



# TRADE AND TARIFFS

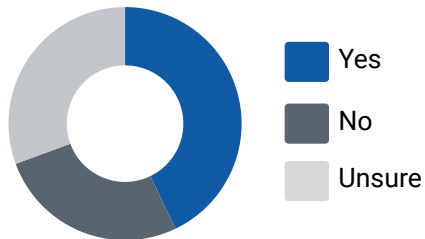
## Have you experienced unfair trade practices?

Nearly 60% of respondents have not experienced unfair trade practices.



## Do you support the Administration's tariff policy on China?

43% of respondents support the policy.



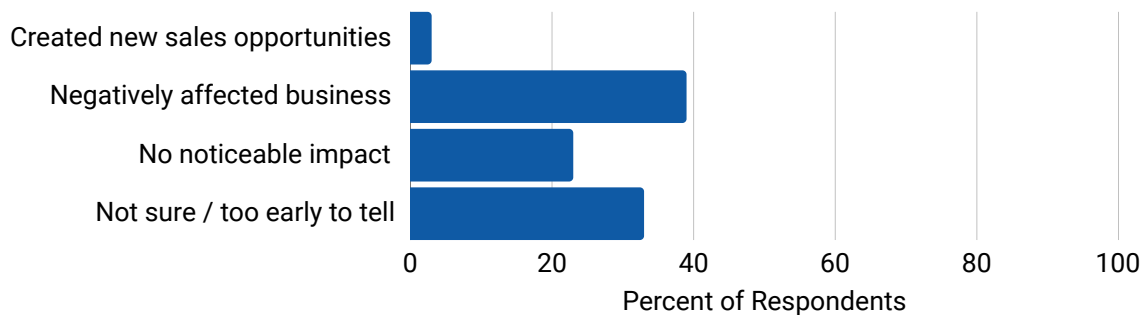
## Do you support the Administration's tariff policy on Canada and Mexico?

40% of respondents do not support the policy.



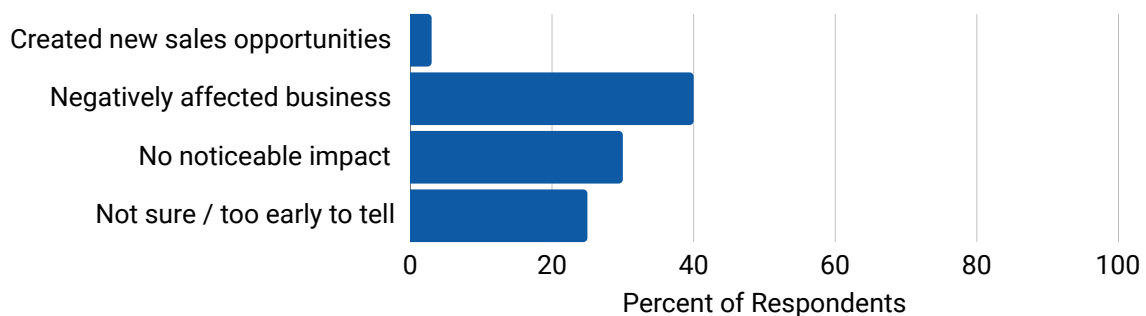
## How have the tariffs on Chinese imports impacted your business?

While most are in support of the tariffs policies, the majority of respondents report the tariffs negatively affecting their business.



## How have the tariffs on Canadian and Mexican imports impacted your business?

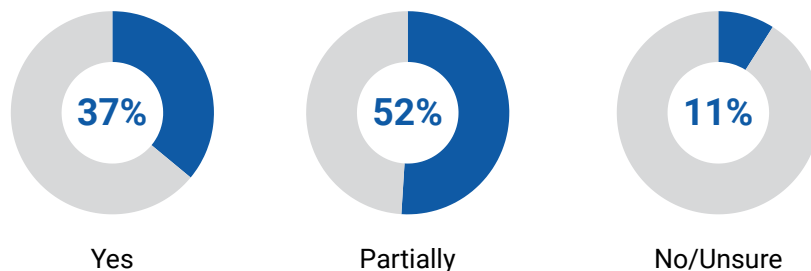
The majority of respondents report the tariffs negatively affecting their business.



## BUSINESS OPERATIONS

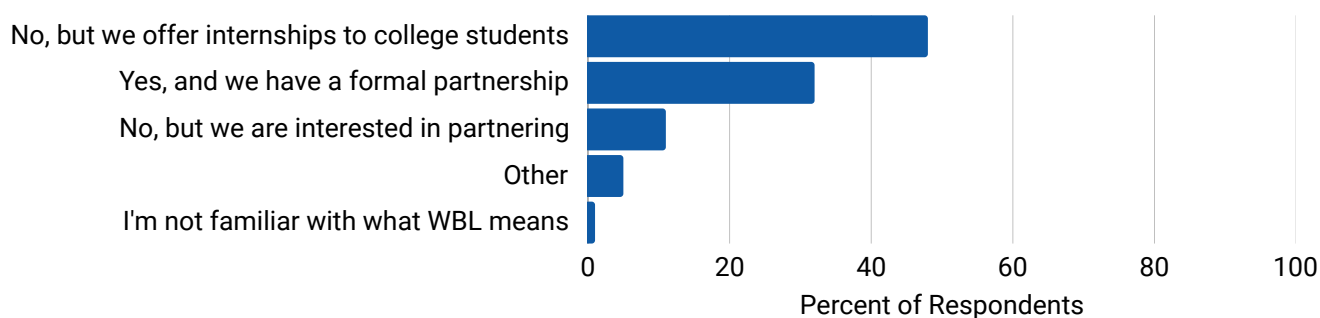
### Are you implementing AI in your business?

89% of respondents are exploring integrations or are already using AI.



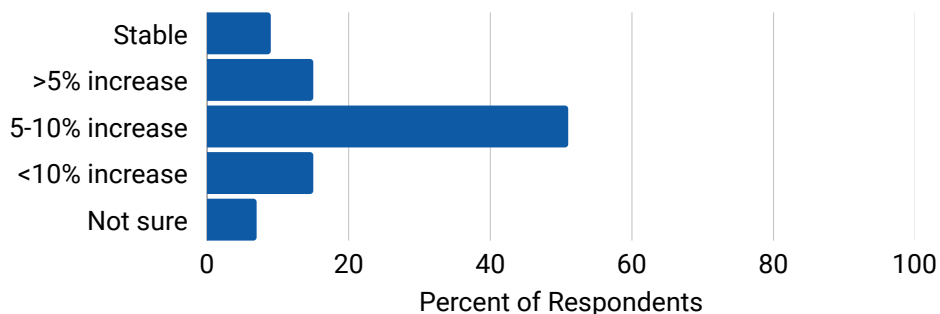
### Does your company currently participate in any work-based learning opportunities for student in partnership with the local school district?

Nearly half of respondents (48%) offer internships or similar opportunities for college students, while 32% have formal partnerships with local school districts.



### What trends are you seeing in health insurance premiums?

Most businesses are feeling premium pressure.



# OPEN RESPONSE QUESTIONS

## What is one thing federal policy makers could do to support business?

Business leaders emphasized a need for stability, pro-growth tax policies, immigration reform, and reduced regulatory burdens. The quotes below represent a snapshot of concerns voiced by Iowa business leaders.

### Immigration and Workforce Access

"We need a labor supply."

"Create a reasonably short path to citizenship for foreign families and workers."

"Figure out sensible immigration."

"Develop better work visa programs for manufacturers & expand legal immigration."

### Tax Reform and Incentives

"Fix the tax code so we do not receive another tax increase."

"More tax incentives for US manufacturers."

"Need to get a good tax policy in place to help get confidence back in organizations to fuel growth and to fuel more hiring."

### Trade and Regulatory Certainty

"Feds need to cut red tape."

"Put pressure on states that implement over-reaching regulations."

"Implement a common sense, strategic approach to implementing regulatory changes."

"Focus on implementing realistic regulation requirements."

### Other Insights

"Reign in all this chaos."

"Give the market rules and let the market work."

"Incentivize businesses that are putting a priority on domestic production."

"Get the deficit under control so we can get interest rates lowered."

# OPEN RESPONSE QUESTIONS

## What is one thing state policy makers could do to support business?

Iowa business leaders call on state policymakers to streamline regulations, strengthen the workforce, enhance Iowa's appeal, and diversify job creation beyond agriculture, while addressing healthcare costs, tax policy, and political overreach.

### Iowa Communities & Workforce

"Continue to improve rules impacting unemployment insurance."

"We need our small towns to be viable to keep our workers and attract new."

"Support rural schools and rural economies."

"Support programs and legislation that help keep talent in Iowa."

### Economic Diversity & Global Engagement

"Support and develop policies that show Iowa as a state of diversity."

"We are too dependent on ag. We need incentives for high-volume manufacturing jobs."

"Push back on tariffs in all forms. Resist isolationism. Recognize and defend Iowa's relationships with the global economy."

### Tax Policy & Regulations

"Address property taxes—one of our fastest rising costs."

"More tax incentives for US manufacturers."

"Reduce over-reaching regulations with no positive environmental outcome."

"Keep reducing regulations."

### Other Insights

"Make Iowa a more welcoming state."

"More grant funding opportunities ... to train employees."

"I think the State of Iowa business climate is pretty good. We just have to get through a drought in sales."

"We need our small towns to be viable to keep our workers and attract new."

**About the Survey:** ABI's CEO Survey is conducted annually to capture the perspectives of Iowa business leaders on key economic and policy issues. The 2025 survey was conducted in June 2025.