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Greening the Hill: Overview and Evolution

2.1 Programme Objectives

The Greening the Hill programme sprung from a common desire among federal Parliamentarians, led by the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Honourable John A. Fraser, to act upon the shared concern for the environment. As the central legislative body in Canada, it made good sense for the House of Commons to lead the way in demonstrating how individuals, the public, and private sector have the power and means to lessen society's environmental impact.

Officially launched on June 12, 1990, the programme originated in 1989 with the creation of a Task Force on the Environment. It was mandated to carry out a systematic review of House policies and practices from an environmental perspective. A comprehensive environmental action plan was prepared for the House of Commons and, having passed through several phases, the programme has now reached the stage where its financial accomplishments should be quantified and highlighted.

2.2 Partnership Arrangements

The driving force behind Greening the Hill has been the personal commitment of Speaker John A. Fraser, along with the encouragement and support of the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Environment. Actual implementation of many of the initiatives could not have been achieved without equal commitment on the part of all Members, staff, management and employees of the House of Commons.

Cooperation and support from other public sector organizations such as the National Capital Commission (NCC), which is responsible for grounds maintenance; and Public Works Canada (PWC), which acts as building and property manager for the House of Commons, has been critical to the successful implementation of the programme. In addition, both Environment Canada and PWC have provided financial support for some of the larger initiatives.

2.3 Programme Scope and Evolution

To understand the programme's benefits, one must appreciate the depth and breadth of Greening the Hill. For detailed information on the nature and implementation of many of the programme's initiatives, reference should be made to a previous publication of the House of Commons, "Greening the Hill: A Retrospect". For quick reference, a brief summary of the programme follows. It should be noted that all initiatives apply to