Memorandum of Support

Atlantic Chapter

A.1072 (Rosenthal)/S.5176 (Marcellino)

Summary

The purpose of this bill is to amend the Environmental Conservation Law in order to preserve the nighttime sky. This bill will amend Section 1-0101, Subdivision 3 of the Environmental Conservation Law to include protection of the nighttime sky as part of New York State’s environmental policy.

Explanation

The nighttime sky is one of our most basic of resources that is often overlooked. However, as development of our state, country, and world persists this resource continues to disappear. In a recent study, it was found that one-fifth of the world’s population has lost naked visibility of the Milky Way, a figure that is comparable to more than two-thirds of the United States’ population. As a result of this encroaching threat it is vital that we codify the importance of a dark night sky and articulate a strong state policy that reflects it value. This is a resource that needs to be addressed at the core of our environmental policy, so we can begin to make strides towards protecting the one resource shared by all people of the world.

Light pollution does not only prevent human visibility of the Milky Way, but there is also clear evidence that artificial illumination of the night sky can impact human health and ecosystem function. The benefits of standards on light pollution are clear, ranging from a more conducive environment to human circadian rhythms to appropriate habitat conditions for rare and endangered nocturnal animal species. For this reason the Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter strongly supports the protection of our night sky and this bill.

Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter Urges Your Support of A.1072/S.5176