



The Custer Institute

<http://www.custerobservatory.org>

Long Island's Oldest Public Observatory

Endorsement of A07281/ S02714 (2009)

June 2009

In the spirit and intent of the International Year of Astronomy, 2009, Custer Institute declares its strong and unwavering support for the passage of the subject legislation, currently under consideration by the New York State Legislature. The nature and intent of this legislation is to reduce light pollution and its adverse affects on the night sky, the natural environment, the habitats of indigenous wildlife, the growth and maturation patterns of plant life, the migratory patterns of certain species of birds and wildlife, the physical wellbeing and safety of whole segments of the population who may be at a higher risk of contracting certain types of cancer, the safety of motorists who become temporarily blinded by glare or whose vision and natural acuity is impaired by excessive and unnecessary lighting. Further, we laud the immediate and positive economic effect this legislation will have on local municipalities, the decreased demand on power generating facilities with the commensurate improvement in air quality directly arising from this reduction and finally, the aesthetic improvement of certain communities whose intrinsic character has been tarnished by the introduction of poorly designed lighting systems and / or fixtures.

Custer Institute is a not-for-profit education and research center whose primary fields of inquiry are astronomy, physics and the space sciences. Other disciplines include geology, paleontology, archaeology, music, politics and sociology. We have a diverse membership whose members claim residence throughout New York State, the continental United States and several Latin American and Eastern European countries.

Custer Institute was founded in 1927 by Charles W. Elmer, co-founder of the Perkin-Elmer Corp. Our facilities include: a modern, 22-foot Ash Dome observatory, equipped with a 0.63m (25-inch) Newtonian, three additional covered observatories with telescopes ranging in size from 10 to 14-inches, a library, a radio astronomy facility, a 100-seat multimedia lecture hall, a darkroom, an optical shop and kitchen. We offer lectures, programs and workshops in a variety of subjects and our observatories are open to the public for observing every Saturday after sunset, weather permitting.

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