
**State Government & Tribal Relations
Committee**

ESSB 5139

Brief Description: Concerning daylight saving time in Washington state.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections (originally sponsored by Senators Honeyford, Hunt, Van De Wege, Fortunato and Pedersen).

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Provides that the state will permanently follow Pacific Standard Time advanced by one hour, if Congress amends the Uniform Time Act to authorize states to do so.
- Submits the bill to the people as a referendum for their adoption and ratification, or rejection, at the next general election.

Hearing Date: 3/27/19

Staff: Jason Zolle (786-7124).

Background:

The State of Washington is located in the Pacific Time Zone. Standard time in the Pacific Time Zone is known as Pacific Standard Time (PST), which is offset by negative eight hours from Coordinated Universal Time (UTC).

In 1951 Washington voters approved an initiative that prohibited counties, cities, or other political subdivisions from observing daylight saving time or any time other than PST, unless the Governor provided otherwise during a period of national war. In 1961 Washington voters reversed course and approved an initiative to institute a statewide daylight saving time period during which time would be advanced by one hour. This daylight saving time period lasted from 2:00 a.m. on the last Sunday in April until 2:00 a.m. on the last Sunday in September. In 1963 the state passed a law extending daylight saving time until 2:00 a.m. on the last Sunday in

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October. During the daylight saving time period, Washington observes Pacific Daylight Time (PDT), which is offset from UTC by negative seven hours.

In 1966 Congress passed the Uniform Time Act (UTA) to adopt a uniform system for keeping time within the standard time zones of the United States. The UTA included a standard daylight saving time period from April to October—the same dates that Washington had established just a few years prior. The UTA permits states to opt out of observing daylight saving time so long as the entire state does so. (For states that lie in multiple time zones, the entire area within any time zone may opt out.)

Beginning in 2007 Congress extended the daylight saving time period to start at 2:00 a.m. on the second Sunday in March and end at 2:00 a.m. on the first Sunday in November. Federal law does not permit a state to observe daylight saving time at any other time of year.

Summary of Bill:

The state will permanently follow PST advanced by one hour, if Congress amends the UTA to allow the state to do so.

The bill includes a referendum clause directing the Secretary of State to submit the act to the people for their adoption and ratification, or rejection, at the next general election.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 18, 2019.

Effective Date: This bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed, except for sections 4 through 6, relating to requiring Washington to observe permanent daylight saving time, which takes effect on the second Sunday in March in the year following the effective date of legislation passed by Congress to authorize states to do so.