

March 6, 2023

RE: UNFAVORABLE - SB 268 – Permanent Daylight Saving Time in Maryland

Dear Senators Ready, Feldman, and members of the Maryland Senate Education, Energy, & Environment Committee:

As sleep medicine professionals and scientists, we urge you to vote against SB 268 and adopt permanent standard time instead.

Permanent DST (pDST) would delay Maryland sunrise to 8:39am, and past 8am up to 102 days (3.4 months) each year.

The United States tried pDST during the 1973 OPEC oil embargo, but saw only minimal benefits on energy savings. Despite offering more light in the evenings, pDST resulted in many more days with dark mornings, particularly in the winter; hence pDST became extremely unpopular, even more so in rural areas, and was **reversed after just one single winter by a strong congressional majority.**

Morning light is crucial for proper circadian alignment, and is one of the treatments used for seasonal depression. If we adopt pDST, we would have many, more dark mornings, with more light in the evening hours.

This has two serious effects:

- 1) Effects on the **biological clock**: Early morning darkness and evening light have similar effects on the biological clock, causing internal body rhythms to shift to later in the day. This can cause individuals to become unable to fall asleep until later in the evening or get up until later in the morning, a condition called "**chronic phase delay.**"
 - a. This chronic discrepancy between the internal biological clock and the social clock, which we use for getting up to go to work and school, is called "**social jet lag.**" Social jet lag has been shown in research studies to increase the risk of obesity, metabolic syndrome, cardiovascular disease, and depression.
 - b. Those who are most vulnerable would be adolescents, who are already expected to arise very early to catch the first tier of buses to get to school, and who are already chronically sleep deprived, based on polls conducted by the National Sleep Foundation. Other groups at special risk would include workers who have long morning commutes, and/or have to start morning work before 8:30 AM.
- 2) **Insufficient sleep**: Having to get up early in the morning despite being unable to fall asleep until late at night also results in chronic sleep loss, which is associated with a host of health problems, including fall-asleep crashes.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education, Agudath Israel of Maryland, Bloomberg Editorial Board, American Medical Association, American Academy of Neurology, American College of Chest Physicians, National Safety Council, American Academy of Sleep Medicine, National Sleep Foundation, National PTA, Society for Research on Biological Rhythms, Society of Behavioral Sleep Medicine, and many more have opposed permanent DST and urged instead for permanent Standard Time. For more information, please consult this site: <https://savestandardtime.com/endorsements/>

Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely yours,

Indira Gurubhagavatula, MD, MPH, who considers Baltimore her hometown

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