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NEWS LOCAL

Liar image fading, poll suggests

By **ANTONELLA ARTUSO**, Free Press Queen's Park Bureau



TORONTO -- A new SES Research poll suggests Premier Dalton McGuinty has had some success shedding his image as a liar.

SES pollster Nikita Nanos said the number of people polled who without prompting offered "lied/liar" as their chief dislike of the premier has dropped 16 per cent since February.

One in four Ontarians polled still see the premier as someone who has a spotty relationship with the truth.

"It's like the temperature in the kitchen has gone down from 95 degrees to 85 degrees, but it's still hot," Nanos said.

More people now appear ambivalent in their feelings about the premier, which may give McGuinty an opening to gain their support over the remaining half of his mandate, he added.

Nanos said the opposition Tories ran a highly successful campaign to label McGuinty a promise-breaker, but appear to have let up over the past six months.

"There's kind of a message for the Conservatives that they've given (McGuinty) a bit of an easy ride," he said.

SES Research also polled Ontarians for their views on Progressive Conservative Leader John Tory and New Democrat Leader Howard Hampton.

Tory is viewed as a businessman, honest and a good speaker, but the vast majority did not have a clear impression of him.

"Four out of every 10 voters cannot describe what they like or dislike about him," Nanos said.


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And while Hampton was seen as policy-oriented and compassionate, most Ontarians were also unsure of what to make of him.

SES RESEARCH POLL

Top things people like about Premier Dalton McGuinty:

Nothing 39%

Unsure 24%

Honest 8%

Doing a good job 3%

Top dislikes:

Nothing 26%

Lied/Liar 25%

Weak 9%

Unsure 8%

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