

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5250

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As of February 20, 2019

**Title:** An act relating to permanent daylight saving time in Washington state.

**Brief Description:** Concerning permanent daylight saving time in Washington state.

**Sponsors:** Senators Mullet, Palumbo, Billig, Das and Hunt.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections: 2/20/19.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Effective on the second Sunday in March the year following the effective date of legislation passed by Congress to allow states to observe daylight savings time year-round, Washington State would remain on permanent daylight savings time.
- Submits the bill to the people as a referendum for their adoption and ratification, or rejection, at the next general election.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, TRIBAL RELATIONS & ELECTIONS

**Staff:** Melissa Van Gorkom (786-7491)

**Background:** The current standard time for Washington State is Pacific Standard Time with the observance of daylight savings time. Daylight savings time is observed in Washington from the Second Sunday in March of each year until the first Sunday in November, during which period the state time is advanced by one hour.

Congress, in the Uniform Time Act, grants states the ability to exempt themselves from daylight saving time. In addition, the Uniform Time Act provides two ways in which an area in the United States can be moved from one time zone to another. First, Congress may enact a statute. Second, a state or local government, by formal request of a governmental official or body, may provide detailed information to the United States secretary of transportation supporting the requesting party's contention the requested change would serve the convenience of commerce. The principal standard for deciding whether to change a time

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zone is the convenience of commerce, which is defined very broadly to include consideration of all of the impacts upon a community resulting from a change to its uniform standard time.

Hawaii and parts of Arizona currently opt out of daylight savings time. Other jurisdictions have been authorized through the secretary of transportation to change their standard time over the years. Currently parts of Idaho and Oregon observe Mountain Standard Time rather than Pacific Standard Time.

**Summary of Bill:** Washington State would remain on permanent daylight savings time starting on the second Sunday in March, the year following the effective date of legislation passed by Congress to allow states to observe daylight savings time year-round. The Department of Commerce must provide notice of the effective date to affected parties.

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:** Available.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains several effective dates. Please refer to the bill.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: Research indicates that changing of times is detrimental to students testing; more auto accidents, more heart attacks, and other health issues occur due to this change. The referendum in the bill would let the voters have a say. This bill would keep us on permanent daylight savings time which will take action by Congress. If we send the vote to the people and they resoundingly show they want this, it puts more emphasis behind it and sends a clear message to Congress.

CON: It is safer for children to have more daylight in the morning during the school year. There are pros and cons for both time periods, the current system provides the best of both worlds. The state should not go with what other states do because they are different. Northern states have less daylight hours than the southern states.

OTHER: The health impact review indicates the impact of implementing year-round daylight savings time on health inequities is not well researched, but there is strong evidence that implementing year-round daylight savings time would likely improve health outcomes, particularly on days that would immediately follow a transition to or from daylight savings time.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Mark Mullet, Prime Sponsor.

CON: M.C. Halvorsen, citizen.

OTHER: Caitlin Lang, State Board of Health.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.