

# **BC LIBERALS' YEAR ANNIVERSARY (2 OF 3)**

**MAY 2002**

***6-in-10 British Columbians Are Disappointed With Liberal Government and Premier's Performance Since Taking Office***

***63% of BC Public Believes Liberals Blind to Impact of Their Changes, But 59% Think Actions Are Necessary***

***68% Express Doubts About Liberals' Decision Making; Trust in Government to Keep Promises Has Decreased (46%)***

***Majority (59%) See Long-Term Payoff With Liberal Policies, Though Public Split on Clarity of Liberal Vision for Future***

**Ipsos**  **Reid**

**THE VANCOUVER SUN**

**BCTV News on Global**



**For Public Release May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2002, 7:30am PST**

*Established in 1979, Ipsos-Reid is Canada's leading market research and public opinion company. It is best known for the Ipsos-Reid Express poll, the most widely quoted source of public opinion in the country. Founded by Dr. Angus Reid, Ipsos-Reid has conducted extensive market and social research in 80 countries and in 40 languages, and serves clients around the world through more than 300-professionals and 1,000 data collection staff in 11 offices. The company is a member of the Paris-based Ipsos Group, ranked among the top ten research companies in the world, with specialties in advertising, media, customer satisfaction, public opinion and market research. Visit [www.ipsos-reid.com](http://www.ipsos-reid.com)*

***For copies of other news releases, please visit***  
[http://www.ipsos-reid.com/media/content/PRE\\_REL.cfm](http://www.ipsos-reid.com/media/content/PRE_REL.cfm)

---

© Ipsos-Reid

***New York • Washington D.C. • Minneapolis • San Francisco  
Vancouver • Calgary • Edmonton • Winnipeg • Toronto • Ottawa • Montréal***



## **BC PUBLIC CRITICAL OF LIBERAL CURRENT PERFORMANCE, BUT SEE LONG-TERM BENEFITS**

**MAY 2002**

***6-in-10 British Columbians Are Disappointed With Liberal  
Government and Premier's Performance Since Taking Office***

***63% of BC Public Believes Liberals Blind to Impact of Their Changes,  
But 59% Think Actions Are Necessary***

***68% Express Doubts About Liberals' Decision Making; Trust in  
Government to Keep Promises Has Decreased (46%)***

***Majority (59%) See Long-Term Payoff With Liberal Policies, Though  
Public Split on Clarity of Liberal Vision for Future***

*These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid poll commissioned by the Vancouver Sun and Global TV conducted between May 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 2002 among a representative cross-section of 800 British Columbian adults. These data are statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional, age and sex composition reflects that of the actual BC population according to 1996 Census data. With a provincial sample of 800, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the overall results are within  $\pm 3.5$  percentage points of what they would have been had the entire adult BC population been polled. The margin of error will be larger for other sub-groupings of the survey population.*

---

© Ipsos-Reid

***New York • Washington D.C. • Minneapolis • San Francisco  
Vancouver • Calgary • Edmonton • Winnipeg • Toronto • Ottawa • Montréal***



## ***6-in-10 British Columbians Are Disappointed With Liberal Government and Premier's Performance Since Taking Office***

When asked whether they have been impressed or disappointed with the overall performance of the BC Liberals over the past year, 62% of those surveyed said they were disappointed with how the Liberals have done since taking office, including 41% who were “very disappointed”. By comparison, 33% expressed general satisfaction, with 9% saying they were “very impressed”.

A similar result emerges in the evaluation of Premier Gordon Campbell's performance over the past year. While 32% of the BC public gave positive reviews to Campbell (9% “very impressed”), 64% said they were disappointed, with 42% feeling “very disappointed”.

From a political perspective, it's important to underline that 44% of voters who supported the Liberals in 2001 say they're disappointed with the government's performance over the past year, including 24% who are “very disappointed”. Meanwhile, half (50%) of Liberal supporters are impressed with what the government has done. A similar pattern emerges when it comes to evaluation of Premier Campbell; 45% of Liberal voters are disappointed (24% very disappointed), and 51% are impressed (17% very impressed).

Regionally, Vancouver Island residents are more critical than others of the government's and Premier Campbell's performance over the past year (68% and 74% disappointed, respectively). This is particularly true in comparison to Lower Mainland residents who are less negative (59% and 61% disappointed, respectively).

People from all walks of life in British Columbia are more disappointed than impressed with the performance of Premier Campbell and his government. However, certain groups stand

out from the rest as being more disappointed – women, young people (18-34), individuals living in union households, and lower income British Columbians. In all cases, 7-in-10 or more say they're disappointed with the performance, compared to just under 6-in-10 men, older British Columbians (55+), those in non-union households, and upper income residents.

### ***63% of BC Public Believes Liberals Blind to Impact of Their Changes, But 59% Think Actions Are Necessary***

A solid majority of British Columbians (63%) think “the BC Liberals don’t care about the people who are most affected by the changes they make”; this includes 44% who “strongly agree” with this view. By comparison, 37% disagree with that the Liberals are uncaring (18% strongly disagree).

However, close to six-in-ten British Columbians (59%) hold the view that “the actions taken by the BC Liberals may seem harsh, but they are necessary if BC is to prosper in the future”; 40% disagree with this assertion. When we look at the intensity of views held in this regard, we find that BC public opinion is fairly polarized; 32% “strongly agree” that Liberal actions are harsh, but necessary, while 27% “strongly disagree” with the view.

From a political perspective, 4-in-10 BC Liberal supporters (42%) agree that the party they supported in the last provincial election is insensitive to the impact their changes are having on people most affected; 58% disagree with this assertion. Importantly, however, a significant majority of Liberals (80%) said that the changes may be harsh, but they're necessary in order for BC to prosper in the future; 20% disagreed with this statement.

British Columbians from all areas of the province and population segments hold similar views about the BC Liberal government’s actions. However, there is some variation in the

intensity with which the views are held in some groups. For example, Vancouver Island (74% agree) and Interior/North (67%) residents are more likely to believe the Liberals are blind to the impact of their changes when compared to Lower Mainland residents (57%). However, people from all regions of the province are similar in their views that Liberal actions may seem harsh, but they're necessary to help BC prosper in the future.

This same pattern surfaces with age as a discerning factor. Younger British Columbians (18-34) are more inclined than those 55 years of age or over to believe the BC Liberals are uncaring as to the impact of their changes on those most affected (67% vs. 55%). However, both age groups are equally convinced that the changes may be harsh, but are necessary for the future prosperity of the province.

A somewhat more divergent pattern of views emerges along gender and socio-economic status lines. While more BC women than men agree that BC Liberals don't care about the people most affected by their changes (67% vs. 58%), BC men are more apt to see the Liberal changes as perhaps harsh, but necessary (63% vs. 56%) in order for BC to prosper in the future. Similarly, more lower and middle income British Columbians than upper income individuals see the Liberals as insensitive to the impact of their changes on people (74% and 65%, respectively vs. 55%). By comparison, the more well off members of the public are more likely to consider the changes as perhaps harsh but necessary for the future of the province (64% vs. 51% lower income households).

### ***68% Express Doubts About Liberals' Decision Making; Trust in Government to Keep Promises Has Decreased (46%)***

Most British Columbians (68%) are of the view that "if often seems like the BC Liberals are making decisions without really thinking them through". This includes 42% who "strongly

---

© Ipsos-Reid

agree” with the assertion. Comparatively fewer – 32% – disagree that the Liberals have not thought through their decisions (14% strongly disagree).

Perhaps as a result, we find that the BC public is losing trust in the government when it comes to living up to its promises. Almost half of those surveyed – 46% – said that their trust has decreased since the Liberals were elected last May, with 38% saying their trust has decreased “a lot”. Fewer (11%) stated their trust in the government has increased (5% “a lot”), while 42% said their trust level has remained about the same over the past 12 months.

Politically, more than half BC Liberal voters (55%) agree that the Liberals are making decisions without thinking them through; 45% disagree with this point of view. And, more Liberal supporters say their trust in government to keep its promises has decreased over the past year (29%) rather than increased (19%). For most (52%), trust levels have stayed about the same.

Regionally, Vancouver Island residents stand out from those living elsewhere in the province for the strength with which they hold the view that Liberal decision making has not been well thought out (77% agree vs. 64% in Lower Mainland). And, while 56% of Island residents say their trust in the government has decreased, fewer people in the Lower Mainland have experienced the same loss of trust (43%).

From a socio-demographic perspective, we find similar patterns as in other areas. Generally, more than 7-in-10 BC women, younger British Columbians, lower and middle income individuals, and people in public sector union households hold the view that the BC Liberals often make decisions without thinking them through. This compares to two-thirds or fewer men, older British Columbians, upper income residents and non-union households.

Meanwhile, the trust in government to keep its promises has decreased more among the former groups (between 52% and 61%) than among the latter (between 38% and 40%).

### ***Majority (59%) See Long-Term Payoff With Liberal Policies, Though Public Split on Clarity of Liberal Vision for Future***

A majority of British Columbians (59%) believe that changes the Liberals are currently making will improve things in the province over the long term. This includes 7% who think some improvements are already evident, and 52% who see no immediate positive changes but expect results to emerge over the next few years. By comparison, 40% of the BC population feel changes the Liberals have implemented have not and will not improve things in the future.

Despite their optimism about the future impact of BC Liberal policies, British Columbians are almost evenly split on whether or not the Liberals have a clear vision for where they want to take the province over the next few years. While a slim majority (52%) agree that the Liberals have “communicated a clear vision”, almost as many (46%) hold the opposite view. And, the public is quite polarized in this regard (21% strongly agree, 26% strongly disagree).

BC Liberal voters more fully embrace the notion that changes the Liberals are making currently will pay off over the next few years. Two-thirds believe that while changes have not been immediate, things will improve; another 11% feel that the changes have already started to improve things in British Columbia. This makes a total of 77% of people who voted for the BC Liberals expressing some confidence that there will be long-term pay off from what the party is currently doing. And, Liberal voters are more convinced than the population as a whole that the Liberals have communicated a clear vision for the province (65% vs. 52% for general population).

Regionally, while residents across all regions are optimistic that the Liberal changes will have a positive impact on BC over the next few years (50%+), people living on Vancouver Island are more critical than others (50% see no improvements vs. 36% in Lower Mainland). There are no regional differences as to whether or not the Liberals have communicated a clear vision for where they want to take BC over the next few years.

A similar pattern emerges here among the different population segments. There's a general view that Liberal changes will ultimately pay off in the long term, but more critical views exist among women, people living in union households, and lower income residents, all of whom feel things have not improved, and are unlikely to improve in the future. By comparison, men, non-union households, and upper income residents are more positive. Overall, there are no significant differences between these groups as to whether or not the Liberals have communicated a clear vision for where they want to take BC over the next few years.





Ipsos Reid

**-30-**

***For more information on this news release, please contact:***

***Kyle Braid  
Vice President  
Ipsos-Reid  
(604) 257-3200***

***For full tabular results, please visit our website at [www.ipsos-reid.com](http://www.ipsos-reid.com). News Releases are available at [http://www.ipsos-reid.com/media/content/PRE\\_REL.cfm](http://www.ipsos-reid.com/media/content/PRE_REL.cfm)***

---

© Ipsos-Reid

***New York • Washington D.C. • Minneapolis • San Francisco  
Vancouver • Calgary • Edmonton • Winnipeg • Toronto • Ottawa • Montréal***