

ONTARIO POLITICS A WEEK BEFORE THE ONTARIO PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE LEADERSHIP CONVENTION

***Ontario PCs Have Slim Lead (35%) Over Liberals (32%), NDP
(24%) And Green (8%)***

***Disapproval Of Premier McGuinty's Performance Climbs From
46% In April To 61% -- Only 29% Approve Of Premier's
Performance***

***Half (52%) Say Liberals Have Ontario "Wrong Track", 42% Say
"Right Track"***



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Toronto, ON – A new Ipsos-Reid poll released today by CFTO/The Globe and Mail/CFRB shows that a week before the choosing of a new leader in Toronto, the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party leads with 35 percent of the decided Ontario vote (down four points from 39% in June), compared to 32 percent for the governing Ontario Liberals (no change since June), the Ontario NDP at 24 percent (up one point from 23%) and the Ontario Green Party at 8 percent (up three points from 5%) among decided voters.

The Ontario Progressive Conservative Party, which lost the last provincial election approximately a year ago, will meet on the weekend of September 18th and will choose a new provincial leader to replace their leader and former Premier Ernie Eves.

The poll also shows that disapproval of Dalton McGuinty's performance as Premier has climbed from 15 points from 46 percent in April to 61% today with only 29% approving of the Premier's performance. Further, half of Ontarians (52%) say that the governing Liberals have Ontario on the "wrong track" with only 42% indicating that it is on the "right track."



These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid/CFTO/The Globe and Mail/CFRB poll conducted from August 31 to September 5, 2004. For the survey, a representative randomly selected sample of 759 adult Ontarians was interviewed by telephone. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.6 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult Ontario population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Ontario population according to the 2001 Census data.

Ontario PCs Lead Ontario Liberals with Slim Margin...

The Ontario PCs, currently led by former Premier Ernie Eves, leads with 35% (down from 39% in early June) of decided voters' support compared with the Ontario Liberals led by Dalton McGuinty at 32% support (unchanged from June), followed by the Ontario NDP led by Howard Hampton at 24% (up one point since June), and the Ontario Green Party led by Frank de Jong at 8 percent (up three points since June). Meanwhile, 1% of decided voters in Ontario would vote for some "other" party.

Currently, 6% of Ontarians would be "undecided" if an election were held tomorrow.

- The PCs have their highest support in Southwestern Ontario (40%), followed by Eastern Ontario (38%) and the GTA Belt/905 (36%).
- Men are more likely than women to support the PCs (41% vs. 30%).
- Those aged 35 and over are significantly more likely than those aged 18-34 to support the PCs (40% vs. 27%).



- The McGuinty Liberals have their highest level of support in the GTA Belt/905 (36%), but the Liberals have no other appreciable strength in the province either geographically or demographically.
- The NDP have their highest level of support in Northern Ontario (33%), followed by Hamilton/Niagara (31%) and the City of Toronto (28%).
- The NDP are supported more by younger voters aged 18-34 than those over the age of 34 (28% vs. 22%).
- The Green Party has its highest level of support in Eastern Ontario (13%) and the North (12%).
- The Green Party enjoys higher support among younger Ontarians aged 18-34 than among those over the age of 34 (11% vs. 7%).

Premier Dalton McGuinty's Performance Approval Sinks Since Last Sounding...

Six in ten Ontario citizens (61%) disapprove of Premier Dalton McGuinty's performance – up from 46 percent (a rise of 15 points) since the last sounding in April 2004. Currently, only 29% approve of the Premier's performance – down 14 points from 43 percent during the same timeframe. One in ten (8%) neither approve nor disapprove of the Premier's performance.

Disapproval of Premier McGuinty's performance is highest among:

- Residents of Niagara/Hamilton (66%) and Eastern Ontario (64%);



- Urban Ontarians (62% vs. 57% in rural Ontario);
- Older Ontarians aged 35 and over (65% vs. 53% among those aged 18-34); and
- Men (66% vs. 56% among women).

Approval for the Premier's performance is highest among:

- Residents of the City of Toronto (33%) and Hamilton/Niagara (32%);
- Younger Ontarians aged 18-34 (32% vs. 27% among those over the age of 34); and
- Women (31% vs. 26% among men).

Half (52%) Say the McGuinty Government Has Ontario on the “Wrong Track”...

Half (52%) of Ontarians believe that the provincial government of Dalton McGuinty and the Liberals has Ontario on the “wrong track” (7% “strongly”, 35% “somewhat”), compared with only 42% who believe that the Liberals have Ontario on the “right track” (23% “somewhat”, 29% “strongly”), and 6% who “don't know”.

Those who believe that the McGuinty Liberals are on the “wrong track” are most likely to be:

- Residents of Southwestern Ontario (58%) and Hamilton/Niagara (56%);
- Be aged 35 and older (55% vs. 48% among those aged 18-34); and
- Male (56% vs. 49% among women).



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Those who believe the McGuinty Liberals are on the “right track” are most likely to be:

- Residents of Northern Ontario (53%) and the City of Toronto (48%).
- Of Liberal decided voters, 85% think the government is on the “right track” compared with 16% of PC voters, 34% of NDP voters and 25% of Green Party voters.

-30-

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- 5 -

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