

Immediate Release: June 18, 2002

New poll shows British Columbians don't want to spend tax dollars on Olympics

Spec News Release

Only 19.7 percent of British Columbians are prepared to spend public funds on the Olympics games, according to a poll released today. The poll, which was conducted for SPEC by MacIntyre and Mustel Research between June 06 -12, asked 506 British Columbians to rank environmental protection, health care, education, public transit, police services and the Olympics when it comes to allocating public money.

Spending for the Olympics rated last behind transit, environmental protection, police and public safety, education and health care as spending priorities for the majority of British Columbians. Vancouverites, with only 13.4 percent listing the Olympics as a priority, are even less amenable to using tax dollars for the Olympics than the provincial average.

"The provincial and federal governments say we don't have money to clean up Vancouver's sewage system that pours 700 million litres of nearly raw sewage and toxic effluent into Vancouver Harbour and Georgia Strait every day," said SPEC president David Cadman. "And we're told there is no money for hospital beds or classrooms. Yet, the federal and provincial governments last week came up with \$620 million for the Olympics. It is clear that most British Columbians want scarce public funds to pay for essential services before any Olympics.

"A lot more discussion needs to occur with British Columbians before millions of dollars are committed to a 14 day sports entertainment event."

The poll results are considered accurate to within plus or minus 4.4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Full results and tables are available at: <http://www.spec.bc.ca/spec/documents/olympicsetable.pdf>.