

MONDAY, JUNE 30, 2014 CONTACT: ALISE RODERER (609) 847-3700

SMITH BILL TO PROTECT CONSUMERS FROM INEXPERIENCED SANDY CONTRACTORS HEADS TO GOVERNOR

TRENTON – Legislation sponsored by Senate Environment and Energy Chairman Bob Smith that would ensure that contractors hired to elevate homes are skilled and experienced to do the job received final legislative approval today and now heads to the Governor's desk.

"With the surge of homes needed to be elevated in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, contractors flooded into the state to get a piece of the market," said Senator Smith, D-Middlesex and Somerset. "But with every skilled contractor, many more do not have the experience to effectively and safely do the work. With this legislation we can provide important regulations to a virtually new industry in the state, providing homeowners with the peace of mind that their contractors are well-prepared for the job."

The bill, S-942, would protect homeowners who are elevating their homes by requiring that any contractor offering home elevation services be registered with the state Division of Consumer Affairs. In order to be eligible for registration through the Division of Consumer Affairs, a home elevation contractor or an employee of the company who is actually engaging in performing home elevation would need at least five years experience in home elevation.

Under the bill, individuals who make false statements while attempting to register as a home elevation contractor would be subject to a penalty between \$10,000 and \$25,000.

The Senate approved the legislation today with a vote of 36-0. Last week the Assembly approved the bill with a vote of 73-3-1. It now heads to the Governor's desk.