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Portland, Scientifically Speaking (WMPG Radio Show)  
LD 1845

Hello,

My name is Sarah Chang and I am a co-host of Scientifically Speaking on WMPG where we discuss science close to home here in Maine for the past 5 years.

I love Maine because of the preserved night skies. Our largest city, Portland, has poor visibility to the night sky, only seeing the brightest stars with ease, but because of our size, we don't have to go too far. In Cape Elizabeth, I can escape the light of the city and look out towards the ocean and see with decent visibility the beautiful center of our galaxy, the Milky Way, circling above us when skies are clear. But to the northeast we can see the glow from the city. Every street light in my neighborhood has lights that glow upwards — wasted energy when the purpose is to illuminate the streets so we can navigate, rather than lighting the skies, hindering the ability to view the sky.

Visitors who come here often have never seen the night sky and Maine is a refuge for the stars and planets amongst an overly lit east coast. But we often get blinded by not only public street lights, but ineffective lighting by our fellow neighbors that disrupt our sleep with the brightest bulbs to ruin even the heaviest of sleepers' circadian rhythms.

Just a 2 hour drive and you can see the most brilliant night sky you've ever seen — millions of bright little lights glitter across the backdrop of space and it's all because of our limited light pollution.

Please include in this legislation recommendations for helping us to preserve and improve the conditions of visibility for dark skies, including:

1. Cutoff light fixtures (no light bleeding upwards into the sky)
2. Low color temperature lightbulbs of 3000k or lower
3. If possible, red light lamps rather than blue light
4. Fully shielded outdoor lighting
5. Dimmable lighting — smart lighting in neighborhoods to save energy at night and reduce light pollution.

We have shining examples on Mount Desert Island and we would be doing good things for human health, animal health, and the visibility of the night sky for all to decrease excessive or inappropriate use of lighting that negatively impacts the night sky. There is nothing to gain by being bright spots on the globe at night from the ISS.

Thank you for supporting this bill.

Sarah Chang, Portland, Maine.