

## BC PROVINCIAL POLITICS – PART II

*Many Indicators Moving in BC Liberal's Direction ...  
But, BC Liberals (44%) Still Effectively Tied with NDP (41%) ...  
As NDP Seen to Have the Upper Hand on Social Issues*



**Public Release Date: Thursday December 9, 2004**

*Ipsos-Reid is Canada's market intelligence leader and the country's leading provider of public opinion research. With operations in eight cities, Ipsos-Reid employs more than 300 researcher professionals and support staff in Canada. The company has the biggest network of telephone call centres in Canada, as well as the largest pre-recruited household and online panels. Ipsos-Reid's Canadian marketing research and public affairs practices are staffed with seasoned research consultants with extensive industry-specific backgrounds, offering the premier suite of research vehicles in Canada – including the Ipsos Trend Report, the leading source of public opinion in the country – all of which provide clients with actionable and relevant information. Ipsos-Reid is an Ipsos company, a leading global survey-based market research group.*

*To learn more, visit [www.ipsos.ca](http://www.ipsos.ca)*

*For copies of other news releases, please visit:  
<http://www.ipsos-na.com/news/>*

## BC PROVINCIAL POLITICS – PART II

*Many Indicators Moving in BC Liberal's Direction ...*

*But, BC Liberals (44%) Still Effectively Tied with NDP (41%) ...*

*As NDP Seen to Have the Upper Hand on Social Issues*

**Vancouver, BC** – A new BC Ipsos-Reid poll shows several indicators moving in a positive direction for the governing BC Liberals. Three-quarters (73%, up 15 points from June) of British Columbians now think the provincial economy is in “very good” or “good” shape. For the first time, more British Columbians think the province is in overall better shape (39%, up 9 points from July) than worse shape (31%, down 11 points) compared to when the Liberals were first elected. And, four-in-ten (41%, up 6 points from September) residents think the BC Liberals deserve to re-elected based on their performance in government since the last election.

Despite these favourable trends, the BC Liberals (44%, up 4 points from September) are still effectively tied with the NDP (41%, up 3 points) in the fight for the support of the province's decided voters. The reason may be the NDP's strength, or the Liberal's weakness, on social issues. While the Liberals have a big advantage over the NDP in terms of which party would do a better job on the economy (52% BC Liberals better vs. 22% NDP better) and the government's finances (49% BC Liberals better vs. 21% NDP better), the NDP have an equally large advantage on the issues of health care (50% NDP better vs. 25% BC Liberals better), education (47% NDP better vs. 24% BC Liberals better) and providing social services (59% NDP better vs. 18% BC Liberals better).

*These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid telephone poll conducted November 24<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>, 2004 with a randomly selected sample of 800 adult British Columbia residents. The results are considered accurate to within  $\pm 3.5$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire BC adult 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 BC population according to the 2001 Census.*

## *Many Indicators Moving in BC Liberal's Direction ...*

Three indicators are moving in a positive direction for the BC Liberals.

1) Three-quarters (73%) of British Columbians now think the provincial economy is in “very good” or “good” shape. This is an increase of 15-points from July (58%), 37-points from October 2003 (36%) and the highest level recorded since September 1996 (76%).

- Perceptions the BC economy is in “very good” or “good” shape are highest in the Lower Mainland (78% vs. rest of BC 66%), with men (81% vs. 66% women) and with higher household income residents (83% vs. 55% lower, 68% middle).

2) For the first time, more British Columbians think the province is in overall better shape (39%) than worse shape (31%) compared to when the Liberals were first elected. Three-in-ten (28%) residents think the province is in the same shape as when the Liberals were first elected. These numbers are a real improvement over measures taken in July 2004 (30% better, 42% worse), on the Liberal's second anniversary (24% better, 45% worse in May 2003) and the Liberal's first anniversary (20% better, 53% worse in May 2002).

- Perceptions the province is in overall better shape are highest with men (51% vs. 28% women), older residents (47% 55+ years vs. 32% 18-34 years, 38% 35-54 years), non-union households (44% vs. 27% union) and higher household income residents (46% vs. 26% lower, 35% middle).

3) Four-in-ten (41%) residents think the BC Liberals deserve to be re-elected based on their performance in government since the last election. This is an increase of 6-points from September (35%). The percentage of residents who say the BC Liberals do not deserve to be re-elected based on their performance has dropped from 63% to 57% over the same timeframe.

- A “Liberals deserve to be re-elected” sentiment is highest with men (47% vs. 34% women), older residents (46% 55+ years vs. 41% 18-34 years, 37% 35-54 years), non-union households (48% vs. 23% union) and higher household income residents (47% vs. 33% lower, 34% middle).

## ***But, BC Liberals (44%) Still Effectively Tied with NDP (41%) ...***

Despite those strong numbers, it's still a very tight race for voter support. The BC Liberals (44%) have a statistically insignificant 3-point lead over the NDP (41%) among decided voters in British Columbia. The Green Party is a distant third choice at 12% support this quarter. These results exclude the 7% of BC residents who have no party preference or are undecided.

Both the BC Liberals (up 4 points) and the NDP (up 3 points) have made gains since September. These gains have come at the expense of the Green Party (down 4 points) and BC Unity (down 3 points). Following the resignation of BC Unity leader Chris Delaney, BC Unity was removed from Ipsos-Reid's list of read-parties in the ballot question. Less than 1% of decided voters "volunteered" BC Unity as their choice this quarter.

The regional analysis shows the BC Liberals with a 7-point lead in the Lower Mainland (46% BC Liberals, 39% NDP) and trailing by a statistically insignificant 3-points in the rest of the province (41% BC Liberals, 44% NDP).

- The BC Liberals do better with men (48% vs. 39% women), non-union residents (51% vs. 27% union) and higher income households (50% vs. 31% lower, 39% middle).
- The NDP do better with women (48% vs. 35% men), union households (58% vs. 34% non-union) and lower income households (52% vs. 46% middle, 37% higher).
- The Greens do better with younger voters (16% 18 to 34 years vs. 13% 35-54 years, 6% 55+ years) and lower/middle-income households (14% lower/middle vs. 9% higher).

## ***As NDP Seen to Have the Upper Hand on Social Issues***

We asked respondents to tell us who (Gordon Campbell and the BC Liberals or Carole James and the NDP) they think would do a better job on some specific issues.

Gordon Campbell and the BC Liberals have a huge advantage on economic and fiscal issues.

- Economy - 52% Liberals better, 22% NDP better, 24% no difference
- Government finances - 49% Liberals better, 21% NDP better, 29% no difference

Carole James and the NDP have a huge advantage on social issues.

- Health care - 50% NDP better, 25% Liberals better, 24% no difference
- Education - 47% NDP better, 24% Liberals better, 27% no difference
- Social services - 59% NDP better, 18% Liberals better, 22% no difference

- 30 -

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

**Kyle Braid**  
**Vice-President**  
**Ipsos-Reid Corporation**  
**604-257-3200**  
[kyle.braid@ipsos-reid.com](mailto:kyle.braid@ipsos-reid.com)

*For full tabular results, please visit our website at [www.ipsos.ca](http://www.ipsos.ca). News releases are available at <http://www.ipsos-na.com/news/>.*