A Call for Night Shift Regulation:

Row 1: 5/5

The response earned 5 points because it effectively integrates one of the sources into its argument: the discussion involving Heikkila et al.’s study on the top of page 4 is effectively integrated to discuss the potential health impacts of working long hours. Omission of these claims would detract from the argument that night-shift workers also often work long hours and therefore require regulations to protect their interests.

While the response does mention two sources in its context (page 1), both references function as a cursory mention and do not progress the narrative about night shift work. In the first mention of the Heikkila et al. source, the response does not interact with the details of the study, and in the mention of the Nixon speech, the response only references a quote without engaging with it (as in, connecting the quote or its context to the argument about night shift work). Moreover, the two sources are placed next to each other, without any commentary about how Heikkila et al.’s conclusion relates to sentiments conveyed in Nixon’s speech. Had the response relied entirely on this section to integrate the stimulus materials, it would not have received any points.

Row 2: 5/5

The response earned 5 points for this row because the introductory paragraphs foster a sense of relevance for the topic. The response recognizes the necessity to solve a specific issue (the effect of night work on health) by illustrating a regulatory need: “neither the OSHA nor any federal law currently imposes specific regulations on night shifts, allowing employers to establish their own workforce policies (Schnotz).” Moreover, the response cites that “more than 21 million workers” engage in night shift work, which demonstrates the prevalence of this issue. It then proceeds to defend the presence of a problem from the bottom of page 1 through the top of page 3. The sense of urgency is communicated with a thorough discussion in this section about the repercussions of night work on employee health and productivity.

The paper also connects to a wider context by arguing that the effects of night work are not just about worker health, but also about job performance: “The government should therefore intervene if night workers are at risk of impaired job performance.”

Row 3: 9/9

The response earned 9 points for this row because it analyzes multiple perspectives to address the complexity of the problem of night shift regulation. The response considers the multiple perspectives of the various stakeholders involved: employees and their wellness, employers and their demands, and federal governments and their regulations. Furthermore, the response puts the various perspectives in dialogue with each other through an evaluation of the perspectives’ limitations and implications. For example, at the bottom of page 6, by putting the practical limitations of employers in conversation with governmental regulations that would mitigate negative effects on night shift employees, the response puts three perspectives in conversation with each other.

Furthermore, the response consistently considers the limitations and implications of perspectives. For example, the response conveys that the need for the federal government to regulate night hours has limitations: “Firstly, organizations that manage certain industries will need to revise their regulations to fit the government’s, which can involve complicated processes. Secondly, shortening night shifts will force employers to adjust work schedules as well as employ new members to make up for the cut hours.” Employers accommodating circadian rhythms also has limitations, as “effective naps for night workers calls for long and unfeasible break periods.” Also, when the response analyzes Tina Waters’s suggestion to “practice good sleep hygiene,” the response acknowledges the limitations of her methods, by explaining that they “ignore the time constraints attributed to many night workers and do not sufficiently alleviate their circadian disruptions.”

Row 4: 12/12

The response earned 12 points for this row because it communicates a clear and convincing argument through a logical organization. It moves through a line of reasoning by explaining the problem, analyzing multiple perspectives, and discussing potential solutions. The commentary interprets evidence by engaging with the content of the quoted material. For example, on the bottom of page 5, the response interacts with the “harm” explained by Thomas Frieden and connects that harm to the already-established problem of “impaired job performance” and “the long-term risks of circadian misalignment” to assert the claim that “the government should interfere.”

Moreover, the response reaches a detailed conclusion regarding the need to regulate night shift work. The conclusion moves beyond merely re-affirming the need, and provides a suggestion about how such regulations might be implemented. The response recognizes the limitations of the federal government’s ability to do so quickly, and suggests that such actions be done “gradually.” It presents enough details --such as details about a model program in the UK-- to assess the plausibility of incorporating future regulations on night work and how feasible such regulations might be in the U.S.

Row 5: 9/9

The response earned 9 points for this row because well-selected evidence from a wide range of relevant and credible sources is present. The paper cites from academic journals, government and professional organizations, and popular magazines to effectively and consistently support claims in the argument. When the source is tightly aligned with the argument, the credibility assessments are brief (e.g., “Sleep researcher Tina Waters” on page 3). However, when the relevance of the source is not as intuitive, the response provides commentary to establish how the evidence is relevant to proving its claim. For example, on pages 5-6, the response cites Thomas Frieden, who discusses the role of government, and connects Frieden’s more general claims with the need for regulation on night shift work (i.e., “Frieden additionally argues that the government has a responsibility to ‘increase the information available to the public and decision makers’ as well as ‘create environments that support healthy behaviors’ (1859). The previously analyzed aspects of the night shift’s current status show that many workers are at risk for work errors and medical complications. As is it clear that current policies of employers do not sufficiently mitigate the health impacts of night workers, the government – suitably the federal government – should aid employers in extending regulations”).

As another example, on page 3, the response contextualizes a quote from Dr. Scheer in its own conversation on shift work: “Most night workers have some degree of sleep disturbance which can affect their long-term health. However, some of these workers, especially shift workers, have schedules that extend into parts of the day (Price). These shifts further augment sleep issues and the long-term risks associated with them. Dr. Frank Scheer, director of the medical chronobiology program at Brigham and Women’s Hospital, asserts that ‘the body clock controls a number of important physiological functions’, including metabolism and cardiovascular health (qtd. in Weeks).”

Row 6: 5/5

The response earned 5 points for this row because it consistently and accurately cites the sources used. The bibliography is complete and all of the cited sources have an entry on this page.

Row 7: 3/3

The response earned 3 points for this row because it contains few flaws in grammar or style. It demonstrates a strong control of the language--for example, “they are still subject to the long term effects of circadian misalignment” -- that is appropriate for an academic audience.