



Syracuse Astronomical Society
Amateur Astronomy in Central New York
www.syracuse-astro.org

Assemblywoman Linda B. Rosenthal
LOB 821
Albany, NY 12248

Senator Carl Marcellino
LOB 812
Albany, NY 12247

Damian G. Allis, Ph.D.
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Re: A7438/S4364

Dear Assemblywoman Rosenthal and Senator Marcellino:

The members of the Syracuse Astronomical Society (SAS) strongly endorse A7438/S4364, the Healthy, Safe and Energy Efficient Outdoor Lighting Act, which would regulate outdoor lighting in the State for the general benefit of its citizens.

Our starry night skies are one of our most precious natural resources, inspiring young and old alike to contemplate the mysteries of the universe. For over a half a century the SAS has reached out to the public here in Central New York to educate neighbors and visitors alike about the marvels of the heavens. Unfortunately, in recent years the view of the cosmos has become increasingly degraded by the misdirected and excessive glow of outdoor illumination.

For the members of our society who observe from their own backyards this problem has become especially troublesome because of general sky brightness and from excessive light from nearer sources that intrudes onto their private property. Likewise, for the SAS's Darling Hill Observatory (located in a semi-rural location on Vesper Hill in the Town of Tully) the sky glow from Syracuse to the north and, increasingly, from the Cortland area to our south has progressively affected our view of larger and larger portions of the sky.

Despite the recent forward looking actions of the Town of Tully in changing over its roadway lighting to full cutoff optics that reduce offensive and distracting glare, save energy, and reduce lighting costs by over 40%, without decisive action to stem the process of needlessly and destructively lighting up the night elsewhere, the light pollution problem will only worsen. It will continue to hamper our ability to bring the wonders of astronomy to others, to degrade the nocturnal environment, and to waste precious energy and taxpayer dollars.

The Healthy, Safe and Energy Efficient Outdoor Lighting Act would begin the process of restoring the glories of the night sky to everyone and will help us to continue our educational mission. It will render other benefits to the general population as well.

Therefore, the Syracuse Astronomical Society formally urges all members of the New York State Legislature to act promptly and decisively to pass the Healthy, Safe and Energy Efficient Outdoor Lighting Act.

If the SAS and its membership can, in any way, be of service in emphasizing the importance of issues raised by A7438/S4364, please do not hesitate to contact myself at (315) 559-4737 or damian@somewhereville.com.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Damian G. Allis, Ph.D.
President, Syracuse Astronomical Society

cc: Senators Bruno, Valesky, DeFrancisco; Assemblymen Kolb, Silver; Governor Spitzer