

# **58% SAY NEW ONTARIO MCGUINITY GOVERNMENT JUSTIFIED IN BREAKING PROMISES: BRING DOWN DEFICIT FIRST**

***Ontarians (65%) Believe Size Of Deficit Is Real***

***Half (49%) Approve Of New Government Performance – Liberals  
Lead (51%) PC's (27%), NDP (16%), Green (6%) As Honeymoon  
Continues***



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**Toronto, ON**– Dalton McGuinty's newly elected Liberal government got an early holiday present today as a poll conducted by Ipsos-Reid on behalf of Globe and Mail/CFTO/CFRB, reveals that almost six in ten (58%) Ontarians support the government in breaking its campaign promises because they believe the government should bring down the reported 5.6 billion dollar deficit before implementing their platform – a deficit that two-thirds (65%) think is real and not exaggerated. Even though the new Liberal government has broken some of their promises, 60% of Ontarians say it is better that they are governing now than the Conservatives under Ernie Eves.

As the House begins to wind down after almost of month of pummelling from the pundits and opposition parties for having broken their promises it would appear that voters are in a honeymoon state of mind. Half (49%) of Ontarians approve of the new governments performance and in a boost of confidence would re-elect them tomorrow with even a larger majority than they received on October 2<sup>nd</sup> – decided voters would give the Grits 51% the Progressive Conservatives 27%, the New Democratic Party 16%, and the Green Party 6%.

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*These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid/Globe and Mail/CFTO/CFRB poll conducted between December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2003 and December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2003. The telephone survey is based on a randomly selected sample of 1001 adults. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to the 2001 Census data.*

### ***Six In Ten (58%) Support New Government In Breaking Promises...***

A majority of Ontarians (58%) support the new government in breaking its campaign promises because they believe the government should bring down the deficit first and not take on any new debt. This compares with 39% who don't accept this position.

- Examining the regions, Eastern Ontario (64%) gave the government highest support for breaking their promises with Toronto (62%), West Central (61%), and East Central (60%) following close behind. Those regions with lower approval were South Central (51%), South West (52%), and the South East (48%) of Ontario.
- Six in ten residents of Ontario aged 18-34 and 55+ are more likely to support the government breaking its promises (each at 60%), compared to 35-54 (56%).
- Men give higher approval rating (60%) compared to women (57%).
- Those with a higher average annual household income are more likely to support the government in breaking its promises (60%). Those residents with lower household



incomes (<\$30K) are slightly less likely (53%) to approve of the government breaking its campaign promises.

## ***Majority Of Ontarians Believe The Deficit Is Real...***

A majority (65%) of Ontarians agree that the size of the reported provincial deficit of 5.6 billion dollars is real and is not exaggerated and do not believe that the new Liberal government is creating or falsifying the deficit to suit their own purposes. This compares with only 26% who disagree with that point of view.

- Belief that the deficit is real is evident in majorities across all regions of the province with the GTA expressing the highest level (71%) of belief.
- Residents of urban regions (66%) are more likely than those who live in rural regions (61%) to agree with the authenticity of the reported deficit amount. This follows with almost 7 in 10 of citizens located in the 416 and 647 areas, and 66% of citizens located in the 519, 705, and 905 areas.
- Ontario citizens who hold a University degree (68%) are more likely to consider the deficit to be real, compared to people who have a high school education or less (61%).

## ***Liberals May Have Broken Promises, But Better Than Eves...***

Even though the new Liberal government has broken some promises, it appears that a majority (60%) of people agree that it is better that they are governing now than the Conservatives under Ernie Eves compare to 33% who wish for the previous administration.



Support for the Liberals is most evident in the GTA as seven in ten (70%) take this position as a majority in each region support the view. Notably, there is a difference when examining urban (62%) vs. rural (53%). Residents of the 416 and 647 (70%) areas are more likely to agree that a Liberal government is better than the Conservative party under Eves compared to those residents in the three areas including 519, 705, 905 (62%).

- Younger citizens (18-34) are more likely (65%) than their older counterparts (35-54, 59% and 55+ 58%) to agree that it is better to be governed under the Liberals than previously by the Ernie Eves Conservatives.
- Women (63%) are more likely than men (58%) to consider the Liberal government with their broken promises better than being governed by the previous Conservative administration.
- Those with a University education (66%) are significantly more likely to agree with the statement, while citizens who have attained up to and including High School (56%) are slightly less likely to agree.

## ***Half (49%) Give New Government Thumbs Up Performance***

### ***Approval...***

Despite a month of being pummelled by pundits and critics alike for breaking their campaign promises half (49%) of Ontarians approve of the new governments performance compared with 39% who disapprove of their performance.

- Half (49%) of the people polled said they approve of the performance of the Liberal government since it took office on October 2, 2003.



- Ontario citizens living in Toronto (56%) gave the highest approval rating of their new government while the East (54%), GTA (52%), West Toronto Suburbs (50%), and citizens from the North (50%) followed behind. Citizens living in West Central Ontario (43%) and in the East Toronto Suburbs (43%) were most likely to disapprove of the performance of the new Liberal government.
- Almost six in ten residents in the 416 and 647 areas (56%) approve of the new government's performance, as 48% of those people who live in the 519, 705, and 905 areas approve.
- People ages 18-34 (55%) are more likely to approve of the Liberals' performance compared to citizens aged 35-54 (44%) and 55+ (51%).

### ***Support For Liberals Still A Honeymoon...***

If a provincial election were called tomorrow, half (51%) of Ontario citizens would support the Liberal party. While larger than the election victory in October this represents a five point decline from where the new government was pegged in our last sounding in November (56%). Support for Liberals (51%) is high across the board, with the Progressive Conservatives (27%) in second place followed by the New Democratic Party (16%), and the Green Party (6%).

- Six in ten people living in East region (60%) are more likely to support the Liberals, while half in most other regions: Toronto (54%), South West (53%), GTA (51%), South East (50%), East Central (50%), and the West Toronto Suburbs (50%) say they would support the Liberals if a provincial election were held tomorrow.
- Ontarians in urban centres (51%) are more likely than those individuals living in rural communities (47%) to vote Liberal. Breaking the data down by area code, this is



confirmed as 416 and 647 areas (54%) support for Liberals and 519, 705, and 905 (48%) less likely to support Liberals.

- Support for the Progressive Conservatives comes from a rural base (31%) and in the 519, 705, and 905 areas (30%), conversely they would have lower support from urban areas (26%), and the 416 and 647 areas (18%).
- The highest support for the NDP comes from the Toronto and the North (22% each).
- Just over half of women (54%) say they would support the Liberal party if there were a provincial election held tomorrow, while men (47%) are just slightly less likely to support the Liberal party.
- Ontario citizens with lower average annual incomes (<\$30K) are more likely to support the NDP compared to those with incomes between \$30K-\$60K (17%) and \$60K+ (13%).

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