

Released on: April 19, 2006

****PREVIEW****

SMITH - ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE TO HOLD HEARING ON WATER QUALITY

Panel Will Focus on Drought Preparation, Toxic Water Quality in Dover Township

TRENTON - Senator Bob Smith, Chair of the Senate Environment Committee, will convene the panel to discuss water quality issues and drought preparation efforts tomorrow at 10:00 A.M. in Committee Room 10 in the Statehouse Annex.

"Water is our most precious resource, but pollution, suburban sprawl and failure to prepare for water shortages jeopardize the supply for everyone, from residential users to industrial users," said Senator Smith, D-Middlesex and Somerset. "We need to look at factors affecting our water quality, and put in place the sort of infrastructure needed to help us make it through any drought without draconian water use restrictions. We want to be able to be able to enjoy a cool glass of water on a hot summer day, not turn on the spigot to find nothing there."

Senator Smith noted that this past March was the driest in recent history, indicating a possible drought on the horizon. He added, "The State of New Jersey has to take every possible precaution in order to mitigate the effects of any pending droughts before we find ourselves scrambling at the last minute."

The Committee will also take testimony on a case in Dover Township, Ocean County, in which the local water supplier, United Water, did not inform the town of radiation in the well water. Senator Smith said that along with drought mitigation, "infrastructure improvements would allow us to pump in clean, safe water in emergency situations, such as the one in Dover."

The panel will hear from invited witnesses, and, time-permitting, will take testimony from the public.

WHO: Senate Environment Committee, See attached for list of invited witnesses

WHAT: Hearing on water supply safety and drought mitigation

WHEN: Thursday, April 20, at 10:00 A.M.

WHERE: Committee Room 10, Statehouse Annex, Trenton, NJ