

GUEST EDITORIAL FROM THE GAZETTE TIMES

Oregon Senate says it's time for a change

The Oregon Senate last week took a step toward ending our generally pointless (and potentially harmful) twice-annual ritual of changing our clocks, joining a resistance that seems to be gaining momentum across the nation.

By a 23-4 margin, senators approved Senate Bill 320, which would move Oregon to year-round daylight saving time. The bill isn't perfect, but it still is worth noting as an important first step forward.

Evidence continues to mount that these time switches (spring ahead an hour every spring; fall back an hour every fall) come with risks to our health and wreak havoc with sleep-deprived Americans.

And the reasons we've been given to justify the time switches simply don't pan out. For starters, daylight saving time never was intended as a boon to farmers: In the words of a memorable report on "Last Week Tonight with John Oliver," "Cows don't care what time it is." And crops get exactly the same amount of light every day, regardless of whether it's daylight saving or standard time.

Daylight saving time wasn't implemented on a large scale until 1916, when Germany and its World War I ally Austria-Hungary set clocks ahead an hour to save on energy costs. Other nations, including the United States, followed suit. After World War I, other nations abandoned the idea, but not the United States. The idea of daylight saving time really picked up steam during the energy crisis of the 1970s.

But here's the deal: Evidence suggests that daylight saving time hasn't saved on energy costs. It may reduce lighting use, but that's offset by increased costs for air conditioning and heating, and increased consumption of gasoline.

So the time was right, so to speak, for Senate Bill 320, which now moves to the House. If the bill becomes law, all but one of Oregon's 36 counties would move to year-round daylight saving time — in other words, we'd spring forward and never fall back. (Malheur County is the exception; that county actually is on Mountain time so that it syncs with nearby Boise, Idaho. That county would continue to switch between daylight time and standard time, to stay in sync with Idaho.)

The bill that passed the Senate isn't exactly a stirring denunciation of the changing of the clocks: It would only become effective if Congress approves the time change and if Washington and California also adopt daylight time on a permanent basis (the good news there is that proposals to do exactly that are making progress in both those states).

And a provision originally in the bill, calling for a public vote on the issue, was eliminated. While we appreciate the Senate's willingness to take this matter into its own hands, we have to admit that we thought a vote on this would have been fun.

In such a vote, we could have gauged popular sentiment on the main dispute that faced senators in last week's deliberations: whether the state should shift permanently to daylight or standard time.

While most senators favored daylight time, the arguments raised by others supporting standard time have some merit. For one thing, staying on daylight time year-round could have an effect on some religious observances. In Judaism, for example, the daily morning prayer is held shortly after sunrise. In January, the sun wouldn't rise until nearly 9 a.m. in western Oregon, making it difficult for some worshipers to make it to work on time.

But, really, on some level, the question of daylight vs. standard time doesn't matter that much: The point here is to do away with the time switch. Senate Bill 320 helps loosen the bonds of this time tyranny.



"OK, THAT IS SO NOT FAIR..."

Your views

Kreider: What can we do to help our local newspaper?

To the Editor:
A local newspaper is an important asset to any community. It is with distress that I read that Western Communications may go out of business. What can our communities do to help in saving our local newspapers? The options are to raise rates without cutting staff; to sell to another company, perhaps local; or to create a hybrid corporate/community funded paper.

Community members: Please provide us some leadership in saving our local community papers. I care!

Jim Kreider
La Grande

Garland: Ask your lawmakers to vote no on HB 3063

To the Editor:
The current measles outbreak was not spread in a school setting. So why are Oregon lawmakers currently pushing a law that would permanently ban unvaccinated or partially vaccinated

children from day care and schools?

Healthy unvaccinated children do not harbor illness or viruses. They cannot spread what they do not have. I thought that education was important to Oregon's elected officials. In Oregon, there is already law that unvaccinated children must be excluded from school during an actual outbreak of a contagious disease, such as the measles. Why would anyone want to make the quarantine permanent? What is the point of denying perfectly healthy kids an education or after school activities? This is segregation. I thought we were done with segregation in schools. Please ask your representative to vote no on House Bill 3063.

Holly Garland
Hillsboro

McCracken: There are reasons to oppose self-serve gas

To the Editor:
Many sound reasons support having attendants fill gas tanks. They are dressed for the weather and are there to

do the job efficiently. It makes no sense to require even able-bodied drivers to exit vehicles in inappropriate clothing in all kinds of weather to deal with gasoline pumps, fumes and payment methods.

Being a gas station attendant is a job. Manufacturing jobs have moved overseas to generate even greater corporate profit from cheap labor and lax regulations. America can and should retain service jobs. A few cents on the gallon to support a local job seems to be money well spent. Those wages circulate in the area. The majority of gas costs goes toward corporate profits.

Often being a gas attendant is where fundamentals of being a good worker are learned and practiced. The hours are flexible to meet a variety of individual needs. For people needing to supplement retirement income it provides part-time employment.

As a driver it is a pleasure speaking to the attendants, and thanking them, especially in inclement weather. They are no different from waiters and waitresses and

Write to us

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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generally deserve a tip.

Having gas station attendants is one of the things that makes Oregon unique and great. The snide column by the Bend Bulletin's Editorial Board and recently printed in The Observer seems insensitive to both drivers and attendants.

I oppose self-service gasoline in Oregon.

Mary McCracken
Island City

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