



Syracuse Astronomical Society  
Amateur Astronomy in Central New York  
[www.syracuse-astro.org](http://www.syracuse-astro.org)

Assemblywoman Linda B. Rosenthal  
LOB 821  
Albany, NY 12248

Senator Antoine Thompson  
LOB 902  
Albany, NY 12247

Syracuse Astronomical Society  
c/o Damian G. Allis  
313 East Willow St. Apt. 501  
Syracuse, NY 13203  
May 21, 2009

Re: A7281/S2714

Dear Assemblywoman Rosenthal and Senator Thompson:

The members of the Syracuse Astronomical Society (SAS) strongly endorse A7281/S2714, 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 our view of the cosmos has become increasingly degraded by misdirected and excessive 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%, and despite the enactment in 2007 of a town-wide outdoor lighting ordinance (Local Law #7), 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 not only continue to hamper our ability to bring the wonders of astronomy to others, but it will also continue 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 A7281/S2714, 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 A7281/S2714, please do not hesitate to contact myself at (315) 559-4737 or [damian@somewhereville.com](mailto:damian@somewhereville.com).

Thank you.

Sincerely,

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

cc: Senators Smith, Valesky, DeFrancisco; Assemblymen Kolb, Silver; Governor Paterson