



# NEWS RELEASE

## For Immediate Release

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### **Approval ratings for Brad Wall remain strong amid weak assessments of the government's management of provincial funds and strong opposition to eliminating SCN.**

April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010 (Saskatoon, SK). A new independent online poll conducted by Insightrix Research with Saskatchewan residents shows that approval of Premier Brad Wall remains relatively steady. Presently 68.5% approve of his performance as Premier of Saskatchewan (30.6% strongly approve and 37.9% somewhat approve). Note that a slight softening in support is observed in that the percentage of those who strongly approve of his performance has declined since a similar poll conducted in December 2009 (35.3%), while those who somewhat approve of his performance remains relatively consistent (37.0%). One quarter (24.7%) either somewhat (10.8%) or strongly (13.9%) disapprove of his performance (up from 19.8% who disapproved of his performance in December 2009).

The poll was conducted shortly after the provincial budget was announced, with a random sample of 800 online respondents who are members of Insightrix's SaskWatch Research™ online panel. Quotas were set by age, gender and region to ensure that a balanced mix of the population was surveyed. Data were collected between April 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

Approval ratings for NDP leader Dwain Lingenfelter are presently at 28.3% (5.4% strongly support and 22.9% somewhat support). This is down slightly from approval ratings noted in the December poll (31.7%).

Despite strong approval ratings for the Premier, party support is softening. Specifically, if an election were held today, 58.4% of decided voters would vote for the Saskatchewan Party (excluding those who say they would not vote or are unsure of who they would vote for). This is down somewhat from an Insightrix Research / News Talk 650 CKOM & News Talk 980 CJME poll conducted in November 2009, at which time 66.6% of decided voters indicated that they would put an 'x' next to the Saskatchewan Party name on the ballot. Despite relatively unchanged approval for Lingenfelter, intent to vote for the NDP has increased from 23.0% in the November poll to 28.7%.

Potentially related to the softening of voter intent for the Saskatchewan Party, approval for the Government's management of provincial funds is relatively weak. Specifically, 9.0% believe the provincial government has done an excellent job in this area, while 36.2% believe they have done a good job (a total of 45.2%). However, one half (50.5%) believe the provincial government has done a fair (30.1%) or poor (20.4%) job managing its finances. Men (53.3%) are more likely than women (37.5%) to believe the government has done a good or excellent job in this area.

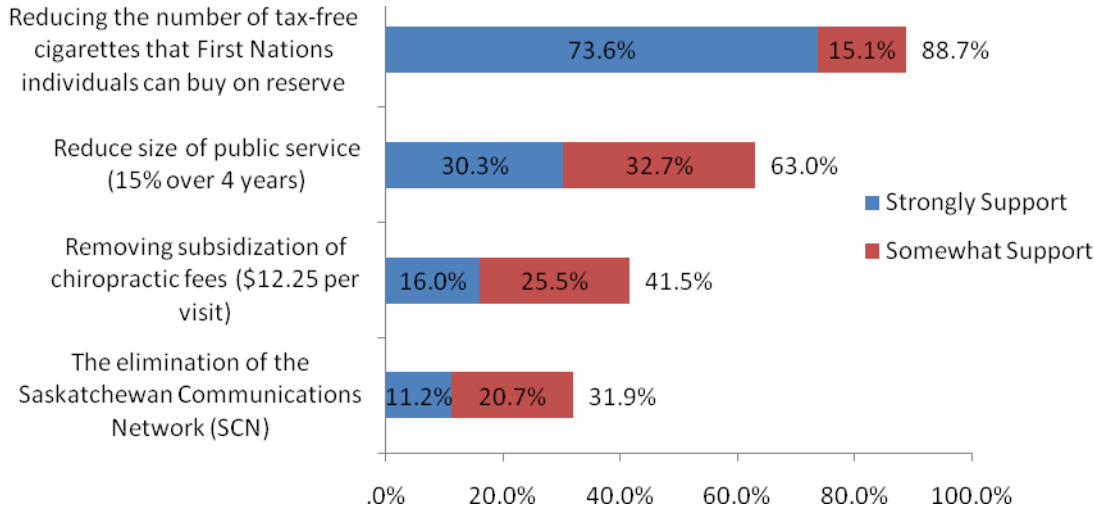
Turning to the 2010-2011 provincial budget, 52.9% of Saskatchewan residents say that overall, they support the budget set forth by the provincial government (8.4% strongly support, 44.5% somewhat support). Three in ten (29.5%) oppose the budget overall (21.5% somewhat oppose and 8.0% strongly oppose). However, 17.6% are unsure on the matter. Men (62.4%) and those aged 55 years or older (62.5%) are more likely to support the budget. Conversely, those earning less than \$30,000 in annual household income (29.1%) are least likely to support the budget, compared to higher income earners within the province.

Looking at specific issues within the budget, support varies notably. A large majority (88.7%) support the decision to reduce the number of tax-free cigarettes that First Nations individuals can buy on reserves (from three cartons per week to one carton per week). While a strong majority of respondents of aboriginal ancestry support this change, they are less likely to support it than are those of non-aboriginal ancestry (77.2% versus 89.3%).

More than six in ten (63.0%) support the decision to reduce the size of the public service by 15% over the next four years, with 30.3% strongly supporting this decision and 32.7% somewhat supporting it. Those living in southern Saskatchewan (excluding Regina) are more likely to support this decision (71.0%) than are those from Saskatoon (55.0%) or Regina (56.8%).

Saskatchewan residents are divided on the issue of removing the government subsidization of chiropractic fees to all but low income individuals. Four in ten (41.5%) support the change while 56.0% oppose it, including three in ten (31.1%) who strongly oppose it. Women (60.7%) are more likely to oppose this decision compared to males (51.1%).

Only three in ten residents (31.9%) support the decision to eliminate the Saskatchewan Communications Network (SCN). More than one half (54.5%) oppose the decision, either strongly (26.5%) or somewhat (28.0%). Another 13.7% are unsure on the matter. Opposition is stronger among females (60.0%) than males (48.6%).



**Research Details**

A total of 800 randomly selected panel members participated in the online research study between April 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010. Quotas were set by age, gender and region to ensure a balanced mix of the population was surveyed and data are weighted. As the research was conducted online, it is considered a non-probability proportion sample and therefore margins of error are not applicable. The November Insightrix Research / News Talk 650 CKOM & News Talk 980 CJME poll and the December Insightrix independent study were conducted with the same specifications and sample size noted above.

**About SaskWatch Research™**

Insightrix developed the Insightrix SaskWatch Research™ online market research panel in October 2007. The panel was (and is continuing to be) developed using high-quality techniques including telephone recruitment and referrals from existing panel members. Presently there are over 7,500 panel members representing all regions of the province. The panel membership closely matches the 2006 Statistics Canada Census based on age, gender, household composition, household income and education. For more information, please refer to: [www.saskwatch.ca](http://www.saskwatch.ca)

**About Insightrix**

Founded in 2001, Insightrix Research Inc. is a full service market research firm that helps clients develop, administer and manage data collection and information strategies. From its office in Saskatoon, Insightrix offers a comprehensive range of research services.