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## Small Business: NJ Supreme Court vacancies, court decisions are

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A recent tide of outrageous lawsuits and vacancies on the State Supreme Court are contributing to a hostile business climate in New Jersey, according to a survey conducted by the Rutgers-Eagleton Institute.

Nearly three quarters of small businesses surveyed said it was "very important" that the Governor and State Senate resolve their impasse in order to fill vacancies on the state's Supreme Court, which began in 2010.

"The New Jersey Supreme Court is crucial to our state's economy," said Marcus Rayner, executive director of the New Jersey Lawsuit Reform Alliance (NJLRA). "New Jersey's business community is telling us loudly and clearly that vacancies on the state's highest court are a leading concern."

"As New Jersey's small businesses recover from a sluggish economy and added devastation from Hurricane Sandy, cost drivers like liability insurance and the threat of frivolous litigation only add to business concerns, which

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can be heavily influenced by court decisions.”

An overwhelming majority (75 percent) of respondents fear that a high-profile lawsuit in Ocean County will negatively impact New Jersey’s business community.

The Court allowed a motorist charged with driving while intoxicated to sue a local establishment for the injuries he sustained after causing an accident; several respondents are planning to make changes to their business as a result of this decision.

Respondents strongly support a proposal to have specialized business courts handle court cases involving businesses. An astounding 92 percent of small businesses surveyed want the Legislature to focus on liability reform.

New Jersey-based small businesses with fewer than 50 employees were surveyed. Complete survey results can be found online at <http://njlra.org>.

\* \* \* \*

*The New Jersey Lawsuit Reform Alliance (NJLRA) is a statewide, bipartisan group of businesses, individuals and organizations committed to improving the State’s civil justice system by advocating for legal reforms in the legislature and in the courts. NJLRA believes a balanced civil justice system is critical to ensuring fair and open courts, maintaining and attracting jobs and fostering economic growth in New Jersey. NJLRA is the only organization in New Jersey dedicated exclusively to civil justice reform.*



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