



A.7281 (ROSENTHAL, ET AL.) S.2714 (THOMPSON)

Summary

This bill would prohibit the installation of new or replacement permanent outdoor lighting by state agencies or public corporations unless the lighting meets certain efficiency standards, as well as other conditions. This bill also would require the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) in consultation with the New York State Energy Research & Development Authority (NYSERDA) to develop efficiency standards for the lighting described. In addition, the legislation would authorize the DEC Commissioner to identify and establish “dark sky preserves,” in order to protect wildlife and enhance night sky viewing.

Explanation

Much of the lighting used to illuminate the outdoors is wasted. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA), 30 percent of the United States’ outdoor lighting is reflected skyward, which confuses wildlife and wastes energy.

The energy demand resulting from wasteful, misdirected and inefficient outdoor lighting requires power plants to produce more electricity, thus causing more pollution. It is estimated that six million tons of coal are used every year to meet the demand of excessive lighting fixtures. Misdirected up-lighting alone costs the nation’s energy consumers an estimated \$4.5 billion each year in unnecessary power bills.

Excess lighting also affects New York’s wildlife. Over-lighting and poorly planned outdoor light positioning disrupts the natural order for nocturnal plants and animals.

With the state and the nation at a crossroads with regard to the energy we use and where it comes from, this measure is particularly timely. The environment, consumers and wildlife will all benefit from this commonsense measure.

Environmental Advocates of New York supports this bill.

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