



NVC/PINKSTON

Northern Virginia *Business Leader* Survey.

Q1 2026 Report



Executive Summary & Insights.

The Q1 NVC/Pinkston Northern Virginia Business Leader Survey series captures the perspectives and sentiments of **210 CEOs, corporate executives, and business owners** operating in the region, including Fortune 500 companies.

- These survey insights are intended to support strategic decision-making for policymakers and the business community across multiple sectors, shaping the future of economic growth in the Greater Washington Region and the Commonwealth.
- This survey represents the perspectives, sentiments, and strategic planning of 210 CEOs, corporate executives, and business owners with operations in Northern Virginia. Nine Northern Virginia-based chambers of commerce partnered on this survey, providing perspectives from business leaders across the region. Those chambers include:

Northern Virginia Chamber (NVC)
Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
Arlington Chamber of Commerce
Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce
Falls Church Chamber of Commerce

Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce
Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce
Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber
Prince William County Chamber of Commerce

- NOVA is the economic engine for both the Greater Washington Region and the Commonwealth of Virginia, representing **46%** of Washington D.C.'s regional economy and **42%** of Virginia's economy.

46% of Washington D.C.'s regional economy source: [George Mason University's Stephen S. Fuller Institute](#)

42% of Virginia's economy source: [Fairfax Economic Development Authority](#)

Top Insights

32%

Policy Issues: Governor and General Assembly

Business leaders cited reducing taxes (32%) as their top policy priority for the new Governor of Virginia and state legislature. Other top issues included: housing affordability (27%), keep right-to-work (20%), transportation and infrastructure investments (17%), and reduce regulation (14%).

49%

Concerning General Assembly Session in Richmond

Business leaders cited the expansion of sales taxes to services (49%) as the most concerning legislation for its potential negative impact on their company. Other legislation of concern included: repeal of right-to-work (27%), new tax bracket for high-earning individuals (the “millionaire’s tax”) (18%), increase to the minimum wage (17%), and paid family and medical leave (13%).

66%

NOVA Economic Sentiment

66% of business leaders believe the NOVA economy will remain the same or decline over the next 6 months (34% remain the same, 29% decline slowly, 3% decline significantly), while 34% believe the NOVA economy will grow (27% grow slowly, 7% grow significantly).

56%

National Economic Sentiment

56% of business leaders are very or somewhat pessimistic about the national economy over the next 6 months, while 25% are very or somewhat optimistic, and 20% are neither optimistic nor pessimistic.

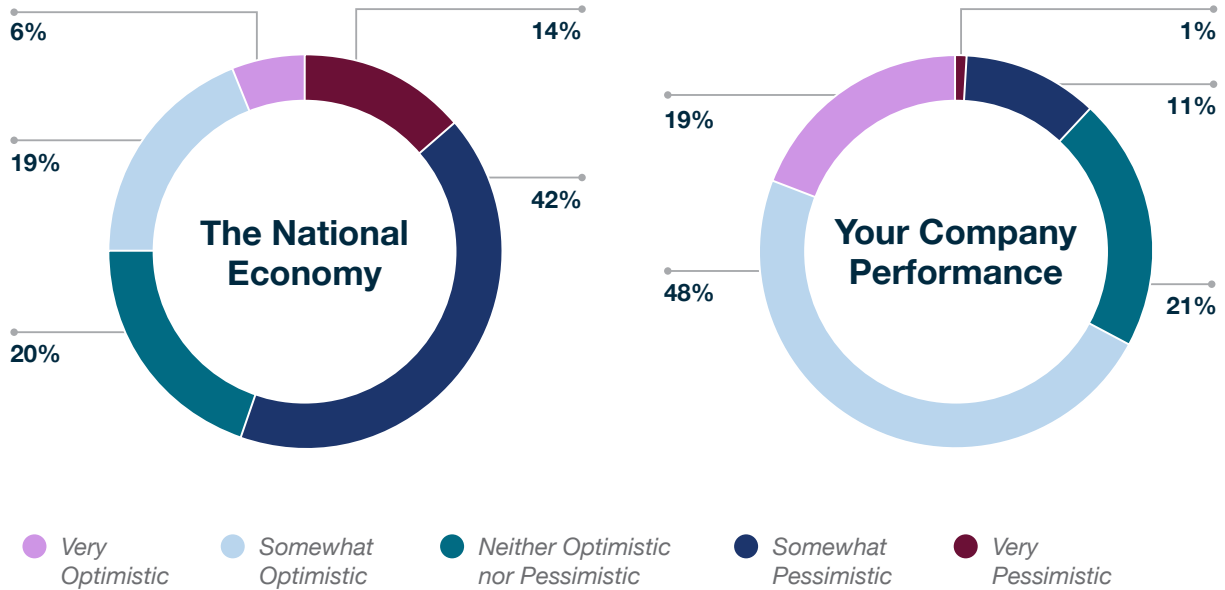
67%

Individual Business Sentiment

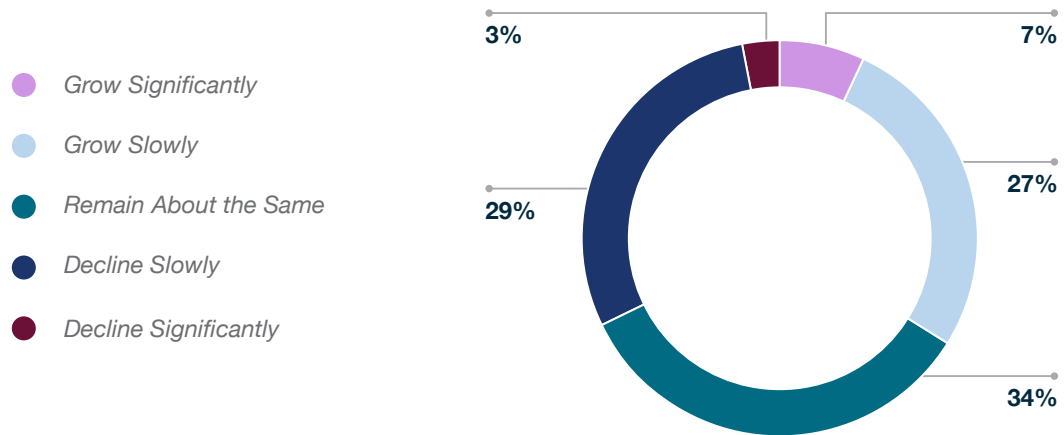
67% of business leaders are very or somewhat optimistic about their own company performance and near future, compared to 21% who are neutral, and 12% are pessimistic.

Survey Questions & Answers.

1 What is your company's outlook toward the following areas over the next six months?



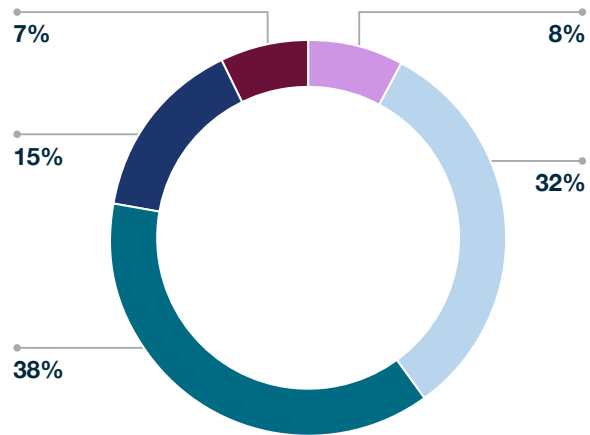
2 Considering that Northern Virginia is an economic driving force for the Greater Washington D.C. area and the Commonwealth of Virginia, how do you believe its (NOVA) economy will change over the next six months?



Survey Questions & Answers.

3 How do you expect your company's **capital spending** to change in the **next six months**?

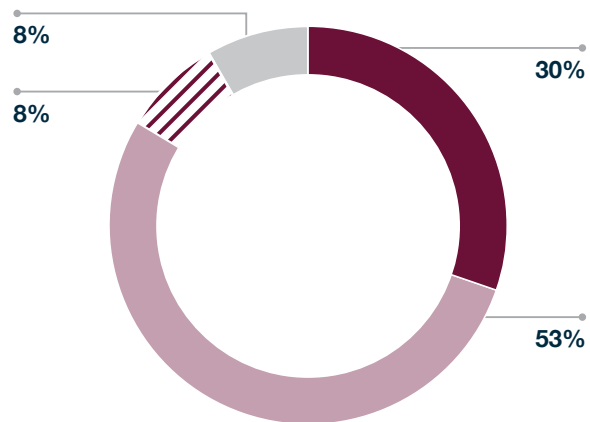
- Increase Significantly
- Increase Slightly
- No Change
- Decrease Slightly
- Decrease Significantly



Hiring Projections

4 Within the **next six months**, do you anticipate needing to adjust your **staffing** in any way?

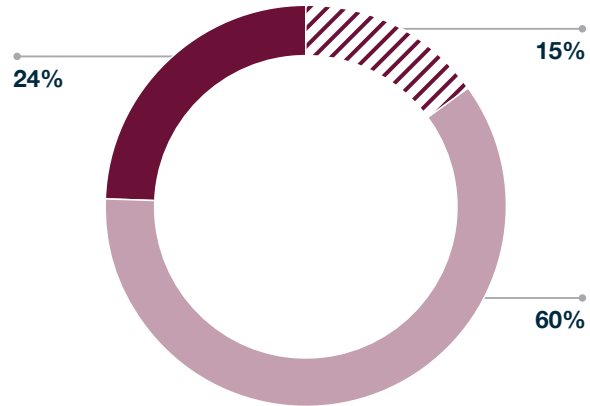
- Increase Hiring
- Stay about the Same
- Reduce Headcount
- Unsure



Survey Questions & Answers.

5 Compared to a year ago, are you experiencing more or less difficulty in finding qualified **talent to hire**?

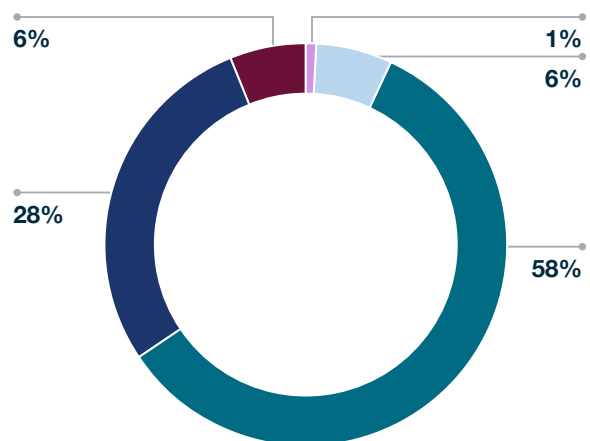
- *More Difficulty*
- *About the Same*
- ▨ *Less Difficulty*



Federal, State and Local Government Impact

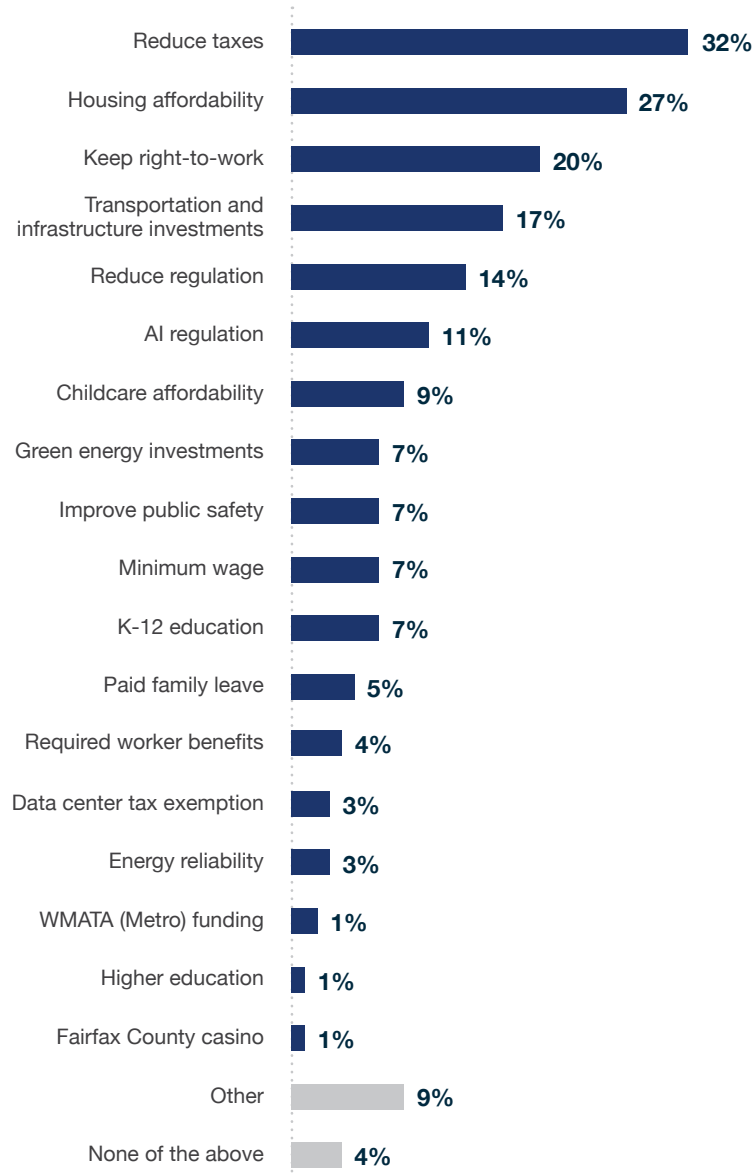
6 How has the President's tariff policy and negotiation process impacted your company? Are they causing your company to...

- *Grow Significantly*
- *Grow Slowly*
- *Make No Impact*
- *Decline Somewhat*
- *Decline Significantly*



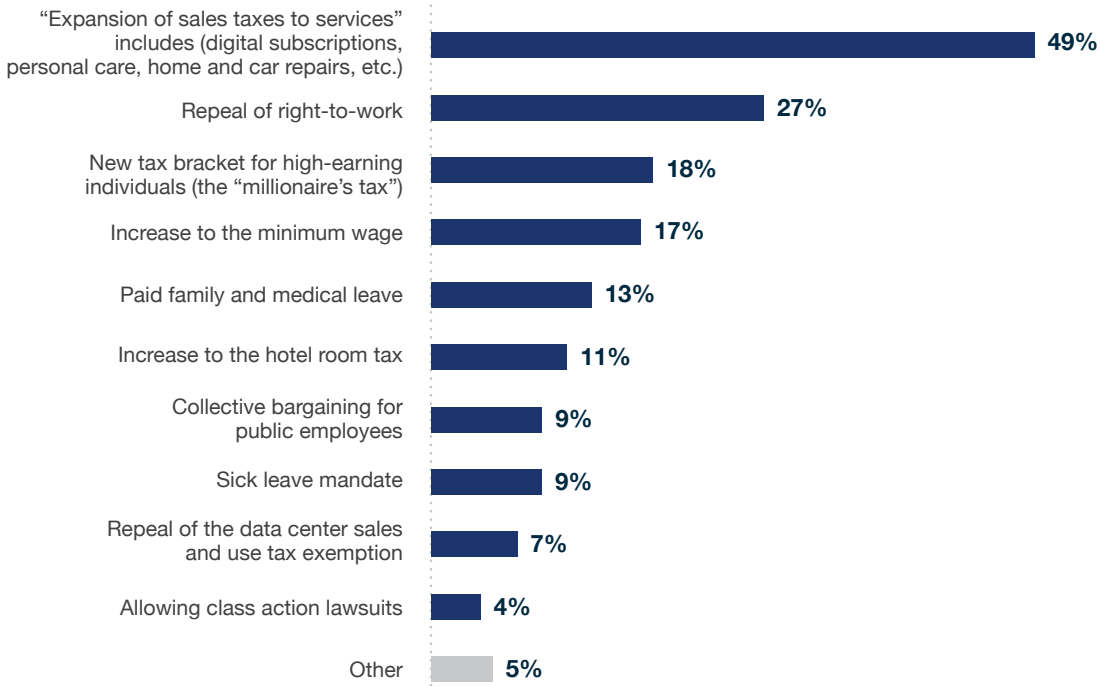
Survey Questions & Answers.

7 What are your top policy priorities for Virginia's new Governor and legislature? (Select up to 2)

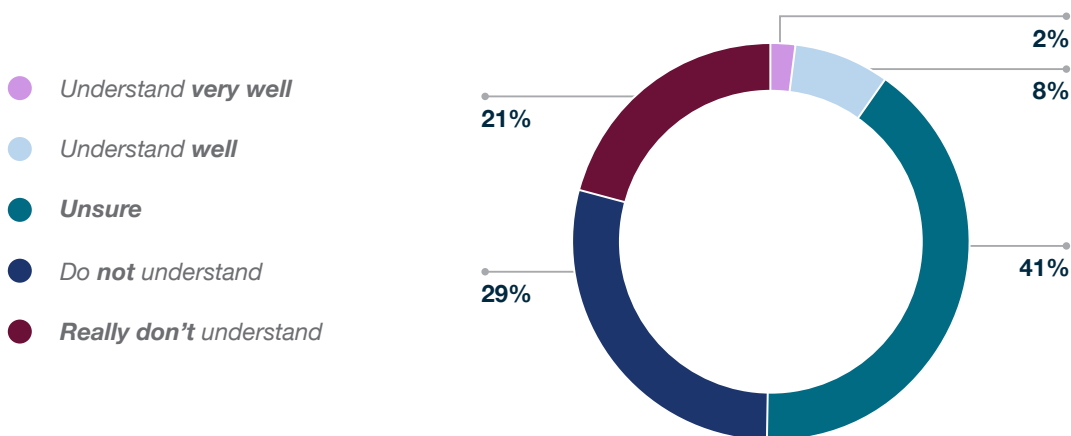


Survey Questions & Answers.

- 8 Which legislation considered during this past General Assembly session caused you the most concern in terms of its potential negative impact on your company's ability to grow? (Select up to 2)

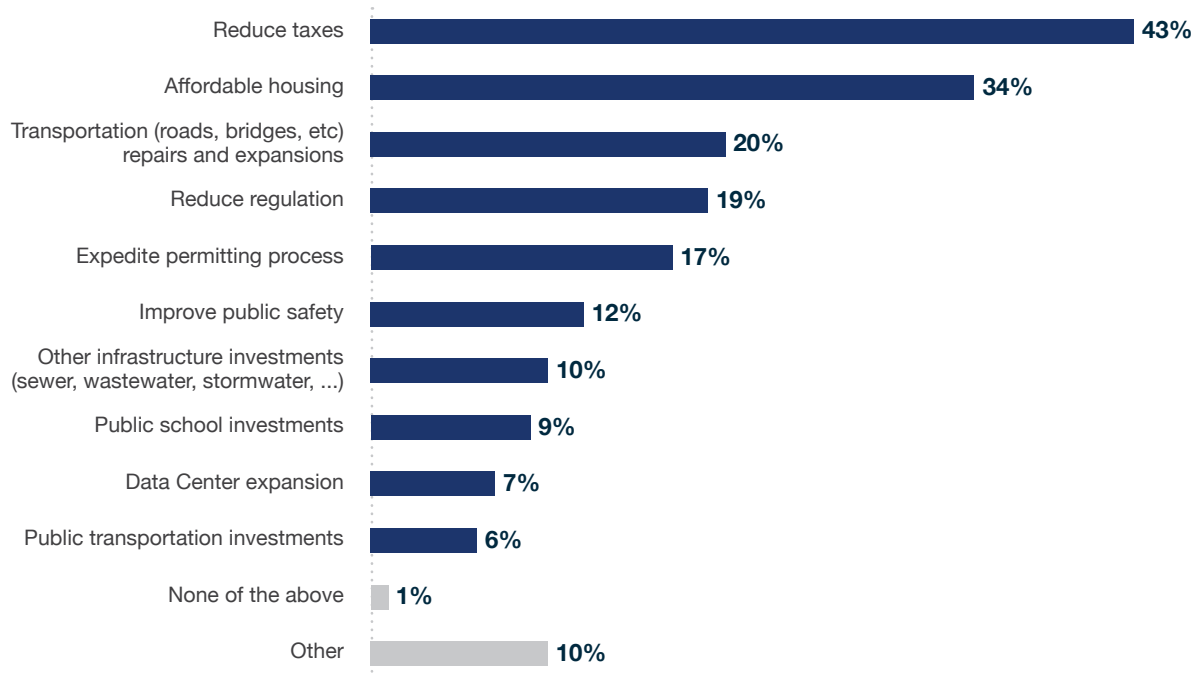


- 9 How much do you think state legislators and policymakers in Richmond understand your local business operations?

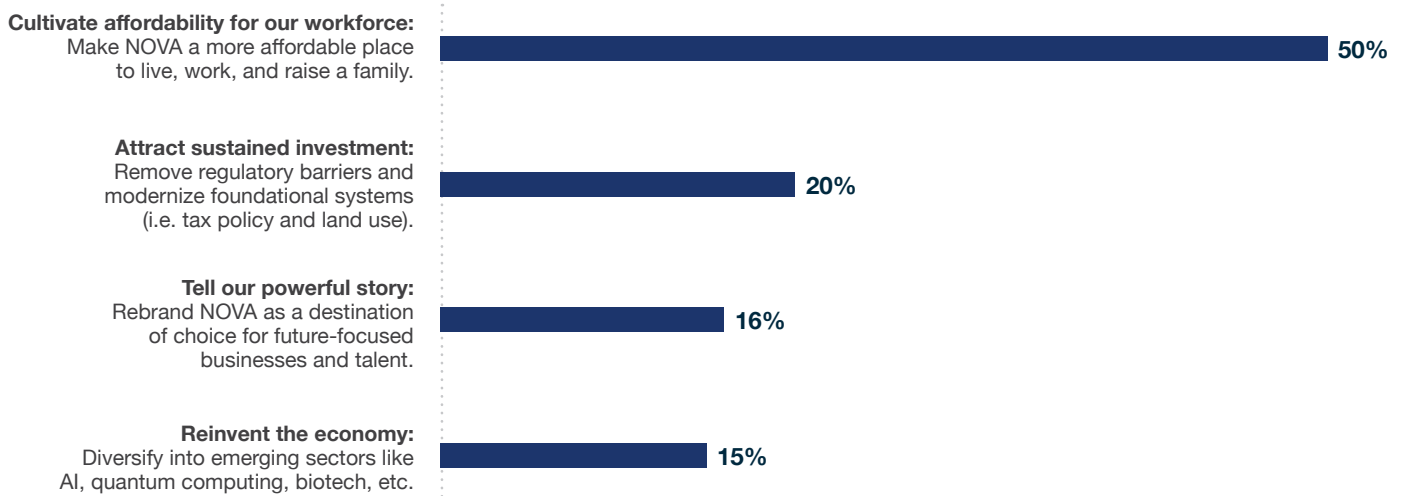


Survey Questions & Answers.

10 What are your top policy priorities for your local county or city government? (Select up to 2)



11 Which NVC NOVA Roadmap goal would have the most positive impact on your organization's growth?



Methodology.

This survey offers a platform where CEOs, executives, and business owners operating in Northern Virginia to forecast economic trends and offer valuable insights to Greater Washington’s business community and policymakers.

- Fielded March 23-30, 2026, the survey consists of questions and responses from **210 business leaders** that explore economic outlook, business sentiment, policy priorities, hiring plans, and opinions on state and local legislation. Nine Northern Virginia-based chambers of commerce partnered on this survey, providing perspectives from business leaders across the region. Those chambers include:

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- Companies with 1-49 employees represented **74%** of respondents; companies with 50-99 represented **3%** of respondents; companies with 100-499 represented **11%**; and companies with 500 or more represented **11%**.
- Company locations included **35%** in Fairfax County or City of Fairfax, **15%** in Loudoun County, **15%** in Prince William County or City of Manassas, **14%** in Alexandria, **7%** in Falls Church, **7%** in Arlington County, and **6%** in other locations.
- **11%** of respondents represented companies with \$100 Million or more in annual revenue; **9%** represented companies with \$10- \$100 Million in annual revenue; **72%** represented companies with less than \$10 Million in revenue; and **8%** of respondents declined to say.



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About NVC

For 100 years, the Northern Virginia Chamber (NVC) — the largest and most influential chamber in Greater Washington — has driven innovation and economic growth. NVC has championed key developments such as the Metro, Dulles Airport, and George Mason University. Representing over 400 members, NVC continues to lead on affordability, workforce, and regional development. Learn more at

www.nvcbusiness.org



About Pinkston

Pinkston is a full service branding, marketing, and communications firm that offers an integrated collection of strategic capabilities, including public relations, strategy, digital marketing, brand identity, research, social media, video production, and web development. Founded in 2001 and based in Falls Church, Virginia, Pinkston serves a wide range of clients including Fortune 100 companies, innovative technology startups, national non-profit organizations, and government agencies. Learn more at

www.pinkston.co

