

AN UPDATE ON BC'S PROVINCIAL POLITICAL SCENE

BC Liberals (47%, down 4 points) Lose Some Ground, But Still Have Solid Lead Over NDP (37%, up 2 points)

Gordon Campbell's Approval Rating Also Down (47%, down 5 points); Carole James Steady (54%, up 1 point)



Ipsos Reid

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Vancouver, BC – A new Ipsos Reid poll in British Columbia shows the BC Liberals have lost some ground since the early summer, but still maintain a sizable lead over their nearest political rivals. The BC Liberals (47%, down 4 points) have a 10 point lead over the NDP (37%, up 2 points) in decided voter support. This is a drop from a 16 point Liberal lead recorded in June 2006. The Green Party is in third place at 13% (up 3 points).

Gordon Campbell's approval rating as Premier has also slipped a few points this quarter. British Columbians are equally split between approving (47%, down 5 points) and disapproving (48%, up 4 points) of Campbell's performance as Premier.

There has been no real change in the approval rating of NDP leader Carole James (54%, up 1 point) who recently returned to work after cancer surgery. However, her disapproval rating (23%, down 6 points) has fallen significantly since June.

These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid telephone poll conducted between September 8 and September 17, 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 ± 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.

BC Liberals (47%, down 4 points) Lose Some Ground, But Still Have Solid Lead Over NDP (37%, up 2 points)

The BC Liberals continue to lead in the battle for voter support in British Columbia. The BC Liberals currently have the support of 47% of the province's decided voters, a 10 point lead over the NDP at 37%. The Liberal lead has slipped from 16 points in June, based on a 4 point drop in Liberal support and a 2 point increase in NDP support. The Green Party is up 3 points this quarter to 13%. These results exclude the 16% of British Columbians who are undecided or express no preference.

Decided Vote Tracking						
	Sep 05	Jun 06	Mar 06	Dec 05	Sep 05	Vote 05
BC Liberals	47%	51%	43%	43%	42%	46%
NDP	37%	35%	40%	41%	39%	42%
Green	13%	10%	12%	13%	13%	9%
Other	3%	4%	5%	3%	5%	3%

In June, the BC Liberals were clearly reaping the benefits of settling agreements with public sector employees. This paid dividends in giving the Liberals a lead with both women (47% Lib vs. 38% NDP) and union households (44% Lib vs. 42% NDP) – two segments that have generally favoured the NDP. Now, voting preferences among these two segments have returned to more historical levels, with the Liberals trailing by 6 points with women (40% Lib vs. 46% NDP) and 10 points with union households (38% Lib vs. 48% NDP).

The BC Liberals continue to do better in the Lower Mainland than in the rest of BC. The Liberals have a 15 point lead in the Lower Mainland (50% Lib vs. 35% NDP) compared with a virtual tie in the rest of BC (42% Lib vs. 41% NDP).

Gordon Campbell's Approval Rating Also Down (47%, down 5 points); Carole James Steady (54%, up 1 point)

British Columbians are split in their assessments of Gordon Campbell's performance as Premier. Slightly less than half (47%, down 5 points) of residents say they approve of Campbell's performance, including 13% "strongly" and 34% "moderately". Similarly, just less than half (48%, up 4 points) disapprove of his performance, including 30% "strongly" and 18% "moderately".

- Campbell's approval rating is higher with men (55% vs. 40% women), non-union residents (51% vs. 42% union) and higher/middle income households (58% higher, 51% middle vs. 29% lower).

A slight majority (54%, up 1 point) say they approve of the job Carole James is doing as NDP and Official Opposition leader (12% "strongly", 42% "moderately"). Her disapproval rating (23%) has dropped a substantial 6 points since June (8% "strongly", 16% "moderately")

- James' approval rating is higher with women (60% vs. 48% men), middle-aged and older residents (58% 35-54 years, 59% 55+ years vs. 45% 18-34 years) and union residents (64% vs. 50% non-union).

Leader Approval Tracking

	Sep 06	Jun 06	Mar 06	Dec 05	Sep 05
Gordon Campbell					
Approve	47%	52%	44%	44%	44%
Disapprove	48%	44%	52%	54%	54%
Carole James					
Approve	54%	53%	57%	61%	60%
Disapprove	23%	29%	26%	30%	23%

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