

Chair Roers and members of the State and Local Government Committee,

I would urge a do not pass recommendation on HB 1259. While HB 1259 would provide a convenience of locking the clocks in standard time, it would create substantial unintended consequences.

This bill would establish standard time permanently in the state. Currently, daylight savings takes place eight months out of the year (second Sunday in March to first Sunday in November). By adopting permanent standard time, residents along state borders and time zone borders would face the most substantial consequences from this bill becoming law.

Permanent standard time would mean the portion of the state in central time would be an hour behind our neighbors in South Dakota and Minnesota while they are observing daylight savings time from March to November. For those in mountain time, they would be in a metaphorical bubble of observing their own time while daylight savings time is in effect. For example, in April, Hettinger would have a time of 9:30AM MST. Just two hours down the road in Mobridge, SD, they would have a time of 11:30AM CDT, thus creating a two hour difference while only being two hours away. Plus, those in mountain time in North Dakota would then be an hour behind those that observe mountain time in South Dakota and Montana during daylight savings time. For example, if you were in Dickinson, traveling one hour in any direction would mean you are an hour behind everyone else for eight months, whereas in the status quo, they are only behind those that reside in central time. This creates inconsistency of being on the same time or different time as our neighbors, depending on what time of the year is happening in that moment.

Another unintended consequence with this bill would be the impact on interstate commerce and the livelihoods of families along state or time zone borders. On the eastern side of the state, permanent standard time would have a great impact on the border cities of Grand Forks, Fargo, and Wahpeton. Many individuals live in North Dakota but work across the border in Minnesota or vice-versa. Permanent standard time would create an additional burden for these individuals during the eight months daylight savings time is observed federally. Individuals residing in North Dakota but take their business across the border would face the burden of having to plan their days an hour earlier or leave their workplaces an hour earlier if they have obligations they need to attend to that currently exist in the status quo. For example, a family lives in North Dakota but their kids enroll in school across the border. Currently, they could leave their home at 7:40am CDT to drop off their kids at school at 8:00am CDT. With this legislation, they would have to leave home at

6:40am CST as they would now be an hour behind the time in the border state. It would also mean the parents who are working in North Dakota would have to leave work an hour sooner than their routine in the status quo to pick up their kids from school, assuming they don't have other arrangements in place. The same impact for North Dakota residents would take place for those who work in a border state or go to college there, having to leave an hour earlier than they currently do for eight months out of the year. Border state residents who work in North Dakota would also be impacted where they may have to leave work early to attend to their obligations, especially if they have individuals to care for. Conducting business, scheduling doctors appointments, and other tasks would become more challenging during those eight months out of the year. Those that live in mountain time would also face challenges. For example, if someone living in Dickinson had a business call they had to make with a person in Moorhead at 8:15am CDT, the person in Dickinson would be on that call at 6:15am MST. This bill would also unintentionally reverse some of the reasons why the time zone line in North Dakota was pushed further west from Bismarck-Mandan a handful of years ago. The same issues addressed above were taking place before the time zone line was pushed further west. Establishing permanent standard time would bring about the same issues for those on the eastern side of the state and those in mountain time in the state, thus negatively affecting a greater number of individuals.

If our neighboring states were to simultaneously adopt a permanent time that aligns with North Dakota if the state were to move in that direction, that would alleviate some of the concerns this bill presents. However, if a neighboring state were to follow suit with North Dakota, it's very likely the neighboring state's neighbors would need to follow suit with them to avoid the issues provided, thus meaning the least impact on day-to-day lifestyles would have to come from the federal level of adopting a permanent time. While permanent standard time is allowable to be done on a state level, the consequences it creates would outweigh the benefit of keeping the clocks locked year-round. Thus, the status quo is the best option until neighboring states and/or Congress establishes a permanent time, whether it be standard or daylight.

For these reasons, I would urge a do not pass recommendation on HB 1259. Thank you for your time.

Thomas Muscha

Grand Forks