

**Testimony of Cole Higlin
North Dakota Recreation & Park Association
To Senate State and Local Government Committee
In Opposition to HB 1259
Thursday, March 27, 2025**

Chair Roers and members of the Committee, my name is Cole Higlin, and I am the public policy chair of the North Dakota Recreation & Park Association (NDRPA). We represent more than 900 members, primarily park districts, and work to advance parks, recreation and conservation for an enhanced quality of life in North Dakota.

I am here today in opposition to House Bill 1259, which proposes the transition to permanent standard time for the state and political subdivisions. If North Dakota shifts from daylight savings time to standard time, several sports and outdoor activities would be negatively impacted due to reduced evening daylight. Sports such as football, soccer, and baseball often rely on later game times, which would be constrained by earlier sunsets. Recreational activities like running, biking, hiking, golf, tennis, and pickleball, commonly enjoyed after work, would also face shorter daylight hours, limiting participation. Youth sports leagues and amateur sports leagues, which typically take place in the late afternoon or evening, would be affected by the reduced daylight, requiring earlier start times or fewer events. Overall, the change would shorten the available time for outdoor activities, impacting sports, community engagement and public physical and mental health.

Moreover, with the reduction in daylight hours, there would be an increased reliance on artificial lighting. The added cost of lighting public parks, sports fields and recreational areas would place an additional financial burden on park districts and taxpayers. These increased costs could divert funds from other critical services and infrastructure improvements.

Parks and recreation are also an important driver of tourism and economic activity in our state. Shorter daylight hours could discourage visitors, reducing revenue.

For these reasons, we urge you to oppose HB 1259. Maintaining daylight savings time is essential for the safety, health and enjoyment of our communities, as well as for minimizing unnecessary costs. Thank you for your time and consideration.