

State of California
California Senior Legislature

**FEDERAL RESOLUTION
PROPOSAL INTRODUCTION FORM**

NAME: Senior Senator Lawrence I. Hartmann
Co-author(s): Senior Assemblywoman June Glasmeier
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SUBJECT: Dangerously bright automotive lights

(Short Title): Blinding Headlights

PART 1: Write a brief summary of your proposal. (Remember, this will be published.

This proposal would ask the National Highway Safety Administration to create an enforceable standard addressing the safety, legality and maximum brightness of car headlights.

This proposal is necessary to address the increasing problem of high intensity headlights that have a blinding effect on oncoming drivers and a mirrored glare from behind. This is a problem that most drivers are concerned about, especially senior drivers. Many drivers feel violated, overwhelmed, blinded, bullied and emotionally anxious. Because of the above, many seniors feel so stressed and anxious they refrain from driving at night because of the blinding lights of some cars.

This proposal would enable our legislators to standardize the new mixture of colors and brightness that faces drivers from oncoming headlights. The new wave of high intensity LED and HID lights makes this proposal urgent as it seems that the lack of enforced regulations make accidents more and more liable to happen. Where is the standard of maximum brightness allowed and the needed enforcement?

PART 2: What statement or statements do you wish to have included in the “**Whereas**” clauses of your proposal? These statements support your reason for pursuing your idea and generally reflect what you found while doing your research. List your supporting statements below. (If you run out of space, feel free to add an extra sheet of paper.)

WHEREAS, Due to glaring high intensity headlights, there have been over 5,000 notices of driver's concern to NHTSA, National Highway Transportation Administration. NHTSA's 118 page 2008 initial report, requested by Congress, indicated headlight glare was a danger to driving especially on two lane roads and to senior driving. The glare danger can come from behind the vehicle, as well as the front. Ask any driver and they each have a tale to tell about problems with blinding headlights.

WHEREAS, cars with certain high intensity lights have become increasingly troublesome and dangerous to drivers who are the victims of the bright lights. Historically, an occasional driver would forget to dim his or her bright lights. Now the blinding lights of some high intensity and possibly illegal bright lights are increasingly common and dangerous even when on low beam.

WHEREAS, New LED and HID high intensity lights tend to temporarily blind drivers of oncoming vehicles, especially those with certain eye problems, such as different stages of cataracts. As drivers age, recovery from the sudden glare of bright lights tends to take longer. This occurs even when the lights are in the dimmed position and of course, become even worse on high beams.

WHEREAS, It appears there is confusion as to what type of lighting is legal regarding headlight brightness and headlight regulations. This is complicated by the sale and installation of aftermarket high intensity lights. Often aftermarket lights are improperly installed and incorrectly adjusted which makes matters even worse.

WHEREAS, There are major differences among the different types of aftermarket lights, ranging from some less expensive aftermarket lights to expensive factory-installed lights.

WHEREAS, Overly bright headlights adversely affect the day-to-day lives of seniors. Many seniors are adversely affected by bright headlights and therefore can no longer safely drive at night. This has a direct effect on their social physical, emotional, and financial well-being. The after glare of overly bright lights also takes longer for seniors to recover from and can confuse their cognitive ability and sudden decision making.

WHEREAS Bright headlight blinding seems to be getting worse. The public is increasingly concerned about what it is going to take to correct this problem. It is very obvious when a bright light car is approaching from the opposite direction and very easy to identify. Headlight lighting standards and enforcement personnel are needed to help resolve the problem.

WHEREAS, The producers and installers of the offending bright headlight products claim the bright lights are safer for those drivers who have them installed. But, in the process, the bright lights are blinding and assaulting the thousands of other affected drivers facing them on the road. As some of those affected have said, "If you have them, you swear by them, if you are blinded by them, you swear at them."

WHEREAS: As part of the "Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity act; a Legacy for Users" (SAFETEA-LU), in 2007 Congress directed the U.S. Department of Transportation to conduct a study on the risks associated with glare to oncoming vehicles. The research project solicited public input. This comprehensive and well-researched study was completed by March of 2008. However presently, in 2016, the danger of glaring headlights still seems to be with us.

WHEREAS: There is currently a petition titled Ban Blinding Headlights by Donald Berry of Pasadena, California, that addresses blinding, harsh headlights and emphasizes the public's desire to have this problem remedied.

WHEREAS: NHTSA, the National Highway Transportation and Safety Administration, is ultimately responsible for handling this situation. NHTSA is key to solving it through government standard 108. NHTSA is aware of the blinding headlight problem and needs our support and encouragement to remedy this problem.

WHEREAS: pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists all are exposed to the bright lights danger. Everyone, young and old, seem to have concerns and stories to tell about bright lights experiences. The bright lights issue affects us all and needs to be addressed.

PART 3: What statement or statements do you wish to have included in the “**Resolved**” clause of your proposal? The resolved clause is a clause or a series of clauses asking the President and Congress to rectify the problem outlined in your “Whereas” clauses. (The more detailed the solution, the better chance you have of successfully seeing your policy objective through the entire legislative process.)

RESOLVED: The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, NHTSA, will revisit their own 2008 study about the dangers of blinding high intensity headlights. This will be accomplished in a timely manner due to the rapidly changing situation of increased factory and aftermarket high intensity light usage.

RESOLVED: New technology such as self-dimming headlights and new lighting technology and light placement standards should be researched for possible solutions.

RESOLVED: A uniform set of standards will be established regarding brightness, type, and location of headlights.

RESOLVED: Publication of headlight and taillight brightness standards and enforcement techniques will be made known to the public, automotive industry, and aftermarket manufacturers of high intensity headlights.

RESOLVED, Proper enforcement will occur and offenders with illegal glaring lights will need certification of compliance from a certified headlight inspection station.

PART 4: If your proposal requires additional funds, cite potential sources and any impact on the budget. (How much will this cost and how will it be paid for?)

NHTSA has resources for research and is already becoming more aware of this increasing problem and the necessity of a solution. Our support and input is necessary.

PART 5: Please list any co-authors/sponsors who should be added to your proposal.

Sr. Assembly Members: Sr. Senate Members: (Associations, Unions, Organizations etc.)

Senior Assembly member June Glasmeier

Senior Assembly Member Bill Witt

Ban Blinding Headlights petition originator, Donald Perry

Part 6: What State Agencies or Departments will be affected by the proposed solution?

NHTSA, traffic and law enforcement agencies, state Department of Motor vehicles.

What interest group(s) are affected by the proposed solution?

Who is in support? The general public of drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

Who is in opposition? Possibly high intensity light manufacturers and car dealerships.