

# News From NJ Senate Democrats



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**CONTACT:** Jason Butkowski  
Tel: (609) 292-5215  
Fax: (609) 984-1235

## SMITH ON DIESEL PARTICULATE TESTIMONY

### *Environment Committee Chair Says Science Points to Need to Further Regulate Emissions*

**TRENTON** - Senator Bob Smith, D-Middlesex and Somerset, the Chairman of the Senate Environment Committee and the prime sponsor of legislation which would greatly reduce diesel emissions in New Jersey, issued comments on testimony heard before his Committee today on the dangers and health risks of particulate matter emissions, such as diesel emissions and other pollutants:

*"The testimony we heard today from some of the preeminent experts in the field of air pollution and its impact on the health and safety of New Jerseyans, particularly children and senior citizens, should be a warning sign to the direction we could be going in if we take no actions to counteract the effects of particulate matter emissions.*

*"Quite literally, air pollution is taking our breath away, causing massive increases in asthma, not just in children -- though they are the most affected -- but across all populations. Fine and ultra-fine particulate matter emissions are contributing to an increase in chronic respiratory illness, as well as the societal costs in hospitalization and lost days of work caused by respiratory illness.*

*"We've even seen instances of greater cardiac health risk, because pollutants are being absorbed through the lungs and into the bloodstream, causing greater strain on our hearts.*

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*"We heard from three experts in their respective fields who gave unrefutable evidence*

*that air pollution is a danger to all New Jerseyans. Dr. Leonard Bielroy of UMDNJ (University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey) highlighted how the greatest rates of asthma seem to travel along our major roadways, proving that vehicle emissions and asthma are directly related. Dr. Paul Lioy of the EOHSI (Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute) gave us a greater understanding of the science behind particulate matter and what it does to the human body. And Ms. Patricia Nelson-Johnson, the Director of the Trenton Childhood Asthma Project, put a human face on those suffering from asthma, detailing the impact that asthma has on children.*

*"Air pollution is choking us out of the Garden State, not in the far-flung future, but right now. It is a health risk throughout the State, nondiscriminating of race, gender, or economic status. We need to explore ways of reducing air pollution across the board, so New Jersey can breathe easier without having to fight for each breath."*

Senator Smith's diesel emissions bill, S-1759, is pending consideration by the Environment Committee.

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