

To: Maine Legislative Committee on State and Local Government
Date: May 9, 2025
Re: LD 1934

A statement in support of LD 1934, An Act to Promote Responsible Outdoor Lighting

Rangeley adopted a lighting ordinance July 1, 2023, recognizing that a dark sky is imperative to maintaining the quality of life here in our corner of Maine. As one of the darkest states in the country, being able to see stars with the naked eye is an experience most people do not enjoy. It has become apparent that having a dark sky is a boost to the tourism that keeps our town economically viable. We have been pursuing this effort for six years.

Rangeley is well on its way to becoming certified by Dark Sky International as a “Dark Sky Community”. This designation is the mark of a community which embraces the benefits of dark sky, is committed to maintaining it and is recognized as such by people around the world by the official sign and listing on the DSI website. It is well documented that a Dark Sky is beneficial for human health, the health of wildlife and plant life, as well as energy savings that will help mitigate climate change.

Support for our efforts is strong. Many residents and visitors have taken a “pledge” to support Dark Sky through the Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust/Dark Sky website. To date, there are 120+ pledges. Business owners are pledging support for our initiative. We recognize Dark Sky with a week of activities and educational outreach every April, coinciding with Earth Day. Dark Sky is advertised in our marketing publications as one of the “things to do” (star gazing) in Rangeley.

Western Maine is already in a position to claim Dark Skies with or without any town or state rulings, but this is in danger of changing quickly. The Rangeley Region is developing at a fast pace and without the lighting ordinance in place, this pristine area risks losing its dark sky. Taking action to protect the Dark Sky is an immediate imperative and we can’t slow down.

Light pollution is an easy fix. People have become accustomed to lighting up everything around us such that we’ve forgotten that our physical health, the health of wildlife and plant life, the climate and our peace of mind, is tied to the sense of slowing down and looking toward something greater than us that a Dark Sky brings.

Please pass LD 1934

Sincerely,
Linda Dexter, Coordinator
Dark Sky Community Application
Rangeley, Maine

David Miller, Executive Director
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