

# BRITISH COLUMBIANS REACT TO EMERSON SWITCH

*Six-in-Ten (62%) Disapprove of David Emerson's Actions  
Three-Quarters (77%) Think Party Switchers Should Face a  
By-Election*



**Ipsos Reid**

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## BRITISH COLUMBIANS REACT TO EMERSON SWITCH

### *Six-in-Ten (62%) Disapprove of David Emerson's Actions Three-Quarters (77%) Think Party Switchers Should Face a By-Election*

**Vancouver, BC** – A new BC Ipsos Reid poll shows that a majority (62%) of British Columbians disapprove of the action taken by David Emerson to switch parties and join Stephen Harper's Conservative cabinet. And while it has been argued that BC will benefit from having someone of Emerson's stature in the federal cabinet, only about one-in-three British Columbians (36%) think the switch will turn out to be a good thing for the province. When it comes to the overall issue of politicians making a party switch, three-quarters (77%) of British Columbians think MPs should have to face a by-election.

Six-in-ten (62%) British Columbians say they disapprove of the actions taken by David Emerson, including nearly five-in-ten (48%) who "strongly" disapprove and 14% who "somewhat" disapprove. Fewer than half as many BC residents (28%) say they approve of Emerson's actions (11% "strongly", 17% "somewhat"). Ten percent of residents have no opinion on this issue.

- Disapproval of Emerson's actions is higher in the Lower Mainland (66%) than in the rest of BC. It is also higher among university graduates (70% vs. 52% among those with high school or less and 61% among those with some post-secondary) and middle income earners (70% among \$40-\$80K vs. 57% among <\$40K and 59% among \$80K+).

Regardless of whether they approve or disapprove of Emerson's actions, fewer than four-in-ten (36%) BC residents think this will ultimately turn out to be a good thing for British Columbia. A slight majority (58%) say that this will make no difference for BC (43%) or will turn out to be a bad thing for the province (15%).

- Older residents and higher income residents are slightly more likely to think this will turn out to be good for British Columbia (44% of residents 55+ years and 44% of residents with HH incomes over \$80,000 think it will be a good thing).

On the broader issue of politicians switching parties, three-quarters (77%) of British Columbians say that MPs should have to face a by-election. Only about two-in-ten (18%) believe that MPs should be able to freely cross the floor of the House of Commons to join a different party than the one with which they were elected.

*These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid telephone poll conducted between February 7<sup>th</sup> and February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2006. The poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 800 adult British Columbians. With a sample of this size, 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 adult population of BC 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 data.*

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