

Jim Upgren, Bismarck

HB 1259 Testimony

Madam chairman, members of the committee. For the record, my name is Jim Upgren, I am a resident of Bismarck, and I am testifying as a private citizen in opposition to HB 1259.

If passed, HB 1259 would eliminate daylight savings time in North Dakota, meaning that we would be on standard time year round. I am opposed to the bill because I like daylight savings time, and I will discuss the reasons why.

First of all, I enjoy being able to do recreational activities later in the evening in the summer. For example, I can currently work a full day in the summer, and if I tee off at 5:30 pm, I can play an entire 18 holes of golf after work on a weeknight. Also, many outdoor youth sporting activities in the fall are held after school and might go into the evening. Sub-varsity contests are often held on fields without lights. I know that when my son played soccer a few years ago, practice started at 6:00 pm, and by the end of the season, sunset was at the exact same time that practice would get done. If HB 1259 passes, a 6:00 pm practice would not be possible in mid-October. In addition, even simple things like taking my kids to the park in the evening wouldn't be possible the same way that it is now. Last week, I took my boys up to the school playground one evening after supper. They saw a few of their friends from school, and played an impromptu game of soccer that lasted until it got dark at 8:00 pm. If we were on standard time, this would not have been possible to do after supper in late March the way that we were able to last week.

There would also be some logistical issues in our cities and towns in the Red River Valley. If HB 1259 were to pass, Grand Forks, Fargo, and Wahpeton would spend half of the year in a different time zone than cities in Minnesota (East Grand Forks, Moorhead, and Breckinridge respectively) that are essentially part of the same community area. Prior to 1960, Bismarck and Mandan were in different time zones, and from what I've heard, it didn't work well.

Another logistical issue arises when you account for the fact that the southwestern part of North Dakota is in the Mountain Time Zone. If HB 1259 were to pass, you could have a situation where it would be 10:00 am in Moorhead, 9:00 am in Fargo, 8:00 am in Dickinson, and then 9:00 am again once you get to Montana. You should not jump ahead an hour when traveling west into a new time zone, but that's would happen if HB 1259 passes.

I have also seen people argue (on daylight savings time in general) that the changing of the clock messes with their kids' bedtimes and sleeping schedules. I have an 8-year-old and a 6-year-old,

and in my 8 years as a parent, I have never once noticed a bedtime or sleep schedule disruption in my kids, so at least as far as I am concerned, that is a non-issue.

Madam chairman and members of the committee, that concludes my written testimony, and I ask that the committee give a Do Not Pass recommendation to HB 1259.