

Dear Honorable Legislators,

Please vote YES on SB 566 to safeguard the health and safety of Oregonians.

Healthy sleep is crucial year-round for a strong immune system, cognitive function, metabolic health, alertness, and mood. Yet, the week after "springing forward," we see a temporary spike in heart attacks and car accidents. While this evens out with fewer heart attacks in the fall after we gain an hour of sleep, **the long-term effects of staying on Daylight Saving Time are far more concerning.**

Chronobiologists—scientists who study body rhythms—have shown that permanent Daylight Saving Time has severe health consequences, including shorter sleep, mental health issues, and decreased life expectancy. **If Oregon wants to get out of the spring-forward, fall-back trap, it should opt for continuous Standard Time.**

Consider Russia, from 2011 to 2014, when they switched to permanent Daylight Saving Time. During Russia's long winters, this shift deprived people of early morning sunlight, disrupting their circadian rhythms. The results were alarming: negative impacts on sleep, moods, and behavior, especially in the north. In 2014, citing these issues and a rise in early morning accidents, Russia reverted to Standard Time permanently.

Scientists have [evidence](#) of how even living on the western edge of a time zone affects people differently than those on the eastern edge. People on the western edge are forced to get up an hour earlier than people on the eastern edge, relative to sunrise. **Analysis of health data from millions of people shows that people on the western edges get on average 19 minutes less sleep every night than people on the east, and have [significantly higher](#) rates of obesity, diabetes, and heart attacks.**

Sunrise and sunset act as natural cues for our body clocks. When we shift time, we disrupt this balance, forcing people to wake up in the dark and stay exposed to light too late. In the Pacific Northwest, this means months of darkness during the winter morning commute. For example, an 8:00 am start in Portland would mean 109 days of darkness, contributing to worse mental health and sleep conditions.

[Research shows](#) that later school start times, aligned with teenagers' natural body clocks, improve mental health, grades, and performance, while also reducing drowsy driving accidents. The life expectancy of students increases when school times are later. The leading cause of death among teens is traffic accidents, because insufficient sleep has measurable consequences. Teton County in Wyoming shifted from a 7:35 a.m. start to a far more biologically reasonable 8:55 a.m. start. The result was astonishing—a 70% reduction in traffic accidents in sixteen- to eighteen-year-old drivers. **Shifting when we first get morning sun for a greater part of the year will yield positive**

outcomes for our children, but will also affect adults for the better if we switch to Standard Time year round.

History shows that trying to shift to permanent Daylight Saving Time doesn't work. In 1973, the U.S. attempted year-round Daylight Saving Time during an energy crisis. It was highly unpopular, led to schoolchildren's deaths, and was abandoned after only 10 months. **Since the mid-1970's, we've also lost about eight weeks of healthy Standard Time, a change that has only worsened the alignment of our body clocks with the natural world.**

Oregon has a chance to lead by adopting year-round Standard Time, as supported by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, the American Academy of Cardiovascular Sleep Medicine, the National Safety Council, the National PTA, and the Oregonian. Hawaii and Arizona have been on Standard Time for over 50 years, and Oregon can do the same now—without waiting for Congress.

Thank you,

Kindra Crick
Oregonian, Educator, Artist, Parent, and Northwest Noggin Board Member