

MEDIA RELEASE

October 1, 2008

New COMPAS Poll

Immense Public Frustration with Politicians Over the Global Warming and Climate Change Debate:

- 66% of Canadians condemn politicians for providing poor-to-bad explanations of global warming and climate change and for their policies on the same.
- 78% of Canadians think the public has a right to more, fair and objective information from the media on the professional and scientific opinions of all sides in the debate.

October 1- Winnipeg/Calgary: A new poll released today by COMPAS Research shows two-thirds of Canadians think politicians have done a poor-to-bad job of providing evidence to justify their proposals to fight carbon gases—including spending billions or levying higher taxes on gasoline or heating oil. Fewer than one in five (19%) think Canada's politicians have done a good-to-excellent job of justifying their plans.

In addition, the poll shows that an overwhelming majority think the media should provide more coverage of all sides in the debate over what causes global warming. That result was consistent regardless of voter intention, region of the country, or opinion on climate change.

For example, 81% of those who intend to vote for the Green party, this opinion was chosen as closest to their own: "The public has a right to more, fair and objective information from the media on the professional and scientific opinions of all sides in the debate." That compares to 81% for those who plan to vote Conservatives, 72% for the Liberals, 84% for the NDP, and 70% for those who plan to vote for the Bloc. Overall, 78% of respondents said that opinion reflects their own.

The poll was commissioned by the Frontier Centre for Public Policy, a Winnipeg-based think tank.

Similarly, on the issue of media coverage, among respondents who hold that humans are responsible for global warming (the anthropogenic adherents), 75% think that despite their own opinion, the public has a right to more, fair and objective information from the media.

"Even those who intend to vote Green and believe human activity is solely responsible for global warming think politicians have done an abysmal job of providing evidence to back up their proposals," said Mark Milke, director of research for the Frontier Centre. "That should tell you something about how badly the discussion has been handled to date.

"It appears the public is very fair in wanting to see and hear all scientific and professional sides in the debate over global warming," said Milke, who noted the poll shows 62% of Canadians believe global warming and/or climate change is taking place and are caused by human actions.

"Those who believe that human activity is the cause of global warming and climate change are as committed to fair reporting for all sides in the debate as Canadians as a whole," said Milke. "The public wants all sides aired in media reports; they do not think the debate has been settled; they also want politicians to justify their proposals to add carbon taxes and to spend billions fighting carbon emissions."

Examples of questions:

Table 2A: Politicians talk about spending billions to fight carbon gases and also about higher taxes on gasoline and heating oil. How good a job have politicians done in providing evidence to justify their proposals?

	ALL	BC	PRAIRIES	ON	QC	ATL
Bad job	16	10	13	19	17	19
Very poor	11	12	10	12	9	16
Poor	39	42	48	40	30	37
UNPROMPTED middling	7	8	9	4	9	7
Good	16	20	9	13	23	15
Very good	2	2	2	4	2	0
Excellent job	1	1	1	1	1	0
Don't know	8	6	9	8	10	7

Table 2B: Turning to the issue of debating climate change, global warming, and their causes, which of the following opinions is closest to you own? [For All Voters and by Voter Grouping According to Stated Voting Intention]

	ALL	CONS	LIBS	NDP	BLOC	GREEN	ANTHROPOGENIC ADHERENTS
The public has a right to more, fair and objective information from the media on the professional and scientific opinions of all sides in the debate	78	81	72	84	70	81	75
UNPROMPTED in between	4	5	3	2	7	3	4
The public needs no more information from the media on the opinions of all sides in the debate because car driving and other human activity are definitely the key climate problem	17	14	23	14	22	13	19
UNPROMPTED Don't know/Refuse to answer	1	1	3	0	0	3	2

The poll can be viewed in its entirety at the Frontier Centre website at www.fcpp.org, or at COMPAS Research website at www.compas.ca.

For more information, contact
 Mark Milke
 Director of Research
 Frontier Centre Calgary
 403-230-2435 (O)
 mmilke@fcpp.org