

Dear Members of House Committee on Rules:

I am not opposed to doing away with time switching but prefer permanent standard time instead of Daylight Saving Time (DST). Those who favor permanent DST because it gives us an “extra” hour of late afternoon light may not have considered what happens on the other end of the day—morning. Let me help with that. Consider:

Western Oregon in the winter is dreary and gray. Curious about what permanent DST would mean for sunrise in the winter, I looked up year-round sunrise times. I was dismayed by what I found and how it would affect mornings. If DST is made permanent, sunrise on December 21 would be 8:47am, almost 9 am. With permanent DST, on October 29 sunrise would—surprise!--be at 7:47, the same as December 21 on standard time. Sunrise would come later and later through November until December 21 (again, the day of the year with the fewest hours of daylight) when the sun would rise at 8:47am. Sunrise would then come earlier every day until March 3, when it would (at long last) reach 7:47am again. In other words, for four months under permanent DST, sunrise would never be before 7:47am (the same time as the day with the least daylight).

What does this mean for morning light levels? For example, under permanent DST during those four months a 7:30am commute would be AS DARK OR DARKER than under standard time. School children, bicyclists, drivers, would all be commuting in darker morning conditions. How might this affect safety on the roads and bike lanes and sidewalks? I fear that morning commuters would be put in increased danger because of increased darkness and reduced visibility.

Permanent DST would have other effects as well. Later sunrise delays the religious observances of Oregon Jewish citizens who pray at sunrise, preventing them from getting to work or other commitments on time. Permanent standard time on the other hand could have a positive outcome for those whose month-long daily fast would be broken an hour earlier when Ramadan falls in the late spring/early summer months.

There may be other reasons why permanent DST is a bad idea (seasonal affective disorder, anyone?). But these are enough for me to endorse permanent standard time. Winter mornings are dark, dreary and depressing enough without adding to the darkness. Let there be morning light!

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