

**THE GREENING OF THE GREAT LAKES**

**CHICAGO AND TORONTO**

**A TALE OF TWO CITIES**

**Great Lakes Cities Initiative**

**2004 International Association of Great Lakes and  
St. Lawrence Mayors' Conference**

**July 14 to 16, 2004**  
**In Chicago, Illinois**

**Notes for a Speech**

**Hon. Jerry S. Grafstein, Q.C. - Toronto**  
**The Senate of Canada**

## **THE GREENING OF THE GREAT LAKES AND CHICAGO AND TORONTO**

### **A TALE OF TWO CITIES**

May I thank the organizers, especially Mayor Daley, for this invitation and his leadership and commitment to the “greening” of the entire Great Lakes Basin?

I am honoured to be here in my capacity as Co-Chair of the Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group – Canada’s largest inter-parliamentary group. Our mandate is to explore opportunities and help resolve irritants in our common interests that lie at the base of our capacious bi-lateral relationship with the United States – the greatest bilateral relationship in the world. I just returned from Idaho. There we were hosted at Coeur d’Alene by Senator Mike Crapo from Idaho. There we held our 45<sup>th</sup> annual three-day conference with private, candid exchanges of views between Members of the Senate and House of Commons on the Canadian side and Members of the Senate and House of Representatives on the American side. This meeting was honest, fruitful and mutually beneficial to both our citizens.

Parliamentarians on both sides of our border continue to reach a deeper understanding of the complicated issues of mutual interest and mutual concern. So I am delighted to be here, in the great city of Chicago, to participate in the Great Lakes Cities Initiative of common interest to our citizens on both sides of our border.

May I commend all the Great Lakes Mayors and city officials here who share Mayor Daley’s “green” vision, a habitable Great Lakes environment, and who are working so astutely to make the Great Lakes a sustainable reality!

My good friend, the Honourable Herb Gray – one of Canada’s greatest Parliamentarians and now Canadian Co-Chair of the International Joint Commission – and his U.S. Co-Chair, Dennis Schornack, will no doubt recount to you the long and useful history of the International Joint Commission, which was established just after the turn of the last century to resolve bi-lateral issues, especially contentious border and water issues. The IJC is one of the great and unsung institutions that has secured, solidified and amplified our Canada-U.S. relationship. Its decisions have been based on “science” and “best practices” and are a model of dispute settlement resolution and reconciliation.

### **U.S. is Canada’s Greatest Job “Outsource”**

A brief commercial on Canada-U.S. relations. Over 300,000 trips are made back and forth across the border each and every day. Over one billion, one hundred million trips across our border each and every year. The U.S. is Canada’s largest trading partner. Since the FTA over a decade ago, amplified by NAFTA, our two-way trade has grown from \$200 million to \$1.4 billion a day to over \$400 billion a year. 85% of our two-way

trade is with the United States. The U.S. is Canada's greatest "outsourcer" for jobs - over 5 million U.S. trade-related jobs!

Unbeknownst to most Americans or Members of Congress, Canada is the number one market for the products and services of 37 states of the Union. In Illinois alone, almost 300,000 direct jobs are related to trade with Canada. So we share this common continent. We share common values and we are essentially each other's single largest trading partner.

### **Canada is U.S.'s #1 Energy Supplier**

One last point. Canada is now the largest supplier of energy to the United States, outstripping the Middle East, so we are now connected daily at the most fundamental level! Canada exports to the U.S. 17% of your oil, 87% of your natural gas, 100% of your electricity and 33% of your uranium. So, it is not Saudi Arabia, not Venezuela, not Mexico, but Canada which is America's largest energy supplier. And as your Energy Report noted some years ago, security of energy supply (S.O.S.) is now a national imperative!

Our relationship goes beyond economics.

At the human level, I estimate that millions of Americans can trace their origins to Canada, including my three grandsons!

### **Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement - Up for Review!**

So, indeed, the Great Lakes Basin, one of the greatest "fresh" water systems in the world, is a shared ecosystem. There is no question in my mind that we share common objectives. We all believe in a healthy, renewal and sustainable Great Lakes Basin ecosystem. While we agree on objectives, even agree on most of the science, Canadians think it is essential that the Great Lakes should be developed as we have in the past so successfully, bi-nationally through the IJC and consistent with our other two major bilateral agreements, the "Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement" and "The Boundary Waters Treaty."

"The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement" is currently up for review. This will provide a grand and timely opportunity for the governments of Canada and the U.S. – together with all Great Lakes states, provinces, cities, tribes, the First Nations and community partners – to examine our mutual progress through the prism of this vital agreement. No doubt, we can and will continue to build on the strengths of these existing bi-national institutions' treaties and agreements! No doubt, we can and will expand the framework of cooperation and collaboration and coordination. Our citizens depend on us.

As Co-Chair of the Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group, I pledge that our Group will work in concert with our colleagues in the United States to make this Great Lakes

Restoration Strategies a vital objective and priority of our work in the months and years ahead.

**Chicago and Toronto: Which is “Greener”? A Tale of Two Cities!  
Comparing the Chicago and Toronto Waterfronts!**

Let me conclude on a literary metaphor. Let me recite for you a Tale of Two Cities - Chicago and my home city of Toronto. Chicago’s waterfront serves as an exemplar to the entire Great Lakes region. Chicago has done a greater job than any other city along the Great Lakes in ensuring that the Great Lakes waterfront was pristine, pure and green. In Toronto, we have not been able to accomplish what both our cities promised to do some ninety years ago. In the first decade of the last century, Toronto, like Chicago, had a waterfront plan. In Toronto, we left “Sunnyside,” a large stretch of our waterfront in the west, and the “Beaches,” a large stretch of our waterfront in the east, open and green for the working classes of Toronto to recreate them along the waterfront and beaches as a green, affordable, grassy, recreational oasis in the heart of the city. In between, “Sunnyside” and the “Beaches,” the Toronto downtown core, except for “Cherry Beach,” have not followed the leadership of the Chicago Plan or the early Toronto Plan. Rather than keep the waterfront “green,” we have allowed condos and high-rise commercial development to erupt, gobbling up the precious “public interest” and the “public good” in scarce waterfront space, blocking the public’s right to view of Lake Ontario, blocking the public’s access to our waterfront, blocking our “public good.”

**Good News, Bad News!  
Ontario Plan: Places to Grow: Better Choices, Brighter Future!**

Last week, there was good news and bad news. The Province of Ontario announced a plan entitled “Places to Grow: Better Choices, Brighter Future.” The laudable purpose was to curb suburban sprawl, targeting certain urban areas for higher intense growth. That was “good news.” The “bad news” is that the Toronto waterfront was designated a high growth, higher density area. Can you believe that!

**Paint a “Green” Line! Along the Lakes!**

In the last 10 years, 23,000 condos, high-priced condos, now occupy the Toronto Metro geography south of Lakeshore Road, the southern lakeside roadway. Another 40,000 condos are planned in this irreplaceable space. We should follow Chicago’s example. We should paint a green line along the waterfront around the Great Lakes and declare “no” to high-rise, habitation or commercial usage. We should insist that this invaluable public resource, this “public good,” becomes and remains green, for the public!

**A “Green” Line around the Great Lakes! Follow Chicago’s Lead!**

I propose that one of the objectives of this great convocation of Mayors be consideration of a “green line” that runs right around the Great Lakes, at least half a mile back from the water, to follow Chicago’s lead to leave that waterfront territory green. In this way, we

will complement the objectives of the Great Lakes Restoration Strategies Bill that will make each of our cities more healthy, sustainable, habitable, safer and sounder for all our

citizens. Remember, paint that one green line to save our waterfronts for our children and our sustainable future! We should inhabit a Chicago “state of mind!”

### **A Blue Flag for Safe Beaches!**

We should introduce, to our waterfronts and beaches around the Great Lakes, the European Union’s successful competition between cities and their waterfronts. A website designates which waterfronts and beaches are safe and useable. The healthy beaches are awarded a Blue Flag of safety as an invitation to tourists and citizens alike. A project called the “Blue Wave” in the U.S. should be emulated around the Great Lakes, with each municipality and region joining to accomplish the same goal! Let’s compete to see which municipalities are “truly green,” “truly blue!”

### **Clean Drinking Water in Canada!**

Let me conclude on this note of personal interest. Several years ago now, I introduced in the Canadian Senate an amendment to our *Food and Drug Act* to require our Food and Drug Agency to provide “federal oversight” on our drinking water across Canada and along the Great Lakes, as you initiated in the United States back in 1974! I hope this year to reintroduce, with the support of my Senate colleagues, this measure. I believe that this will add another Canadian pillar to the grand visionary platform of the Great Lakes Restoration Strategies Bill. As well, I will explore, with American Congressional Colleagues and my Canadian colleagues, the introduction of parallel federal legislation to match the high sustainable objectives in the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. May I commend my great friend Senator DeWine and Congressman Rahm Emanuel for their creative leadership on this grand sustainable platform of policies!

### **Green Trees!**

Let me suggest another “green” competition. Let each city compete for green tree coverage. In Toronto, 45% to 50% of the city was once covered in trees. Now, it is 17% and falling. Green cities means green trees! Green trees means a healthier landscape.

### **Millennium Park: Chicago Waterfront. Daley’s Leadership at its Best!**

Finally, a word on Mayor Daley’s brilliant and innovative leadership in expanding the Chicago waterfront park area to add Millennium Park, and his kind invitation to the opening this week. This park, a world model mix of culture and horticulture and greenery, sets the bar higher for all Great Lake cities to emulate! Imitation is the highest form of flattery.

**Next Year in Quebec City!**

I look forward to participating in these discussions. I thank you again for the privilege of attending this most historic and important conference. I look forward to participating with you next year in Quebec City!

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