

June 10, 2016

Dear Council Member:

We are writing to request your co-sponsorship of Intro. 0822-2015 which addresses the light pollution caused by the type of LED streetlights that are being installed by the DOT. This legislation mandates that the color temperature of all LED streetlights installed in NYC should be limited to a maximum of 3000 Kelvin, the rating used to measure color temperature. By contrast, the new LED streetlights have an excessively high rating of 4000 plus Kelvin.

The harsh, white glare of these streetlights is the subject of an increasing number of complaints from residents living in the neighborhoods where they are being installed. Articles about these complaints have appeared in several publications, such as the New York Times, New York Magazine, the New York Post, the Gothamist, and neighborhood newspapers. In response to such complaints, several cities, such as Davis, California, have required a reduction in the Kelvin rating of their streetlights.

The Sierra Club NYC Group, to which we belong, endorses Intro. 0822-2015. We are now working with several individuals and organizations throughout NYC, including the International Dark-Sky Association, to mobilize support for this legislation.

Council Member Donovan Richards introduced Intro. 0822-205 when he was chair of the Committee on Environmental Protection. Currently, the bill is co-sponsored by Council Members Helen Rosenthal and Stephen Levin, who represent us in the City Council, and Council Members Corey Johnson and Costa Constantinides.

We are enclosing the following materials:

The text of Intro. 0822-2015. Please see the reverse of the text for our outline of five main reasons for supporting this legislation.

A June 7, 2016 Community Board 4 letter to Mayor de Blasio that expresses support for Intro. 0822-2015 and calls on the Mayor to impose a moratorium on new LED streetlight installations "until the issues have been resolved and the negative health and comfort impacts have been minimized."

An October 2015 New York Times Op Ed by Lionel Shriver, "Ruining that Moody Urban Glow."

A December 2015 article, "City's LED Retrofit Shows Need for Careful Lighting Choices," about how Davis, California reduced the Kelvin rating of its LED streetlights in response to citizen complaints.

An October 2015 International Dark-Sky Association article, "5 Appalling Facts about Light Pollution."

A December 2015 International Dark-Sky Association article, “5 Popular Myths about LED Streetlights.”

“The Value of Dark Skies – About Environmentally Friendly Lighting,” an article about LED streetlights published in the March/April 2016 issue of LED Professional Review: Trends & Technologies for Future Lighting Solutions.

Recently, the DOT has proposed to respond to citizen complaints by reducing the wattage of LED streetlights, but the solution is to reduce the color temperature and not the wattage. This is why various cities in the U.S. and throughout the world have reduced the Kelvin rating of their LED streetlights.

We would very much appreciate your co-sponsorship of this important environmental and quality of life legislation and would be glad to provide additional information on request about Intro. 0822-2015.

Respectfully.

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