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Toronto, ON – With less than two weeks to go in the race for the mayor's chair in Toronto, a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of NewsTalk 1010 has revealed that the campaign is a horserace with the edge currently going to George Smitherman over his rival Rob Ford.

This poll, which was taken October 8-10, 2010, finds that if the election were to happen tomorrow George Smitherman would garner 31% (+8) of Torontonians vote against main rival Rob Ford who would receive 30%, up 2 points from an Ipsos Reid poll from late September.

Two other candidates trail with Joe Pantalone (11%, up 1 point) and Rocco Rossi (4%, down 3 points). Candidate Sara Thomson dropped out of the race and threw her support behind George Smitherman (but her name will still appear on the ballot). One quarter (25%, up 8 points) of Torontonians still declare themselves as undecided.

But these are the results from what we refer to as 'Topline preference voters' –a total that includes many voters who won't likely go out to the ballot box on voting day. That's why another set of potential voters become crucial because municipal campaigns in Toronto are notorious for minimal participation by voters: those who say that they are absolutely certain they will go out on Election Day. In the 2003 election when David Miller first was elected mayor, voter turnout was estimated at 38%; in the last municipal election held in 2006, voter turnout was estimated at 41%. When trying to predict the outcome of a municipal election, it's most important to focus on voters who will actually show up to cast their ballot on Election Day.

And even though the percentage of those who say they are 'absolutely' certain to go out and vote on Election Day is likely inflated (54% up 9 points) right now, it's an important measure of both commitment and motivation of those most likely to actually show up and mark their ballot.

When the votes are counted among this pool of 'likely turnout voters', it reveals that George Smitherman (38% +9) has the edge over rival Rob Ford (32% +2) and well outpaces Joe Pantalone (15% +1) and Rocco Rossi (3% down three points), while only 13% of voters in this pool remain undecided (up four points).

As for where the candidates are likely to 'pull' their vote among those most likely to go out and vote, they are as follows:

- Smitherman (38%) - Toronto 46%, North York 41%, Scarborough 37%, Etobicoke 32% and York/East York 23%.

- Ford (32%) - York/East York 46%, Scarborough 38%, Etobicoke 36%, North York 32% and Toronto 21%.

- Pantalone (15%) - Toronto 22%, York/East York 13%, Etobicoke 13%, Scarborough 11% and North York 9%.

- Rossi (3%) - Toronto 5%, York/East York 3%, North 03%, Etobicoke 3% and Scarborough 0%.

As such, this campaign is shaping up like most others: it's not about counting on the vote, it's all about getting the vote out to count.

Other Vote Perspectives…

- 54% of Torontonians indicate they are absolutely certain to go out and vote on Election Day. A regional breakdown indicates that those most likely to do so are in Etobicoke (73%), followed by Toronto (60%), York/East York (53%), Scarborough (51%) and North York (38%). Of the candidates Joe Pantalone's voter base is the most committed to actually go out and vote (72%) followed by those supporting George Smitherman (65%), Rob Ford (57%) and Rocco Rossi (37%).

- Topline vote: Smitherman 31% – Toronto 39%, North York 31%, Scarborough 29%, Etobicoke 27% and York/East York 23%; Ford 30% – York/East York 37%, Etobicoke 35%, Scarborough 35%, North York 30% and Toronto 22%; Pantalone 11% – Toronto 16%, York/East York 13%, Etobicoke 12%, Scarborough 8% and North York 7%; Rossi 4% – York/East York 10%, Etobicoke 6%, Toronto 5%, North York 4% and Scarborough 0%.

Momentum: Tied on the Topline between Smitherman (31%) and Ford (31%) but among <u>Most Likely Voters</u> it's Smitherman (42%) over Ford (29%)…

- When asked which candidate is gaining popularity and momentum, Torontonians, overall, say it's a tie between George Smitherman (31%) and Rob Ford (31%) followed by Joe Pantalone (11%) and Rocco Rossi (6%). However, it's a different story when it comes to those who are most certain that they will actually go out and vote on Election Day: Smitherman (42%) leads Ford (29%), Pantalone (10%) and Rossi (6%).

These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of NewsTalk 1010 from October 8-10, 2010. For the survey, a representative randomly-selected sample of 400 adults living in Toronto was interviewed by telephone. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ±4.9 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult population of Toronto proper 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 that the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Toronto population according to Census data. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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