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Contact: *Chris Donnelly*  
(609) 847-3700

## **SWEENEY/SMITH LEGISLATION REAFFIRMING NJ'S PARTICIPATION IN RGGI CLEARS SENATE**

TRENTON – Legislation sponsored by Senate President Steve Sweeney (D – Gloucester, Salem, Cumberland) and Senator Bob Smith (D – Middlesex) that would reaffirm New Jersey's participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) cleared the full Senate today.

The bill, S1322, would clarify the intent of RGGI legislation enacted in 2007. That law helped create an emissions auction and trading mechanism to help reduce the level of greenhouse gas emissions, particularly carbon dioxide. In May of last year, Governor Christie announced that he was withdrawing New Jersey from RGGI without seeking legislative approval.

"The effects of greenhouse gases on the environment are really indisputable at this point. That makes Governor Christie's action all the more short sighted and without merit. For the governor to withdraw New Jersey from RGGI was a bad move that could have dire consequences in the long term. That is why it is essential that we pass this legislation," said Sweeney.

"Participation in RGGI is really a matter of common sense. That is why the Legislature made it clear five years ago that New Jersey was to be a participant. Being part of RGGI is the right, responsible thing to do. The future of our environment should not be held hostage to the Koch Brothers' national political agenda," said Smith.

The bill would clarify the original 2007 legislation by ensuring that New Jersey's participation in RGGI was not suggested, but mandated by the law. Passage of the bill would require Governor Christie to reenter New Jersey into RGGI.

The bill now heads to the Assembly.