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MEDIA RELEASE

Labor Clinging to Power

Labor is set to lose a swathe of key marginal seats on Saturday, but possibly not quite enough to give the Liberal-Nationals a majority in their own right. It all swings on several too close to call seats, including the ALP-Greens contests in Brunswick, Richmond and Melbourne which may hand the Greens the balance of power in a hung Parliament.

A JWS Research State-wide mega poll including individual seat samples of up to 300 or more voters in each of 24 key seats shows that if an election had been held last weekend, Labor's 22 seat majority would have been slashed to single figures. Likely losses at this stage include Mount Waverley, Forest Hill, Mitcham, South Barwon, Mordialloc and Burwood. Prahran is on a knife edge and too close to call, whilst the Greens might pick up Brunswick, with Melbourne and Richmond also too close to call.

There are unlikely to be any seat gains for Labor, but they look to have successfully sandbagged a range of key seats (especially regional seats), including Gembrook, Frankston, Ripon, Bendigo East, Bentleigh, Ballarat West and Ballarat East.

In summary, based on the seat by seat boost sample results and all other things being equal, if the election had been held last weekend, the result would have been Labor 49 seats, Coalition 38 seats, Greens 1 seat and 3 seats too close to call (Prahran, Melbourne and Richmond).

"If these results hold up at Saturday's election three scenarios are all in play. Labor may still be able to scrape home and form majority Government with John Brumby elected in his own right as Premier. However Labor's lead has been reduced to such a small number of seats that Ted Baillieu and the Liberals could yet snatch an unlikely victory. Alternatively, the Greens could find themselves in the position of king makers as part of a Labor-Greens minority Government," said John Scales, the Head of Strategy and Research at JWS Research.

The JWS Research poll of 9,218 voters across Victoria included a boost sample of 8,210 voters in 24 key seats, including 14 Labor marginals, 6 Liberal marginals, 3 Labor seats under threat from the Greens and the seat of Gippsland East held by Independent Craig Ingram – but which looks likely to fall to the Coalition. A full list of results in these key seats is appended.

The survey was conducted from Saturday through Monday 20th – 22nd November 2010 using automated telephone polling technology. Voters were asked a series of pre-recorded questions on their voting intentions and other political issues.

"With this automated polling technology, we obtain reliable results in individual key seats as well as a representative State-wide sample across all seats. The boost samples in key seats allow us to publish information which would otherwise only be accessible to the major political parties, so the public is also in the know," Mr Scales said.

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“Importantly, what this poll shows is that you can’t just apply swings on a State-wide, geographic or marginality basis to calculate the result at any given time. Variations in local campaigns, local issues and local candidates demands that all seats are unique and need to be surveyed in detail. For example, applying swings on a grouped seats basis would not identify that although Labor has been stung in its most marginal seats in the 0-4% range, they may yet steal the march of the Opposition and the Greens by holding Gembrook, Bentleigh, Prahran, Melbourne and Richmond.

In other results from this JWS Research poll:

- In a less than ringing endorsement of either leader, John Brumby (36%) is slightly ahead of Ted Baillieu (32%) in the preferred Premier stakes, with 16% saying they prefer neither and a further 16% undecided.
- 17% of Victorian voters are either very or fairly likely to change their mind, 6% are undecided about whether or not they will change their stated preference and 4% are as yet still undecided who to vote for – making it a very open contest with the possibility of last minute swings that could still influence who forms Government after Saturday.
- 46% of voters expect John Brumby and Labor to win the election on Saturday and only 25% expect Ted Baillieu and the Liberal Nationals to win. 21% think it is too close to call and 8% are undecided.
- Voters are split at 39% all as to who would be the best for Victoria – a re-elected John Brumby and Labor Government or a change to Ted Baillieu and the Liberal Nationals, with 22% undecided.
- On who has run the best campaign so far, 34% say Labor and 22% the Liberal Nationals, but more than one in four (27%) say both major parties have run poor campaigns.

“The combination of a lack of engagement with the leaders, expectations of a Brumby-Labor win, sizable proportions of voters yet to make up their mind and who have found the campaigning efforts by both sides wanting, plus the added uncertainty as to which party is best for Victoria make for a potent mix.”

“With Labor’s majority apparently reduced to only a handful of seats, we might still see a surprise result on Saturday. Seats like Seymour, Carrum, Bellarine and Bendigo West are now also rumoured to be in play, which means it isn’t over until it’s over,” said Mr Scales.

Both major parties have a problem with low State-wide primary votes, of just 35% for Labor (down 8 points since the 2006 election) and 39% for the Liberal National Coalition (down by less than one point). Support for the Greens is a high 19% (up 9 points) and 8% state they will give their first preference to other parties or candidates. Just 4% were undecided on primary voting intention.

John Scales is a foundation partner and the Head of Strategy and Research at JWS Research, an independent strategy and polling company specialising in crisis and risk management research for corporate and public affairs clients. John Scales has a 20 year plus heritage in political and corporate research and strategy.

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Table 1: Two Party Preferred Vote – Statewide and Key Seats

Two Party Preferred Vote (83 ALP v LNP contests)*	Seats	Sample	2006 TPP margin	20-22 Nov 2010		TPP swing since 2006	ALP net seat gains	ALP seats post election (45 seats required to Govern)
				ALP	LNP			
Victoria	83	7,817	+3.6	50.1%	49.9%	-3.5	-6	49 (-6)
Melbourne	53	4,646	+8.3	52.9%	47.1%	-5.4	-7	48 (-7)
Country/Regional Victoria	30	3,171	-4.8	45.0%	55.0%	-0.2	0	
ALP seats	51	5,394	+12.4	55.1%	44.9%	-7.3	-18	41 (-14) Unlikely, caused by loss of votes in safe ALP/LNP seats
LNP seats	32	2,423	-10.5	41.9%	58.1%	+2.4	+4	
ALP >12% seats *	21	247	+21.0	60.6%	39.4%	-10.4	0	46 (-9)
ALP >8-12% seats	10	163	+10.2	54.6%	45.4%	-5.6	0	
ALP 4%-8% seats	11	1,855	+6.6	52.4%	47.6%	-4.2	0	
ALP 0-4% seats	9	3,129	+2.3	47.2%	52.8%	-5.1	-9	
LNP 0-4% seats	7	1,605	-1.7	42.3%	57.7%	-6.0	0	
LNP 4%-8% seats	5	458	-6.1	39.0%	61.0%	-4.9	0	
LNP 8-12% seats	11	196	-10.0	45.6%	54.4%	+5.6	0	
LNP >12% seats	9	164	-20.4	38.6%	61.4%	+9.0	0	

Note: 3% undecided on primary vote and 9% undecided on TPP vote have been excluded to enable direct comparison with 2006 election results.

** Excludes the ALP seats of Northcote, Brunswick, Richmond, Melbourne and the seat of Gippsland East held by the Independent Craig Ingram.*

*** Includes the ALP seats of Ballarat East, Ballarat West, Bentleigh, Bendigo East, Ripon, Burwood, Prahran, Mordialloc, Frankston, South Barwon, Mitcham, Forest Hill, Gembrook and Mt Waverley and the Coalition seats of Ferntree Gully, Kilsyth, Hastings, Narracan, Bayswater and Box Hill.*

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Table 2: Seat by Seat in the Key Marginals

Seat by seat in the key marginals	Sample	TPP margin 2006 Election	TPP Vote 20-22 Nov 2010		TPP swing since 2006	Likely Result
			ALP	LNP		
Brunswick*	300	+27.9	47%	53% (Greens)	-30.5	ALP Likely Loss to Greens
Richmond*	285	+25.2	51%	49% (Greens)	-24.2	Too Close to Call
Melbourne*	222	+21.5	49%	51% (Greens)	-22.9	Too Close to Call
Ballarat East	345	+6.7	54%	46%	-2.9	ALP Hold
Ballarat West	339	+6.6	59%	41%	+2.2	ALP Hold
Bentleigh	351	+6.4	57%	43%	+0.7	ALP Hold
Bendigo East	420	+5.4	54%	46%	-1.2	ALP Hold
Ripon	288	+4.4	53%	47%	-1.1	ALP Likely Hold
Burwood	373	+3.8	43%	57%	-10.6	ALP Loss
Prahran	269	+3.6	50%	50%	-3.1	Too Close to Call
Mordialloc	325	+3.6	42%	58%	-12.0	ALP Loss
Frankston	324	+3.3	54%	46%	+0.6	ALP Hold
South Barwon	384	+2.3	44%	56%	-8.0	ALP Loss
Mitcham	376	+2.0	48%	52%	-3.7	ALP Likely Loss
Forest Hill	357	+0.8	47%	53%	-4.0	ALP Likely Loss
Gembrook	349	+0.7	52%	48%	+1.7	ALP Likely Hold
Mt Waverley	372	+0.4	44%	56%	-6.3	ALP Loss
Ferntree Gully	283	-0.1	36%	64%	-13.8	LIB Hold
Kilsyth	318	-0.4	47%	53%	-3.1	LIB Hold
Hastings	296	-1.0	42%	58%	-6.7	LIB Hold
Narracan	350	-2.7	40%	60%	-7.0	LIB Hold
Bayswater	324	-2.9	44%	56%	-3.1	LIB Hold
Box Hill	380	-5.3	40%	60%	-4.5	LIB Hold
Gippsland East (IND) **	580	-13.6	43% (IND)	57%	-7.0	IND Loss to NAT

* TPP result calculated as ALP versus Greens. ** TPP result calculated as IND versus LNP.

The vote questions asked:

PRIMARY VOTE: "If the Victorian State election was held today who would you vote for in your local lower house seat?"

IF UNDECIDED: "Even though you are undecided, do you have a leaning towards any of the following candidates or parties in your local seat?"

PREFERENCE QUESTIONS: "Even though it is not your first choice, if the State election was held today and you must choose between (Labor and the Liberals or Nationals) / (Labor and the Greens) / (the Independent and the Liberals or Nationals), who would you likely choose?"

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Table 3: Preferred Premier – by Primary Vote

Preferred Premier	Total 20-22 Nov 2010	Primary Vote				
		Labor	Coalition	Greens	Others	Can't say
John Brumby	36%	81%	5%	32%	16%	13%
Ted Baillieu	32%	4%	77%	5%	13%	1%
Neither	16%	5%	7%	40%	45%	22%
Undecided	16%	10%	11%	23%	26%	64%

Question: Who is your preferred Premier of Victoria?

Table 4: Preferred Premier – by Vote Strength, Gender and Area

Preferred Premier	Total 20-22 Nov 2010	Soft and undecided voters	Men	Women	City	Country/ Regional Victoria
John Brumby	36%	31%	33%	39%	41%	29%
Ted Baillieu	32%	12%	28%	36%	31%	33%
Neither	16%	24%	18%	14%	14%	20%
Undecided	16%	33%	21%	11%	15%	18%

Question: Who is your preferred Premier of Victoria?

Table 5: Win Expectations – by Primary Vote

Preferred Premier	Total 20-22 Nov 2010	Primary Vote				
		Labor	Coalition	Greens	Others	Can't say
John Brumby and Labor	46%	78%	24%	44%	33%	23%
Ted Baillieu and the Liberal Nationals Coalition	25%	4%	53%	11%	21%	14%
Too close to call or minority Government	21%	12%	18%	36%	35%	29%
Not sure	8%	6%	5%	9%	10%	34%

Question: Who do you think will win Government overall at the Victorian State election?

Table 6: Win Expectations – by Vote Strength, Gender and Area

Preferred Premier	Total 20-22 Nov 2010	Soft and undecided voters	Men	Women	City	Country/ Regional Victoria
John Brumby and Labor	46%	42%	42%	49%	50%	39%
Ted Baillieu and the Liberal Nationals Coalition	25%	20%	26%	25%	23%	30%
Too close to call or minority Government	21%	21%	23%	19%	20%	22%
Not sure	8%	16%	9%	7%	7%	9%

Question: Who do you think will win Government overall at the Victorian State election?

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Table 7: Best for Victoria – by Primary Vote

Preferred Premier	Total 20-22 Nov 2010	Primary Vote				
		Labor	Coalition	Greens	Others	Can't say
John Brumby and Labor	39%	81%	3%	45%	27%	9%
Ted Baillieu and the Liberal Nationals Coalition	39%	2%	88%	15%	34%	9%
Undecided	22%	17%	9%	40%	39%	82%

Question: Which one of the following statements do you most agree with? Press one if you agree it will be better for Victoria if Labor is re-elected to Government. Press two if you agree it will be better for Victoria if there is a change to a Liberal Nationals Government. Press three if you are undecided.

Table 8: Best for Victoria – by Vote Strength, Gender and Area

Preferred Premier	Total 20-22 Nov 2010	Soft and undecided voters	Men	Women	City	Country/ Regional Victoria
John Brumby and Labor	39%	33%	36%	41%	42%	33%
Ted Baillieu and the Liberal Nationals Coalition	39%	22%	36%	42%	36%	44%
Undecided	22%	45%	27%	17%	22%	23%

Question: Which one of the following statements do you most agree with? Press one if you agree it will be better for Victoria if Labor is re-elected to Government. Press two if you agree it will be better for Victoria if there is a change to a Liberal Nationals. Press three if you are undecided.

Table 9: Run the Best Campaign – by Primary Vote

Preferred Premier	Total 20-22 Nov 2010	Primary Vote				
		Labor	Coalition	Greens	Others	Can't say
John Brumby and Labor	34%	68%	10%	30%	25%	11%
Ted Baillieu and the Liberal Nationals Coalition	22%	3%	48%	12%	10%	1%
Both major parties have run poor campaigns	27%	14%	27%	39%	47%	45%
Undecided	17%	14%	15%	19%	18%	44%

Question: Which one of the two major parties do you think has run the best campaign so far?

Table 10: Run the Best Campaign – by Vote Strength, Gender and Area

Preferred Premier	Total 20-22 Nov 2010	Soft and undecided voters	Men	Women	City	Country/ Regional Victoria
John Brumby and Labor	34%	35%	32%	37%	37%	29%
Ted Baillieu and the Liberal Nationals Coalition	22%	12%	19%	25%	20%	25%
Both major parties have run poor campaigns	27%	31%	28%	27%	25%	30%
Undecided	17%	23%	22%	12%	17%	16%

Question: Which one of the two major parties do you think has run the best campaign so far?