

PROVINCIAL POLITICAL SCENE

Referendum and Recall Drive Loom as Serious Threats to BC Liberals

Three-quarters of British Columbians would vote to abolish the HST if the referendum were held today.

[VANCOUVER – Jun. 10, 2010] – With the implementation of a harmonized sales tax (HST) looming in British Columbia, the rancour towards the tax and anger towards the government has not abated, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found

The online survey of a representative sample of 1,612 British Columbia adults also shows that three-in-four respondents would vote to abolish the HST if the province were to hold its first citizen initiated referendum today.

Voting Intention

Across British Columbia, 46 per cent of decided voters (-1 since April) say they would support the New Democratic Party (NDP) candidate in their constituency if a provincial election were held tomorrow.

The governing BC Liberals are second with 26 per cent (-3), followed by the Green Party with 14 per cent (unchanged), and the BC Conservatives Party with eight per cent (+3).

In order to assess the impact of the HST on BC Liberal fortunes, we asked respondents if they would reconsider their support under two different scenarios. About one-in-five voters (22%) would be more likely to vote for the BC Liberals if they backed off the HST, but more (28%) would be less likely to do so. One third of respondents (34%) say they would be just as likely to support the party in the next provincial election.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Voting Intention: BC NDP 46%, BC Lib 26%, Green 14%, BC Conservative 8%**
- **45% of voters in BC Liberal held ridings would definitely sign a petition to recall their MLA**
- **76% would vote to abolish the HST in a referendum, 17% would keep it**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From June 1 to June 6, 2010, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,612 randomly selected British Columbia adults who are Angus Reid Forum panellists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 2.4%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure samples representative of the entire adult population of British Columbia. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

CONTACT:

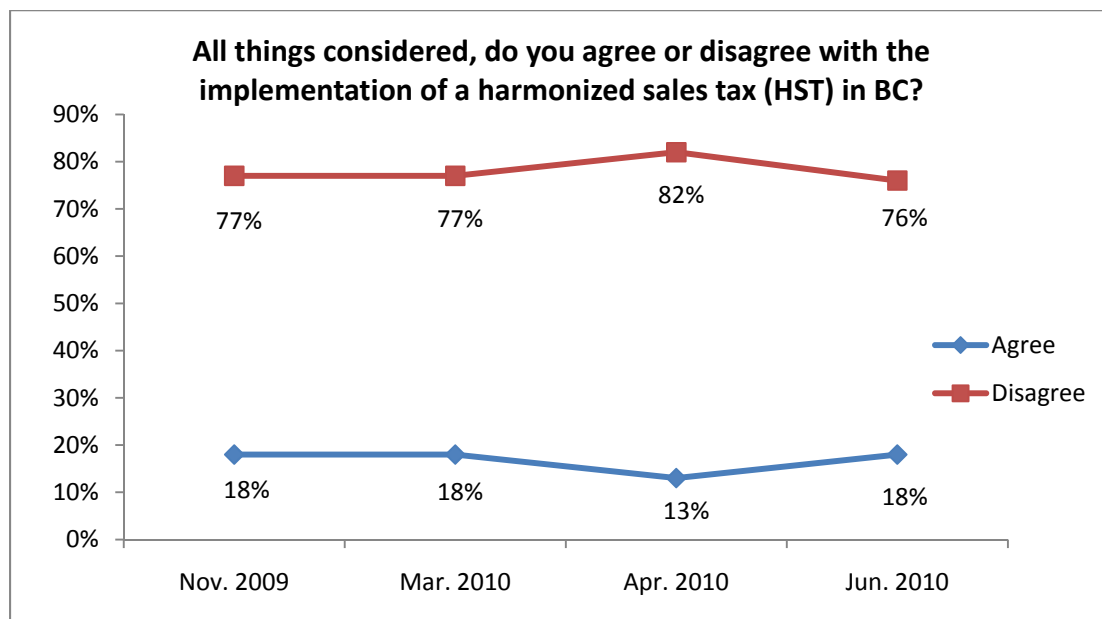
Hamish Marshall, Research Director, Public Affairs, 604-647-1987, hamish.marshall@angus-reid.com

If Gordon Campbell were to step down as Premier, it would have even less of an impact on the BC Liberals vote. One-in-six voters (16%) would be more likely to vote BC Liberal if Campbell was not the Premier, but 23 per cent would be less likely. For a party caught in a difficult political situation, neither of these drastic options provides much relief or an easy way out.

HST

Overall, 76 per cent of British Columbians say they disagree with the implementation of the HST (down six points since April). Disagreement is most vehement on Vancouver Island and in the Southern Interior (both 78%).

In a referendum on the HST, which now seems inevitable, 76 per cent of British Columbians would vote to abolish it, 17 per cent to keep it and seven per cent are undecided. More than four-in-five decided voters (82%) would cast a ballot to abolish the HST.



Recall of MLAs

Voters in provincial ridings held by the BC Liberals were asked if they would sign a petition to recall their MLA—an idea that has been proposed by some anti-HST activists. Almost half of respondents in these ridings (45%) said they would definitely sign a petition to recall their MLA and another 17 per cent would probably sign it.

CONTACT:

Hamish Marshall, Research Director, Public Affairs, 604-647-1987, hamish.marshall@angus-reid.com

In all, 31 per cent of people who voted for the BC Liberals in the 2009 election—and who are currently represented by a BC Liberal member in the legislature—would definitely sign a recall petition. The numbers are highest on Vancouver Island (53% would definitely sign the petition) and the Southern Interior (48%).

These levels of support are well above the required threshold to recall an MLA. For an MLA to be recalled, the petition must be signed by more than 40 per cent of the voters who were, on the date of the last election of the Member, registered voters for the Member's electoral district.

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BC Political Scene

If a provincial election were held tomorrow in British Columbia, which one of the following parties would you be most likely to support in your constituency? – *Decided voters including leaners*

	British Columbia	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
BC NDP	46%	42%	51%	39%	49%	49%
BC Liberals	26%	31%	22%	31%	26%	23%
BC Greens	14%	12%	15%	21%	13%	9%
BC Conservatives	8%	9%	8%	6%	7%	12%

BC Political Scene

If a provincial election were held tomorrow in British Columbia, which one of the following parties would you be most likely to support in your constituency? – *Decided voters including leaners*

	British Columbia	GVRD	Vancouver Island	Interior	North
BC NDP	46%	46%	54%	43%	34%
BC Liberals	26%	27%	18%	30%	35%
BC Greens	14%	15%	16%	7%	18%
BC Conservatives	8%	5%	9%	16%	7%

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BC Political Scene

If a provincial election were held tomorrow in British Columbia, which one of the following parties would you be most likely to support in your constituency? – *Decided voters including leaners*

	British Columbia	Income			Education		
		<\$50k	\$50-99k	\$100k+	HS or Less	College/Tech	Univ+
BC NDP	46%	48%	49%	37%	47%	48%	42%
BC Liberals	26%	20%	24%	42%	25%	22%	36%
BC Greens	14%	16%	15%	11%	11%	16%	12%
BC Conservatives	8%	10%	8%	5%	9%	10%	5%

BC Political Scene

If a provincial election were held tomorrow in British Columbia, which one of the following parties would you be most likely to support in your constituency? – *Decided voters including leaners*

	June 1-7	Apr. 12-14	March 15-17	<i>May 2009 Election</i>
BC NDP	46%	47%	43%	42%
BC Liberals	26%	29%	35%	46%
BC Greens	14%	14%	13%	8%
BC Conservatives	8%	5%	6%	2%

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BC Political Scene

All things considered, do you agree or disagree with the implementation of a harmonized sales tax (HST) in BC?

	June 1-7	Apr. 12-14
Strongly agree	5%	2%
Moderately agree	13%	11%
Moderately disagree	14%	17%
Strongly disagree	62%	65%
Not sure	6%	5%

BC Political Scene

As you may know, there is a petition drive underway to collect signatures for a BC-wide referendum on the HST. In the last few days, the petition organizers have reached the required number of signatures to hold a referendum. If the signatures are validated, there will be a referendum to abolish the HST, probably in September of 2011 – which is more than a year after the HST being implemented. If that referendum occurs, how would you vote?

	British Columbia	GVRD	Vancouver Island	Interior	North
Yes – Abolish the HST	76%	75%	80%	79%	67%
No – Keep the HST	17%	19%	13%	14%	18%
Undecided / Would not vote	7%	6%	6%	7%	15%

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MLA Recall (BC Liberal held Ridings ONLY)

In British Columbia, the Recall and Initiative Act allows a registered voter to petition to remove a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) from office. For an MLA to be recalled, the petition must be signed by more than 40 per cent of the voters who were, on the date of the last election of the Member, registered voters for the Member's electoral district. If the recall is successful, the seat is declared vacant and a by-election must take place in the electoral district. Some of the anti-HST activists have talked about organizing recall petitions against MLAs who voted for the HST. If there was a recall petition against your own MLA, would you sign it?

	British Columbia	GVRD	Vancouver Island	Interior	North
Definitely would sign it	45%	43%	53%	48%	33%
Probably would sign it	17%	17%	22%	14%	18%
Probably would not sign it	13%	14%	10%	12%	19%
Definitely would not sign it	13%	14%	10%	12%	13%
Not sure	12%	12%	5%	14%	16%

MLA Recall (BC Liberal held Ridings ONLY)

If there was a recall petition against your own MLA, would you sign it?

Vote in the 2009 Provincial Election

	British Columbia	BC Liberal	BC NDP	BC Green
Definitely would sign it	45%	31%	68%	61%
Probably would sign it	17%	16%	15%	13%
Probably would not sign it	13%	18%	9%	10%
Definitely would not sign it	13%	24%	3%	2%
Not sure	12%	11%	5%	14%

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BC Politics

If Gordon Campbell and the BC Liberal government backed down and decided not to implement the HST, would you be more likely, less likely or just as likely to vote for the BC Liberals in the next provincial election in May 2013?

	British Columbia	GVRD	Vancouver Island	Interior	North
More likely	22%	22%	21%	25%	22%
Just as likely	34%	34%	30%	35%	43%
Less likely	28%	27%	36%	26%	20%
Not sure	15%	17%	13%	13%	15%

BC Politics

If Gordon Campbell steps down as Premier, would you be more likely, less likely or just as likely to vote for the BC Liberals in the next provincial election in May 2013?

	British Columbia	GVRD	Vancouver Island	Interior	North
More likely	16%	17%	13%	17%	20%
Just as likely	39%	37%	40%	39%	43%
Less likely	23%	23%	27%	20%	16%
Not sure	22%	23%	19%	24%	21%

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Angus Reid Public Opinion is a practice of Vision Critical—a global research and technology company specializing in custom online panels, private communities, and innovative online methods. Vision Critical is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Public Opinion team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995

Vision Critical is now one of the largest market research enterprises in the world. In addition to its five offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, London, Paris and Sydney. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.

Angus Reid Public Opinion polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum (www.angusreidforum.com), Springboard America (www.springboardamerica.com) and Springboard UK (www.springboarduk.com) online panels, which are carefully recruited to ensure representation across all demographic and psychographic segments of these populations. Panel members pass through rigorous screening and a double opt-in process ensuring highly motivated and responsive members. These premier online survey platforms present respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses. Each survey is actively sampled and weighted to model that characteristics of the universe required and employs the latest in quality control techniques to ensure data validity.

Since 2006, Angus Reid has covered eight provincial elections in Canada—more than any other pollster in the country—and the results have accurately predicted the outcome of each of these democratic processes.

Angus Reid, the only public opinion firm to exclusively use online methods to follow the views of the electorate during the 2008 federal campaign, offered the most accurate prediction of the results of Canada's 40th election. More information on our electoral record can be found at:
<http://www.visioncritical.com/record-of-accuracy>

More information on the way Angus Reid conducts public opinion research can be found at
<http://www.visioncritical.com/what-we-do/practices/angus-reid-public-opinion/>

- 30 -

**For more information, please contact
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

**Copies of this poll are available on our website:
<http://www.visioncritical.com/category/global-opinions-and-trends>**

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