

Dear Chair Holvey and Members of the House Committee on Rules,

I write to you today to express my support for SB 320. This is a bill to abolish the twice-annual clock shifts and permanently adopt daylight savings time. For brevity's sake, I will refer to that time as "summer time," and refer to the institution of clock changes as "DST."

Discussion was heard on the Senate floor regarding the possibility of an amendment to adopt permanent winter time rather than summer time. I will focus this written testimony on why it is essential that SB 320 not be amended in this manner by presenting arguments in favor of such an amendment, and replying to each one in turn.

Argument #1: *Although federal law permits states to adopt permanent winter time, it does not presently allow permanent summer time.*

Response: Washington and California are also considering similar legislation this year. Washington's SB 5139 has passed from the Senate to the House, 46-3. California's AB 7 has passed from the Assembly to the Senate, 72-0. Both bills mandate the permanent adoption of summer time.

If all 3 states on the west coast agree to simultaneously move to summer time, Congress will have no reason to refuse. This issue has broad bipartisan support, and people as different as Governor Brown and the current US President have each made public statements supporting an end to DST.

Argument #2: *Children will be stuck waiting for the school bus in the dark.*

Response: During the darkest weeks of the year, children are dismissed from school for winter break. Districts that are particularly affected can change their schedules to better accommodate the available daylight if local parents find that there is indeed an issue. As students are already able to make their way to school in cities like Edmonton, it is evident that these challenges have been solved before.

Furthermore, in the age of tablets and giant TVs, it is hard for parents to get children to go outside and play. In the winter months, when it is dark so soon after the kids get home from school, this is nearly impossible. Permanent summer time will encourage kids to go out and play by giving them an extra hour of daylight after school.

Some have also presented calculations regarding the latest time that sunrise will occur in the winter if summer time is adopted year-round. However, daylight begins well before sunrise, and ends well after sunset. During civil twilight, when the sun is a few degrees below the horizon, people are able to see clearly without artificial lighting.

Argument #3: *The choice of which time is a matter of preference, and some people would prefer to have more daylight in the morning hours.*

Response: Most people seem to prefer summer time. For instance, a poll of 1,147 adults in 2017 showed that 74% of respondents wanted an end to clock changes, with summer time preserved. [1]

Argument #4: *Some religious communities may have a hard time meeting morning prayer obligations.*

Response: SB 320 does present an inconvenience to those groups, though not an insurmountable one. These same groups live and work in areas further north with even less winter daylight than Oregon.

More importantly, we must not forget that this bill is not a matter of convenience. There is a cost paid in human lives for every year that states fail to abolish DST. There is a measurable increase in heart attack (25%) [2], stroke (8%) [3], workplace accidents (5.7%) [4], fatal car wrecks [5] and suicides [6] associated with changeover days. On the other hand, the effects of DST on energy conservation (the stated benefit of the practice) are negligible at best. [7]

It might seem as though we could reconcile these things by an amendment to use winter time instead of summer time, but this is not the case. Oregon, California and Washington must move together, or not at all, as it is simply not feasible for these states to be in separate time zones. This year is the first year I am aware of in which any serious traction has been made in all 3 states simultaneously. We may not be so fortunate as to have all three legislatures moving in concert for a very long time.

If Oregon breaks from the pack by choosing winter time, DST will almost certainly remain in effect in all three states indefinitely, and people will continue to die.

Carthago delenda est,

Jonas Acres

Endnotes:

- [1] <https://enddaylightsavingtime.org/poll-74-percent-americans-want-end-daylight-saving-time-keep-later-sunsets/>
- [2] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4189320/>
- [3] <https://www.webmd.com/stroke/news/20160229/daylight-saving-time-tied-to-brief-spike-in-stroke-risk>
- [4] <https://www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/hr-topics/risk-management/Pages/Workplace-Injuries-Daylight-Saving-Time.aspx>
- [5] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11152980>
- [6] <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1479-8425.2007.00331.x>
- [7] https://www1.eere.energy.gov/ba/pba/pdfs/epact_sec_110_edst_report_to_congress_2008.pdf