

From: Lisa Alexia

Sent: Saturday, May 15, 2021 8:44 AM

To: House State Affairs <HouseState.Affairs@akleg.gov>; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins <Rep.Jonathan.Kreiss-Tomkins@akleg.gov>; Rep. Daniel Ortiz <Rep.Daniel.Ortiz@akleg.gov>

Subject: HB-31

Hello,

As a physician assistant with nearly 20 years of experience providing primary, emergency, and mental health care to Alaskans west of Juneau, I am writing to oppose HB-31. While permanent DST is a bad idea for the nation, it is a disastrous idea for the majority of Alaskans. Allowing Daylight Saving Time (DST) to become permanent would amount to an unconsented public health experiment with predictable bad effects on sleep, mental and physical health, and student learning.

The current time zone for most of Alaska covers several hours of longitude; by the sun, it is aligned with Juneau but the bulk of the population of Alaska already sits several hours west, by the clock, of their true solar noon. The effect of permanent DST would be to make mornings darker, all winter long, than they already are. Based on well-established science, the impact on this to mental health, physical health, unintentional injury (car accidents), substance abuse, suicide rates, and student learning (especially for teens) will be negative. Lives will be lost, student outcomes throughout Alaska will decline further than they already are. If DST became permanent, it would worsen the already significant discrepancy between the clock and the sun, which would essentially become an unconsented public health and education experiment which would heavily impact the majority of Alaska's populations, including Anchorage, Fairbanks, and most of the rest of Alaska, including many villages that already experience extended darkness in the winter mornings.

Please consider the attached photo I took at St. Paul Island, Alaska, on November 2, 2019, at 10:00. St. Paul Island is nearly the same latitude as Juneau (actually, it's a little farther south) but quite far west in Alaska. The next day, November 3, brought the end of DST for the year and more light at this time. Keep in mind that if passed and enacted, this bill would not just mean morning darkness at 10:00 a.m. continues through the winter, but actually further delays sunrise. Thus, sunrise on December 21st on St. Paul Island would not happen until just before noon. Imagine living and working in a community such as Juneau, where all civil functions start at 8:00am but the sunrise doesn't happen until almost noon for much of the winter! Having worked on St. Paul Island in the winter, I can confirm that yes, it is quite difficult for people to be fully alert and awake and functioning normally in the morning, when your place of work begins at the solar equivalent time of 4:55 am.

Please also consider the commentaries (links below) I have written on the issue of time zones in Alaska, which contain references to the research which confirms that shifting our biological clocks to make mornings darker will have negative impacts on health and learning, as well as to the information presented above.

I would be happy to discuss this further at the hearing for HB-31 scheduled for May 18 at 3:00 p.m. Please send the appropriate access link, and I will be available to discuss further.

Thank you,
Lisa Alexia, PA-C, CAQ-Psychiatry

BIO: Lisa Alexia is currently both a psychiatric and rural primary care physician assistant (itinerant) who began providing health care in rural Alaska in 2001 as a community health aide. She currently lives in Anchorage.

[Make Alaska Standard Time permanent](#), February 21, 2020

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