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As the B.C. provincial election campaign moves into its final week, the governing B.C. Liberals appear to have a solid lead over the opposition NDP. This, according to an Environics Research Group survey of 601 eligible voters in B.C. commissioned by the Independent Contractors and Businesses Association of B.C. and conducted between April 30 and May 2, 2009.

Party Support. Among decided voters in B.C., 47 percent say they would vote for the B.C. Liberal Party. This is on par with the popular vote the B.C. Liberals had when they were re-elected in the last election in 2005. The New Democratic Party currently trails the Liberals at 36 percent, which represents a drop of six points from their popular vote in 2005. Another 12 percent would support the B.C. Green Party, compared to the nine percent they won in 2005, while five percent support the B.C. Conservatives and other parties and candidates. Sixteen percent of eligible voters are undecided or say they would not vote.

Vote Intention – B.C. (Percentage of Decided Voters) Sample: 508 Eligible and Decided Voters (Sampling error: +/-4.3%)	
B.C. Liberals	47
New Democrats	36
Greens	12
Conservatives/Other	5
DK/NA	16

Regional and Demographic Patterns. There are some clear regional and demographic patterns in party support. The B.C. Liberals have an overwhelming lead in the Fraser Valley/outer GVRD, while the NDP is ahead on Vancouver Island. The race is close in the City of Vancouver/inner suburbs and in the interior. It is also notable that men and older voters tend to strongly support the B.C. Liberals, while among women and among younger and middle-aged voters, party support is more evenly divided. Support for the Green Party is heavily concentrated among younger voters and they are also most likely to say they may change their mind about how they will vote.

Most important issue/factor. When British Columbians are asked what will be the most important issue or factor that will influence how they vote in the election (asked unprompted, without offering choices), the most common responses relate to the economy (31%), followed by various political factors such as leadership, honesty in gov't, local candidates and platform (20%), and health care (11%). Eight percent mention environmental issues and eight percent mention education. A further 22 percent have no opinion.

Best Premier. Gordon Campbell has a clear lead when British Columbians are asked which party leader would make the best

premier with 45 percent choosing him. The proportion that think Gordon Campbell would make the best premier is virtually identical to the percentage who would vote for his party. Carol James lags far behind on this question, with 25 percent feeling that she would make the best premier – a number that is significantly less than the proportion who would vote for her party. Just five percent think Jane Sterk would make the best premier. One-quarter have no opinion on who would make the best premier or say “none of the above.”

Managing the B.C. economy. Gordon Campbell and the B.C. Liberals are the choice of one-half of British Columbians (52%) on the specific question of who would do the best job on managing the B.C. economy, compared to just 25 percent who choose Carol James and the NDP, and four percent who choose Jane Sterk and the Green Party. Another 19 percent have no opinion or feel they would all be the same.

Right track/wrong track. One-half of British Columbians (50%) feel that the current B.C. provincial government has the province on the right track, compared to 36 percent who feel it has the province on the wrong track. Fourteen percent have no opinion.

For further information, please contact:

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Methodology

These results are taken from an Environics survey of 601 eligible voters in British Columbia conducted in between April 30 and May 2, 2009. On a provincial basis, these results are accurate to within +/-4.0 percentage points, in 95 out of 100 samples. Questions:

What will be the most important issue or factor that will influence how you vote in the provincial election?

If a provincial election were held today, which one of the following parties would you vote for? [ROTATE PARTIES] the B.C. Liberal Party, the NDP, the Green Party, or another party? [If “Undecided” ask] Perhaps you have not yet made up your mind; is there nevertheless a party you might be inclined to support?

All in all, would you say that the current B.C. provincial government has the province on the right track or wrong track?

In your opinion, which one of the following party leaders would make the best Premier of B.C.: Gordon Campbell, Carol James, Jane Sterk?

In your opinion, which one of the following would do the best job on managing the B.C. economy: Gordon Campbell and the B.C. Liberals, Carol James and the NDP, Jane Sterk and the Greens?

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