

RABBI  
DOVID  
HEBER

EDUCATION, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

MARCH 7, 2023

SENATE BILL 268

GENERAL PROVISIONS - FULL-YEAR DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME

TESTIMONY OF RABBI DOVID HEBER

RABBI

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THE INTRIGUING WORLD OF  
JEWISH TIME

SEFER SHAAREI ZMANIM  
(GATES OF TIME)

**OPPOSE**

In light of the pending legislation, I wanted to convey how devastating year-round Daylight Saving Time (DST) would be for the Orthodox Jewish community.

Introduction: Jews worldwide conduct prayer services three times each day, 365 days a year, and on some days there are additional prayers as well. The longest service of the day is the morning prayer service, during which time the prayer shawl and phylacteries are donned. Ideally, prayer services take place in the synagogue with other congregants who form a minyan/quorum. Breakfast is not eaten until after services.

Time of Morning Prayer Service on weekdays: The service in the synagogue takes approximately 40-50 minutes. Exact times vary slightly from one synagogue to another. Morning services ideally take place around sunrise (or later) and may not be prayed before dawn.

With year-round DST, note the following times for some major Jewish metropolitan areas in Maryland in December and January:

<u>City</u>	<u>Dawn/Earliest Start Time</u>	<u>Prayers End</u>	<u>Sunrise</u>
Baltimore (EDT)	7:14 a.m.	7:55-8:05 a.m.	8:26 a.m.
Silver Spring (EDT)	7:15 a.m.	7:55-8:05 a.m.	8:27 a.m.

The problem is quite obvious. With services not able to take place until such late times and ending as late as 8:05 a.m., those leaving to begin their commute to work would encounter serious work schedule disruptions. How can individuals during the winter pray before going to work? Earlier work schedules would make it impossible to pray.

Furthermore, school schedules would be greatly disrupted as classes could not begin on time due to such late services.

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Finally, there should be concern for children who need to commute to school. Many children start school at 8:00 a.m. or 8:30 a.m. They would need to leave when it is still very dark. In the cities listed above, school start-times would occur 30 minutes before sunrise. The gain of not having to change the time twice a year is greatly offset by the very dark morning commute.

I urge the members of the committee to oppose SB 268.