

## CONSERVATIVES ENTER CAMPAIGN WITH BIG LEAD

*Liberals Holding Their Own In Winnipeg, NDP Support*

*Below Level Recorded in Last Federal Election*

**Winnipeg** – As the starting gun sounds on the 2011 federal election campaign, the Conservative Party enters the race well ahead of its rivals in Manitoba, a Probe Research Inc. March telephone survey of 1,000 Manitoba adults conducted exclusively for the *Winnipeg Free Press* reveals. The party's big lead, however, is mostly based on its dominance in its rural Manitoba stronghold. Within Winnipeg, it is a substantially closer race.

### ***One-Half of Decided Manitoba Voters Prefer Conservatives***

Overall, the Stephen Harper-led Conservatives enjoy the support of one-half of decided Manitoba voters (51%). Conservative support has increased by three percentage points since December, and on the eve of the writ, their level of support is two percentage points higher than that registered in the 2008 election.

The Michael Ignatieff-led Liberals, meanwhile, are backed by one-quarter of decided Manitoba voters (26%, unchanged since December). After experiencing their worst Manitoba electoral showing since 1926 (19%), the Liberals enter this campaign in better shape compared to the last time Manitobans were summoned to the federal polls.

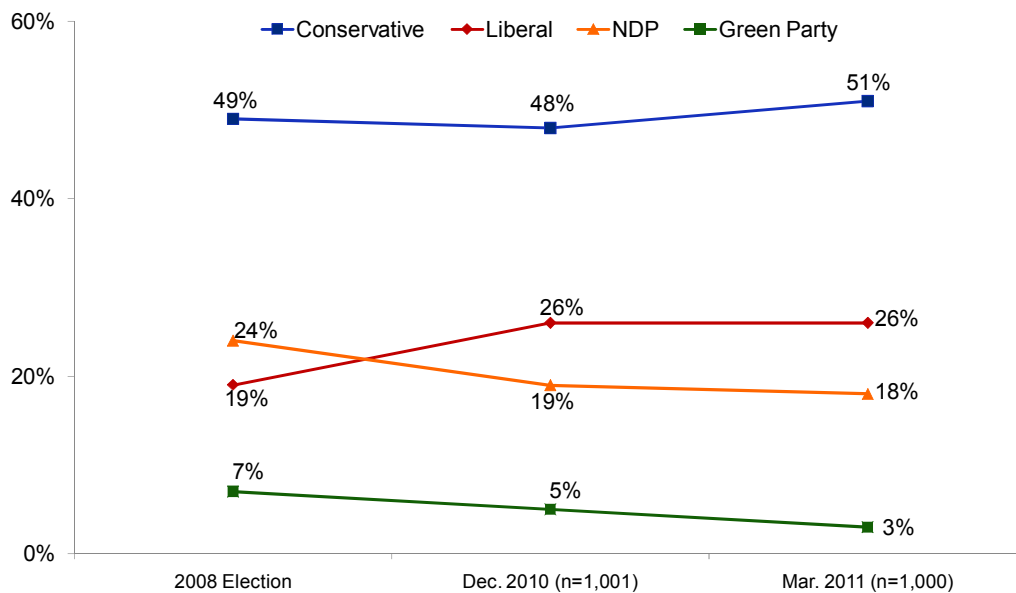
For their part, the New Democrats under Jack Layton enter the present federal campaign with the support of fewer than one-in-five Manitobans (18%, -1% vs. December and -6% vs. the 2008 election). Support for the Elizabeth May-led Greens, meanwhile, is also slightly lower than it was three years ago (3%, -2% vs. December and -4% compared to the party's 2008 election result).

Fully one-quarter of respondents (26%) were undecided or did not indicate which party they would cast ballots for in a hypothetical federal election.

**P R B E**  
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## Federal Party Support in Manitoba

*"If a federal election were held tomorrow, which party's candidate would you be most likely to support?"*



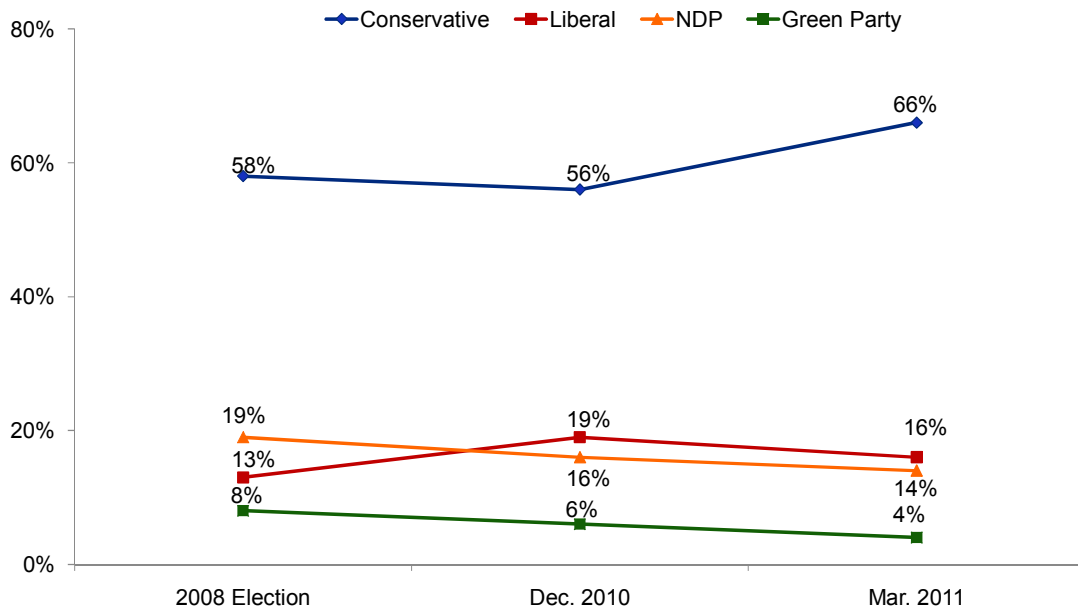
Base: All respondents

## Conservative Gains Come From Their Rural Strongholds

The slight province-wide increase in Conservative support has been driven almost entirely by an uptick in the party's popularity outside Winnipeg, where the party currently holds five seats (out of six) that it won with huge pluralities in the 2008 election. Fully two-thirds of decided adult voters in this region (66%, up from 56% in December) now indicate they would cast ballots for the current governing party. Only slightly more than one-in-ten voters outside Winnipeg would now cast ballots for the Liberals (16%, -3% vs. December) or New Democrats (14%, -2% vs. December), while support for the Green Party in this area is almost non-existent (4%, -2% vs. December).

### PRBE FEDERAL PARTY SUPPORT - Rural/Northern Manitoba -

"If a federal election were held tomorrow, which party's candidate would you be most likely to support?"



Base: All respondents

## The Winnipeg Battleground

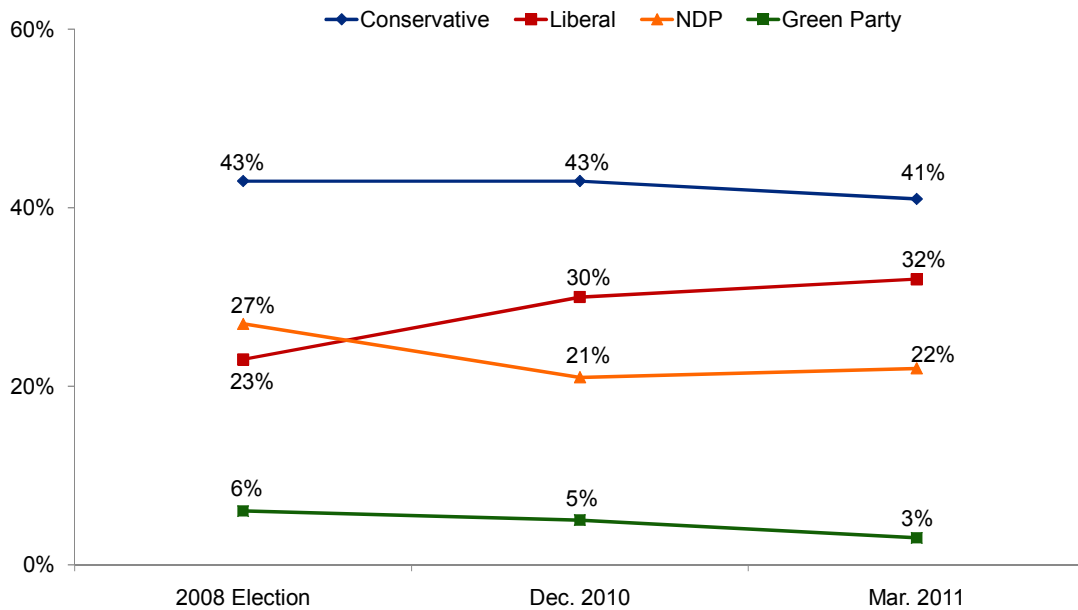
Within Winnipeg, where there are eight seats up for grabs, the Conservatives continue to lead the Liberals and NDP, but not by the expansive margins it enjoys outside of the Perimeter Highway. Fully four-in-ten urban voters would now cast ballots for the Conservatives (41%, down from 43% in both December and the 2008 election). However, one-third of Winnipeg adults would now vote for a Liberal candidate (33%, +3% vs. December and +10% vs. their 2008 result). One-in-five decided urban voters continue to back the NDP (21%, unchanged from December but -6% vs. 2008). Just three percent of those surveyed in Winnipeg, meanwhile, would cast ballots for the Green Party (-2% vs. December and -3% vs. 2008).

### PRBE RESEARCH INC.

## Federal Party Support

- Winnipeg -

*"If a federal election were held tomorrow, which party's candidate would you be most likely to support?"*



Base: All respondents

Looking at different areas of Winnipeg, it should be noted that the Conservatives are the most popular party in northwest Winnipeg<sup>1</sup> (50%, versus 26% Liberal and 21% NDP) northeast Winnipeg (43%, versus 27% NDP and 20% Liberal) and southeast Winnipeg (46%, versus 35% Liberal and 18% NDP).

The Liberals enjoy the highest proportion of voter support in southwest Winnipeg (49%, versus 35% Conservative and 10% NDP), which is an area that includes the closely-contested Liberal-held Winnipeg South Centre riding as well as a portion of the Conservative-held riding of Winnipeg South. The NDP enjoy a slight advantage in the Core Area (34%, versus 29% Conservative and 28% Liberal), which includes NDP-held Winnipeg Centre and a portion of Winnipeg North, which switched in a recent by-election from NDP to Liberal.

<b>FEDERAL PARTY STANDINGS IN RURAL AND URBAN MANITOBA -- March 2011 -- Net Voting Intention Among Decided Voters</b>					
<i>"If a federal election were held tomorrow, which party's candidate would you be most likely to support?"</i>					
	<b>Total Manitoba</b>	<b>Winnipeg</b>	<b>Non- Winnipeg</b>		
(Base)	(1,000) (%)	(600) (%)	(400) (%)		
Conservative	51	41	66		
Liberal	26	33	16		
NDP	18	21	14		
Green Party	3	3	4		
	<b>Northwest Winnipeg</b>	<b>Southwest Winnipeg</b>	<b>Southeast Winnipeg</b>	<b>Northeast Winnipeg</b>	<b>Core Area</b>
(Base)	(127) (%)	(139) (%)	(104) (%)	(116) (%)	(115) (%)
Conservative	50	35	46	43	29
Liberal	26	49	35	20	28
NDP	21	10	18	27	34
Green Party	1	4	-	6	5

<sup>1</sup> Includes areas west of Polo Park

## Conservatives Most Popular With Men, Older Voters

The Conservatives continue to be the most popular party among all major demographics. However, their appeal is especially pronounced among male voters (56%, versus 45% of women), those over the age of 55 (56%, versus 48% of those aged 35-54 years and 49% of those aged 18-34 years) and those with lower levels of formal education (61% of those with Grade 12 or less, versus 51% of those with partial post-secondary education and 45% of university and college graduates). The Liberals, for their part, tend to be more competitive among university and college graduates (32%, versus 17% among those with Grade 12 education or less) and higher-income households (36% among those with incomes of \$100,000 or greater, versus 20% among households in the \$30,000 to \$59,999 bracket).

FEDERAL PARTY STANDINGS AMONG SELECTED SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS -- March 2011 -- Net Voting Intentions Among Decided Voters							
<i>"If a federal election were held tomorrow, which party's candidate would you be most likely to support?"</i>							
	Total	Gender		Age			
		Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+	
(Base)	(1,000) (%)	(484) (%)	(516) (%)	(304) (%)	(343) (%)	(271) (%)	
Conservatives	51	56	45	49	48	56	
Liberals	26	24	28	25	25	26	
NDP	18	14	23	20	23	14	
Green Party	3	4	2	3	3	3	
	Education			Income			
	HS or Less	Some Post-Sec.	Post-Sec. Grad	<\$30K	\$30K-\$59K	\$60K-\$99K	\$100K+
(Base)	(312) (%)	(187) (%)	(483) (%)	(111) (%)	(228) (%)	(272) (%)	(200) (%)
Conservatives	61	51	45	45	49	54	46
Liberals	17	25	32	29	20	22	36
NDP	18	20	18	20	26	20	12
Green Party	2	2	5	6	4	3	2

*This province-wide Omnibus survey was designed and conducted by Probe Research Inc. via telephone interviews conducted between March 7<sup>th</sup> and March 23<sup>th</sup>, 2011 among a random and representative sampling of 1,000 Manitoba adults. With a sample of 1,000, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results are within +/- 3.1 percentage points of what they would have been if the entire adult population of Manitoba had been interviewed. The margin-of-error is higher within each of the survey's population sub-groups. Modified random-digit dialing was used to ensure that all Manitoba adults would have an equal opportunity to participate in this Probe Research survey. Minor statistical weighting has been applied to this sample to ensure that the age and gender balance correspond with the province as a whole.*

For more information on this survey, please contact:

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