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**SENATE ENVIRO PANEL GREENLIGHTS SMITH BILL PROVIDING
INCENTIVES FOR USE OF WIND ENERGY**

TRENTON – The Senate Environment Committee has approved a bill sponsored by Senator Bob Smith that would provide an incentive for the increased use of wind as a viable alternative energy source.

“Any time we can promote the use of alternative energies we stand to reap long-term benefits,” said Sen. Smith (D-Middlesex). “Sales tax exemptions on the purchase of solar equipment have helped proliferate the use of this energy source over the last few decades. Hopefully this bill will provide similar incentives to increase the use of wind energy, particularly within the business sector.”

The bill (S-2005) would provide a sales and use tax exemption on the future purchase of any wind energy device or system. Although solar energy equipment has been exempt from the sales and use tax since 1977, the state does not currently provide a similar exemption for wind turbines.

The bill would also allow those who have purchased a wind system going back to June 30, 1977 - when the solar equipment sales tax exemption went into effect - to file an application for a state rebate on the sales tax paid on the purchase. However, the device must still be in use at the time of this bill’s enactment in order for the purchaser to qualify for the rebate.

The bill now heads to the Senate Budget Committee for a fiscal note.

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