

HB0165

General Provisions - Standard Time - Year-Round Daylight Saving Time

Statement in **Opposition** to Permanent Daylight Savings Time and in Favor of Permanent Standard Time

My name is Steven R. Hursh, PhD, President of the Institutes for Behavior Resources, Inc., Baltimore, and adjunct Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. My specialty is sleep and circadian science. The computer simulation I invented to predict sleep and fatigue under work schedules is widely used by the airlines and the US Department of Defence. I am also an expert on the behavioral economics of public policy. I believe there are two key points to be considered. The first is health and human physiology. There is a sizeable literature that documents the negative health and safety impacts of shifting our body clocks twice each year. As a practical matter, moving the clocks ahead each spring creates for most people the loss of an hour of sleep that can negatively impact alertness the next day and create a small but important safety risk, considering that the entire population is impacted. The scientific literature points to adopting a single standard in each time zone, either standard time or daylight time. If there are any health benefits of one of these choices, there is some evidence that standard time is more healthy.

The second key point relates to the practical advantages of permanent standard time. If we were to be on permanent daylight time, then morning daylight on January 1 is delayed from 7:26 to 8:26 – which means that children will be standing in the dark waiting for buses much longer in the winter and commuters are driving in twilight an hour later as well. This risk is not just for one day, but for a major part of the winter months for everyone. The delay of sunrise in the winter has attendant safety implications that are probably more important than the health implications of either standard.

But what about the practical implications in the evening? Many people, including myself, relish the long evenings in the summer to enjoy outdoor activities. Will standard time adversely impact those leisure activities? The answer is probably not and here is a case to consider. Hawaii does not observe daylight savings time, so on July 1, in the middle of the summer, twilight is from 8:11 to 8:42 pm. If we were on standard time in Baltimore on July 1, our evening twilight would start about a half hour later than in Hawaii, from 8:48 to 9:36 pm, and full darkness would be nearly an hour later. So, with standard time, our summer leisure activities would be impacted less by sunset than it is in Hawaii. The practical matter is that summer will still have later sunsets under standard time and offer ample opportunities for evening leisure activities. As with most things, it will take some time to get adjusted to this new reality, but once we adjust, we don't have to struggle with it twice a year. And, as a bonus, we don't have to wait so long for the start of fireworks on July 4th!

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/how-daylight-saving-time-poses-a-host-of-health-concerns-according-to-a-neurologist>

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