



March 4, 2015

The Honorable Charlie Huggins
Alaska State Senate
Alaska State Capitol, Room 103
Juneau AK, 99801

Re: Opposition to Senate Bill 6 – Elimination of Daylight Savings Time

Dear Senator Huggins:

The Alaska Chamber respectfully opposes Senate Bill 6, an act exempting the state from Daylight Savings Time (DST).

The Chamber is an organization dedicated to improving the business environment in Alaska. The Chamber represents hundreds of businesses from Ketchikan to Barrow that share a common goal – to make Alaska a viable and competitive place to do business. While we believe SB 6 is well intentioned, the Chamber has long opposed eliminating DST due to the anticipated, negative impact on Alaska's business community. The Chamber has not conducted a recent survey, however, over 70 percent of Chamber members opposed eliminating DST in 2009.

Alaska's placement on the globe is one that provides us with strategic advantages for shipping, transportation, military deployment and telecommunications. However, our location also provides significant challenges for conducting regular business with partners outside Alaska, particularly those on the East Coast. SB 6, as proposed, would increase those challenges for the bulk of the year, creating a five-hour time difference between Alaska and the East Coast of the United States, and a two-hour difference with our key economic partners in the Pacific Northwest and along the West Coast.

SB 6 would create unnecessary new hurdles for Alaska businesses dealing in financial markets, global trade, logistics and tourism. The concern about throwing Alaska businesses out of synch with financial markets is real and would impact banks, traders, investors and other members of the Alaska finance community.

Alaska's visitor industry will be impacted as well. Eliminating DST would require cruise ships to depart at least one hour earlier than currently scheduled to achieve parity with Pacific Daylight Time. In Ketchikan, such earlier departures are equivalent to a loss of 30 days in port representing a significant loss of economic activity.



The Chamber believes the impact of eliminating DST currently outweighs any potential benefits, and passage of SB 6 should be postponed until DST is eliminated at the federal level. Such a change at the federal level would allow Alaska to maintain the current time zone differentiations across the United States.

Alaska businesses are the key source of State funding and face plenty of challenges over the next few years. Today's financial reality of sustained lower oil prices will necessarily constrict State spending which will impact every Alaska community. Eliminating DST will further disadvantage Alaska businesses by reducing the number of hours to interface with business partners, advisors, customers, and suppliers for a substantial portion of the year. Now is not the time to add new challenges to doing business in Alaska.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Rachael Petro'.

Rachael Petro
President and CEO