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SMITH BILL TO ALLOW HOMEOWNERS TO INSTALL SOLAR PANELS IN
HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATIONS RECEIVES FINAL LEGISLATIVE
APPROVAL

TRENTON - A bill sponsored by Senator Bob Smith which would limit homeowners' associations from regulating the placement of solar panels on home roofs was approved today by the Senate by a vote of 37-0, receiving final legislative approval.

"Solar panels have become a popular alternative energy source, cutting down our reliance on pollution-spewing, non-renewable fuel sources," said Senator Smith, D-Middlesex, the Chair of the Senate Environment Committee. "When a family opts to go green and install these energy-saving panels in their homes, the State should do everything in its power to encourage them. We cannot let arbitrary homeowners' association rules stand in the way of environmentally-conscious energy decisions."

The bill, S-2638, would prohibit homeowners' associations, or any other association formed for the management of commonly-owned housing units and facilities, from forbidding the installation of solar collectors on the roofs of single family dwellings and townhouses. The bill stipulates that the homeowners' associations cannot stand in the way of solar panel installation when repair of the roof is the responsibility of the unit owner. The bill also would prohibit homeowners' associations from enforcing any rule which would lead to the increased cost of installation of solar panels.

"Homeowners' associations should not prohibit their members from enjoying the benefits of solar energy," said Senator Smith. "We're not talking about what type of flower to plant in your home garden, but rather, about energy decisions which affect the future of the planet. Given the evidence of global warming, we should be doing everything we can to encourage homeowners to make environmentally-friendly decisions, not hinder them through pseudo-government homeowners' association rules."

The bill now heads to the Governor to be signed into law.