

News From NJ Senate Democrats



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SMITH: 'HIGHLANDS ON HOLD UNTIL THURSDAY'

TRENTON - Senator Bob Smith, D-Middlesex and Somerset, Chair of the Senate Environment Committee, issued the following statement after announcing that a planned hearing today on S-1, the bill he sponsored to protect the pristine waters of the New Jersey Highlands region, will be postponed until Thursday to give Environment Committee members more time to provide input into the bill:

"While we are not moving forward with the vote on the landmark Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act today as previously planned, I want to emphasize that this in no way reflects diminished determination to get this done.

"The Highlands Water Protection Act may quite literally be the most important environmental legislation in this quarter century, and I look forward to seeing it released from Committee. However, Senate President (Richard) Codey, requested that the bill be postponed while some final clarifications are sought for some of the members of the State Senate.

"I had hoped that we could register our votes on this historic and far-reaching measure to protect the water supply for more than half the State today, but I understand the issues, and will comply with Senator Codey's request.

"The bill will be postponed until Thursday, but I want to make something abundantly clear: there will come a time, in the very near future, when it's time to fish or cut bait. At this point, we're just trying to get the perfect bait, so that everyone feels that their concerns were, if not resolved, at least considered in the crafting of the bill. However, I expect that we will

have a vote on Thursday, and every member will be accountable for their vote."

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