



# Association of New Jersey Recyclers

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## **ANJR hails Senate Environment Committee vote On S-557 (Smith), the Recycling Enhancement Act**

The Association of New Jersey Recyclers (ANJR) hailed the Senate Environment Committee's vote today to release S-557 as the first step toward restoring New Jersey as a national model for residential and commercial recycling.

"New Jersey was the first state to implement mandatory recycling in 1987 and our state's ambitious recycling goals and impressive tonnage results in the early years of the program made us a model for the rest of the country," said ANJR President Dominick D'Atilio.

"Unfortunately, the statewide tax on solid waste which funded local and county recycling programs was allowed to expire in 1996," D'Atilio said. "Since then, recycling totals have steadily declined.

D'Atilio explained that New Jersey was recycling 45 percent of its municipal solid waste by 1995 and 61 percent of total solid waste in 1997.

"Since then, recycling totals have dropped every year," he said. "By 2002, we were recycling only 33 percent of municipal solid waste and 53 percent of total solid waste.

"The \$3-per-ton tax contained in this legislation will provide the funding boost needed by our towns and counties to revitalize their programs and get our recycling numbers back on track."

The ANJR president said that S-557, sponsored by Senator Bob Smith (D-Middlesex), is supported by the state's recycling community, by local and county governments, by leading environmental organizations and by the New Jersey League of Women Voters.

"Unfortunately, several business organizations are reluctant to get behind the bill because they have adopted an across-the-board policy of opposition to any new taxes regardless of their environmental or societal benefits," D'Atilio noted.

"This is truly unfortunate when it comes to this bill to fund recycling," he said, "because recycling has contributed significantly to the state's economy.

D'Atilio said there are 2,000 recycling businesses operating today in New Jersey, providing 27,000 jobs and generating \$5.9 billion in annual sales.

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