

**CARP Post-Budget Poll Report
April 20, 2012**

KEY FINDINGS

Strong majorities of members disagree with both the budget overall and the raising of the age of eligibility for OAS, and twice as many will vote against the government as will vote for it because of these issues.

The majority agree there is no good reason to change OAS and that the government's promise to reimburse the provinces for the missing funds is not a good idea, primarily because OAS is seen as a pension, not a government payout and there is no taste for applying for what is seen as 'welfare'. Reducing the claw back limit from \$69,000 is seen as a better idea than raising the eligibility age. Those who take a position on the schedule of the age change say it is appropriate.

Few have heard of the Third Quarter or TIOW programs, but those who have think them effective. There is strong agreement with the government plan to require federally regulated industries to insure their long term disability plans.

Military budget cuts and government personnel cuts are met with approval.

The vast majority agree with the Ontario budget provision requiring wealthy seniors to pay more for their prescription drugs.

Close to one half of members would apply for a home renovation tax credit, half say it would allow them to stay at home and out of care longer and the majority agree such a tax credit is a worthwhile budgetary expenditure.

Close to one half of members will watch at least some of the Stanley Cup playoffs, and just more than one tenth will watch "every game they can".

Conservative and Liberal support is down recently, the Conservatives because of robocalls and the F-35, and the Liberals because of Tom Mulcair. The NDP are up sharply in voter preference.

FEDERAL BUDGET

The majority of our members do not agree that Minister Flaherty's recent budget is good for older Canadians and those on fixed incomes (71%), and close to half say they "disagree strongly" (46%).

Finance Minister Flaherty presented the federal budget last Thursday. How much do you agree this budget meets the needs of older Canadians and those on fixed incomes?

AGREE	23%
Agree strongly	5%
Agree	18%
DISAGREE	71%
Disagree	27%
Disagree strongly	46%
DON'T KNOW	4%

Close to two thirds disagree this budget will create growth and prosperity while protecting the vulnerable (61%).

How much do you agree that Minister Flaherty's budget will help Canada grow and achieve prosperity, while protecting the most vulnerable?

AGREE	29%
Agree strongly	5%
Agree	24%
DISAGREE	61%
Disagree	33%
Disagree strongly	28%
DON'T KNOW	10%

Three times as many say they will vote against this government because of the budget (57%) as say they will vote for the government (21%), and those voting against include one quarter whose views may have been switched by the budget (25%).

Are you more likely to vote for the government, less likely to vote for the government or neither more nor less likely to vote for the government because of this budget?

VOTE FOR GOVERNMENT	21%
Would have voted for government anyway	11%
More likely to vote for government	10%
Neither more nor less likely	21%
VOTE AGAINST GOVERNMENT	57%
Would not have voted for government anyway	32%
Less likely to vote for government	25%
OTHER	*
DON'T KNOW	1%

Two thirds disagree with the decision to raise the age for OAS from 65 to 67 (64%), and the largest group “disagree strongly” (42%).

In the budget, the age of eligibility for Old Age Security was raised from 65 to 67, starting in 2023. How much do you agree with this budget provision?

AGREE	35%
Agree strongly	13%
Agree	21%
DISAGREE	64%
Disagree	22%
Disagree strongly	42%
DON'T KNOW	2%

Once again, three times as many members say they will vote against the government because of OAS (57%) than say they will vote for it (21%), and this includes one quarter whose votes may shift (25%).

Are you more likely to vote for the government, less likely to vote for the government or neither more nor less likely to vote for the government because of the decision to change the age for OAS?

VOTE FOR GOVERNMENT	21%
Would have voted for government anyway	11%
More likely to vote for government	10%
Neither more nor less likely	21%
VOTE AGAINST GOVERNMENT	57%
Would not have voted for government anyway	32%
Less likely to vote for government	25%
OTHER	*
DON'T KNOW	1%

The majority of members do not believe there is any good reason to change OAS (53%), but the fact that just two workers will support each retiree, instead of four (17%) and the general claim that OAS is “unsustainable” (10%) also draw attention.

The government has given several reasons for raising the OAS age - which of the following do you accept as a good reason?

No good reason to change OAS	53%
2 workers supporting each retiree instead of 4	17%
OAS unsustainable	10%
If OAS not cut, no OAS in future	7%
Other countries have raised age to 67	5%
Need to help future generations	5%
OTHER	2%
DON'T KNOW	2%

Two thirds do not think the government's assurances of aid to the provinces to tide over lower income seniors is a good idea (65%), primarily because they claim (incorrectly) that OAS is not welfare but a pension (46%). Among those who think it is a good idea (26%), the largest group assume those needing help will get it (18%).

The government acknowledged that poor seniors will have trouble waiting the extra two years but only provided for those already on federal government assistance or CPP disability pensions and said that they will reimburse the provinces for additional costs for seniors who seek social assistance. What is your reaction to this?

GOOD IDEA	26%
Those needing help will get it	18%
Limit overall spending on OAS	5%
Provinces will bear the load	1%
OTHER	2%
Neither good idea nor not such a good idea	6%
NOT SUCH A GOOD IDEA	65%
OAS is a pension, not welfare	46%
Provinces will waste money on bureaucracy	9%
Those who need will not apply	5%
OTHER	3%
DON'T KNOW	3%

Of the three main options for reducing the cost of OAS, members pick lowering the eligibility limit from \$121,000 (42%). The other two solutions, reducing the claw back limit (24%) and raising the eligibility age (22%) both garner about one quarter support.

There are three options for reducing the cost of OAS. Which of these would you have preferred?

Reduce eligibility limit from \$121,000	42%
Reduce claw back limit from \$69,000	24%
Raising age from 65 to 67 as in budget	22%
DON'T KNOW	12%

When asked whether the schedule for raising the age for OAS is appropriate, more than half say no changes should occur (55%), but, among those who make a choice, it is seen the timing is correct (22%).

The age for OAS will begin to rise gradually in 2023 for those Canadians who are now 54 or younger. By 2029 all Canadians will have to wait until age 67 to receive OAS. By that time, most of the Baby Boomers will have already received their OAS. What do you think of the timing of the phase-in of the proposed change to the OAS age?

Should be no change to OAS	55%
Change is planned at the right time	22%
Change should come sooner to include boomers	12%
Change should come later to exclude boomers	7%
DON'T KNOW	4%

Four-in-ten agree the Third Quarter project will be effective (41%), but a similar proportion have never heard of it (39%).

In the budget, the government committed to \$2 million a year supporting the Third Quarter program, which connects employers seeking experienced employees with older workers seeking employment, primarily in remote or one-industry towns. How much do you agree this is an effective way to create jobs and lower unemployment for older workers in those communities?

AGREE	41%
Agree strongly	8%
Agree	33%
DISAGREE	15%
Disagree	9%
Disagree strongly	6%
NEVER HEARD OF THIRD QUARTER	39%
DON'T KNOW	5%

In the case of the TIOW program, fewer think it effective (35%) than those who have never heard of it (39%).

The government will continue to support the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers (TIOW) program with \$25 million a year to assist older workers in vulnerable smaller communities. This money is given to the provinces to design their own employment programs which vary across the country. How much do you agree this is an effective way to create jobs and lower unemployment for older workers?

AGREE	35%
Agree strongly	5%
Agree	30%
DISAGREE	23%
Disagree	14%
Disagree strongly	8%
NEVER HEARD OF TIOW	38%
DON'T KNOW	5%

Once again, the proportion thinking TIOW will be successful (24%) is smaller than the proportion who have never heard of the program (29%).

How successful do you think the TIOW program will be at finding jobs for older Canadians?

SUCCESSFUL	24%
Very successful	2%
Somewhat successful	23%
NOT SUCCESSFUL	39%
Not very successful	26%
Not at all successful	13%
NEVER HEARD OF TIOW	29%
DON'T KNOW	8%

Two thirds agree that new plans for federally regulated industries to insure their long-term disability planes will be effective (64%).

The government has also committed to bringing in legislation requiring federally regulated employers like banks, airlines and telecommunications to insure their employee long term disability plans from now on. How much do you agree this will be an effective protection for employee long term disability benefits in case of bankruptcy?

AGREE	64%
Agree strongly	12%
Agree	52%
DISAGREE	17%
Disagree	12%
Disagree strongly	5%
DON'T KNOW	18%

More than half agree this protection should have been offered retroactively to Nortel pensioners (53%).

How much do you agree this protection should have been made retroactive to protect, among others, the Nortel pensioners?

AGREE	53%
Agree strongly	18%
Agree	35%
DISAGREE	30%
Disagree	23%
Disagree strongly	7%
DON'T KNOW	17%

Two thirds agree with military cuts in the budget (67%).

In the budget, the government committed to cutting the military's budget by 5% from \$20 billion to \$19 billion a year. How much do you agree this is a reasonable sacrifice on the part of the military?

AGREE	67%
Agree strongly	20%
Agree	47%
DISAGREE	27%
Disagree	17%
Disagree strongly	10%
DON'T KNOW	6%

Slightly fewer agree with personnel cuts in the budget (55%).

The government also committed to saving \$5.2 billion by 2015 through cuts to 19,000 civil service jobs, 12,000 through lay offs and 7000 through attrition. How much do you agree this is a reasonable move in a budget which the government says is all about job creation?

AGREE	55%
Agree strongly	23%
Agree	32%
DIAGREE	41%
Disagree	24%
Disagree strongly	17%
DON'T KNOW	4%

ONTARIO BUDGET

The vast majority agree with the Ontario budget provision requiring wealthy seniors to pay more for their prescription drugs (82%).

Ontario Finance Minister Dwight Duncan presented that province's budget last Tuesday. In it, single seniors earning more than \$100K and couples earning more than \$160K will pay a higher deductible for their drug benefits, 3% of net income. How much do you agree with this budget provision?

AGREE	82%
Agree strongly	32%
Agree	50%
DISAGREE	12%
Disagree	7%
Disagree strongly	5%
DON'T KNOW	6%

HOME RENO TAX CREDIT

There is an even split between those members who say they would participate in a home renovation tax credit (46%) and those who say they would not (47%).

How likely would you be to apply for a home renovation tax credit designed to make your home more accessible?

LIKELY	46%
Very likely	16%
Somewhat likely	30%
NOT LIKELY	47%
DON'T KNOW	7%

One half of members say renovating their homes for accessibility would allow them to stay out of care longer (50%). Notably, one quarter don't know if this is the case (26%).

If you were able to renovate your home to make it more accessible, would this allow you to live in your home longer and avoid going into assisted living?

Yes	50%
No	25%
DON'T KNOW	26%

The majority agree that the budgeted cost of this tax credit is worth the benefits it confers (58%), but it is clear there is some ambiguity on this ("DON'T KNOW" - 21%).

How much do you agree the budgetary cost of a home renovation tax credit like this is worth the benefits?

AGREE	58%
Agree strongly	13%
Agree	45%
DISAGREE	21%
Disagree	16%
Disagree strongly	5%
DON'T KNOW	21%

STANLEY CUP

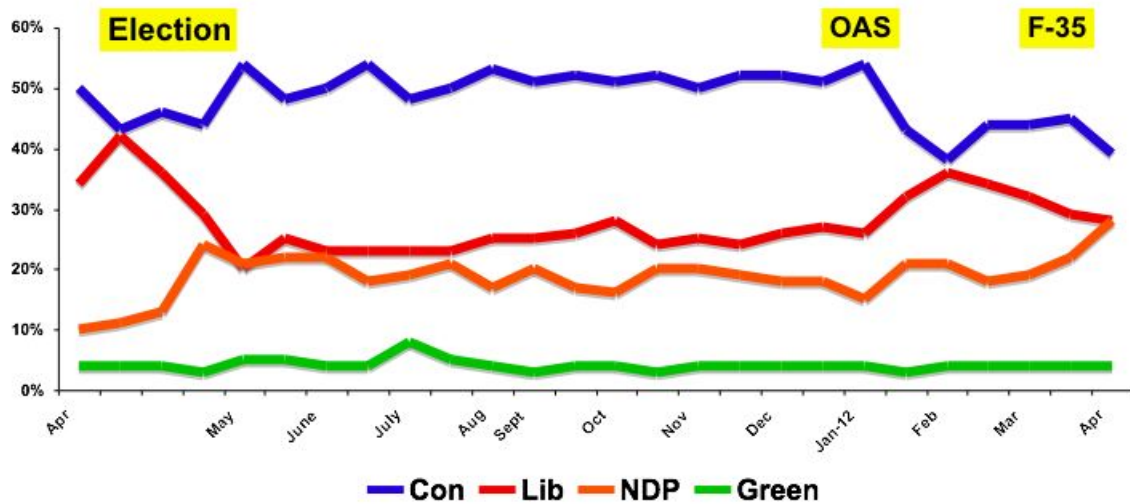
Members are evenly split on whether they will watch the Stanley Cup (45%) or not (43%). One half of those who will watch will watch a game or two (21%) and a third will watch every game they can (13%)

The Stanley Cup playoffs will start next week. Which of the following best describes your reaction to this?

WILL WATCH	45%
Might watch part of a game or two	21%
I'll watch as many games as I can	13%
Only watch as long as Canadian team in it	9%
Only watch as long as my team in it	3%
WON'T WATCH	43%
Who cares	43%
Oh no, Peter Mansbridge and The National bumped	5%
Pretend I'm watching to have something to talk about	3%
OTHER	3%
DON'T KNOW	1%

ELECTORAL PREFERENCE

The Conservatives have undergone a significant decline in support since they introduced their plan to change OAS, and this was just compounded by scandals over robocalls and the F-35. The Government party now sits at 39%, down from a high of 54% before OAS broke. In the meantime, since the election of Tom Mulcair as party leader, the NDP has seen their fortunes improve to the point where they are tied with the faltering Liberals (at 28% each).



More than 2500 CARP Poll™ panel members responded to this poll between April 3 and 5. The margin of error for a probability sample this size is plus or minus 2.0%, 19 times out of 20. That is, if you asked all members of the CARP Poll™ panel the identical questions, their responses would be within 2%, either up or down, of the results shown here, 95% of the time