

July 19, 2019

Honourable John Horgan  
Premier of British Columbia  
West Annex, Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC  
Via Email: [citizenengagement@gov.bc.ca](mailto:citizenengagement@gov.bc.ca)

**Submission on Time Observance and Maintaining Daylight Saving Time (DST) Year-round**

Premier,

The BC Chamber of Commerce would like to thank you and your government for allowing the BC Chamber and its network the opportunity to share what's on our members' minds when it comes to time observance in our province and the desire to maintain DST throughout the year.

As you know, we are BC's largest and most broadly-based business organization in the province. Our 120 local chambers of commerce and boards of trade and 36,000 businesses hail from every corner of BC. From single-shingles to multinationals – representing every sector of the economy – our network has been that valued voice of business on Canada's west coast for over 60 years.

Through our grassroots, bottom-up policy process, the BC Chamber values our work with the provincial government to grow the people who power our strong and vibrant provincial economy. There is no better organization to engage with when one wants to know *what's on the mind of BC businesses* in both urban and rural jurisdictions.

Thanks to the direct input of our local chambers and boards of trade, the BC Chamber is driving insights to government and our partners. Our policy recommendations offer real solutions to real challenges facing businesses and workers across the province.

With that in mind, we are pleased to share our network's position on the time change issue (please see attached). The BC Chamber has been advocating for this change since 2016 when it was adopted by our network at our AGM in Kelowna. It was recently renewed as official BC Chamber policy at our AGM in Burnaby this past May.

The time change issue is an important matter for businesses and residents alike. Stopping the time change doesn't just have a potential environmental benefit, but it can also provide a positive result in reducing workplace accidents, increasing traffic safety and providing better health outcomes for residents.

***Environmental Impact:*** A primary consideration of the DST is to conserve energy. The thinking was that an extra hour of daylight in the summer would reduce energy consumption. The studies to date are unclear if there is any energy savings. With the extra hour in summer, many people end up using devices – like air conditioners – longer, which likely negates any energy savings.

**Workplace Safety:** For business, a safe work environment is always a top priority. What you'll see in our policy resolution is a growing body of evidence that the yearly time change is challenging that safe workplace. Workplace accidents – in particular, severe workplace injury – increase around the time changes.

**Traffic Accidents:** Like increased workplace accidents, there also appears to be a correlation between the time change and increased traffic accidents especially during the "fall back" time in November when it's darker earlier. With mounting insurance costs at ICBC, stopping the time change – and maintaining the DST – could be added help in managing those financial pressures if it reduces accidents.

**Health:** There are health considerations to stopping the time change. There is a growing body of research on the effects of the time change related to sleeping patterns and heart attacks. Getting a good night sleep doesn't only mean workers are more refreshed and productive at work, but sleep deprivation is probably also linked to heart attack outcomes. Doing away with the time change can help residents stay healthy – a great objective by itself but has the added benefit of lower health care costs as well.

**Tourism:** Beyond the workplace, traffic and health reasons, there is a beneficial business rationale to maintaining the DST. Thanks to our Collective Perspective survey, we know BC business feel our tourism sector/visitor economy has the greatest potential importance to the overall economy in the next 5-10 years. Giving our tourism-related businesses an extra hour of daylight in the evening throughout the year should allow them more opportunity to share the BC experience with their clients.

There are few reasons not to end the time and maintain the DST over the entire calendar. There is one caveat to this position though: we must do this in conjunction with our U.S. partners in the Pacific Time Zone (and even Mountain Time zone for our BC communities on Mountain time).

As we say time and again, uncertainty and unpredictability are the greatest drag on business success. By changing our time zone without our partners, it would create that uncertain environment we want to avoid. For that reason, we appreciate the provincial government's efforts to connect with their State counterparts during this process.

Thank you again to your government for this opportunity to engage. Should you or your officials have any questions on our submission, we would happy to connect further.

Sincerely,  
The BC Chamber of Commerce



Val Litwin  
President and CEO

Attachment:

## **PERMANENT DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME (DST) FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA (2019)**

### **ISSUE**

Twice a year, in B.C. and in most parts of Canada, Canadians join with approximately 76 other countries around the world and practice Daylight Saving Time (DST). Since 2007, the clocks have moved forward on the second Sunday in March and then moved back on first Sunday of November.

In 2007, the B.C. government received 4,300 submissions from businesses, individuals and organizations and conducted a 4-week public consultation on expanding DST by an extra 3 weeks every year in order to align with the U.S. and other jurisdictions. The final tally showed that 92 percent of respondents favoured DST and the extra hour of daylight during the evening hours.

In 2019, the provincial government has launched a public engagement on the time change that has garnered over 150,000 responses from British Columbians in just 1 week of the consultation process. This is clearly an issue top of mind for British Columbians and BC businesses like.

Currently, 78% of the world does not change time. In North America, only Saskatchewan, northeast B.C. and Arizona don't change time. Neither does other areas and countries, such as Hawaii, Puerto Rico, China, Japan, Russia, South Korea, India and most of Australia, South America and Africa.

In November 2015, a petition was launched to Stop the Time Change in B.C. Within the 4 months during Standard time (Nov – March), the petition has obtained almost 25,000 signatures, raised awareness across Canada and definitely started the conversation. There was a meeting held in November 2015 with then provincial Ministers Terry Lake and Todd Stone to discuss the petition and start the conversation within the B.C. Legislature.

In 2018 and 2019, California, Washington State and Florida have overwhelmingly passed state legislature bills to remain on permanent Daylight Savings Time (DST). Oregon currently has a bill introduced, but not yet voted on. In the United States changing the time requires federal approval. The states are now waiting for the federal approval to happen.

These states would join Arizona, Hawaii, Saskatchewan and parts of British Columbia as jurisdictions that do not change time.

### **BACKGROUND**

The primary goal of Daylight Saving Time is to conserve energy, but whether DST actually saves energy is unclear and there are many contradictory studies. There are, however, even more studies that tell us that the change itself can cause accidents, injuries and even deaths. Many of these issues are related to sleep pattern change that the biennial shift mandates.

There is a growing collection of evidence to show that the biennial time change has plenty of unintended consequences, examples such as these can directly affect the operation of business.

### ***Workplace accidents***

Workplace accidents may be another side effect of sleep loss from the one-hour time change. They increase in frequency that Monday. "Perhaps even scarier, is the spike in injury severity," said Christopher Barnes, an assistant professor at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. "Instead of bruising a hand, maybe you crush a hand." A study Barnes led in 2009, and reported in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, looked at the severity of workplace accidents in miners on the Monday following the time change. The researchers found a 5.7 percent increase in injuries and a 67.6 percent increase in workdays lost to injuries. Barnes said the results were likely to be similar in other workplaces with similar hazards. Sleep loss determines the difference between the relatively common near-miss that happens in mining, and a true accident, said Barnes. "We're closer to disaster than we realize," he said. "The margin for error is not very big." "If I were in that environment, one thing I would try to do is schedule you're most dangerous tasks for other days."

### ***Sleep loss***

Alterations to sleeping patterns can mean employees have to make substantial changes to their routines, and some studies have shown that absenteeism goes up in the first few weeks of the introduction of Daylight Saving Time.

In a culture where we are constantly being told we need more sleep, the start of DST piles another hour per person onto the national sleep debt. "We're already a highly sleep-deprived society," said Russell Rosenberg, Vice-chair of the National Sleep Foundation. "We can ill afford to lose one more hour of sleep. Additionally, the shift in the period of daylight can present a challenge in catching up on sleep. "It does take a little extra time to adjust to this time change, because you don't have the morning light telling your brain it's time to wake up," he said.

### ***Heart attacks***

As our workforce is continuing to age, the connection between sleep and heart attacks gained attention following a 2008 Swedish study that showed an increase of about 5 percent in heart attacks on the three weekdays following the springtime shift. "Sleep and disruption of chronobiological rhythms might be behind the observation." Heart attacks have been found to be highest on Mondays after the time change, so a shift in sleeping patterns may explain that as well as Dr. Imre Janszky told My Health News Daily. According to a 2012 study at the University of Alabama Birmingham, the Monday and Tuesday after daylight saving time in the spring have also been associated with a 10% increase in heart attacks. The study found a corresponding 10 per cent decrease in heart attack risk over the 48 hours after people "fall back" and gain an extra sleeping hour in the fall.

### ***Traffic accidents***

An increase in traffic accidents is perhaps the best studied health consequence of the time shift. Sleep loss puts people at much higher risk for motor vehicle accidents," Rosenberg said. A 1996 study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* showed an 8 percent increase in motor vehicle accidents on the Monday following the time change. A 2001 study from Johns Hopkins and Stanford universities also showed an increase on the Monday following the change. At least one U.S. agency has taken the point to heart. Last November, as the clock shifted back to daylight standard time, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration warned drivers that, with nightfall occurring earlier in the evening, "adjusting to the new, low-light environment can take time, and that driving while distracted puts everyone -- and especially pedestrians -- at greater risk of death or injury."

### **Tourism Boost**

Many tourism and outdoor activity businesses believe that daylight saving time could provide a financial boost for the tourism industry. Shifting that extra hour to the end of the day could boost outdoor activities and bring in an extra two (2) percent in revenue from visitors, according to [timeanddate.com](http://timeanddate.com)

### **CONCLUSION**

Moving clocks forward and backward every year in an increasingly complex digital world is not without consequences either. Air traffic schedules, train schedules, public transport schedules all must be changed biennially. It complicates timekeeping, disrupts meetings and even livestock have been shown to have trouble adjusting to new routines.

Moving the hours around twice a year is a complex matter. Although it was originally brought forward by Benjamin Franklin as a way to conserve energy, and that remains its primary purpose to this day, there is in fact no consistent evidence to show it is helping us. There is on the other hand, plenty of evidence to show that constantly shifting back and forth does harm.

With the recent bills being passed in California and Washington state, Premier Horgan has now reached out to these states for more information and has stated that all the pacific will benefit from remaining on the same time, and he is open to the idea of stopping the time change if the west coast states do the same.

It is for that reason that the Chamber of Commerce advocates a no-time-shift policy and remains on Daylight Savings Time for the calendar year

### **THE CHAMBER RECOMMENDS**

**The Provincial Government collaborates with Washington State, Oregon and California to have the Pacific Time Zone in Canada and U.S.A to remain on DST throughout the year.**