

Centenary elm on Parliament Hill

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Ms Garrett,

Last week, the CBC published your statement concerning the centenary elm that is slated for removal on Parliament Hill. We are advocating for it to be protected and preserved instead. We understand that you have looked at many alternatives regarding how to deal with the tree, including commemorating its demise but, as we are more interested in keeping the tree alive, we would ask that alternative plans that take the tree into account be considered instead.

It was also reported that part of your reasoning for removing the tree was that it is very sick. The Hill Times also covered the story and published the following:

"Dave Buttivant, an arborist hired to conduct the recent assessment, said even if the tree wasn't in the construction path, the chances of it surviving for much longer are slim. He said he doesn't expect it to survive for another five years.

"We were looking for remedies as far as preserving the tree, relocating three, or if necessary, removing it," he said. "I believe there was a lot of dead and dying branches, and unfortunately, it's been damaged by construction on the hill. It's not going to be around much longer."

In his assessment, he said he found that "there's already 50 per cent dieback on tree," meaning that most of its branches are either missing or scorched."

This contradicts opinions we have heard from a number of very reputable tree experts. Would you be agreeable to releasing Mr. Buttivant's report so that it can be peer reviewed by other experts? Our view is that the removal of this tree should be based on much more solid evidence than what we have seen to date.

Paul Johanis
Chair, Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital

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