

BRITISH COLUMBIA POLITICAL SCENE

NDP Edges Ruling BC Liberals Nine Months Before Election

Half of respondents say their opinion of Premier Gordon Campbell has worsened over the past two months.

[VANCOUVER – Aug. 27, 2008] - The New Democratic Party (NDP) has surpassed the governing BC Liberals by a slim margin, and a majority of the province's voters believe the time for change in Victoria has come, according to a new Angus Reid Strategies poll.

In the online survey of a representative provincial sample, the BC NDP is first with 41 per cent, followed by the BC Liberals with 38 per cent, and the Green Party with 14 per cent. Seven per cent of decided voters would support other parties.

Voters in the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) are almost evenly divided in their assessment of the two main provincial parties (NDP 40%, BC Lib. 39%), while almost half of Vancouver Island voters (49%) are ready to cast a ballot for the NDP in the next election.

The survey illustrates an evident gender gap, with 43 per cent of male respondents supporting the BC Liberals, and 47 per cent of women backing the BC NDP.

The BC NDP is ahead in the youngest and oldest voter demographics (18-34 and 55+), while middle aged respondents give the edge to the BC Liberals.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Voting Intention: BC NDP 41%, BC Liberals 38%, Green 14%**
- **57% disapprove of Gordon Campbell's performance as Premier**
- **Preferred Premier: Carole James 33%, Gordon Campbell 31%, Not sure 34%**
- **Momentum Score: Gordon Campbell -45, Carole James -5**
- **58% per cent believe it is time for a change of government in British Columbia; 29% think the BC Liberals should be re-elected**

Full topline results are at the end of this release

*From August 21 to August 25, 2008 Angus Reid Strategies conducted an online survey among a randomly selected, representative sample of **802 adult residents of British Columbia**. The margin of error for the total sample is +/- 3.5 %, **19 times out of 20**. 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.*

Approval Ratings

Neither of the two main party leaders is doing particularly well in British Columbia. Only 26 per cent of respondents approve of BC Premier and BC Liberals leader Gordon Campbell, and 25 per cent are satisfied with BC NDP leader Carole James. However, a majority of respondents (57%) is dissatisfied with Campbell, compared with roughly two-in-five (38%) who disapprove of James. Two-thirds of respondents (69%) were unsure when asked about Green Party leader Jane Sterk.

Campbell posted a particularly high negative momentum score (-45). Half of respondents (50%) say their opinion of the Premier has worsened over the past two months, and only five per cent report an improvement. The momentum score for James stands at -5 (13% say their opinion of the BC NDP leader is better than two months ago, 18% say it is worse).

When asked who would be the best Premier for the province, James holds a four-point advantage (35% to 31%) over Campbell, but one-third of respondents are undecided.

Qualities

Respondents were provided with a list of nine qualities and characteristics and asked whether each of them applied to the two main provincial party leaders. Campbell holds the upper hand in having a vision for British Columbia (49% to 41%), being a strong and decisive leader (42% to 26%), managing the provincial economy effectively (37% to 17%) and understanding complex issues (35% to 30%).

James is more likely to be regarded as a politician who cares about the environment (57% to 35%), who understands the problems of BC residents (49% to 21%), and who is honest and trustworthy (45% to 21%). The two party leaders post dismal ratings on the issue of trust: fewer than one-in-four respondents say either Campbell (21%) or James (23%) inspires confidence.

Appetite for Change

More than half of respondents (58%) believe it is time for a change in British Columbia's political scene and want a different provincial party to be elected into power. Three-in-ten (29%) believe the BC Liberals should be re-elected. A similar proportion (30%) claim Campbell has delivered on his promise to usher in "a new era of hope and prosperity" in BC, while three-in-five (60%) disagree.

Issues

Health care (20%) is the top electoral issue for BC residents, followed by the economy (14%), tax relief (9%), leadership (8%) and the environment (8%). Only 32 per cent of respondents think BC is on the right track, while 43 per cent believe the province is on the wrong track.

British Columbia 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?

	Region				
	BC	Greater Vancouver (GVRD)	Vancouver Island	Southern Interior	North / Interior
New Democratic Party (NDP)	41%	40%	49%	41%	33%
BC Liberals	38%	39%	33%	37%	47%
Green Party	14%	15%	14%	13%	6%
Other	7%	6%	4%	9%	14%

British Columbia 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?

	Gender		Age			Education			Income		
	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	HS or less	College / Tech School	Univ+	<\$50K	\$50-99K	\$100K+
New Democratic Party (NDP)	36%	47%	42%	37%	46%	44%	40%	41%	46%	44%	36%
BC Liberals	43%	32%	30%	45%	36%	43%	33%	41%	32%	34%	49%
Green Party	14%	14%	18%	11%	14%	10%	17%	14%	16%	15%	10%
Other	7%	6%	10%	6%	4%	3%	11%	4%	6%	8%	5%

Approval for Party Leaders

Do you approve or disapprove of Gordon Campbell's performance as Premier?
Do you approve or disapprove of Carole James' performance as leader of the New Democratic Party?
Do you approve or disapprove of Jane Sterk's performance as leader of the Green Party?

	Approve	Disapprove	Not sure
Gordon Campbell	26%	57%	17%
Carole James	25%	38%	37%
Jane Sterk	12%	19%	69%

Momentum for Party Leaders

Over the course of the past two months, would you say your opinion of the following party leaders and parties has improved, stayed the same or worsened?

	Improved	Stayed the same	Worsened	Not sure
Gordon Campbell	5%	39%	50%	5%
Carole James	13%	57%	18%	12%
Jane Sterk	5%	47%	6%	41%

Preferred Premier

Of the following provincial party leaders, which one do you think would be the best Premier of British Columbia?

Carole James	35%
Gordon Campbell	31%
Not sure	34%

Appetite for Change

Thinking about British Columbia, which one of these two statements comes closest to your own point of view?

It is time for a change in government in British Columbia—a different provincial party should be elected into power	58%
It is not time for a change in government in British Columbia—the BC Liberals should be re-elected	29%
Not sure	13%

“Hope and Prosperity”

After the May 2001 election, Gordon Campbell promised to usher in a new era of hope and prosperity for British Columbia. After seven years of a BC Liberal government, do you think the province is living in a new era of hope and prosperity?

Yes	30%
No	60%
Not sure	10%

BC’s Direction

Overall, do you think British Columbia is on the right track, or the wrong track?

Right Track	32%
Wrong Track	43%
Not sure	25%

Top Electoral Issues in BC

As you may know, there will be a provincial election in British Columbia in May 2009. From the list of issues below, please click on the one issue that is the most important to you when deciding who you will vote for in the provincial election.

Health Care	20%
The Economy	14%
Tax relief	9%
Leadership	8%
Environment	8%
Crime / Public Safety	7%
Poverty	7%
Homelessness	5%
Drug Traffic / Drug Use	3%
Education	2%
Energy / Electricity	2%
Municipal Funding, Services, & Powers	2%
Day Care / Child Care	1%
Aboriginal affairs	1%
Other / None / Don't know	11%

Qualities and Characteristics

Thinking about the following qualities and characteristics, please say whether you think they apply to Gordon Campbell?

	Apply	Does not apply	Not sure
Has a vision for the future of British Columbia	49%	32%	19%
Is a strong and decisive leader	42%	44%	15%
Can manage the provincial economy effectively	37%	45%	19%
Understands complex issues	35%	41%	24%
Cares about the environment	35%	41%	25%
Generally agrees with you on issues you care about	23%	60%	17%
Understands the problems of BC residents	21%	59%	20%
Inspires confidence	21%	60%	19%
Is honest and trustworthy	18%	60%	22%

Qualities and Characteristics

Thinking about the following qualities and characteristics, please say whether you think they apply to Carole James?

	Apply	Does not apply	Not sure
Cares about the environment	57%	10%	33%
Understands the problems of BC residents	49%	18%	33%
Is honest and trustworthy	45%	16%	39%
Has a vision for the future of British Columbia	41%	20%	39%
Generally agrees with you on issues you care about	37%	28%	35%
Understands complex issues	30%	24%	46%
Is a strong and decisive leader	26%	34%	40%
Inspires confidence	23%	40%	37%
Can manage the provincial economy effectively	17%	33%	50%

Angus Reid Strategies is a full-service polling and market research firm which 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 Strategies team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995.

Angus Reid Strategies, along with its sister company, Vision Critical, is now the largest Canadian-owned market research enterprise. In addition to its four offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices San Francisco, New York and London, England. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.

Angus Reid Strategies polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum online panel (www.angusreidforum.com), which is recruited via an industry-leading process that incorporates a randomized, widespread invitation approach and a triple opt-in screening procedure. The panel is maintained through state-of-the-art sampling techniques and frequent verifications of personal identity, contact information, and demographic characteristics. This premier online survey platform presents respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses.

Over the last year, Angus Reid has covered five 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. <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=news&newsid=194>

More information on the way Angus Reid Strategies conducts public opinion research can be found at <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/ARS.ARF.WP.pdf>

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

**Copies of this poll are available on our website:
www.angusreidstrategies.com**