

# ***News From NJ Senate Democrats***



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## **VITALE-SMITH BILL TO AUTHORIZE LOCAL BONDING FOR REFURBISHMENT OF AMBULANCES, PUBLIC SAFETY VEHICLES**

**TRENTON** - A bill sponsored by Senators Joseph F. Vitale and Bob Smith to authorize local governments to issue five-year bonds for the reimbursement of an ambulance, rescue vehicle or similar public safety vehicle was approved by the Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee today by a vote of 3-0.

"This past weekend, we've seen firsthand the necessity of having well-equipped local rescue and first aid squads, as they played a key role in providing care to local residents who were affected by the winter storm," said Senator Vitale, D-Middlesex. "Without quality rescue vehicles able to contend with snow drifts that were at least a foot high in most areas of the State, many of our first aiders would not have been able to reach those in need of serious medical assistance. Empowering local governments to fund rescue and first aid vehicle refurbishment is necessary to continue to allow local agencies to provide top notch services to our communities."

The bill, S-2141, would amend the "Local Bond Law" to permit all local units to authorize the issuance of five-year bonds for the refurbishment of an ambulance, rescue vehicle or similar vehicle provided that the refurbishment will extend the life of the vehicle for at least five years. Currently, the law only permits the authorization of five-year bonds for fire engines and other firefighting vehicles.

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"Our first aid and rescue squads, police forces, and fire departments comprise the safety net to serve and protect our local residents, and New Jersey needs to make the tools available to local governments to best serve New Jerseyans," said Senator Smith, D-Middlesex and Somerset. "By giving our municipal officials access to five-year bonding to cover the expenses of keeping first aid and rescue vehicles in working order, we are ensuring that New Jersey has the resources to keep all of our citizens safe."

The bill now heads to the full Senate for consideration. An identical bill, A-3050, was approved by the Assembly in October.

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