

## Testimony of the NYC Department of Environmental Protection

### Hearing of the NYC Council Committee on Environmental Protection and Waterfronts

April 6, 2026

Good afternoon, Chair Gennaro and members of the Committee. I'm Beth DeFalco, Deputy Commissioner for Public Affairs at the Department of Environmental Protection. Thank you for the opportunity to be here today to discuss Intros 730-A, 804, and 795. I'll take them in turn.

#### ***Intro 730-A – Water Quality Testing***

Intro 730-A is rooted in a shared priority: making sure New Yorkers have clear, timely information about water quality.

There are a lot of reasons and ways to monitor and receive timely information about what exactly is in our local waters.

First and foremost is human health. The presence of bacteria from fecal matter, whether from storm runoff or untreated sewage, and certain kinds of algae, are potentially harmful to human health when people come into direct contact with water.

Ecological health is another reason for robust water quality programs. The presence of excessive nitrogen, or low oxygen levels, or excessive amounts of certain algae, can be harmful to the plants and creatures that live in our water bodies and that are essential for a balanced ecosystem.

Finally, not only are clean, beautiful water bodies a sign of a healthy environment, but we also recognize that there are important quality of life reasons to work towards that goal. Good water clarity is key to attracting people to our waterfronts and for the promotion of recreational activity, where appropriate, such as boating and sightseeing. Recreation, as we know, is vitally important for maintaining vibrant, desirable communities where people want to visit, live, and work.

We look forward to arriving at legislation that accomplishes our shared goals of not just keeping the public informed, but making sure that our local waters are as healthy, clean, and beautiful as possible.

#### ***Intro 804 – Light Pollution***

Intro 804 takes on an important issue, light pollution, and we support the goal of reducing unnecessary light in residential areas, particularly given the impacts on quality of life and public health.

That said, we believe the bill needs more clarity to be implementable.

Right now, there are key terms that aren't defined — such as "other lighting." It's also unclear whether the bill applies strictly to residential zones or extends into mixed-use areas, which is a big distinction in New York City.

There are also practical questions. The bill sets a 3,000-lumen limit, but doesn't specify how that's measured — by the fixture or by the bulb? From what distance? From what direction? And it doesn't address ambient light, which in a city like New York can be significant.

Just as importantly, the bill doesn't identify which agency would enforce this policy or how it would be paid for. This is not work that any City agency currently does.

While we don't believe the bill is enforceable as it stands now, as always, we're happy to work with the Council to help tighten the bill so it can achieve its goals in a clear and enforceable way.

### ***Intro 795 – Public Drinking Fountains***

Finally, Intro 795 speaks to something we strongly agree with: making sure New Yorkers have access to clean, free drinking water.

However, DEP does have some concerns regarding the responsibilities and scope this bill assigns to the agency.

DEP does not install or maintain any drinking fountains. It's simply not part of our operational scope, and not something we are well suited to take that on.

In non-park public spaces, fountains are typically installed and maintained by other entities — often private partners — and DEP does not have a role in those arrangements.

The bill also doesn't address ongoing maintenance, which is critical. Installing a fountain is one thing — keeping it clean, functional, and safe over time, such that it would actually be used and serve its intended purpose — is where the real enduring work is.

So, from our perspective, the bill needs clearer alignment between its goals and the entities best positioned to deliver on it — along with clarity on long-term responsibility.

We're committed to supporting the Council's goals here, and we're ready to help shape a path that works.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify and for your continued partnership. We look forward to continuing that work.

With that, I'll turn it over to our colleagues at the Department of Parks and Recreation to speak further on Intro 795, and then I'm happy to take your questions.



**April 6, 2026**  
**New York City Council Committee on**  
**Environmental Protection & Waterfronts**  
**Legislation: Int. 795**

Testimony by: Mark Focht, Acting First  
Deputy Commissioner, NYC Parks

Good morning, Chair Gennaro, members of  
the Environmental Protection and  
Waterfront Committee, and other members  
of the City Council. I am Mark Focht, Acting  
First Deputy Commissioner for NYC Parks.  
I'm pleased to be joined today by our  
Deputy Commissioner for Capital Projects  
Eric Boorstyn, as well as our Citywide



Legislative Affairs representative, Gabriella Cappelletti.

Thank you for having us here today alongside our agency partners at the Department of Environmental Protection, to discuss Introduction 795, which would require NYC Parks to install, replace, or upgrade 500 outdoor drinking fountains in various parks over the next nine years, with 300 required to take place in the next five years. NYC Parks maintains over 3,400 exterior drinking fountains throughout our parks and playgrounds, making us far and away the largest provider of clean drinking



water for New Yorkers, and our dedicated staff works extremely hard to keep them in good working order. As a general practice, we incorporate new and replacement water fountains into the design for nearly all of our park renovation capital projects, making sure they are thoughtfully located to best serve park visitors, whether it's used by kids at the playground on a hot day or a jogger taking a break to fill their reusable water bottle.

In advance of every winter, the majority of these outdoor drinking fountains need to be winterized, manually drained and



deactivated by our dedicated trades staff, to avoid damage to the subsurface infrastructure from freezing pipes. And as we speak, those same trades staffers are well along in the process of reactivating our thousands of water features throughout the park system, including drinking fountains, to make sure that New Yorkers can enjoy them as the temperatures start to rise.

Whenever new or upgraded drinking fountains can be installed as part of a larger Parks capital project, depending on the individual site needs and project budget, we aim to add both ADA-compliant drinking



fountains and bottle fillers to sites when feasible. As a general practice, our park water fountains are located near well-used features and amenities within the parks, such as children’s play equipment, seating areas, or athletic courts and fields, to make sure the fountains are available where park visitors need them most. There are several different standard models we utilize for drinking fountains in our parks, ranging from “Hi-Lo” drinking fountains offering access at two different heights, to standalone downward-flowing bottle fillers, some of which even include an additional spigot and bowl at the base, for dog owners



to utilize. We are very committed to increasing the amount of water fountains accessible in our parks and are proud to share that between the five-year period from FY21 to FY25, we installed a total of 527 drinking fountains and bottle fillers including free standing units as well as those installed on the sides of public restrooms.

Turning to the legislation being heard today, as you may be aware, NYC Parks is already working to comply with Local Law 93, passed by the Council last year, which mandated the installation of drinking



fountains within parks over the next 10 years. Through this effort, we are seeking to identify every opportunity to add or improve drinking fountains throughout our portfolio of park properties. As such, though we share the Council's support for expanded access to drinking water, we believe that Introduction 795 is largely duplicative of that recently enacted law, the language for which was negotiated jointly between the Council and the Administration, to ensure an appropriate and reasonable approach to improving public access to water fountains, a goal we all share.



Thank you for allowing us to testify before you today and for your continued advocacy and support for our city parks. We are now happy to answer any questions that you may have.



Steve Gruber, Director of Communications

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Mayor's Alliance for NYC's Animals

**Testimony in support of Intro 0804-2026 – A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to light pollution from light fixtures in a residential district**

**Monday, April 6, 2026**

The Mayor's Alliance for NYC's Animals, a 501(c)(3) animal welfare organization and member of the NYC Lights Out Coalition, supports Intro 0804-2026, which would restrict persons other than government agencies from operating lights causing outdoor illumination greater than 3,000 lumens in a residential district, unless the lighting is fully shielded to reduce light trespass. Any person in violation of this bill would be liable for a civil penalty of \$50.

Since our inception in 2003, the Mayor's Alliance for NYC's Animals has worked toward improving the lives of animals in New York City. While our primary mission has centered on improving the welfare of owned and homeless pets in New York City, our concerns have always extended to the welfare of all animals, including wildlife, with which we share our community.

As a member of the Lights Out Coalition, the Mayor's Alliance joins our colleagues in support of Intro 0804-2026. Light pollution creates a wide range of negative

*More...*

consequences for our city's human and non-human residents and visitors. Our focus is on its effect on wildlife, particularly migratory birds. They are attracted to light.

On evenings during migration season, birds will alter their paths to approach areas with increased light pollution. This causes them to lose their way and to collide with tall glass buildings, resulting in injury and death to thousands of our feathered friends.

In 2021, New York City took a major step to reduce light pollution and protect migrating birds by enacting two important laws. One requires all non-essential outdoor lighting in city-owned and city-leased buildings to be turned off between 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. during peak avian migration periods. A second law mandated the installation of occupancy sensors in city-owned buildings to ensure interior lights are only on when occupied, with 100% compliance targets set to be met by 2030.

With Intro 0804-2026, we have the opportunity to expand on our success and reduce light pollution in New York City even further by reducing light pollution from residential buildings. This legislation not only will improve the quality of life for our city's residents and visitors, but also will be life-saving for thousands of migratory birds who pass through our skies each year.

Thank you.



## **New York City Council**

Committee on Environmental Protection and Waterfronts

Hearing on Int. No. 0804

April 6, 2026

## **Written Testimony in Support of Int. No. 0804**

Submitted by the Urban Wildlife Alliance

The Urban Wildlife Alliance respectfully submits this written testimony in strong support of Int. No. 804, which would limit excessive outdoor lighting in residential areas unless properly shielded.

We commend the Council for recognizing light pollution as an important environmental issue and for advancing a practical, targeted approach to reduce unnecessary artificial light in residential areas. By addressing excessive and unshielded lighting, this legislation takes a meaningful step toward reducing avoidable harm while maintaining necessary lighting for safety and functionality.

At the same time, we believe this legislation presents an important opportunity to recognize light pollution as a matter of wildlife welfare. Artificial light at night is often overlooked, yet it has significant and well-documented impacts on urban ecosystems and the animals who depend on natural cycles of light and darkness.

Each year, migratory birds pass through New York City under the cover of darkness, relying on natural light cues such as the moon and stars to navigate. Excessive and unshielded artificial lighting disrupts these cues, disorienting birds and drawing them into densely built areas, where they are at significantly higher risk of collision with buildings. These collisions result in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of birds each year in our city.

The Urban Wildlife Alliance brings extensive hands-on experience working directly with injured, orphaned, and sick wildlife across New York City. Through this work, we regularly see the real-world consequences of this disorientation. Birds that should have safely continued their migration instead end up injured, grounded, and vulnerable. We are also a member of the Lights Out Coalition, a collaborative effort dedicated to reducing light pollution and protecting migratory birds through awareness, policy, and action.

The impacts of light pollution extend beyond migratory birds. Many species in our city depend on natural light-dark cycles to regulate behavior and survival. Nocturnal animals rely on darkness for

foraging and safety, while insects, which are essential to urban ecosystems, are drawn to artificial lights in large numbers, leading to exhaustion and death. These disruptions have cascading effects throughout the ecosystem.

Urban wildlife already faces significant pressures from habitat loss, human disturbance, and environmental stressors. Light pollution adds an additional and entirely avoidable burden.

To ensure that the intent of Int. No. 804 is fully realized, we encourage the Council to view light pollution reduction not only as a matter of residential quality of life, but also as a meaningful component of urban environmental and wildlife policy. Thoughtful lighting design, including appropriate brightness limits and shielding, can significantly reduce harm to wildlife while maintaining public safety.

The Urban Wildlife Alliance would welcome the opportunity to support the Council in advancing public education and best practices around wildlife-friendly lighting as part of a broader effort to reduce preventable wildlife harm.

We believe that New York City has the opportunity to lead by example in recognizing light pollution as a significant environmental and wildlife welfare issue. Int. No. 804 is an important step in that direction and demonstrates how practical, science-based measures can support coexistence between people and wildlife.

Thank you for your consideration and for your commitment to advancing policies that reduce harm and promote a more humane and responsible relationship with wildlife in New York City.

Sincerely,

Arina Hinzen

Founder & Executive Director  
Urban Wildlife Alliance  
arina@urbanwildlifeny.org

REBNY Testimony | April 6, 2026

# The Real Estate Board of New York to The New York City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings on Intro 804 Regarding Light Pollution

The Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY) is the City's leading real estate trade association representing commercial, residential, and institutional property owners, builders, managers, investors, brokers, salespeople, and other organizations and individuals active in New York City real estate. REBNY appreciates this opportunity to submit comments to the Committee on Environmental Protection and Waterfronts on Intro 804, in relation to light pollution from light fixtures in a residential district.

The proposed legislation, sponsored by Councilmembers Wong and Louis, would require privately-owned light fixtures causing illumination greater than 3000 lumens in a residential district to be fully shielded to reduce light pollution. It is our understanding that the intent of the bill is to protect sleeping quarters in low-density residential districts with one to three family homes. However, the bill language today would capture residential buildings in mixed-use districts and those in medium to high density residential districts, where lighting requirements are necessary as a matter of public safety, zoning, and code.

Given our understanding that the bill is intended for districts with one- to three-family dwellings, the bill should be amended to clearly limit the definition of residential districts to low density residential districts with one to three family homes to align with the goal and purpose as put forward by the sponsors.

Thank you again for accepting REBNY's testimony on this matter.

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# RIVERKEEPER®

**April 6th, 2026**

## **New York City Council Committee on Environmental Protection and Waterfronts**

**Submitted by Em Ruby, Senior Coordinator, Riverkeeper**

My name is Em Ruby, and I am the New York City Advocacy and Policy Coordinator at Riverkeeper. Thank you, Chairperson Gennaro and Members of the New York City Council Committee on Environmental Protection and Waterfronts, for your leadership in improving water quality and for the opportunity to testify today.

Riverkeeper is a member-supported watchdog organization dedicated to protecting and restoring the Hudson River and its tributaries in the waters throughout New York City.

While Riverkeeper strongly supports efforts by the Council to improve water quality and increase testing for pollutants in New York City waters, we believe there's room to better target Intro 730-A on pollution that is a greater threat to New Yorkers rather than the bill's current focus on Harmful Algal Blooms and Petroleum. We also believe that testing locations should be identified through a user study of NYC waters, instead of the broadly interpretable "water front areas used for recreation".

This bill would require DEP to test for "Harmful Substances" in New York City waters, with a particular focus on Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) and petroleum. Riverkeeper, alongside the SWIM coalition, encourages the Committee to focus on combined sewage overflows (CSOs) and their impact on water quality, rather than harmful algal blooms (HABs) and petroleum, which are important but not the highest priority for recreational water users.

In terms of detection and measurement, HABs and petroleum are difficult to systematically detect through water quality testing. HABs occur mostly in stagnant areas that can vary from year-to-year, petroleum emanates from various sources intermittently and unoften. That said, both of these pollutants are typically visible to the naked eye when present in waters. In contrast, CSOs are point sources and thus have discrete locations that are easy to routinely monitor to protect human and ecosystem health. Further, CSOs represent the biggest threat to water quality for NYC waters – and the city discharges more than 21 billion gallons of CSOs yearly. This represents a significant threat to human and ecological health, and greatly restricts New Yorkers access to swimmable and fishable water.



**Em Ruby, Advocacy Policy and Planning Senior Coordinator · [eruby@riverkeeper.org](mailto:eruby@riverkeeper.org)**

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To ensure the intent of this bill is met, we recommend amending this legislation to focus on CSOs as the primary “harmful substance,” measured by the presence of sewage indicator bacteria, and to establish testing protocols for the Department of Environmental Protection to monitor CSOs impact on water quality at recreational access points. To do that, this legislation should require DEP to:

1. Identify priority testing locations based on the results of a user study of NYC waters, to determine where New Yorkers are currently using the water, including but not limited to commercial and industrial usage, boating, kayaking, jet skiing, fishing, swimming, wading and other near shore and on water activities. We recommend using the user study conducted in 2022 by Riverkeeper and NYS Department of Environmental Conservation as part of the Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to update Water Quality Standards for New York Saline Waters.
2. Conduct testing near shore, i.e. less than 15’ from the water’s edge, so as to ensure results are useful for recreational purposes. Currently, DEP collects water quality samples mid-channel, which does not adequately identify water quality conditions near shore.

Further, Riverkeeper would like to highlight that real time notification when CSO outfalls are discharging is absolutely essential to protecting public health and recreational access. Currently, DEP is notifying users only when the discharges so thoroughly pollute a waterbody that it violates water quality standards. Some open waters like the East River rarely see such notices, despite dozens of discharges each year. The city’s current warning system fails to protect kayakers, fishers and others who may unknowingly recreate at a flowing outfall, and the Council could fix that.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and we look forward to working with you on this legislation in the future.



Animal Welfare.  
Worldwide.

April 6, 2026

Dear Members of the Committee on Environmental Protection and Waterfronts,

As a member of the Lights Out Coalition and on behalf of our supporters in New York City, FOUR PAWS USA would like to submit its support for Intro 0804.

We support this reasonable bill that will reduce light pollution by requiring outdoor lighting in residential areas 3,000 lumens or higher to be shielded. To be “shielded” means that a device, even something as simple as tape, should be used to direct the light downward, rather than upward or horizontally. This easy action reduces glare and light pollution, which in turn will reduce deadly bird collisions.

Measures like this are necessary because each year 15 to 25 million migratory birds fly over New York City. Tragically, an estimated 250,000 of them die every year from building collisions caused by unnecessary lights at night or reflective glass. However, by taking mindful steps like this simple and effective bill, our collective actions can save thousands of birds each year from becoming disoriented by the artificial lights and deadly collisions at night.

For these reasons and more, FOUR PAWS USA supports this bill and urges the Committee members to please do the same.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

**Melanie Lary**

*Research and Campaigns Manager*

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Animal Welfare.  
Worldwide.

April 1, 2026

Dear Members of the Committee on Parks and Recreation,

As a member of the Lights Out Coalition and on behalf of our supporters in New York City, FOUR PAWS USA would like to submit its support for Intro 0806.

We support this commonsense bill because it will establish an urban wildlife advisory board appointed by the Mayor and City Council Speaker that will include academic and field experts. These experts are necessary to assist the Board with developing a comprehensive city wildlife management plan that promotes biodiversity while also protecting public health.

A science-based and transparent plan is needed to properly analyze the city's wildlife problems, propose humane management strategies, and estimate costs for initiatives. We support the fact that the Board will hold public hearings and solicit testimony, and that the Parks Department will submit annual reports to the Mayor and the Council Speaker to update the status of wildlife management programs and the progress of adopted proposals. It is also important that all city agencies are required to consider the impact of their policies and actions on New York City wildlife.

For these reasons and more, FOUR PAWS USA supports this bill and urges the Committee members to please do the same.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

**Melanie Lary**

*Research and Campaigns Manager*

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April 4, 2026

New York City Council  
Committee on Environmental Protection, Resiliency and Waterfronts  
City Hall  
New York, NY

**Re: Written Testimony in Support of Intro 0804**

Dear Members of the Committee:

My name is Andrew Farnsworth, and I am the Science Advisor to the Lights Out Coalition, a Visiting Scientist at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, a long-time birder, and a New York City resident. I write in strong support of Intro 0804, which would restrict persons other than government agencies from operating lights causing outdoor illumination greater than 3,000 lumens in a residential district unless the lighting is fully shielded to reduce light trespass, with a civil penalty of \$50 for violations. This is a practical, measured, and constructive bill that would help New York City use outdoor lighting more responsibly, efficiently, and humanely.

I support this bill because it addresses a real and growing problem in a straightforward way. In residential districts, excessive and poorly directed nighttime lighting does more than simply illuminate property; it trespasses into neighbors' windows, creates glare, wastes energy, erodes the natural nighttime environment, and creates unnecessary risks for nocturnally active wildlife. By focusing on shielding and light trespass rather than banning necessary illumination, Intro 0804 takes the right approach. It preserves the ability to light spaces when and where needed while encouraging better lighting design: light directed where it is useful, at levels that are appropriate, and in ways that minimize harms beyond a property line.

From my own experience as a scientist, birder, city resident, and public-facing advocate on light pollution, I have seen that New Yorkers respond well when this issue is framed positively and inclusively. People understand that reducing wasted light promotes good neighborly behaviors, respects shared space, protects health of people and wildlife, reduces unnecessary and unwanted glare and trespass, and makes lighting more purposeful and relevant. In my public work, I have tried to communicate exactly that spirit: that better lighting is a win-win-win solution, one that can improve quality of life while also helping birds and other animals move through the city more safely and saving energy. Public-facing scientific and outreach work is also a core part of my role at the Cornell Lab, where I connect migration science to education, conservation action, and public awareness.

The scientific case for reducing unnecessary outdoor light at night is now extensive and highly compelling. Foundational and widely cited work on ecological light pollution established that artificial nighttime lighting alters biology and ecology across a wide and diverse array of taxa (Longcore and Rich, 2004). Subsequent high-impact research has shown that bright nighttime lighting can dramatically alter the behavior of nocturnally migrating birds, including in New York City, where a single, concentrated light source can attract and disorient migrants (Van Doren et al., 2017) even in a heavily light polluted environment. Broad-scale analyses further indicate that skyglow is a strong predictor of migrant stopover density and may create ecological traps in illuminated landscapes (Horton et al., 2023), while other studies show that light pollution is especially pervasive during migration, the most vulnerable stage of the annual cycle for many birds (Cabrera-Cruz et al., 2018). The consequences also extend beyond birds: artificial light at night disrupts nocturnal pollination and plant reproductive success (Knop et al., 2017), and can alter ecosystem functioning and species interactions even beyond directly illuminated areas (Giavi et al., 2020). The same body of literature also supports the human and economic benefits of reducing excess light. Reviews in *Science* and other peer-reviewed journals conclude that nighttime light exposure can disrupt circadian physiology, suppress melatonin, and impair sleep and other health outcomes (Cho et al., 2015; Zielińska-Dąbkowska et al., 2023), including correlation with cancers, while mitigation studies make clear that reducing intensity and directing light only where and when it is needed can reduce skyglow and ecological harm while also cutting wasted energy (Gaston et al., 2012; Tavares et al., 2021).

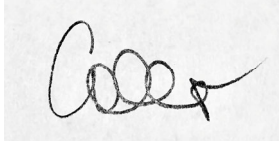
Taken together, this literature strongly supports policies that reduce unnecessary, poorly directed nighttime lighting in residential settings.

Intro 0804 is therefore not a symbolic bill. It is a necessary and sensible step toward better urban environmental management. In residential districts especially, fully shielded lighting is a reasonable standard because it targets the core problem of light trespass and wasted illumination. It helps people who are trying to sleep, reduces unnecessary brightness in shared neighborhood space, and makes it easier to preserve some measure of nighttime darkness in a city that is otherwise saturated with artificial light. It also sends an important message that New York City values thoughtful design over excess.

This legislation is also well aligned with the broader spirit of urban stewardship. We should aspire to be a city that works for people without unnecessarily degrading the ecological systems of which it is a part. New York can be both vibrant and environmentally responsible: we can be both the city that never sleeps and the one that stays awake mindful of our impacts. We can maintain safe, functional lighting while also acknowledging that the night is an important habitat and an important public health condition. For migratory birds passing over our neighborhoods – which number in the millions twice each year, for nocturnally active animals moving through our parks and shorelines, and for residents living next to bright and intrusive fixtures, these choices matter.

For all of these reasons, I respectfully urge the Council to pass Intro 0804. This bill offers New York City an opportunity to lead with a policy that is modest in scope, clear in its expectations, and meaningful in its benefits. It would improve residential lighting practice in a way that supports neighborly coexistence, public well-being, energy conservation, humane values, and the protection of urban biodiversity. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,



**Andrew Farnsworth, Ph.D.**

Science Advisor, Lights Out Coalition

Visiting Scientist, Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Long-time birder and New York City resident

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**Testimony of Alia Soomro, Deputy Director for New York City Policy  
New York League of Conservation Voters  
City Council Committee on Environmental Protection and Waterfront  
April 6, 2026**

My name is Alia Soomro and I am the Deputy Director for New York City Policy at the New York League of Conservation Voters (NYLCV). NYLCV is a statewide environmental advocacy organization representing over 30,000 members in New York City. Thank you, Chair Gennaro, and members of the Committee on Environmental Protection and Waterfronts for the opportunity to comment.

NYLCV supports Intro 795 of 2026, sponsored by Council Member Nurse, which would require the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation (Parks) to install, replace, or upgrade 500 outdoor drinking fountains by 2035. The bill would require such fountains to have bottle filling stations and be accessible to people with disabilities. Additionally, Parks would be required to report the locations of the 500 fountains, and assess the feasibility of year-round outdoor drinking fountains. The bill would also require the NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), in consultation with the Department of Transportation, to install 10 new outdoor drinking fountains in public places other than parks within communities that are underserved by publicly accessible drinking fountains. Finally, DEP would be required to make recommendations on whether the program should be expanded, and what challenges and issues are presented by the program.

Increasing access to New York City's drinking water, especially in public spaces, is essential. This bill helps mitigate the impacts of the climate crisis in a few different ways, including mitigating the impacts of extreme heat. While extreme heat events are increasingly common with climate change, New York City is especially prone to these events. It has the greatest number of people exposed to the urban heat island effect in the United States due to the vast amount of asphalt, buildings, and other infrastructure that absorb and re-emit the sun's heat. Extreme heat events particularly hit seniors, low income and communities of color the hardest due to structural racism such as residential redlining.

This bill will also reduce single-use plastic and litter by encouraging residents to use reusable water bottles. This reduction is critical to our ongoing efforts to combat plastic pollution and to achieve our zero waste by 2030 goal. Single-use plastic products, which are designed to be used once and thrown away afterwards, contribute to our reliance on fossil fuels and harm residents, local wildlife, and our waterways. For each ounce of polyethylene produced (the plastic most common for single-use plastics), one ounce of carbon dioxide is emitted. When plastics are sent to landfills—which are disproportionately located in low income and

communities of color due to environmental racism—they take centuries to decompose. Reducing our reliance on plastics will also reduce the costs to taxpayers of carting, processing, and exporting these discards.

Our main recommendation is that the final number of drinking fountains to be installed balances ambition, equity, and practicality, but most importantly, the final number to be installed in each borough should also be determined based on neighborhoods with a high heat vulnerability index (HVI). The factors included in the HVI are surface temperature, green space, access to home air conditioning, and the percentage of residents who are low-income or non-Latinx Black. Since extreme heat disproportionately impacts low income and communities of color, this bill has the potential to ensure that New Yorkers most vulnerable to extreme heat have access to resources such as free public drinking water. For the drinking fountains that are required to be installed not under the jurisdiction of DPR, we recommend places such as bus stops, open streets, and public plazas.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.



Humane Westchester &lt;humane.westchester@gmail.com&gt;

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**Testimony re: Intro 0806**

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Humane Westchester <humane.westchester@gmail.com>  
To: Humane Westchester <humane.westchester@gmail.com>

Mon, Apr 6, 2026 at 4:47 PM

Hon. Speaker and Council Members,  
NYC COUNCIL

I support Intro 0806, the Wildlife Protection Plan. Seeing wildlife is a proven benefit to people; in fact one of the reasons citizens move upstate etc is to be removed from the dense, brick-and-mortar reality of city living. Children especially enjoy seeing our splendid wildlife: In fact a deer that wandered a Harlem park delighted residents - till this animal was needlessly killed while in city custody, to the immense dismay of the public:

<https://www.cnn.com/2016/12/16/us/new-york-harlem-deer-dies>

Such incidents must be avoided: NYC can create a healthy, safe haven and green space for our wildlife residents which will enhance NYC living conditions, along with nurturing green spaces and trees, which are the 'lungs' of the earth.

My organization, Animal Defenders of Westchester, has been actively seeking urgently-needed enhanced protection of wildlife both in my community and in NYC; we have also been working directly with the NYSDEC to that end as well; in 2026 enlightened people understand the importance of the human-animal bond. We strongly urge NYC to enact Intro 0806.

Kiley Blackman,  
Founder

**ANIMAL DEFENDERS OF WESTCHESTER**

www.ADOW.org

**Like us on Facebook:**

www.Facebook.com/westchester4geese

***ADOW was established 25 years ago and is the  
Premier Animal Advocacy group in Westchester***

*"The awful wrongs and sufferings forced upon the innocent, helpless, faithful animal race, form the blackest chapter in the whole world's history" -Edward Freeman*

**ANIMAL DEFENDERS OF WESTCHESTER**

[www.ADOW.org](http://www.ADOW.org)

**Like us on Facebook:**

[www.Facebook.com/westchester4geese](http://www.Facebook.com/westchester4geese)

***ADOW was established 25 years ago and is the Premier Animal Advocacy group in Westchester***

**From:** [Kathy Nizzari](#)  
**To:** [Gachette, Josh](#); [Meehan, Jenna](#); [Haley, Molly](#); [mikearvanitesd49](#) Arvanites; [Alexander, River](#)  
**Cc:** [Testimony](#); [Townsend, Sierra](#); [Shell, Samia](#); [Bynum, Natasha](#); [Chawla, Ricky](#); [Dougherty, William](#); [Heredia, Daniel](#); [Hornig, Cynthia](#); [Puder, Shulamit](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Environmental Protection Committee - LOC Testimonies Supporting Intro 0804-2026  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 8, 2026 10:10:24 AM

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Dear Environmental Protection Committee Members & Team,

Hoping this finds you all well. For your files I am attaching testimony from Lights Out Coalition and some of our members in support of Intro 0804 for your files:

*Lights Out Coalition members:*

[Lights Out Coalition](#) {LOC}

[Dr Andrew Farnsworth](#), Cornell Lab of Ornithology

[Urban Wildlife Alliance](#)

[Mayor's Alliance for NYC's Animals](#)

[Four Paws](#)

[NY4Wildlife](#)

[Humane Westchester](#)

*Friends of the coalition:*

[JP Byrne](#)

[M Hoffman Koenig](#)

[S Fischer](#)

Please let me know if you have any questions or comments.

Thank you for your time and concern. Wishing you a lovely day,

Kathy

--

Kathy Nizzari

## Lights Out Coalition, Founder and Chair



[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [Instagram](#)

Please consider the environment before printing this email. Thank you.

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF INTRO 0804**  
New York City Council – Committee on Environmental Protection  
Submitted by a Volunteer Bird Collision Monitor, New York City

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Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am a New York City resident and a volunteer who monitors bird-building collisions during spring and fall migration. I strongly support Intro 0804.

Each migration season, I walk the streets of this city at dawn collecting birds that struck illuminated buildings overnight — warblers, thrushes, sparrows making journeys of thousands of miles that end on a New York City sidewalk. Artificial light is a primary driver of these collisions. Migratory birds navigate by the stars, and bright, unshielded lights pull them off course, exhaust them, and lead them into glass.

Intro 0804 is a practical, targeted response. It does not ban bright lighting — it simply requires that fixtures over 3,000 lumens in residential districts be fully shielded, directing light where it is needed rather than into the night sky. The \$50 civil penalty is modest and designed to encourage compliance. Shielded fixtures are widely available and affordable.

New York City sits on one of the most heavily traveled migration corridors in the Western Hemisphere. Anything we can do to make the built environment less hostile to wildlife is worth doing. I urge the Committee to advance this bill. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawne Eng  
Volunteer Bird Collision Monitor  
New York City

5/31/26

Testimony for bill 804 from (born and raised New Yorker) Jason Paul Harman Byrne, Brooklyn, NY, [REDACTED]

*The second bill, Intro 804, seeks to limit excessive outdoor lighting in residential areas by requiring shield fixtures with more than 3,000 lumens. The move would reduce light pollution and neighborhood disturbances. In addition, violators of the legislation receive a \$50 civil penalty.*

Since our first skyscraper, The Tower Building, went up in lower Manhattan in the nineteenth century, we have been giving birds a very hard time. New York City is a critical stopover on the Atlantic Flyway, a major migratory corridor stretching from Greenland to the Caribbean, hosting millions of birds during spring and fall migrations. Over 25 million birds, including hawks, warblers, and shorebirds, use city parks for food and rest. This is not only great for them, but great for us and our environment.

Tens of thousands of stunningly beautiful resident and migrating birds perish each year due to window strikes. We cannot in good conscience sit back and not do everything in our power to remedy this dire situation.

New York City is a world leader in culture, economics, sports and almost everything else you can mention, let's also be the leader in becoming a bird-safe city. Several other cities are already way ahead of us, such as Chicago, the first city to launch a "Lights Out" campaign and on track to saving over ten thousand migratory birds this Spring. Toronto has taken up a similar initiative. Across the U.S. more than fifty cities have "Lights Out" laws. Perhaps this bill can be the start of us doing it bigger and better, for the benefit of our birds, and us.

If we can save one bird, in fact we can save tens of thousands a year, from a violent and preventable death, why wouldn't we? We share this world with these precious birds, and we have put over three hundred skyscrapers, most with reflective windows, in their way. I think we owe it to them to have an effective "Lights Out" law.

City Hall Hearing 6th April 2026 in NYC Re: Resolutions  
0804-2024 Wildlife Protections NYC

As a resident in District 6, I began rescues of birds of all species from land & sea. I'm Juliet Hanlon. After a Channel 4 news broadcast about not feeding birds in NYC, blaming them (wrongfully) on the cause of rat growth, I have faced multiple cases of attack, threats, chased into traffic when leaving seed on a sidewalk, disparaging remarks by people who entitle themselves to ridicule and ask me to stop... threatened to have my throat slit for rescuing week dying birds by onlookers, the hatred climate grew after the misinformation that Channel 4 broadcast.

The Wild Bird Fund save thousands of birds annually. I've rescued dozens of birds most of whom die from pre-death emergency relief state of starvation. The need to educate the public is ever present so I support the passage of this legislation that promotes protections for all wildlife we share urban life with.

Responsible feeding of birds avoids giving them human food which is garbage. Their beaks are not built to eat human food they need bird seed whole and raw. They consume it within minutes of dropping it leaving the sidewalk spotless. They are not the cause of rat population, people feeding birds garbage are responsible for the rats. This has to cease and right education brings proper feeding saving countless lives.

The anti pigeon protection are spikes up to 6 inches long that tear off the skin of babies heads, lead to accidents breaking their fragile limbs, as birds build nests there, rendering them to die helpless from infections and risk of no rescuers. Businesses like

the High Line invested in anti-bird devices placed everywhere near & under transport areas. We need to ban such practices and devices and remove them. Resolution 0804-2024 will protect species from harm.

Conservation begins early so programs in schools on responsible conduct when feeding birds (that are 3 days from starvation), requires children be exposed to these facts. Let's protect our youth. Let these resolutions build a better informed public, let the children learn compassion not hate so that our wildlife have a chance to enjoy their liberties. Resolution 0804-2024 teaches children through such protections.

Thank you for your consideration. Please pass the protections Bill 0804-2024 .

Thank you.

Respectfully yours,  
Juliet Hanlon

My name is Laura Leopardo and I'm in District 35 in Brooklyn and am a supporter of the Lights Out Coalition. I'm here asking that you support and pass Intro 804.

I'd like to start out by sharing how birds are important members of our many ecosystems. They play a vital role in controlling insects and rodents, act as pollinators and provide seed dispersal, all which are tangible benefits to us. However, numerous recent studies have shown that since the 1970's, there has been a 30% loss in the total number of birds, about three billion in North America alone. With this great emptying of the skies, there are now three billion fewer beaks to snap up insects, and three billion fewer pairs of wings for moving nutrients, pollen and seeds throughout the world. In addition, according to the National Audubon Society, two-thirds of our existing birds in North America are now at risk of extinction due to climate change, loss of habitat, etc. That all spells A LOT of trouble for coveted bird friends!

Now let's add on the additional facts of light pollution to the above equation. The NYC Bird Alliance has stated that somewhere around 250,000 birds die each year in NYC alone after colliding with glass buildings, with light pollution being a very significant factor in these collisions. NYC is a major flyway for migrating birds. Eighty percent of them migrate at night and are attracted to artificial lights. The lights on buildings disorient them and confuse their navigation systems and their thousand-mile journeys can end abruptly in deadly collisions with glass. According to the USDA this phenomenon has led to the death of an estimated 500 million to a billion birds annually in the United States through collisions with windows, walls, floodlights or the ground.

We know this will reduce bird collisions! In addition to saving the lives of countless birds, these bills would, in turn, reduce energy consumption, and thus be a logical part of our city's sustainability strategy by reducing our carbon footprint. The proposal is a win-win. We are the guardians of the earth, and it is our job to make sure our birds remain a significant and important element of our ecosystem.

3/31/26

To Whom it May Concern,

This is regarding bill Intro 804 which seeks to limit excessive outdoor lighting in residential areas by requiring shield fixtures with more than 3,000 lumens. The move would reduce light pollution and neighborhood disturbances. In addition, violators of the legislation receive a \$50 civil penalty. As a born and raised New Yorker, a NYC DOE teacher, environmentalist, and birder, I fully support this bill.

“NYC Bird Alliance research shows that between 90,000 and 230,000 birds are killed in the city each year in these tragic collisions, a death toll worsened by lights that confuse migrating birds.”

Why is this number so high? Because, just like us, birds use lit pathways to get to their destination. Unlike us, they can not determine man-made lights from the natural light they are instinctually following.

We have many migrating birds, who stop to rest and refuel, as we are on the Atlantic Flyway (their migrating path). These birds fly thousands of miles defying all the odds just to be blindsided by a lit window. They hit the window, get concussed, and if not taken care of immediately, die an unfair death.

As a species we are getting further away from nature and creating man-made catastrophes that cause the untimely death of thousands of birds.

Over 50 major North American cities have lights-out programs. Why is NYC so late to the game? We need to protect the birds who migrate here and they will pay us back a thousandfold by decreasing the insect population and pollinating our gardens and farms, and providing pleasure for people to observe.

Bill 804 should be the first step in a long process of creating a more natural environment for our wildlife and our human residents.

Thank you for your time,  
Samantha Fischer



**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0804 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: April 6, 2026

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Margaret Love

Address: 28 Bond St NY 10012

I represent: Lights Out Coalition

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 730-A Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 4-6-28

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Em Ruby

Address: [REDACTED] Brooklyn, NY

I represent: Riverkeeper

Address: 20 Secor Rd, Ossining NY

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 804 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 4/6/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kathy NIZZARI

Address: [REDACTED] NYC 10001 [REDACTED]

I represent: LIGHTS OUT COALITION

Address: same

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0804 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 4/6/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dawne Eng

Address: [REDACTED] NYC 10282

I represent: myself

Address: same as above

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 04/06/2026

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ELIZABETH SUAREZ

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: DOB

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Renaldo HYLTON

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: DEPT OF BUILDINGS

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 4/6/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ERIC BORSTYN, DC OF CAPITAL

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: NYC PARKS

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 4/6/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MARK FOCHT, AEDC OF PARKS

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: NYC PARKS

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 4/6/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: GABRIELA CARPO, CITYWIDE LEG. AFFAIRS

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: NYC PARKS

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*Appearance Card*

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor     in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**(PLEASE PRINT)**

Name: Michael Fornan

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: DEP

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*Appearance Card*

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor     in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**(PLEASE PRINT)**

Name: Beth DeFalco

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: DEP

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jonathan Hoffman

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: DEP

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: TINA PINA (MOTHER PIGEON)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: MYSELF

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms