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## POLITICS IN ONTARIO

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***-- However, the Majority (54%) of Ontarians Say they "Approve of the Overall Performance of the Provincial PC Government" --***

***-- And, Six in ten (61%) Believe "Mike Harris and the Progressive Conservatives have Ontario on the Right Track"--***

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This Angus Reid Group / Globe and Mail / Global TV/ CFRB poll was conducted by telephone between December 14<sup>th</sup> and December 29<sup>th</sup>, 1999. A total of 1,000 Ontarian adults were surveyed.

These data are statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional, age and sex composition reflects that of the actual Ontarian population. With a sample of this size, the overall results are within  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points (19 times out of 20) of what they would have been had the entire adult Ontarian population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population.

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For the first time since the 1999 provincial election, the Ontario government, led by Mike Harris, is trailing in the polls. The provincial Liberals have pulled into the lead with 42 percent of the decided vote followed by the Tories (36%) and the New Democratic Party (17%). However, the majority (54%) of Ontarians say they "approve of the overall performance of the provincial Progressive Conservative government". And, more than six in ten (61%) believe that "overall, the provincial government of Mike Harris and the Progressive Conservatives has Ontario on the right track".

*These are the findings of an Angus Reid Group poll conducted between December 14<sup>th</sup> and December 29<sup>th</sup>, 1999. The poll includes a randomly selected sample of 1,000 Ontarian adults and has an associated margin of error of  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points 19 times out of 20.*

***Ontario's PC Government (36%) Trails for the First Time Since the 1999 Ontario Election, while the provincial Liberals pull into the Lead with 42 percent of the Decided Vote - NDP (17%)***

For the first time since Ontario's 1999 election, the Tories are trailing the provincial Liberals in popular support. The Liberals are in the lead with 42 percent (up 2% since October 1999) of the decided vote. The Tories follow at 36 percent of the vote, marking a drop of eight percentage points since October of 1999. The New Democrats gain some territory by garnering 17 percent (up 3% since October 1999) of the vote. The undecided vote resides at 7 percent.

- ◆ The strongest levels of support for the Provincial Liberals are found in the following demographics: 18 to 34 year olds (48%), those with a high school education or less (44%), women

(45%), individuals in lower income households (<\$30k, 47%) and Ontarians living in the GTA (47%).

- ◆ The provincial government's greatest levels of popular support come from Ontarians over 35 years old (41%), those with some post-secondary education (42%), men (40%), individuals from high-income households (>\$60k, 45%), rural Ontarians (44%) and those living in the 905 area code of the GTA (40%).
- ◆ The NDP finds its greatest levels of support in young Ontarians (19%), those with a high school education or less (20%), women (19%), individuals living in households with less than \$60,000 combined income (20%), urban dwellers (18%) and more specifically, those living in the 416 area code of the GTA (19%).
- ◆ The areas where the provincial government has lost ground since October 1999 are amongst younger Ontarians (39% to 27%), those with a high school education or less (44% to 30%), men (50% to 40%), middle household income individuals (47% to 34%) and residents of Hamilton/Niagara (43% to 33%), Eastern Ontario (46% to 38%), the GTA (46% to 36%) and urban areas in general (44% to 35%). The provincial Liberals and the provincial New Democrats have benefited by gaining territory from the demographic groups listed above.

### ***However, the Majority (54%) of Ontarians Say They “Approve of the Overall Performance of the Provincial PC Government”***

Despite receiving lower levels of popular support, the majority (54%, down 6% since October 1999) of Ontarians still say that they “approve of the overall performance of the provincial PC government”. Nearly one-quarter (23%) indicate that they “strongly approve” rather than “somewhat approve” (31%) of Mike Harris' government performance. On the other hand, more than four in ten (44%) disapprove of the overall performance of the provincial government. Of those who disapprove, nearly twice as many “strongly disapprove” (28%) rather than “somewhat disapprove” (16%).

- ◆ The majority of Ontarians, in nearly every demographic grouping, approve of the provincial government's overall performance since taking office in 1995. Exceptions include respondents with household incomes of less than \$30,000 (48%), Northern Ontarians (43%) and individuals who live in the 416 area code of the GTA (49%).
- ◆ Particularly high levels of approval are found amongst Ontarians who are 35 years or older (56%), individuals with some post-secondary education (60%), men (59%), Ontarians from middle-income

and high-income households (53% and 60% respectively) and respondents living in South Western Ontario (60%), Eastern Ontario (57%) and the 905 area code of the GTA (57%).

- ◆ PC supporters (95%) approve of the provincial government's overall performance. Indeed, the majority (53%) "strongly approve", while the remainder say they "somewhat approve" (43%). Liberal (39%) and NDP (17%) voters are far less likely to indicate that they approve of the government's performance.

### ***Six in Ten (61%) say "Mike Harris and the Progressive Conservatives Has Ontario on the Right Track"***

When asked whether "the provincial government of Mike Harris and the Progressive Conservatives has Ontario on the right track or the wrong track", more than six in ten (61%, down 3 points since October 1999) Ontarians say, "Ontario is on the right track". Of those who believe that Mike Harris' government has Ontario on the right track, more say it is "somewhat on the right track" (36%) rather than "strongly on the right track" (25%). Nearly four in ten (38%), however, say the province is on the "wrong track". Twenty two percent believe it is "strongly on the wrong track", while 16 percent say it is "somewhat on the wrong track".

- ◆ Across the board, Ontarians in each and every demographic grouping are more likely to believe the province is on the "right track" than they are to say that they "approve" of the provincial government's overall performance.

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For more information on this news release, please contact:

John Wright  
Senior Vice-President  
Angus Reid Group  
(416) 324-2900

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