



HB 3202: Oregon Night Sky Protection Act

The Problem:

Light Pollution Harms Wildlife

From hummingbirds and warblers to sparrows and geese, millions of birds migrate across North America every year, covering hundreds to thousands of miles. Most of these birds, some that weigh as little as half an ounce, make this remarkable and perilous journey at night, visualizing the magnetic pull of the earth and using the moon and stars to set their course. By reducing skyglow over our cities, we can help them make it to their destinations safely.

Darkness is Habitat

In addition to hosting migratory birds on their way north or south, nighttime darkness is actual habitat. Biological systems evolved on this planet in cycles of light and dark. When we light the night, we are in fact fragmenting habitat occupied by nocturnal species. We are also tampering with highly complex ecosystems that rely on carefully timed circadian rhythms (light/dark cycles) that govern sleep, mating, migration, flowering, hunting, hibernation, plant budding and flowering, leaf drop, and the list goes on.

Artificial Light Harms Human Health

Humans need the dark too! The American Medical Association recommends steering clear of blue-rich white LED streetlights to “minimize potential harmful human health and environmental effects.” And suggests that exposure to artificial light at night may increase the risk of cardiovascular disease, depression, sleep disorders, obesity and breast cancer.ⁱ Research out of the Stanford Sleep Epidemiology Labⁱⁱ shows that street lighting can delay sleep cycles and reduce the quality of our sleep.

The Solution:

To reduce light pollution, HB 3202 would require shielded outdoor lighting fixtures on public buildings or that have been constructed with the use of state funds to: use fully shielded lighting fixtures; emit only as much light as is necessary to achieve intended purposes; and have a color temperature of 3,000 Kelvin or lower.

The bill also requires ODOT, to the extent practicable and safe, replace outdoor light fixtures on highways and at ODOT facilities with the use of reflective markings, and signage.

Finally, with certain exceptions, all state agencies would be required to remove or replace non-shielded outdoor lighting fixtures at their facilities by January 1, 2034.

For questions, contact:

Kyle Linhares—Steadfast Advocates, LLC
503-536-3338 or kyle@steadfastadvocates.com

ⁱ <https://www.ama-assn.org/press-center/press-releases/ama-adopts-guidance-reduce-harm-high-intensity-street-lights>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4863221/>