

Case No. 21-02623

May 28, 2022

To the Hon. Michelle L. Phillips:

Dear Ms. Phillips,

Local governments, business owners and utility companies have forgotten two important things: Artificial light is meant to help us; enhance our vision; increase opportunities and provide safer, easier passage after dusk. Incandescent technologies served that purpose well for over a century of widespread public use. LEDs do the opposite. They hurt people's eyes, blind them, give them headaches, nausea, dizziness, seizures and migraines. People go to great lengths to protect themselves from LED lights, shielding their eyes; driving with one hand; looking sideways; squinting; wearing hats; tinted glasses; staying in; opting out; putting big, thick, full-coverage blackout shades on their windows because otherwise they can't get any sleep at night. Complaints like these are absolutely consistent from LED-lit communities everywhere. If you look up "US cities complaining about LED street lights" dozens and dozens of near-identical articles immediately appear. How can anybody claim LEDs are fit for purpose? Every person who reports LED-induced pain, illness, injury, discomfort or visual distortion is living, empirical proof that LED lighting is decidedly *unfit*.

The other point lost among the contorted justifications surrounding LED installation is that each of us has the right to go where we want, when we want. We get to travel, work, shop, recreate, keep appointments, move house and run errands without government or businesses impeding our way, limiting our participation, or dictating our route - and definitely without being forced to maneuver around public infrastructure on public property, lest we end up sick or injured. It doesn't matter if utility companies only want to install LEDs from now on or if municipalities want to save money using LEDs. Public lighting is meant to provide safety. LED use creates conditions that are demonstrably unsafe.

There seems to be this vast sense of helplessness and fatalism out there, a lot of buying into a fallacy that LED use is inevitable, and anyone unlucky enough to suffer adverse impacts has to be sacrificed from now on. That's false. No-one gets to demand that everybody live with dangerous lighting, just because local governments fell for false promises and now don't want to admit the mistake or correct their course. A series of human actions put LEDs in place, and a reverse series of actions can take them away again. It all depends on what we care about most.

Making people dangerously sick and impeding their rights isn't a practical or sustainable governing model. The cruelty of it is breathtaking, too. I can attest to that. Hurting the natural world is also cruel, also foolishly counterproductive. Reduced electricity usage from lighting is meaningless compared to how LED lighting decimates the vital insect populations on which every ecosystem depends. No living thing can thrive in a disintegrating environment. A complete reevaluation is very much in order. Please devote the Public Services Board's efforts towards helping make that happen. Many of us are longing to be comfortable and safe around artificial lighting again.

Sincerely,

MarieAnn Cherry

Cambridge, New York