

PROVINCIAL POLITICAL SCENE

# Tax Cut Welcomed in BC, But No Bounce for Campbell Before Exit

*The provincial NDP maintains a high level of voter support, and two-thirds of British Columbians would cast a ballot to abolish the HST.*

[VANCOUVER – Nov. 5, 2010] – British Columbians welcomed the tax break announced by Premier Gordon Campbell during his televised appearance last week, but were not swayed by his justification for the implementation of the harmonized sales tax (HST), a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

The online survey of a representative provincial sample of 807 British Columbian adults—completed before the Premier announced his resignation at 11:30 am on Nov. 3—also finds that less than one-in-five respondents expected the BC Government to deliver on Campbell's recent education and health care pledges.

## Political Scene

Almost half of decided voters and leaners across British Columbia (47%, -2 since October) would cast a ballot for the New Democratic Party (NDP) candidate in their riding if a provincial election were held tomorrow. The governing BC Liberals are in second place with 26 per cent (+2).

The Green Party is third with 10 per cent (-3), and is now tied with the BC Conservative Party for the first time (10%, +2). Seven per cent of respondents would support other parties or vote for independent candidates.

## KEY FINDINGS

- **Voting Intention: BC NDP 47%, BC Libs. 26%, Green 10%, BC Conservative 10%**
- **Approval Ratings: Carole James 25%, Gordon Campbell 12%, Jane Sterk 11%,**
- **66% say Campbell was unconvincing when he discussed the decision to bring in the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST)**
- **65% support the 15 per cent reduction in the tax rates on all personal income up to 72,000 dollars**

*Full topline results are at the end of this release.*

*From November 2 to November 3, 2010, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 807 randomly selected British Columbia adults who are Angus Reid Forum panellists. 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 a sample representative of the entire adult population of British Columbia. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.*

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The Liberals trail the NDP in every demographic, except respondents living in households earning more than \$100,000 a year (49% to 33%).

The fluctuation among decided voters did not alter the retention rates for the two main contenders. The NDP is holding on to 87 per cent of their May 2009 voters, while the Liberals are only backed by 55 per cent of their supporters in last year's provincial election.

### **The Leaders**

The approval rating for Premier and BC Liberal leader Gordon Campbell is 12 per cent (+3 since October). One-in-four respondents (25%) approve of the way Carole James is handling her duties (-2), and 11 per cent (-1) are satisfied with Green Party leader Jane Sterk.

All three party leaders maintain the negative momentum scores they had last month. Campbell is at -61 (4% of respondents say their opinion of the BC Premier has improved in the past three months, while 65% say it has worsened), followed by James with -13, and Sterk with -4.

### **HST Referendum**

Two-thirds of British Columbians (66%, -6) say they would vote to abolish the HST in the referendum scheduled for Sept. 24, 2011. One-in-five (21%, =) would cast a ballot to keep the HST, while 13 per cent (+6) are undecided.

There is a noticeable gender gap on this question, as women (72%) are much more likely than men (59%) to express support for abolishing the HST.

### **The Premier's Speech**

A majority of respondents do not expect the BC Government to deliver on two pledges made by Campbell during his televised speech.

Three-in-five British Columbians (58%) do not believe that every Grade 4 student will be reading, writing and doing math at a Grade 4 level by 2015, and a similar proportion (60%) do not foresee the government allocating 49 cents out of every dollar to support health services in British Columbia by 2013.

Two-thirds of respondents (66%) think that Campbell was unconvincing when he discussed the decision to bring in the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST). Only nine per cent of respondents found him convincing.

Two-thirds of British Columbians (65%) support Campbell's decision to announce a 15 per cent reduction in the tax rates on all personal income up to 72,000 dollars, effective Jan. 1, 2011.

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## The Future

About a third of respondents (32%) say they would prefer for the NDP to form the government after the 2013 election, while about three-in-ten (28%) would like to see the BC Liberals—with a different leader— assembling the next provincial administration.

## Analysis

In the last survey taken before Gordon Campbell's resignation, the NDP remains way ahead of the BC Liberals. The support of almost half of decided voters appears impressive. However, the slight advantage on the "next government" question suggests that a section of NDP voter support is soft, and amounts to a rejection of Gordon Campbell. Carole James actually lost points in the approval category this month, and keeps a negative momentum score, despite battling the most unpopular premier in the country.

For the BC Liberals, the survey shows that, while most British Columbians welcomed the announced tax break, Campbell had ceased to be the best spokesperson for the party. Few people were convinced by the HST explanation, and less than one-in-five expected the government to deliver on the health care and education pledges. A new era begins, and the governing party will look for a new leader who will be tasked with courting disenchanted supporters.

*This year's editions of the BC Political Scene can be accessed here:*

*[March 2010](#) / [April 2010](#) / [June 2010](#) / [July 2010](#) / [September 2010](#) / [October 2010](#)*

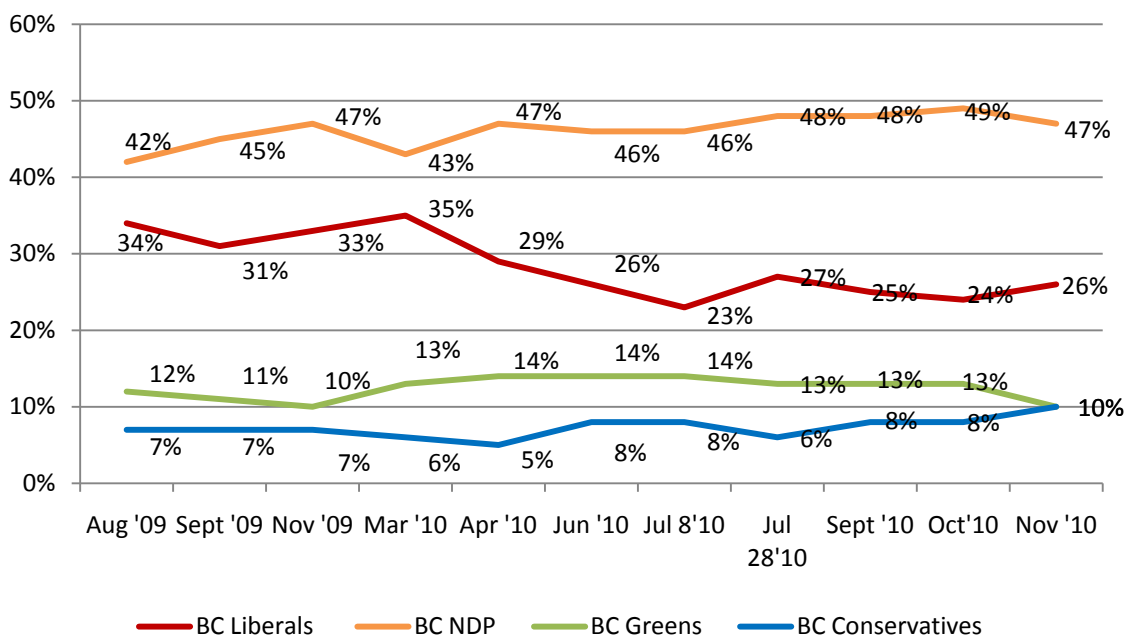
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If a provincial election were held tomorrow in British Columbia, which one of the following parties would you be most likely to support in your constituency? – *Decided voters including leaners*



### 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	Metro Vancouver	Vancouver Island	Interior	North	May 2009 Election
BC NDP	47%	44%	51%	45%	57%	42%
BC Liberals	26%	31%	25%	20%	26%	46%
BC Greens	10%	13%	8%	8%	2%	8%
BC Conservatives	10%	6%	10%	18%	7%	2%
Other / Independent	7%	6%	6%	9%	8%	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*

	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	<\$50K	\$50-99K	\$100K+
<b>BC NDP</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>BC Liberals</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>49%</b>
<b>BC Greens</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>BC Conservatives</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Other / Independent</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>4%</b>

**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*

	Respondents who voted for the NDP in the 2009 Election	Respondents who voted for the BC Liberals in the 2009 Election
<b>BC NDP</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>BC Liberals</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>55%</b>
<b>BC Greens</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>BC Conservatives</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Other / Independent</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>10%</b>

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### BC Political Scene

Do you approve or disapprove of the performance of each of the following people?  
– Change since October 2010

Total BC			
	Premier and BC Liberal leader Gordon Campbell	BC NDP leader Carole James	BC Green Party Leader Jane Sterk
Approve	12% (+3)	25% (-2)	11% (-1)
Disapprove	75% (-3)	45% (+2)	26% (+3)
Not sure	13% (+1)	29% (-1)	63% (-1)

### BC Political Scene

Over the course of the past three months, would you say your opinion of each of the following people has improved, stayed the same, or worsened?

Total BC			
	Premier and BC Liberal leader Gordon Campbell	BC NDP leader Carole James	BC Green Party Leader Jane Sterk
Improved	4%	11%	3%
Stayed the same	25%	57%	52%
Worsened	65%	24%	7%
Not sure	6%	9%	39%
<i>Momentum Score</i>	<i>-61</i>	<i>-13</i>	<i>-4</i>

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**BC Political Scene**

As you may know, a referendum on the HST will take place on Sept. 24, 2011. The question that will be used in the referendum has not been released yet, but it is expected that the referendum will ask voters in BC whether to abolish or keep the HST. In that referendum, how would you vote?

	British Columbia	Metro Vancouver	Vancouver Island	Interior	North
Yes – to abolish the HST	66%	65%	61%	67%	88%
No – to keep the HST	21%	24%	24%	16%	10%
Undecided	13%	11%	15%	17%	2%

**BC Political Scene**

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	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	<\$50K	\$50-99K	\$100K+
Yes – to abolish the HST	59%	72%	65%	66%	67%	69%	64%	58%
No – to keep the HST	28%	15%	20%	23%	21%	16%	24%	34%
Undecided	13%	12%	15%	11%	12%	15%	12%	8%

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**BC Political Scene**

From what you have seen, read or heard, would you say British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell was convincing or unconvincing when he discussed the decision to bring in the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST)?

<b>Convincing</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Unconvincing</b>	<b>66%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>26%</b>

**BC Political Scene**

British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell made two pledges during his televised speech. All things considered, do you expect the BC Government to deliver on each one of these pledges?

	<b>Will deliver on this pledge</b>	<b>Will not deliver on this pledge</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
<b>Ensuring that every Grade 4 student is reading, writing and doing math at a Grade 4 level by 2015</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>26%</b>
<b>Allocating 49 cents out of every dollar to support health services in British Columbia by 2013</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>22%</b>

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### BC Political Scene

As you may know, British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell announced a 15 per cent reduction in the tax rates on all personal income up to 72,000 dollars, effective Jan. 1, 2011. Do you support or oppose this decision?

	British Columbia	Metro Vancouver	Vancouver Island	Interior	North
Support	65%	65%	67%	60%	76%
Oppose	14%	14%	15%	15%	6%
Not sure	21%	21%	18%	25%	18%

### BC Political Scene

At this point, which of the following scenarios would you prefer for British Columbia after the 2013 election?

	British Columbia	Metro Vancouver	Vancouver Island	Interior	North
The NDP forms the next government	32%	30%	36%	30%	42%
The BC Liberals with Gordon Campbell as leader form the next government	6%	6%	7%	4%	5%
The BC Liberals with a different leader form the next government	28%	31%	26%	24%	26%
None of these / Not sure	34%	32%	31%	42%	27%

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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](http://www.angusreidforum.com)), Springboard America ([www.springboardamerica.com](http://www.springboardamerica.com)) and Springboard UK ([www.springboarduk.com](http://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.*

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*<http://www.angus-reid.com/services/record-of-accuracy/>*

*More information on the way Angus Reid conducts public opinion research can be found at*

*<http://www.angus-reid.com/about/>*

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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.angus-reid.com>**

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