

We're writing in support of LD 1845, Act to Regulate Outdoor Lighting. As a resident of Mount Chase in northern Penobscot County, We're privileged to experience dark night skies on par with the darkest regions in the United States and the world. At my home, a sky quality meter measures the sky's luminescence at 21.99 (for reference, 22.00 represents the darkest that night skies can be on moonless nights).

Northern Maine stands out as the largest area of unpolluted dark night skies east of the Mississippi River. It should stay that way.

Within a decade, a large mine may operate a few miles north of my home if it is permitted. Without adequate oversight, regulation, and enforcement, the mine's planned 24/7 operations could significantly impair night skies in the Mount Chase area. It might not seem like much at first, perhaps just a glow on my northern horizon, but this is how we eventually lose dark night skies—in increments.

No matter the cause, the outcome is the same. Poor planning, a lack of awareness, a “business as usual” attitude leads to fewer and fewer visible stars, increasing danger for migratory birds, and death traps for nocturnal insects.

Until the 20th century, dark night skies were an experience shared by all of humanity through all time. Now, most people cannot see the Milky Way, let alone be awed by an unfathomable number of stars. Light pollution is also wasted energy. Reducing light pollution helps municipalities, businesses, and residents save money. Additionally, Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument is a [designated International Dark Sky Sanctuary](#). It is already a destination that people seek to view pristine night skies, but as more people become aware of northern Maine's dark night skies, more people will visit to experience it.

Dark Sky Maine, a 501c3 non-profit, recommends several ways to provide lighting for the type of lighting that the State of Maine should adopt to preserve dark skies and improve the overall health of people in our state:

- Avoid 5,000 Kelvin blue-white light since it negatively affects the health of animals, pollinators, and humans.
- Utilize lighting at the 2,700 Kelvin level.
- Lighting fixtures should have full cut-off shields to prevent light from shining upward
- Bulbs should be above the plane of cut-off shields.

These are simple measures that we support the state adopting through legislation. We also suggest the legislation include measures to fund education and outreach efforts to ensure the public becomes aware of the bill's requirements as well as incentives to help people make the best choices when they need to install outdoor lights.

Night skies should not and can not be sacrificed. I'm grateful that the legislature is considering LD 1845 “Act to Regulate Lighting.”

Thank you,
Michael Fitz and Jeanne Roy
Mount Chase, ME