

News From NJ Senate Democrats



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FOR RELEASE: Immediate
October 12, 2004

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SMITH APPLAUDS FEDS ON HIGHLANDS FUNDING

Senate Environment Chair Says That NJ Congressional Delegation 'Put Money Where Mouth Is'

TRENTON - Senator Bob Smith, D-Middlesex and Somerset, the Chairman of the Senate Environment Committee and one of the driving forces in the State Legislature behind S-1, New Jersey's historic "Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act," issued the following statement applauding the efforts of New Jersey's Congressional delegation in obtaining \$110 million in federal funds to help preserve the Highlands in New Jersey and surrounding states:

"Our federal Representatives and Senators deserve much praise for their efforts to protect New Jersey's Highlands area. They've backed up their preservation promises with federal funds, and really put in the money to make our statewide measure a resounding success.

"The \$110 million fund, to be shared between New Jersey, Connecticut, New York, and Pennsylvania, will underscore the State's own dedication to preserving the Highlands, with \$12 million dedicated annually from the Realty Transfer Fee for the first 10 years, and \$5 million every year after that.

"With the increased funding, we will be able to protect vulnerable and valuable watershed lands in the Highlands, while ensuring that property owners will be fairly compensated for their preserved lands.

"I'm very happy that the federal government has recognized what we in New Jersey have known for a while, that the Highlands region is too valuable to allow it to be consumed by industrialization and suburban sprawl. With federal assistance, secured by New Jersey's Congressional Delegation, we will be able to protect the pristine beauty of the Highlands for generations of New Jerseyans to come."

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