

Brian Hinrichs
Friends of Katahdin Woods & Waters
LD 1934

Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters is a non-profit philanthropic partner to the National Park Service at Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument. In 2020, the national monument became a Dark Sky Sanctuary, with night sky readings that prove the monument and its surrounding neighbors have some of the darkest skies east of the Mississippi. Our organization and the National Park Service are actively working hard to protect this natural resource, and LD 1934 - An Act to Promote Responsible Outdoor Lighting, is one important step forward. The bill outlines key steps to support dark-sky protection in our communities.

In our work with individuals and communities, we have seen that limiting light pollution can be simple and cost effective. And the benefits can multiply out for all. As a Dark Sky Sanctuary, we have seen astro-tourism growing in the Katahdin region: at last year's Stars Over Katahdin event, a family journeyed from Boston to experience the dark skies. The year prior, a young couple from New York came straight to Patten, Maine from another Dark Sky Sanctuary in Flagstaff, AZ. Not to mention the hundreds of local and statewide guests at this one event each year who come out and spend locally to enjoy our treasured starry nights.

Thank you for your consideration of this important measure.