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SMITH-GREENSTEIN LEGISLATION TO ENCOURAGE PUBLIC USE OF GREEN CARS APPROVED BY SENATE

Measure Would Build Needed Alternative Fuel Infrastructure in State

TRENTON – Legislation sponsored by Senators Bob Smith and Linda R. Greenstein that would aid in New Jersey's transition to low- and zero-emission vehicles was approved today by the full Senate.

"New Jersey has set strict vehicle emission standard goals that will require aggressive and innovative strategies to reach. These goals will bring great benefits to the residents of New Jersey including better air quality, a healthier environment and less dependence on foreign oil and fossil fuels," said Senator Smith, D-Middlesex and Somerset. "In the Senate Environment and Energy Committee, we have focused on ways to encourage the public acceptance of alternative fuel vehicles including electric and natural-gas powered cars, and this measure is the product of those labors. But it is just the beginning. The Legislature will continue to push for laws and incentives that will encourage New Jersey residents to purchase and drive alternative fuel vehicles."

The measure, S-2194, would require the New Jersey Turnpike Authority to install electric vehicle charging stations and natural gas and propane refueling stations at no fewer than four rest areas on the New Jersey Turnpike and no fewer than four rest areas on the Garden State Parkway. The Turnpike Authority would be required to spread out the stations between the northern, central and southern regions of New Jersey to increase the recharging and refueling services throughout the state. The bill would also require the South Jersey Transportation Authority to install electric vehicle charging stations and natural gas and propane refueling stations at two rest areas on the Atlantic City Expressway.

"Public acceptance of electric and natural gas powered vehicles will come naturally if the residents of New Jersey have access to the required infrastructure, such as fueling and recharging stations," said Senator Greenstein, D-Middlesex and Mercer. "Currently consumers are dealing with a chicken versus egg situation where they don't want to purchase alternative fuel vehicles without the refueling stations installed and available for use. By requiring the Turnpike Authority and the South Jersey Transportation Authority to install power and fueling stations, we can provide consumers with confidence that we are committed to making zero- and low-emission vehicles the norm in New Jersey and we can jumpstart the Garden State's alternative fuel vehicle industry."

S-2194 was approved with a vote of 34-6. It now heads to the Assembly for further consideration.