

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE

March 11, 2025

1:32 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Kelly Merrick, Chair
Senator Forrest Dunbar, Vice Chair
Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Donald Olson
Senator Robert Yundt

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

SENATE BILL NO. 111

"An Act relating to the diagnosis, maintenance, and repair of products that use digital electronics to operate; adding an unlawful act to the Alaska Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Act; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

SENATE BILL NO. 102

"An Act exempting the state from daylight saving time; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

SENATE BILL NO. 26

"An Act petitioning the United States Department of Transportation to change the time zones of Alaska; exempting the state from daylight saving time; and providing for an effective date."

- BILL HEARING CANCELED

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SB 111

SHORT TITLE: DIGITAL PRODUCT REPAIR

SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) DUNBAR

02/26/25 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/26/25 (S) CRA, L&C
03/11/25 (S) CRA AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)

BILL: SB 102

SHORT TITLE: ELIMINATE DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

SPONSOR(s): STATE AFFAIRS

02/19/25 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/19/25 (S) CRA, STA
03/11/25 (S) CRA AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)

WITNESS REGISTER

ELIZABETH CHAMBERLAIN, Director of Sustainability
iFixit

San Luis Obispo, California

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified by invitation in support of
SB 111.

HAHLEN BEHNKEN, Intern
Senator Forrest Dunbar
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions on SB 111.

JOE TORMA, General Manager
Green Star of Interior Alaska
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified by invitation in support of
SB 111.

SENATOR SCOTT KAWASAKI, District P
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Introduced SB 102 on behalf of the Senate
State Affairs Committee, as chair.

JOE HAYES, Staff
Senator Scott Kawasaki
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Gave a presentation on SB 102 on behalf of
the Senate State Affairs Committee.

ACTION NARRATIVE

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CHAIR MERRICK called the Senate Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Gray-Jackson, Dunbar, and Chair Merrick.

SB 111-DIGITAL PRODUCT REPAIR

[1:33:25 PM](#)

CHAIR MERRICK announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 111 "An Act relating to the diagnosis, maintenance, and repair of products that use digital electronics to operate; adding an unlawful act to the Alaska Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Act; and providing for an effective date."

CHAIR MERRICK invited the bill sponsor to put himself on the record to introduce SB 111.

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SENATOR DUNBAR, speaking as sponsor, introduced SB 111. He said the bill addresses challenges with digital products whose manufacturers do not make repair tools available. Many products cannot be repaired by the owner due to proprietary software, glued components, or special tools withheld by the manufacturer, forcing customers to use licensed dealers. Such dealers are often unavailable in Alaska, particularly rural areas. He said this can cause actual health and safety challenges.

SENATOR DUNBAR stated that although "right to repair" legislation is still in the early stages, multiple states have introduced it, including Oregon, Colorado, and New York. SB 111 incorporates provisions from the best parts of those bills and invited testifiers will provide technical details.

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SENATOR DUNBAR said Alaskans are independent, self-sufficient individuals, who like to repair their vehicles and devices. Particularly those who live off the road system or in a rural area where there are not many other options. He cited Caterpillar and John Deere as examples where large equipment failures can leave owners waiting weeks or months for repairs. He noted that owners cannot let an independent mechanic service that equipment. Such delays are impractical for farmers and independent mining operations. He expressed hope Alaska will join other states in adopting the "right to repair" trend.

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CHAIR MERRICK announced invited testimony on SB 111.

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ELIZABETH CHAMBERLAIN, Director of Sustainability, iFixit, San Luis Obispo, California, testified by invitation in support of SB 111. She described iFixit as a repair company that provides over 115,000 step-by-step repair guides for products ranging from toasters to tractors, and sells parts and tools so individuals can fix products themselves. She said one in fifteen Alaskans used iFixit last year, and the company also sells parts and tools wholesale to independent repair shops. In recent years, iFixit has partnered with manufacturers to provide original parts to customers, in some cases to comply with right to repair laws. She noted that iFixit is now the official parts distributor for Google Pixel, Microsoft Xbox, Logitech, and others.

MS. CHAMBERLAIN said both consumers and independent repair shops report difficulty in obtaining spare parts. Some products, such as vacuum cleaners and fitness trackers, have no replacement parts available, while others have only a limited range of parts. She gave an example involving a Dyson hairdryer with a faulty power switch. She was unable to locate the needed part. She reached out to an independent repair shop, and it was unable to locate that particular part too. When she contacted Dyson for an out-of-warranty repair, she was told to buy a new hairdryer. She stated that manufacturers can push consumers to purchase new products when the manufacturer is not required to share repair parts.

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MS. CHAMBERLAIN said iFixit supports electronics right to repair legislation nationwide and noted that five states have enacted such laws. She said many manufacturers do not comply, even where laws have passed, and especially in states where these laws have not passed. Even though right to repair is gaining traction, the pressure needs to continue to ensure Americans can get the repair access they need. She stated that Alaskans deserve the same access that is guaranteed by law to consumers in California, New York, Minnesota, Oregon, and Colorado. She said extending the lifespan of electronics benefits: the consumer's pocketbook; the environment; the reduction of waste; the conservation of raw materials; and the prevention of toxic byproducts from manufacturing. She said it takes about 34 years of use for a cell phone to consume as much energy as is required to make it, and extending product lifespans helps avoid contributing to the 53 million tons of new electronic waste

generated each year. She expressed support for SB 111 as a sound compromise that works for all interests.

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CHAIR MERRICK said the testifier raised a good point about enforcement and asked what type of enforcement or recourse is available to uphold a consumer's legal right to repair.

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HAHLEN BEHNKEN, Intern, Senator Forrest Dunbar, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, replied that it would be enforced as violations of other unfair trade practices are enforced under that Act. He referenced Section 3 of the sectional analysis, which states:

"Section 3. Amends AS 45.50.471(b) by adding violations of SB 111 Digital Product Repair statutes AS 45.45.800-45.45.890 to the list of unfair methods of competition and unfair or deceptive acts or practices declared to be unlawful."

MR. BEHNKEN said he would provide additional details in writing.

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CHAIR MERRICK said that would be helpful information.

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SENATOR DUNBAR expressed his belief enforcement would fall to the Civil Division of the Department of Law and said he will get back to the chair with that information.

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JOE TORMA, General Manager, Green Star of Interior Alaska, Fairbanks, Alaska, testified by invitation in support of SB 111. He stated that Green Star is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to encourage waste reduction and increase recycling in Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) communities. In 2017, Green Star obtained an electronics recycling contract for FNSB and, in 2020, began operating the central recycling facility in Fairbanks. He said Green Star also serves as the regional coordinator for Zender Environmental Backhaul Alaska, which removes end-of-life electronics from rural communities. He commented that he sees end of life electronics all day every day.

MR. TORMA said one of Green Star's main initiatives is "Reuse It," a retail store selling refurbished laptops, desktops, network components, TVs, and small appliances, either repaired

or dropped off in working order. The organization also offers a "Rebuild IT" computer class to teach young people how to assemble computers from reclaimed parts, keeping products out of the landfill and providing an alternative to buying new.

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MR. TORMA said this is the Alaskan way, especially in the Interior where parts, tools, and documentation are sometimes unavailable, and the ability to keep items working is part of daily living. Without access to parts, many items received are ground up and reclaimed rather than repaired and reused. He reiterated Green Star's support for SB 111. He suggested amending the bill language to clarify that tools and documentation should remain freely available to independent repair shops, even if a manufacturer can no longer obtain original replacement parts. He said that, if possible, there should be no restriction on obtaining parts from secondary sources and that Green Star relies heavily on reclaimed and third-party parts.

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CHAIR MERRICK said the committee will take his testimony into consideration. She said she has dealt with this issue as have others and it is very frustrating.

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CHAIR MERRICK held SB 111 in committee.

[1:47:23 PM](#)

At ease.

SB 102-ELIMINATE DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

[1:48:26 PM](#)

CHAIR MERRICK reconvened the meeting and announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 102 "An Act exempting the state from daylight saving time; and providing for an effective date."

CHAIR MERRICK invited the chair of the Senate State Affairs Standing Committee and his staff to introduce the committee's bill.

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SENATOR SCOTT KAWASAKI, District P, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, introduced SB 102 on behalf of the Senate State Affairs Committee, as chair. He stated that SB 102 would exempt Alaska from observing daylight saving time. Daylight saving time

is traditionally observed between the second Sunday in March and the first Sunday in November. While Alaska has observed daylight saving time since 1966, SB 102 proposes switching the state to permanent standard time. He said this change would provide mental and physical health benefits, strengthen Alaska's economy, and eliminate the need for residents to change their clocks twice each year. He noted that Arizona, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Guam, and other U.S. territories have already exempted themselves, and many states, including Washington and Oregon, have introduced similar legislation this year.

SENATOR KAWASAKI expressed appreciation to the sponsor of the other bill, related to standard time, for recognizing the health benefits associated with ending daylight saving time. He said the American Academy of Sleep Medicine agrees that switching between standard time and daylight saving time increases risks to physical health, mental health, and public safety. He stated that both permanent standard time and permanent daylight saving time have advantages for Alaska, given its northern location.

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JOE HAYES, Staff, Senator Scott Kawasaki, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, delivered a presentation on SB 102, on behalf of the Senate State Affairs Committee, Senator Kawasaki, Chair.

[1:51:07 PM](#)

MR. HAYES moved to slide 2, History of Daylight-Saving Time (DST):

[Original punctuation provided.]

History of Daylight-Saving Time (DST)

- Germany was first country to implement DST in 1916
 - US followed suit but repealed DST a year later
- During WWI and WWII many countries temporarily implemented DST
- By 1965, time zones were erratic across the US
- Extra hour of daylight reduced energy usage of electric lighting and heating
- Almost all non-Western countries have since moved to standard time

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MR. HAYES moved to slide 3, Negative Effects of Changing Clocks:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Negative Effects of Changing Clocks

- Shifting sleeping hours twice a year disrupts circadian rhythm
- Reduces cerebrovascular and cardiovascular health
- Increases traffic accidents and workplace injuries
- Increases substance abuse and mental health disorders
- Circadian Misalignment
- American Economic Association estimates social cost of \$275 million annually

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MR. HAYES moved to slide 4, Daylight Saving Time vs Standard Time, the comparison section of the presentation.

MR. HAYES moved to slide 5, Daylight Saving Time:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Daylight Saving Time

- 1974 Energy Crisis
 - 79 percent approval -> 42 percent approval
- Energy is no longer saved
 - Incandescent Lights
- Federal Law
 - Arizona, Hawaii, 5 US Territories

MR. HAYES reviewed the slide, noting that the 1974 energy crisis drove strong public support for daylight saving time. He said public support has since fallen to about 42 percent, in part because of the energy saving impact of modern lighting. He said under federal law, Arizona, Hawaii and 5 U.S. territories switched to standard time.

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MR. HAYES moved to slide 6, Standard Time:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Standard Time

- More light in the morning improves physical and mental health
- Metabolic disorders, depression, cardiovascular disease risk decrease
- Permanent Standard Time is supported by many groups
 - American Academy of Sleep Medicine
 - European Sleep Research Society
 - Centre for Economic Policy Research
- Doesn't require congressional amendments

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MR. HAYES moved to the map graphics on slide 7, depicting how standard time preserves morning light, whereas permanent daylight time makes sunrise too late.

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MR. HAYES moved to photos on slide 8, comparing morning road visibility in Fairbanks on January 27 under daylight saving time and under standard time. He noted that a graphic on the slide illustrates how standard time aligns more closely with the sun, while daylight saving time forces earlier waking.

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MR. HAYES read from a March 6 news article, reporting that President Trump would not push for permanent daylight saving time because public opinion is evenly split. He quoted the President, "It's a 50-50 issue and if something is a 50-50 issue it is hard to get excited about it ... I assume people would like to have more light later, but some people want to have more light earlier because they don't want to take their kids to school in the dark. It's something I can do, but a lot of people like it one way. A lot of people like it the other way ... It's very even. And usually I find when that's the case, what else do we have to do?"

MR. HAYES expressed his belief that a national bill would not be enacted because the President, who initially supported the idea, had changed his position.

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SENATOR DUNBAR observed that northern Alaska and even the Interior differ so greatly from the rest of the country that this debate does not even really apply. He said there are parts of the state where the sun goes down in December and does not rise again until January or February. Even the Interior has very

long daylight hours in the summer and very long periods of darkness in the winter. He stated that, for him personally, whether there is more daylight in the morning or evening is less significant than the seasonal time change itself. He said, unless he is mistaken, the health effects of the changeover are well categorized and are extremely negatively impactful on Alaska's population. He asked if that was a fair characterization.

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SENATOR KAWASAKI confirmed that was the case. He stated that multiple studies show the time change itself, whether requiring people to wake earlier and lose sleep or adjusting to the extra evening light, is the most disruptive factor. Because of Alaska's northern latitude, even in Juneau the state is currently gaining five minutes of daylight per day, amounting to a half-hour difference each week. He noted that on Sunday morning it was still fairly dark, yet within a week the change will be barely noticeable. The effect is even more pronounced further north, with Anchorage gaining more daylight than Juneau and Fairbanks gaining about seven minutes per day. He agreed that, due to its geographic position, daylight saving time has minimal impact on Alaska either way.

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SENATOR DUNBAR observed that, if his math was correct, Fairbanks would gain as much daylight in nine days as it does from the "spring forward" shift of daylight saving time.

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SENATOR KAWASAKI agreed, noting that nine days at seven additional minutes of daylight per day equals 63 minutes, just over an hour.

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CHAIR MERRICK thanked the presenters. She said her constituents feel passionately about this issue.

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SENATOR DUNBAR said it is an exhausting issue.

[SB 111 was held in committee.]

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There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Merrick adjourned the Senate Community and Regional Affairs Standing Committee meeting at 1:58 p.m.