

STUDENT SENATE BILL 2024-1364

TITLE: Resolution on the Importance of Reducing Light Pollution in Gainesville, Florida

AUTHOR(S): Senator Hunter Monson

SPONSOR(S):

WHEREAS, light pollution refers to the excessive or misdirected artificial light that obscures the night sky and disrupts natural ecosystems; and,

WHEREAS, Gainesville, Florida, is home to a diverse range of flora and fauna that depend on natural light cycles for survival and reproduction; and,

WHEREAS, light pollution has been linked to negative impacts on human health, including disrupted sleep patterns, increased stress levels, and potential links to serious illnesses such as cancer [1][2]; and,

WHEREAS, artificial light at night can interfere with astronomical observations, hindering scientific research and stargazing opportunities [3]; and,

WHEREAS, the preservation of dark skies is essential for cultural and educational activities related to astronomy; and,

WHEREAS, energy waste from excessive lighting contributes to higher carbon emissions, exacerbating climate change [4]; and,

WHEREAS, effective lighting design can improve public safety while minimizing light pollution [5]; and,

WHEREAS, the reduction of light pollution can enhance the quality of life for residents by providing a more natural and restful nighttime environment [5] [6]; and,

WHEREAS, Gainesville's commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship requires proactive measures to address light pollution [7]; then,

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes the importance of reducing light pollution to protect natural ecosystems, human health, and the night sky in Gainesville, Florida.

THEREFORE LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED, that the University of Florida Student Senate advocates for the city to conduct a comprehensive audit of existing outdoor lighting in public spaces to identify sources of light pollution.

THEREFORE LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED, that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes that existing public lighting that contributes significantly to light pollution will be retrofitted or replaced with compliant alternatives.

THEREFORE LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED, that the University of Florida Student Senate supports the implementation of guidelines for the use of outdoor lighting that prioritize energy efficiency and minimize light spill.

THEREFORE LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED, that the University of Florida Student Senate encourages private property owners to adopt practices for outdoor lighting to reduce light trespass and glare.

THEREFORE LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED, that the University of Florida Student Senate advocates for the City of Gainesville to promote the use of shielded and downward-facing light fixtures to reduce glare and skyglow.

THEREFORE LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED, that the University of Florida Student Senate advocates for the City of Gainesville to adopt policies to regulate the brightness, color temperature, and operating hours of digital billboards and outdoor advertisements.

THEREFORE LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED, that the University of Florida Student Senate advocates for the University of Florida to adopt policies to limit light pollution and light spill on campus, primarily targeting major stadium lights while keeping student safety a priority.

THEREFORE LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED, that the University of Florida Student Senate supports for new public lighting installations to comply with standards that minimize light pollution and maximize energy efficiency.

THEREFORE LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED, that the University of Florida Student Senate aims to aid the City of Gainesville in developing an educational campaign to raise awareness about the impacts of light pollution and the benefits of reducing it.

THEREFORE LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED, that the University of Florida Student Senate advocates for the City of Gainesville to measure and report on progress in reducing light pollution, using indicators such as night sky brightness and energy consumption.

THEREFORE LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED, that the University of Florida Student Senate supports the creation of a citizen advisory committee on light pollution to provide ongoing input and recommendations.

Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to the Vice President for Student Life Heather White, University of Florida Student Body President John Brinkman, & City of Gainesville Mayor Harvey Ward.

[1] <https://psychology.du.edu/research/showcase/impacts-light-pollution-human-health#:~:text=Some%20of%20these%20impacts%20include,resulting%20in%20altered%20hormone%20production.>

[2] [https://darksky.org/resources/what-is-light-pollution/effects/human-health/#:~:text=Research%20suggests%20that%20artificial%20light,diabetes%2C%20breast%20cancer%20and%20more.&text=What%20is%20light%20pollution%3F,-Effects%20of%20light&text=%20Many%20species%20\(including%20humans\),darkness%20to%20survive%20and%20thrive](https://darksky.org/resources/what-is-light-pollution/effects/human-health/#:~:text=Research%20suggests%20that%20artificial%20light,diabetes%2C%20breast%20cancer%20and%20more.&text=What%20is%20light%20pollution%3F,-Effects%20of%20light&text=%20Many%20species%20(including%20humans),darkness%20to%20survive%20and%20thrive)

[3] <https://cescos.fau.edu/observatory/lightpollastro.html#:~:text=This%20means%20that%2C%20just%20like,seen%20in%20the%20night%20sky.>

[4] <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/light-pollution/#>

[5] <https://darksky.org/resources/what-is-light-pollution/light-pollution-solutions/#:~:text=Outdoor%20lighting%20fixtures%20that%20shield,reduced%20illuminance%20without%20compromising%20visibility.>

[6] <https://darksky.org/resources/what-is-light-pollution/effects/night-sky-heritage/>

[7] <https://www.gainesville.com/story/news/local/2024/05/01/gainesville-chosen-to-participate-in-national-sustainability-program/73524724007/#:~:text=The%20city%20currently%20has%20a,robust%20climate%20action%20plan.>

 6/20/24

Monish Vijayaraghavan
Senate President

Date