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Tory 'positive draw,' poll shows

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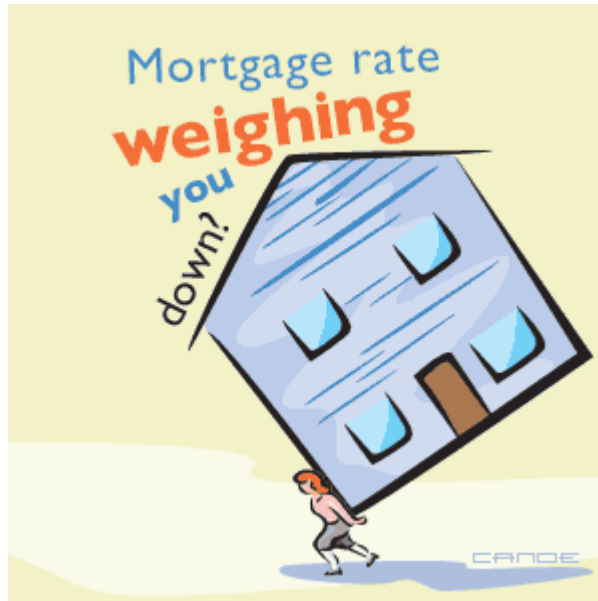
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TORONTO -- A man named Tory offers the party called Tory its best chance to woo back voters, according to an SES poll obtained by Sun Media. Former Rogers Cable executive John Tory was selected by 21 per cent of those surveyed as the leader who would most likely draw their support to the Conservatives.

Second-place Jim Flaherty was chosen by only 12 per cent of the 500 eligible voters surveyed and Frank Klees by six per cent.

"His positive draw is almost twice that of Jim Flaherty and almost three times that of Frank Klees," SES Research president Nik Nanos said, adding the result reflects the perception that Tory's reputation received a positive bounce in Toronto's mayoral race last fall, despite losing to David Miller.

"It also suggests that he represents the most growth potential if he's elected leader," Nanos said.



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Tory 'positive draw,' poll shows

One-quarter of those surveyed said they were undecided, while 32 per cent said they wouldn't vote for any of them.

The survey results come on the eve of the party's leadership convention.

The party will say goodbye to its leader and former premier Ernie Eves tomorrow afternoon and announce his replacement soon afterward.

More than 60,000 party members are eligible to vote.

Flaherty's campaign yesterday dismissed poll results previously released by SES that suggested voters are more likely to support a centrist leader like Tory than candidates perceived as more right wing, such as Flaherty and Klees.

"The next provincial election takes place three years from now, not today," a Flaherty news release says.

The SES poll also found Conservatives and Liberals in a statistical tie (40 per cent to 38, respectively) among support from those surveyed.

"If the Conservatives can register 40 per cent of the vote, a lot of the baggage of the previous mandate is history," Nanos said.

The survey's results are considered accurate plus or minus 4.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

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