

HB 1259

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

Testimony in Opposition to House Bill HB 1259

Submitted by Cameron Dietz

Date: 3/26/2025

Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 1259, which proposes requiring the state to observe standard time year round in North Dakota. While I understand that there are arguments in favor of uniformity and consistency, I believe that this bill would have significant negative impacts on the residents of our state, particularly in terms of recreation, quality of life, and public health.

1. Impact on Outdoor Recreation and Summer Enjoyment

One of the most concerning aspects of this bill is the impact it would have on outdoor activities, which are an integral part of life in North Dakota, especially during the long summer days. Under the current system, we benefit from the extra daylight in the evening, which allows families, outdoor enthusiasts, and businesses to take full advantage of the warmer months. The change to standard time year-round would result in shorter daylight hours in the evening, curtailing opportunities for people to engage in recreational activities such as hiking, biking, fishing, and Golfing. This could significantly detract from the overall enjoyment of the summer season, especially in a state where outdoor activities are a key part of our lifestyle.

3. Economic Impact on Local Businesses

North Dakota's economy benefits from outdoor tourism and local businesses that thrive during the summer months. Restaurants, retail stores, and service industries see increased patronage in the evenings, when daylight lasts longer. With standard time year-round, businesses could see a decline in evening customers, particularly those who engage in evening activities. Additionally, farmers, ranchers, and others whose schedules are heavily tied to the daylight hours could be impacted by a change that doesn't account for the realities of their work.

4. Alignment with Neighboring States and Regional Coordination

North Dakota's time zone changes are consistent with those of neighboring states, and many of us have come to rely on the synchronization of time for interstate commerce, travel, and social interaction. The shift to a standard time year-round would disrupt this alignment, making it more difficult for people to coordinate activities and schedules across state lines. This disruption could also complicate business operations and travel for North Dakotans who frequently interact with people in neighboring states.

5. Lack of Sufficient Public Input and Consideration

Finally, I urge this committee to consider the voices of North Dakotans who value the benefits of daylight saving time and the additional daylight hours it brings. There has been little public engagement and broad-based discussion regarding this bill. Furthermore the public engagement that has been present has been uniformly in opposition. It is important that we take into account the diverse needs of our population, including families, farmers, small business owners, and outdoor enthusiasts, before making a significant shift in how we observe time.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I firmly believe that requiring the state to observe standard time year round, as proposed in House Bill 1259, would have detrimental effects on recreation, the economy, and overall quality of life in North Dakota. I respectfully urge the committee to reject this bill and consider alternative solutions

that support the well-being of our state's residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Cameron Dietz