

On 4:42 PM -0400 4/21/10, Concord Chamber of Commerce  
Director wrote:

Debbie –

The Chamber is made up of many businesses – independently-owned and franchises; landlords and tenants; non-profit organizations; and many small one-person home-based businesses. Some of these businesses fall into the formula business category and others do not; some may not be a formula business today but may be in the future through successful growth or the sale of a business.

The Concord Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to promoting and serving business, supporting tourism and fostering a strong economic climate, all consistent and in harmony with the character and culture of Concord. Through an active website with business marketing opportunities, a Shop Locally initiative which includes the successful Gift of Concord gift certificate program, interaction with Town management, and many special events aimed to promote local business, we support Concord businesses in every way we can. The Visitor Center actively supports many of the non-profit, retail and hospitality business groups through information provided to visitors.

Many business owners are not Concord residents and do not get to have a voice or a vote at Town Meeting. Providing the survey, and the accompanying copies of the Warrant Articles, was our way to allow the Chamber to genuinely reflect the members' thoughts on articles that affect the business community. The responses from the members, along with independent emails we have received, would have helped us get a sense of how members feel about the issues. We were trying to explain, as is done on many election ballots, what a “yes” or “no” vote could mean, with no biased opinion intended. As the Chamber, we hope to represent the opinion of the majority of our members and to act of their behalf when we have a voice to do so.

Since you have acknowledged that you have invalidated any possible survey results, we have already turned-off the survey and will follow-up with an email to our members asking them to email us directly with any opinions so that we may have a sense, and a record, of how our membership feels about the articles in question and so we are able to report and act accordingly.

This issue is obviously an emotional one for many and we can only hope that by hearing and listening to everyone's thoughts, votes will be cast that will reflect a true consensus.

Stephanie M. Stillman

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