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## WYNNE SUSTAINING CLEAR BUT MODEST LEAD AS CAMPAIGN APPROACHES DEBATE AND HOME STRETCH

[Ottawa – June 2, 2014] – Ah, the horserace. Pundits complain about the undue focus on this aspect of democracy and self-appointed polling “experts” tell us to ignore the polls as they are unreliable and potentially a corrosive influence on democracy. To this we say phooey! We have full confidence in our polls and the pompous caveats of the “experts”<sup>1</sup> will have zero impact on an eager, poll-thirsty audience who will want these data out of some blend of simple curiosity or more strategic purposes. We have no comment on the claim that the polls are so inconsistent and mercurial that they have no value. Our polling has been very stable and the underlying anatomy of support for the parties has also been very consistent from poll to poll.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- **Ontario provincial vote intention:**
  - ▣ **38.5% Liberal**
  - ▣ **33.7% Progressive Conservative**
  - ▣ **16.9% NDP**
  - ▣ **7.8% Green Party**
  - ▣ **3.0% Other**

*Please note that the methodology is provided at the end of this document.*



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Far from going radio silent, and ceding the polling field to the backrooms and parties, we will begin offering a daily update of how the parties are faring as we enter the final stages of the campaign. We will be tracking a number of key indicators along with vote intention. Starting tomorrow we will also start including a separate likely voter estimate along with our usual number based on all eligible voters. We will be looking at firmness of vote, where shifts have been occurring and how indecision evolving. We are also going to include a measure of emotional response to the incumbent offering to gauge how that is evolving. We note that this approach served us very well in the last Ontario campaign where we saw the outcome fairly early and accurately.<sup>2</sup>

So what has happened so far? The story of the campaign is two fold: first, Wynne has maintained a somewhat surprising but stable lead of about five points throughout the campaign (she has never trailed in any of our polling); second, Horwath and the NDP cratered following what many of their erstwhile constituencies considered a pretty attractive budget – particularly compared to what was seen as a scorched earth proposal from Tim Hudak. Whatever tactics/strategy Horwath has been attempting to pull out of this swoon, it’s not working. The NDP are basically disappearing as a serious political force in Ontario. The field is fairly clear for a showdown between Wynne and Hudak, with both rising in lock step. It is the case, however, that

<sup>1</sup> Michelle McQuigg “Tired of trying to make sense of Ontario election polls? Ignore them, say experts”, The Canadian Press, Friday, May 30, 2014. Available online at: <http://goo.gl/a9JuyH>

<sup>2</sup> EKOS Research Associates, “A Brief Post Mortem on Polling During the Ontario 2011 Election”, October 7, 2011. Available online at: <http://goo.gl/x2K5gl>

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Wynne has maintained a clear advantage throughout this and barring a serious pratfall in tomorrow's debate appears poised to win.

## Demographic Patterns Stable

While the relatively smaller sample size limits our ability to probe into the demographics patterns of each party's base, the overall trend appears to be one of stability. The Liberals owe much of their lead to their advantage with women while men are evenly split between the Liberals and the PCs. Both parties are continuing to battle it out for the Boomer and senior votes, groups that will make up the lion's share of the votes on Election Day. The PCs have opened up a lead with the college educated, while the Liberals have tightened their hold on university graduates. While the NDP have seen a rather abrupt drop in their support over the last week, this fall seems to be consistent across all ages, regions, and levels of educational attainment.

## A Final Note on Emotion

As veteran Clinton pollster Stanley Greenberg noted there are three things that win elections: number one is emotion, number two is emotion and number three is emotion. We updated some tracking that we used successfully in the last Ontario election to glean the prospects for victory based on emotional response. Strong emotions produce engagement and turnout. These can be both negative, such as anger or they can be positive, like hope. What they can't be (for success) is tepid; and discouraged is tepid.

Looking at these results further confirms the close race with a modest but significant emotional advantage to Wynne. Although almost no one is particularly "happy" in economically anxious Ontario, the balance of strong positive emotions (happy and hopeful) significantly outweighs the negative (angry). Anger is up slightly and quite a bit among PCs who are very angry. But hope is up even more amongst Liberal supporters who have warmed to Wynne and her platform. The NDP emotional responses reinforce the egregious problems Horwath is suffering. Not only is she plummeting in the polls, her shrunken constituency is decidedly less happy and considerably more discouraged. She hasn't been successful in tapping the mad as hell over ethical problems constituency – Hudak owns that highly motivated group. She is left with a diminished and discouraged cadre of mirthless voters who are less likely to show up both by virtue of demographics and emotional response.

Tomorrow we will present new numbers and a likely voter forecast. It will show that the inflated Green Party and other categories are not going to show up on E-day in great numbers. It will also show that while the race is tight, Hudak will need to do very well in the debate to eclipse the stable lead now enjoyed by Wynne. In our experience debates rarely have such an impact.

## Top Line Results:

### Ontario vote intention

Q. How do you plan to vote in the upcoming provincial election on June 12th?\*

#### Provincial results



#### 2011 Ontario Election Results



\*Respondents were also asked if they had already voted. Figures include the responses of those who voted in advance polls or by special ballot.

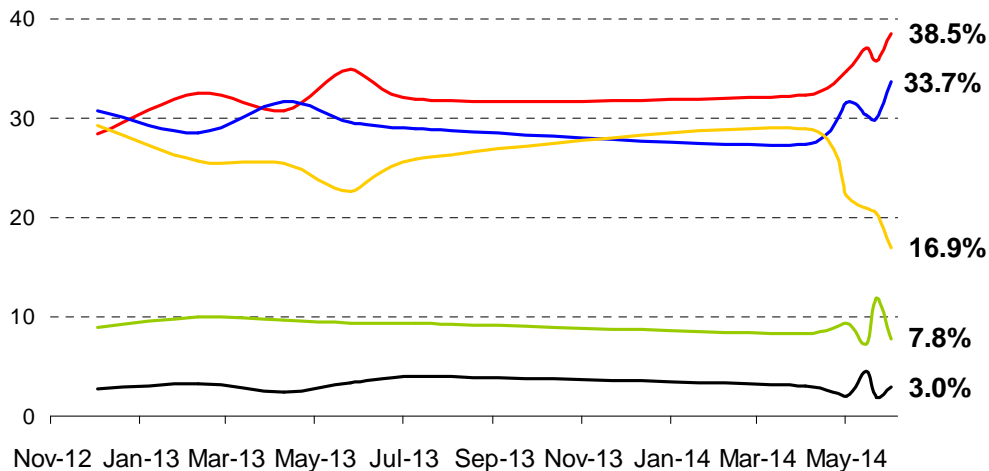
Note: Based on decided and leaning voters only. Our survey also finds that 18.0% of respondents are either undecided or ineligible to vote.

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BASE: Residents of Ontario; May 29 – June 1, 2014 (n=927)

### Tracking Ontario vote intention

Q. How do you plan to vote in the upcoming provincial election on June 12th?\*



\*Respondents were also asked if they had already voted. Figures include the responses of those who voted in advance polls or by special ballot.

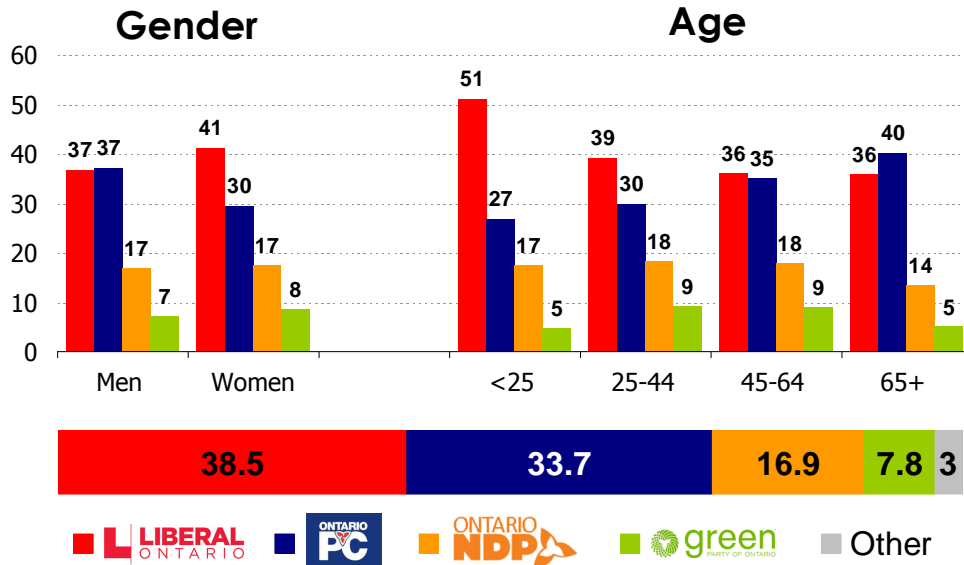
Note: Based on decided and leaning voters only. Our survey also finds that 18.0% of respondents are either undecided or ineligible to vote.

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BASE: Residents of Ontario; most recent data point May 29 – June 1, 2014 (n=927)

## Ontario vote intention by gender/age

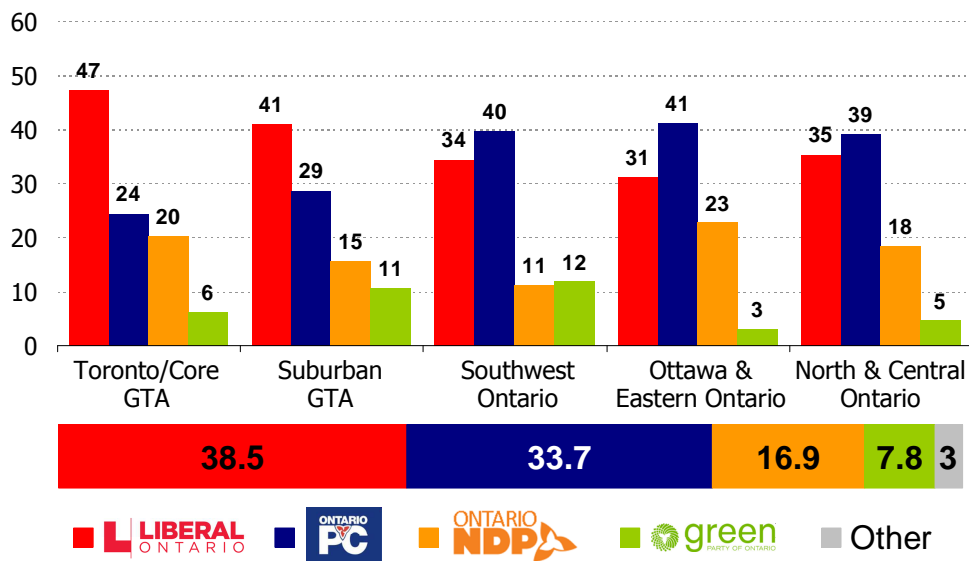
Q. How do you plan to vote in the upcoming provincial election on June 12th?\*



\*Respondents were also asked if they had already voted. Figures include the responses of those who voted in advance polls or by special ballot.  
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## Ontario vote intention by region

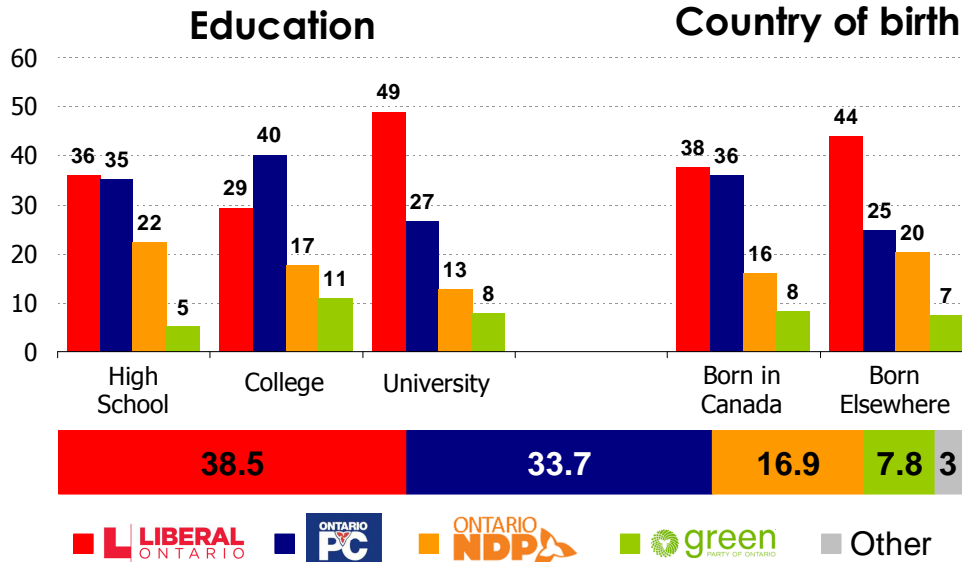
Q. How do you plan to vote in the upcoming provincial election on June 12th?\*



\*Respondents were also asked if they had already voted. Figures include the responses of those who voted in advance polls or by special ballot.  
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## Ontario vote intention by other demographics

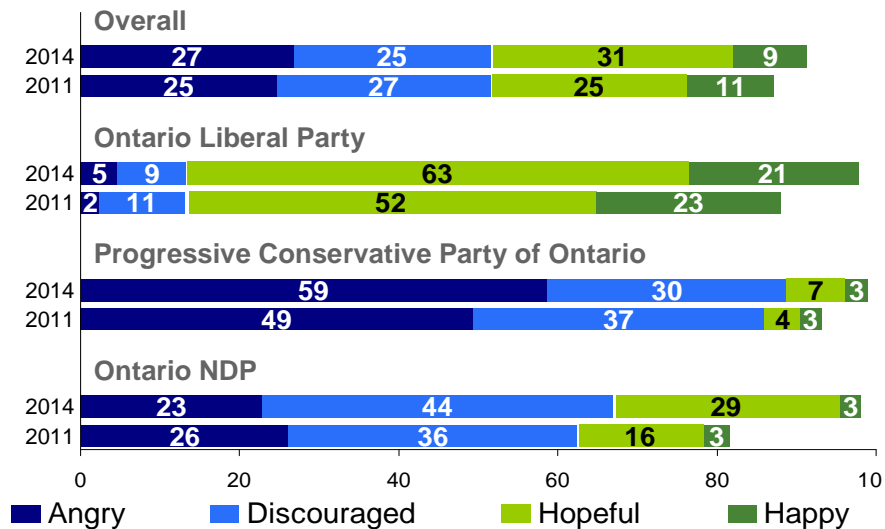
Q. How do you plan to vote in the upcoming provincial election on June 12th?\*



\*Respondents were also asked if they had already voted. Figures include the responses of those who voted in advance polls or by special ballot.  
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## Emotions towards current government

Q. When thinking about Kathleen Wynne's Liberal government, which of the following emotions best describes how you feel?\*



\*In 2011, respondents were asked about "Dalton McGuinty's Liberal Government"  
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## Detailed Tables:

<b>Provincial Vote Intention: Ontario</b>							
<i>Q. Thinking about the upcoming provincial election on June 12th, have you already voted either at an advance poll or by special ballot?</i>							
<i>[IF YES] How did you vote in this election?</i>							
<i>[IF NO] How do you plan to vote in the upcoming provincial election on June 12th?</i>							
<i>[If undecided] Even if you do not have a firm idea, are you leaning towards a party?</i>							
<i>[If yes] As it stands, towards which party are you leaning?</i>							
					Other	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>38.5%</b>	<b>33.7%</b>	<b>16.9%</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>3.6</b>
<b>REGION</b>							
Toronto/Core GTA	47.1%	24.3%	20.1%	6.1%	2.4%	196	7.0
Suburban GTA	40.9%	28.7%	15.4%	10.5%	4.6%	157	7.8
Southwest Ontario	34.4%	39.6%	11.2%	11.7%	3.0%	180	7.3
Ottawa and Eastern Ontario	31.1%	41.1%	22.6%	3.0%	2.2%	113	9.2
NE/Central/NW Ontario	35.2%	39.1%	18.3%	4.6%	2.8%	114	9.2
<b>GENDER</b>							
Male	36.6%	37.1%	16.6%	7.1%	2.6%	373	5.1
Female	41.2%	29.5%	17.3%	8.4%	3.6%	378	5.0
<b>AGE</b>							
<25	51.1%	26.8%	17.4%	4.6%	0.0%	22	20.9
25-44	39.1%	30.0%	18.1%	9.0%	3.8%	149	8.0
45-64	36.0%	35.1%	17.7%	8.9%	2.3%	291	5.7
65+	35.8%	40.2%	13.5%	5.0%	5.5%	288	5.8
<b>EDUCATION</b>							
High school or less	36.0%	35.0%	22.2%	5.0%	1.9%	143	8.2
College or CEGEP	29.3%	40.0%	17.4%	10.8%	2.6%	218	6.6
University or higher	48.8%	26.5%	12.7%	7.7%	4.3%	389	5.0
<b>COUNTRY OF BIRTH</b>							
Canada	37.5%	36.0%	15.7%	8.1%	2.8%	582	4.1
Other	43.8%	24.7%	20.2%	7.2%	4.0%	171	7.5

### **Emotions towards Current Government**

*Q. When thinking about Kathleen Wynne's Liberal government, which of the following emotions best describes how you feel?*

	Angry	Discouraged	Happy	Hopeful	Other	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>26.8%</b>	<b>24.7%</b>	<b>9.2%</b>	<b>30.6%</b>	<b>8.7%</b>	<b>927</b>	<b>3.2</b>
<b>REGION</b>							
Toronto/Core GTA	16.2%	27.1%	9.1%	40.9%	6.7%	223	6.6
Suburban GTA	26.2%	26.3%	12.0%	24.4%	11.2%	201	6.9
Southwest Ontario	35.5%	23.6%	10.4%	24.5%	6.0%	224	6.6
Ottawa and Eastern Ontario	30.3%	25.7%	4.0%	29.7%	10.2%	139	8.3
NE/Central/NW Ontario	26.4%	19.6%	8.4%	33.7%	12.0%	140	8.3
<b>GENDER</b>							
Male	31.5%	24.2%	10.7%	29.8%	3.8%	418	4.8
Female	23.7%	27.4%	8.7%	34.5%	5.8%	452	4.6
<b>AGE</b>							
<25	17.0%	18.4%	26.6%	38.0%	0.0%	23	20.4
25-44	25.8%	26.8%	7.0%	32.2%	8.2%	174	7.4
45-64	31.1%	27.3%	6.5%	31.1%	4.0%	342	5.3
65+	28.9%	26.1%	9.7%	32.6%	2.7%	328	5.4
<b>EDUCATION</b>							
High school or less	20.5%	25.4%	18.3%	29.6%	6.1%	181	7.3
College or CEGEP	36.0%	28.2%	4.3%	27.0%	4.5%	250	6.2
University or higher	24.7%	24.9%	7.5%	39.5%	3.5%	435	4.7
<b>COUNTRY OF BIRTH</b>							
Canada	29.7%	24.4%	9.2%	32.1%	4.7%	683	3.8
Other	19.0%	32.3%	11.4%	32.1%	5.2%	193	7.1
<b>PROVINCIAL VOTE INTENTION</b>							
Ontario Liberal Party	4.6%	8.6%	21.4%	63.2%	2.2%	297	5.7
Progressive Conservative	58.7%	30.0%	2.8%	7.4%	1.1%	265	6.0
Ontario NDP	22.8%	44.0%	2.6%	28.7%	1.8%	113	9.2
Green Party of Ontario	28.2%	47.8%	12.1%	11.9%	0.0%	56	13.1
Other	34.5%	29.2%	6.1%	27.7%	2.5%	29	18.2

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## Methodology:

This study was conducted using Interactive Voice Response (IVR) technology, which allows respondents to enter their preferences by punching the keypad on their phone, rather than telling them to an operator.

In an effort to reduce the coverage bias of landline only RDD, we created a dual landline/cell phone RDD sampling frame for this research. As a result, we are able to reach those with a landline and cell phone, as well as cell phone only households and landline only households. This methodology is not to be confused with the increasing proliferation of non-probability opt-in online panels which have recently been incorrectly reported in major national media with inappropriate margin of error estimates.

The field dates for this survey are May 29 – June 1, 2014. In total, a random sample of 927 Ontario residents aged 18 and over responded to the survey (including a sub-sample of 760 decided voters). The margin of error associated with the total sample is +/-3.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Please note that the margin of error increases when the results are sub-divided (i.e., error margins for sub-groups such as sex, age, education and region). All the data have been statistically weighted by **gender, age, and education** to ensure the sample's composition reflects that of the actual population of Ontario according to Census data.