

News From NJ Senate Democrats



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FOR RELEASE: Immediate
May 9, 2005

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SENATOR SMITH REMINDS SENIORS TO FILE FOR PROPERTY TAX REBATES

PISCATAWAY - Senator Bob Smith announced today that his district office will be available to help seniors and disabled residents who are required to file applications in order to receive the FAIR property tax rebate this year.

"High property taxes are the number one issue affecting the quality of life in New Jersey," said Senator Smith, D-Middlesex and Somerset. "For many on fixed incomes, such as seniors and disabled citizens, meeting the property tax burden becomes an impossible task without some relief from the State. My district office staff has been asked to help applicants get the property tax relief to which they are entitled, and seniors and disabled residents living in Middlesex and Somerset counties should feel free to call on them for assistance."

Information regarding the FAIR rebate, a new State program offered in lieu of the NJ SAVER and Homestead property tax rebates, was mailed out between April 26 and May 3 by the Department of Treasury, and applications are due by June 1, 2005. According to the Treasury Department, the checks will arrive in the mail in early to mid-August, the same time the Homestead rebate checks would have traditionally been sent out to property taxpayers.

Due to the merging of the two property tax relief programs, seniors and disabled residents must file an application to be eligible for relief this year, and given the fact that these residents did not have to file applications for eligibility in the Homestead rebate program in previous years, there may be confusion among residents as to the application process.

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"Many residents may not understand the new rules in applying for the FAIR rebate

program, and we don't want their confusion to cost them valuable property tax relief," said Senator Smith. "The Treasury Department has put together a number of useful information outlets, and many legislators are stepping forward to offer assistance to their constituents as well. Working in tandem, we will be able to make the FAIR program as effective as it can be, and bring real property tax relief to rely on it."

To be eligible for the FAIR rebate, seniors and disabled New Jerseyans must have owned and occupied a home in New Jersey as their primary residence since October 1, 2004. They must also have a gross income under the threshold of \$200,000 and their home must be subject to local property taxes.

Applications can be filed online at www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation, or by phone at (877) 658-2972. State residents can call (888) 238-1233 to ask questions of the State Department of Treasury, or if they would like assistance from the Senator Smith's district office, they can call (732) 752-0770. Senator Smith's District Office is located at 216 Stelton Road, Suite E-5, in Piscataway.

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