

PROVINCIAL POLITICAL SCENE

BC Liberals Plummet as HST Looms; British Columbians Want a New Party

Four-in-five respondents say they would “definitely” or “probably” sign the petition to repeal the new tax if given the opportunity.

[VANCOUVER – Apr. 17, 2010] – The governing BC Liberal Party has lost support in British Columbia and the BC New Democratic Party (NDP) has extended its advantage, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

The online survey of a representative sample of 800 adults in British Columbia also shows that half of respondents would like to have a new option in provincial politics, and that four-in-five British Columbians would sign a petition to repeal the harmonized sales tax (HST).

Voting Intention

Across British Columbia, 47 per cent of decided voters (+4 since March) say they would support the New Democratic Party (NDP) candidate in their constituency if a provincial election were held tomorrow. The governing BC Liberals are second with 29 per cent (-6), followed by the Green Party with 14 per cent (+1), and the BC Conservatives Party with five per cent (-1).

The NDP is now five points ahead of the level of support it garnered in the May 2009 provincial ballot, while the BC Liberals are now 17 points below their election total.

British Columbia Premier and BC Liberals leader Gordon Campbell has a momentum score of -58. Just four per cent of respondents say that their opinion

KEY FINDINGS

- **Voting Intention: BC NDP: 47%, BC Libs 29%, Green 15%, BC Con. 5%**
- **49% think it is time for a new provincial political party in BC**
- **A new centre-left party would have six-point lead over the NDP, a new centre-right party would be in second place, well ahead of the BC Liberals**
- **81% would “definitely” or “probably” sign a petition to repeal the HST**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From April 12 to April 14, 2010, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 800 randomly selected British Columbia adults who are Angus Reid Forum panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.5%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure samples representative of the entire adult population of British Columbia. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

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of Campbell improved over the past three months, while 62 per cent say it worsened. NDP leader Carole James is now even on this particular indicator. While Green Party leader Jane Sterk has a score of +6, one third of respondents (32%) are undecided when asked about their opinion of Sterk.

Leaders and Parties

Respondents were provided with a list of attributes and characteristics, and asked to use some of these words to describe the two main provincial parties and their leaders.

A majority of respondents believe the BC Liberals are arrogant (64%) and dishonest (52%), and more than two-in-five brand them as secretive (48%), uncaring (45%), out of touch with their community's needs (45%) and oblivious to the province's needs (41%).

While the BC NDP fares better, some negative traits are evident. More than a third of respondents think the BC NDP is inefficient (40%) and weak (37%). However, 32 per cent regard it as mindful of the province's needs, and 29 per cent see it as both compassionate and in touch with their community's needs.

A similar scenario ensues when voters are asked to rate the leaders. Almost three-in-four respondents (72%) think Campbell is arrogant, 56 per cent brand him as secretive, 55 per cent think he is dishonest, and 51 per cent believe he is uncaring.

James is seen as compassionate (45%), down to earth (40%) and open (33%), but respondents also regard her as weak (38%) and inefficient (35%).

A New Party?

Half of respondents (49%) believe British Columbia needs a new party in the provincial political scene, while one-in-four (26%) disagree with this notion. Respondents in Metro Vancouver (52%) and the BC Interior (54%) are more likely to support the creation of a new party.

A new party with a centre-left ideology would garner the backing of 34 per cent of decided voters, followed by the BC NDP with 28 per cent, and the BC Liberals with 23 per cent. A new party with a centre-right ideology would trail the NDP (37% to 30%), but hold a commanding lead over the BC Liberals (15%).

HST and the Vander Zalm Petition

The harmonized sales tax (HST) remains unpopular, with 82 per cent of respondents (+5 since March) saying they disagree with its implementation.

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The recent campaign against the HST, which includes former BC Premier Bill Vander Zalm, has struck a chord with BC residents. Two-thirds of respondents (67%) say they would definitely sign the petition to repeal the new tax if a person knocked on their door, and a further 14 per cent would probably sign it.

Analysis

Voters have not forgiven the BC Liberals for their decision to bring the HST. Public outcry has not subsided over the past month. In fact, many British Columbians are now willing to sign the petition to repeal the tax if a person shows up at their doorstep with it.

Carole James has gained momentum over the past few months, while Gordon Campbell continues to be rated negatively by a majority of respondents.

The idea of a new party is welcomed by half of respondents, but electoral success appears to hinge on ideology. A centre-right party will hurt the BC Liberals and facilitate a victory for the NDP, in a situation that recalls the 1990s. However, a new centre-left party would take votes from both established parties and would head to the next election with a six-point lead.

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BC Political Scene

If a provincial election were held tomorrow in British Columbia, which one of the following parties would you be most likely to support in your constituency? – *Decided voters including leaners*

	British Columbia	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
BC NDP	47%	43%	52%	42%	48%	50%
BC Liberals	29%	35%	24%	33%	27%	29%
BC Greens	14%	12%	16%	21%	13%	8%
BC Conservatives	5%	5%	6%	2%	7%	6%

BC Political Scene

If a provincial election were held tomorrow in British Columbia, which one of the following parties would you be most likely to support in your constituency? – *Decided voters including leaners*

	British Columbia	GVRD	Vancouver Island	Interior	North
BC NDP	47%	46%	56%	42%	48%
BC Liberals	29%	29%	22%	34%	37%
BC Greens	14%	15%	12%	13%	9%
BC Conservatives	5%	5%	5%	7%	2%

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BC Political Scene

If a provincial election were held tomorrow in British Columbia, which one of the following parties would you be most likely to support in your constituency? – *Decided voters including leaners*

	British Columbia	Income			Education		
		<\$50k	\$50-99k	\$100k+	HS or Less	College/Tech	Univ+
BC NDP	47%	55%	45%	40%	51%	44%	46%
BC Liberals	29%	17%	32%	47%	26%	30%	34%
BC Greens	14%	22%	12%	4%	14%	13%	13%
BC Conservatives	5%	4%	5%	6%	5%	7%	3%

BC Political Scene

If a provincial election were held tomorrow in British Columbia, which one of the following parties would you be most likely to support in your constituency? – *Decided voters including leaners*

	Apr. 12-14	March 15-17	November 10-11	<i>May 2009 Election</i>
BC NDP	47%	43%	47%	42%
BC Liberals	29%	35%	33%	46%
BC Greens	14%	13%	10%	8%
BC Conservatives	5%	6%	7%	2%

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BC Political Scene

Over the course of the past three months, would you say your opinion of [NAME] has improved, stayed the same or worsened? – *Change since March 2010*

	Gordon Campbell	Carole James	Jane Sterk
Improved	4% (-3)	16% (+5)	4% (-3)
Stayed the Same	31% (-7)	61% (-1)	54% (+3)
Worsened	62% (+13)	16% (=)	10% (+1)
Not sure	4% (-1)	7% (-3)	32% (-2)
<i>Momentum Score</i>	-58	=	+6

BC Political Scene

There has been a lot of talk recently about having a new political party in the provincial political scene. Thinking about this, which one of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?

	British Columbia	GVRD	Vancouver Island	Interior	North
We need a new provincial political party in British Columbia	49%	52%	39%	54%	32%
We do not need a new provincial political party in British Columbia	26%	22%	28%	29%	40%
Not sure	25%	25%	33%	17%	28%

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BC Political Scene

Here are some words that people may use to describe a political party. Please select up to six words you think describe the BC Liberals / NC New Democratic Party (NDP)

	BC Liberals	BC NDP
Down to earth	4%	25%
Arrogant	64%	14%
Mindful of your province's needs	16%	32%
Oblivious to your province's needs	41%	19%
Open	3%	21%
Secretive	48%	12%
Efficient	11%	6%
Inefficient	31%	40%
Forward-looking	16%	20%
Backward-looking	10%	25%
Makes me proud	1%	4%
Makes me ashamed	26%	8%
Compassionate	2%	29%
Uncaring	45%	7%
Honest	3%	12%
Dishonest	52%	15%
Strong	12%	5%
Weak	8%	37%
Growing	8%	27%
In decline	27%	18%
In touch with your community's needs	5%	29%
Out of touch with your community's needs	45%	20%

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BC Political Scene

Here are some words that people may use to describe Gordon Campbell / Carole James. Please select up to six words you think describe him / her.

	Gordon Campbell	Carole James
Down to earth	5%	40%
Arrogant	72%	16%
Open	3%	33%
Secretive	56%	7%
Efficient	11%	12%
Inefficient	29%	35%
Compassionate	6%	45%
Uncaring	51%	5%
Honest	6%	27%
Dishonest	55%	8%
Strong	18%	13%
Weak	12%	38%
Exciting	3%	4%
Boring	14%	31%
In touch	8%	23%
Out of touch	49%	28%
Intelligent	24%	22%
Foolish	28%	19%

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BC Political Scene

Suppose a new provincial party with a **centre-left** ideology were created in British Columbia. Which party would you vote for in the next provincial election, scheduled for May 2013? – *Decided Voters*

	British Columbia
The new party with a centre-left ideology	34%
BC New Democratic Party (NDP)	28%
BC Liberals	23%
BC Green Party	8%
Other Party / Independent	7%

BC Political Scene

Suppose a new provincial party with a **centre-right** ideology were created in British Columbia. Which party would you vote for in the next provincial election, scheduled for May 2013? – *Decided Voters*

	British Columbia
BC New Democratic Party (NDP)	37%
The new party with a centre-right ideology	30%
BC Liberals	15%
BC Green Party	11%
Other Party / Independent	6%

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BC Political Scene

All things considered, do you agree or disagree with the implementation of a harmonized sales tax (HST) in BC?

	Apr. 12-14	March 15-17
Strongly agree	2%	3%
Moderately agree	11%	15%
Moderately disagree	17%	13%
Strongly disagree	65%	64%
Not sure	5%	5%

BC Political Scene

As you may know, a group that includes former BC Premier Bill Vander Zalm has launched a petition to repeal the HST. To succeed, the petition must be signed by at least 10 per cent of registered voters in each of the province's 85 ridings in the next 90 days. If a person knocked on your door with this petition, would you sign it?

	British Columbia	GVRD	Vancouver Island	Interior	North
Definitely would sign it	67%	65%	63%	70%	81%
Probably would sign it	14%	16%	16%	12%	6%
Probably would not sign it	7%	9%	5%	7%	5%
Definitely would not sign it	6%	7%	5%	8%	3%
Not sure	5%	4%	11%	4%	4%

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Angus Reid Public Opinion is a practice of Vision Critical—a global research and technology company specializing in custom online panels, private communities, and innovative online methods. Vision Critical is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Public Opinion team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995

Vision Critical is now one of the largest market research enterprises in the world. In addition to its five offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, London, Paris and Sydney. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.

Angus Reid Public Opinion polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum (www.angusreidforum.com), Springboard America (www.springboardamerica.com) and Springboard UK (www.springboarduk.com) online panels, which are carefully recruited to ensure representation across all demographic and psychographic segments of these populations. Panel members pass through rigorous screening and a double opt-in process ensuring highly motivated and responsive members. These premier online survey platforms present respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses. Each survey is actively sampled and weighted to model that characteristics of the universe required and employs the latest in quality control techniques to ensure data validity.

Since 2006, Angus Reid has covered eight provincial elections in Canada—more than any other pollster in the country—and the results have accurately predicted the outcome of each of these democratic processes.

Angus Reid, the only public opinion firm to exclusively use online methods to follow the views of the electorate during the 2008 federal campaign, offered the most accurate prediction of the results of Canada's 40th election. More information on our electoral record can be found at:
<http://www.visioncritical.com/record-of-accuracy>

More information on the way Angus Reid conducts public opinion research can be found at
<http://www.visioncritical.com/what-we-do/practices/angus-reid-public-opinion/>

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**For more information, please contact
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

Copies of this poll are available on our website:
<http://www.visioncritical.com/category/global-opinions-and-trends>

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