

## ***PROPERTY ASSESSED PAYMENTS FOR ENERGY RETROFITS (PAPER) Supporters***

**For immediate release**

**February 1, 2012**

TORONTO - a diverse group of concerned organizations and individuals has filed a request for review to the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario under Section 61 of the *Ontario Environmental Bill of Rights*.

These actions were taken to encourage provincial government to facilitate the use by municipalities of Local Improvement Charges in a *Property Assessed Payments for Energy Retrofits (PAPER)* program to support energy saving retrofits in residential properties, in order to:

- meet provincial and municipal targets for reductions in energy use and GHG emissions
- fight climate change
- promote energy efficiency and health in residential properties
- provide an economic stimulus
- save tax dollars on health care, costly energy infrastructure and environmental impacts, and increase provincial tax revenues through job creation
- provide a better world for future generations.

The background for this request primarily comprises three reports published by the David Suzuki Foundation on a *Property Assessed Payments for Energy Retrofits* program, which would use a modified local improvement charges mechanism to finance energy retrofits, reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, and save homeowners money on their energy bills. What will make this attractive to all levels of government, is that the program would be designed to be delivered at no cost to municipalities and would also benefit higher-level government budgets. It's a multi-win for all levels of government, for homeowners, the economy, and the environment.

“This kind of low-interest financing focuses on energy-saving retrofits, and makes it easy for fiscally responsible homeowners to do energy-saving retrofits because it is one-stop-shop,” says the reports’ author (and EBR request for review signatory) Sonja Persram. “Larger amounts enable homeowners to do more intensive energy retrofits while homeowners’ credit is not affected using this mechanism because the financing is associated with the property and any balance automatically transfers to the new owner on sale.”

Janet Gasparini, signatory, and a former City of Greater Sudbury Councillor as well as current Executive Director of the Social Planning Council of Sudbury says, “longer terms are available than typical financing, and with a neighbourhood approach which focuses on savings assisted by bulk buying, these retrofits are more affordable at all income levels.”

Signatory and Toronto Real Estate Board immediate past president Bill Johnston said his organization supports the concept. “The program is a winner for citizens, governments and future generations,” he said, noting that the idea could provide homeowners with a simple, cost-effective way to improve the energy efficiency, comfort and health of their homes; create jobs; and reduce the strain on the environment through reduced energy use.

“Financing energy efficiency retrofits of existing building is a challenge, but it’s critical to reducing greenhouse gas emissions,” said Peter Love, also a signatory, and Adjunct Professor at the Faculty

of Environmental Studies, York University as well as former Chief Energy Conservation Officer of Ontario.

Broad interest in and support for the concept has been expressed by many Ontario stakeholders, including the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the City of Guelph and the City of Windsor, as well as from groups such as the Toronto Real Estate Board, the David Suzuki Foundation, Green Communities Canada and the Sudbury Social Planning Council.

**For more information:**

- [Request for review](#) of the Environmental Bill of Rights: to facilitate using Local Improvement Charges for *Property Assessed Payments for Energy Retrofits (PAPER)* in single family homes. Click [here](#) for cover letter.
- PAPER collaboration [weblink](#)
- Association of Municipalities of Ontario [letter of support](#) for PAPER
- City of Windsor [Council resolution](#) on PAPER
- City of Guelph [letter of support](#)
- Toronto Real Estate Board [letter of support](#)
- Report # 1 - [Property Assessed Payments for Energy Retrofits \(PAPER\): Recommendations for Regulatory Change and Optimal Program Features](#)
- Report # 2 - [Property Assessed Payments for Energy Retrofits and Other Financing Options](#)
- Report # 3 - [Strategic Recommendations for an Optimal "PAPER" Program](#)
- Municipal Finance Officers' Association of Ontario, Member Magazine "*In The Black*" [article](#) by Sonja Persram, April 2011 (included in Halifax Regional Municipality's Report to the Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources):

**Contact:**

Sonja Persram, BSc., MBA, LEED® AP  
President & CEO  
Sustainable Alternatives Consulting Inc.  
T: 416-324-9388  
M: 416-997-0045  
[sonja@sustainable-alternatives.ca](mailto:sonja@sustainable-alternatives.ca)  
[www.sustainable-alternatives.ca](http://www.sustainable-alternatives.ca)