

DAYLIGHT SAVING BILL (NO. 2) 2006

Second Reading

Resumed from 1 November.

HON NORMAN MOORE (Mining and Pastoral - Leader of the Opposition) [3.06 pm]: I did not want this bill to be dealt with without any debate at all. Although I had no intention of being the first speaker after the mover of the second reading, circumstances have conspired in that way.

It is a pity that this bill has come on for debate at this time. It is the sort of bill that, in my view, should have been considered about six months ago. The Parliament should have been given enough time to consider it without the unseemly haste that has been attached to it since its inception. Indeed, if this bill is passed, the first trial period will begin very soon - in December - yet that trial period is less than the future trial periods that are contemplated by the bill. Therefore, because of the haste, the first trial period will not be a total trial period at all but, in fact, be part of a trial period. Obviously, the proponents of the bill have talked about a three-year trial period before a referendum. In my view, it would have been better had this matter been dealt with some time ago, and it ought to have been a government bill.

I have looked at the history of daylight saving legislation in Western Australia. The last time the notion of daylight saving came into the Parliament was in a private member's bill. Hon Reg Davies introduced a bill into the Legislative Council in 1991. That bill was ruled out of order in the Legislative Assembly, even though it had passed through the Legislative Council, because this house had passed legislation that imposed a burden on the Treasury of the state. As a result of that the then Lawrence government introduced a bill that became an act in 1991. We then had a trial period of daylight saving and a referendum in 1992. It is interesting looking at that bill: it actually provided for amelioration of circumstances in some parts of the state. A particular section of the bill created a committee to seek to look after the interests of particular groups or localities within Western Australia that might be affected by daylight saving. I do not quite know how that committee was supposed to work - whether it was meant to say that the sun would not move over York or somewhere else for an hour a week, or whatever the government had in mind. I think it was a bit of a sop to those people who thought that the government might be able to do something about the effects of daylight saving on particular communities. Needless to say, the referendum was subsequently held and lost.

Prior to the 1992 referendum we had two other referenda in Western Australia: one in 1975 and one in 1984. History tells us that each of the referenda held on those three occasions was defeated. The public has told us on three occasions now that it does not support daylight saving. Indeed, in 1975, 53.66 per cent said no; in 1984, 54.35 per cent said no; and in 1992, 53.14 per cent said no. We had an increase in the second referendum and a slight decrease in the third referendum. As a result of those referenda Western Australia does not have daylight saving.

I have always been of the view that we should have a referendum on this sort of issue because this is one of the few issues that we legislate for that affects every single person in Western Australia. Some people say to me that we should not have to have a referendum on this; it is not a big deal; why should everybody be required to vote on it when people have strong views about more important issues like health, education, prostitution and abortion? I have taken the view that even though all those issues are very important, they do not affect every single individual in Western Australia, unlike daylight saving, which has an impact on every individual's circumstances. I have always believed that the notion of having a referendum on this matter is a good thing.

As for this bill, I have to say that I am personally quite ambivalent about daylight saving. At my time in life it does not mean one thing or the other. I might add that in the past it was different. I had young children on one occasion and I voted against it. On a previous occasion I voted for it because I was a bit younger and more energetic than perhaps I am these days. From a personal perspective I am quite ambivalent about daylight saving. Indeed, when I consider what daylight saving means, it means that for those people who lead active lifestyles, who live in the metropolitan area, who have access to the beach, perhaps have a boat, who like to go walking, playing sport and other things like that, an extra hour of daylight in the evening may in fact enhance that lifestyle. I can understand why people would want to support daylight saving if they happen to be fortunate enough to enjoy that sort of a lifestyle. On the other hand, daylight saving is an absolute and total pain in the neck for many people in regional Western Australia particularly, and they are very vigorously, emphatically and emotionally opposed to it. I look at it from their perspective. If a person lives in Bruce Rock, for example, and has an extra hour of daylight in the evening, how does he rush off to the beach, or hop in his boat, or play tennis on grass courts, or take his dog for a walk in Kings Park? What does he do? He might go to the local swimming pool, or if he is a farmer he might jump in the dam and hope he can get a bit cooler. It seems to me that the benefits of daylight saving for city people, although they are important, do not outweigh the disadvantages of daylight saving for country people. Therefore, I will vote against this legislation because of the adverse

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consequences for my constituents. Indeed, all those people who live in country Western Australia will have their lifestyles adversely affected, and I cannot support that.

However, importantly, as a member of Parliament representing a region, I obviously took the time to check the voting situation within my electorate. I went through the results of the last three referenda in the Mining and Pastoral Region to the extent that I could do so accurately, because the boundaries have changed a bit over time. However, I chose all the electorates that roughly make up the Mining and Pastoral Region of today and looked at how they voted in the past. In 1975, there were six Legislative Assembly districts in what is now roughly the Mining and Pastoral Region. Four of the six voted against daylight saving, and two voted in favour of it. Interestingly, the two that voted yes were the Kimberley and the Pilbara, and the ones that voted no were Boulder-Dundas, Gascoyne, Kalgoorlie and Murchison-Eyre. Overall, 52.84 per cent voted no, and 47.15 per cent voted yes. Interestingly, the no vote was less in my region than it was statewide, which surprised me a little, and I do not know the reasons for that.

In 1984, five seats made up what is roughly my electorate now - that is, Gascoyne, Kalgoorlie, Kimberley, Murchison-Eyre and the Pilbara - and all five of those seats voted no. The no vote was 56.9 per cent, and the yes vote was 43.1 per cent. Therefore, there was a move away from daylight saving in my electorate between 1975 and 1984. Indeed, the no vote in my electorate in 1984 was higher than the statewide no vote. In 1992, there were six seats in my electorate; that is, Ashburton, Eyre, Kalgoorlie, Kimberley, Northern Rivers and Pilbara. Again, all electorates voted no. The total no vote this time was 61.5 per cent. Therefore, it had gone from 56.9 per cent in 1984 to 61.5 per cent in 1992, compared with a statewide vote of 53.14 per cent.

Hon Kim Chance: Do you have the yes vote in the Kimberley in those figures available to you?

Hon NORMAN MOORE: Yes.

Hon Kim Chance: Can you tell us?

Hon NORMAN MOORE: The yes vote in the Kimberley in 1975 was 50.36 per cent; it was pretty close. In 1984, it was 46.3 per cent, and in 1992, it was 35.05 per cent. I will come to that in a minute because it is an interesting scenario, and we need to think outside the square in respect of that. When I consider what my electorate wants me to do, acknowledging that the last referendum was in 1992, which was a fair while ago, I note that the trend has been away from the yes vote and there has been an increase in the no vote over that time. The no vote went from 52.84 per cent in 1975 to 61.5 per cent in 1992. That is a fairly indicative figure denoting people's views on this matter, and I do not know of any reasons that those voting trends would have changed in that time.

It is interesting to look at the results in some of the seats in 1992. In Ashburton, the no vote was 61.6 per cent; that was based around Karratha and that part of the Pilbara. In Eyre, the no vote was 54.68 per cent; that was essentially the part of the world comprising the Murchison and the north eastern goldfields. In Kalgoorlie, the no vote was 51.22 per cent. To be fair to the member for Kalgoorlie, who has promoted daylight saving, Kalgoorlie, of all the Assembly electorates within my electorate, has been the only one that has been one or two points either side each time. It has been pretty close in Kalgoorlie on most occasions. In the last referendum in 1992, the no vote in the Kimberley, ironically, was 64.95 per cent; in Northern Rivers, which was based upon the country around Carnarvon and Exmouth, the no vote was 71.67 per cent; and in the Pilbara, the no vote was 66.7 per cent. There is a very strong voting pattern in the Mining and Pastoral Region in favour of the no vote. I did some particular work on the Kimberley. It is a bit unusual because the east Kimberley, which is virtually on the Northern Territory-Western Australia border - I refer particularly to places such as Kununurra and Wyndham - has a problem with daylight hours, particularly in winter when the sun goes down at about four o'clock in the afternoon. I would have thought there was a significant case for those people to be voting for daylight saving, and they initially did so. In 1975, the yes vote in the boxes in Kununurra and Wyndham was 68.5 per cent; in 1984 it was 64.1 per cent and in 1992 it was 52.2 per cent. The trend in the east Kimberley is away from the yes towards the no, although people there still voted yes in each of those referendums. I have been lobbied by people in the east Kimberley to support daylight saving because of their particular circumstances, albeit that the majority of voters in the Kimberley voted no - as I mentioned a moment ago, 64.95 per cent at the last referendum. This creates some difficulties. A former colleague of mine, Hon Philip Lockyer, raised this on a previous occasion. Maybe Kununurra and Wyndham should be on Central Standard Time, and there may be some benefits if that happened, albeit that those areas still belong to Western Australia. Interestingly - the Leader of the House would know this - when the Ord River scheme continues on into the Northern Territory, under the current time arrangements, a very large proportion of the irrigation area will be one and a half hours ahead of the rest.

Hon Kim Chance: Actually, half of the M2 area is on the Northern Territory side.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: Yes, so we will say half and half. There will be a strange scenario, in which one large agricultural and horticultural area will have two different time zones. Fortunately, the Northern Territory does not have daylight saving at the moment, so the time difference will remain as one and a half hours; however, if daylight saving is adopted in Western Australia and not in the Northern Territory, the time difference will be two and a half hours. That creates an additional problem. Maybe there is a case to at least consider the notion of Kununurra and Wyndham going on to Central Standard Time. I have not had time to think about all those things because of the way in which this matter has been brought on, but they are the sorts of things that need to be contemplated for those parts of my electorate and of Western Australia whose longitudinal position creates a problem.

The bill now before the house, as it was passed by the Legislative Assembly, provides for a three-year trial period, which in my view is too long, followed by a referendum to be held between 10 May and 13 September 2009. That is an election year, so a state election early in 2009 would be followed by a referendum not long afterwards. The referendum on daylight saving and any election should be kept quite separate, and I understand that that is the view of the Premier on this matter. I would not want them to get mixed up. In the event that the bill is read a second time, I have placed some amendments on the supplementary notice paper to reduce the number of trial years from three to two, and to enable the referendum to be held in the first half of 2008, so that it is kept as far away from the election as possible. I would very much like the next election to be fought on issues such as accountability and ministerial behaviour and competence, rather than daylight saving, which, in some minds, will take precedence over some of these other issues. This issue should be kept separate and distinct from any election. Any suggestion that the referendum on daylight saving be held in conjunction with an election would undermine and diminish the ability of people to get involved in the real issues that should be considered at election time.

I will be voting against the second reading, and in the event the second reading succeeds, I will move those amendments in the committee stage. We will wait to see what the house does in relation to the second reading, committee and third reading stages, acknowledging of course that every member has a free vote on this bill.

In conclusion, I have been a little disappointed to read - this is newspaper talk, not necessarily the facts - that some pressure has been put on Labor members to toe the party line on this bill. That would be a very unfortunate situation. I am not saying it is true; I am saying it has been reported and members opposite can tell me if I am wrong. I hope I am. The suggestion has been made that some members of our house have had pressure put on them to vote "Yes", and if I am wrong I am happy to acknowledge that. It is important to have a free vote on issues such as this, as members have had in the past on issues such as abortion. We have been able to have a proper debate in this house unencumbered by any pressure being applied to members from outside. Certainly, we shall get pressure from all sorts of lobby groups, if I can use that expression today, but everybody has a view on this and they want to tell us about it. I am not talking about pressure in this context; I am talking about pressure from our political leaders. There has been none in our case.

Hon Graham Giffard interjected.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: I accept the comment made by Hon Graham Giffard that no pressure has been put on him by the Premier or by anybody else. I am pleased to hear that. I trust that every member is voting to reflect either the needs of the electorate or his or her own view in respect of this matter.

I have said publicly that one handwritten letter to me from a very concerned constituent is worth more than 500 e-mails that all have the same spelling mistake in them. Our computer systems were clogged up with this spam arrangement of "I support daylight saving" -

Hon Graham Giffard: With the same spelling error.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: With the same spelling error - they have "trail" instead of "trial". Every one is identical and there are thousands of them. I thought to myself that if all it takes to "lobby" me is to press a button to send me a common e-mail in which the sender has not even checked the spelling, that person is not making much effort. A lot of people have taken the trouble to write or type letters themselves; they are not cyclostyled letters that one simply signs at the bottom. They are from real people who have made a proper effort to convince me of their particular point of view. To those people who want to get involved in this form of e-mail lobbying in the future, I suggest that members of Parliament are smarter than they think and will not believe that receiving 5 000 or 10 000 e-mails means that a lot of people have a particular point of view. These days it does not take much effort to send a member of Parliament one of those.

As I said at the beginning, it is a pity this bill has come on in the way it has. It would have been better to have given us more time and to have had longer consideration of the issues so that we could perhaps have had a complete trial period this summer starting in, say, October and going through to March next year. Then we could have had a referendum next year so that we could make a quick decision about what we wanted to do in

the future. Because of the circumstances, I will go along with a two-year trial if the house agrees to pass the bill. However, I indicate I oppose the legislation and will vote against the second reading.

HON MURRAY CRIDDLE (Agricultural) [3.28 pm]: It will come as no surprise to anybody in the Parliament that I will be voting against the bill. However, I have heard the amendments put forward by Hon Norman Moore and if the bill is given a second reading, I will support those for the reasons he gave. I think three years is far too long a trial period, and commencing the trial within such a short time frame has not given people an opportunity to get feedback. It is amazing what can be done with a bill if someone wants it to come into the Parliament, is it not? Other bills - some of them very important - have languished on the notice paper for years without having made it through the system to be debated. We have been debating what I would consider to be some very important bills, yet this one seems to have made its way to the top of the pack, and I wonder why that has happened. I wonder what circumstances have led to this bill making its way through to the top of the pack, what influence the people who have brought this bill forward have had, and maybe what rewards there will be at the end of the day. In my part of the -

Hon Graham Giffard: What are you suggesting?

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: I am suggesting that a lot of important bills are on the notice paper, and that at the end of the year there is always a raft of bills that the government wants to rush through. The government says that they are important; everything is important at the end of the year. Yet this bill seems to have made its way through the mire. People in country areas are getting absolutely sick and tired of seeing these sorts of things come forward. In recent times I have been to Badgingarra, Dongara, Geraldton and down to Narrogin and Esperance, and I have heard the same feedback everywhere. The other day a bloke in Dongara told me that he was ambivalent about daylight saving. There has been no pressure about this put on me, apart from the raft of e-mails that have come through my office and jammed the system. I have not spoken to any of those people; I do not know why they do not come and face up. Apart from that, I have heard very little, if anything, from people wanting this bill to come through. In fact, yesterday I happened to come across a very senior Perth businessperson having lunch. He recognised who I was, which might be surprising to some people. He told me that daylight saving is no good at all for people in Asia; he does his business in Asia. Western Australia is actually in the same time zone as a large section of Asia. Daylight saving will move us away from time synchronisation with that part of Asia, where we are developing all the opportunities in the world. The second reading speech states that we have only a few business deals there; God knows what that is all about. The business relationship with Asia is absolutely astronomical and growing. Trade is not confined to gas and iron ore; we are exporting a bit of agricultural produce into that area, which is of enormous benefit to Western Australia because it is a geographically close destination. We can benefit from transport advantages and all those sorts of things. However, to return to the point that the businessman was making, Western Australia will be out of line with not only the eastern states but also Asia if this bill goes through. People should think seriously about these issues as we go forward.

Some remarks have been made about people in the country being backward and so forth; this line has been peddled for quite some years. I have great respect for those people who want daylight saving. I can understand their reasons. However, do not tell me that people in the country do not have as much right to put forward arguments asserting that their lifestyles will be impacted on by daylight saving. When my children were younger, they travelled 40-odd kilometres to school and spent about an hour and a half on the school bus. It was claimed in the second reading speech that such considerations are blown out of proportion. I can tell members that parents have tired and irritable kids as the result of an extra waking hour. In fact, a shearing contractor rang me the other day, and the facts as he outlined them to me were not very pleasant at all. His shearers derived enormous benefit from the extra hour's sleep in the cool of the morning. There are ramifications in daylight saving for people who work long hours and who take the opportunity to have the extra hour's sleep in the morning.

As everybody knows, three referendums on daylight saving have already been held. In 1975, the margin was 3.66 per cent; in 1984, it was 4.35 per cent; and in 1992, it was 3.14 per cent. Here we go again. After three years we will have an opportunity to vote in another referendum. Heavens knows what referendums cost. I hope that the referendum is not aligned with an election. Three years is far too long to trial daylight saving. It has been suggested that this matter should have gone to the people in the first place. Some people have referred to page 286 of the Constitution, which provides that the authority rests with the people. In this case we will make a decision in Parliament and the people will only have a say via a referendum in three years' time. The feedback I have received in my electorate is that about 80 per cent of the people do not want daylight saving. That is a very telling statistic. The member for Wagin has carried out a poll in his electorate and it reflects that figure. The figures for the past three referendums on this issue have been consistent in Wagin.

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Another issue which has been raised in the second reading debate and which was raised during times of war is the matter of saving power. In those days there were not as many buildings with airconditioning. I would like to know what impact airconditioning will have if daylight saving is introduced. What amount of power will airconditioning require? Everyone knows it is a fact that we have experienced brownouts and blackouts over the past few years. We do not want the incidences of brownouts and blackouts to increase because of another hour of daylight. What will be the impact of having an extra hour of daylight in the evening?

Another issue is water use. All members know that there is a shortage of water throughout Australia. One wonders whether a greater amount of water will be used in the evenings during daylight saving hours. My wife uses water each evening, but we use our own ground water. That issue should have been looked at. I have not seen any figures lately that can justify the daylight saving bill.

I have previously mentioned on the public record the issue of providing airconditioning in school buses. The government has indicated that Treasury is not willing to provide finance to fit airconditioning in more school buses. However, there is an opportunity to do that because seatbelts have not been fitted in school buses. Therefore, money that would have been quarantined in the budget for that purpose could be used to install airconditioning in school buses. I am sure that the money set aside for fitting seatbelts in school buses is still available. The latest information I have from the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure is that the fitting of seatbelts in school buses is not likely to proceed. That does not surprise me because, as a former Minister for Transport, I understand the reasons why seatbelts have not been fitted in school buses. The problems are insurance and the various sizes of children and so forth. Funding is available in the budget to install airconditioning in school buses if it is transferred from the money that was set aside to fit school buses with seatbelts. That measure should be implemented immediately if daylight saving is put in place. During my days as the president of a parents and citizens association, the P&C funded the installation of airconditioning in a school. It cannot be said that the Department of Education installed it, because we did. When the education department had the idea that it would take away the transportable classrooms, it did not take them away because they were used for other classrooms. We took the airconditioner out of the transportable classrooms when the numbers shifted and the department wanted to take away the particular building. From what I have said, it will come as no surprise to anybody to know that I will not be supporting this bill. I am concerned that it has come on so quickly, when we have other legislation that could have been debated. The government always says at the end of the year that we have important legislation that must be debated. If this bill is passed, it will be interesting to see how its effects flow forward. I have reservations about daylight saving, and people in my electorate are against it.

HON BRUCE DONALDSON (Agricultural) [3.41 pm]: I will not be supporting this legislation. Having a free vote, my decision is easy for three reasons. The first reason is that the Agricultural Region electorate has continually said no, and that is still very much to the point. The polling that I have conducted tells me that 65 to 70 per cent of people in the Agricultural Region are still opposed to daylight saving. That makes my decision easy, when I have a free vote away from party lines. The second reason is that I have lived in the country through daylight saving trials when I had young children, as has Hon Murray Criddle. As a farmer, I saw no benefits from the trials whatsoever; in fact, those days of the early trials of daylight saving were very difficult because many of us did not have airconditioning. We had to try to get kids to bed at 8.30 pm when the sun had just gone down and we had to try to get them up by 7.30 in the morning to catch a school bus to go to school. They then came home from school in the heat of the afternoon. Farmers might have had a small wading pool or a dam for their kids to swim in, but there were certainly no beaches close by. Half the time we did not get the Albany doctor, which is the equivalent of the Fremantle doctor, because, unfortunately, it did not reach places like Koorda but petered out near the Great Eastern Highway. The third reason is that every year hundreds of delegates attend the state Liberal Party conference in Perth at the end of July. This year we had a good, robust debate on the question of daylight saving, as one would expect. The vote at the end of the debate was against daylight saving. That vote was representative of people from metropolitan, country and regional Western Australia; that is, from one end of Western Australia to the other. The vote of the delegates was quite clear; they were against daylight saving. We must take note that they are the eyes and ears of our party. Unfortunately, the bill is now regarded as a Liberal bill.

Hon Kim Chance: We have been blamed for it, too.

Hon BRUCE DONALDSON: I am very pleased to hear that. I thought we had become the bunnies in this. I am glad that someone else is sharing the blame.

Hon Graham Giffard: I thought it was the Greens' bill.

Hon Norman Moore: Let's tell everybody that's what it is!

Hon BRUCE DONALDSON: That might be a good idea. Western Australia already has more hours of sunlight than any other state. If we really want daylight saving, we should have it in the wintertime, so that instead of the sun setting at 5.30 pm it would be only 4.30 pm, and people would have an extra hour to spend with their family.

Hon Graham Giffard: They would go to work in the dark.

Hon BRUCE DONALDSON: They go to work in the dark anyway. I have been quite amused at some of the comments that have been made about why we should have daylight saving. For example, mum, dad and the kids can frolic and play and have family time together and they can go to the beach. These are some of the comments I have heard. However, our society has changed dramatically. In many households both partners work. When they get home, what will happen? Kids should be doing homework. Who will cook the tea? While everybody is prancing around the beach or running around a park kicking a football, what will happen? Do we drive to the takeaway outlets? I have a feeling our major takeaway chains will love daylight saving because mum will say to dad, "We've had a great time in the park but I didn't put the chops or the potatoes on. Let's get takeaway instead." When both partners get home from work, they are usually pretty tired. They try to adjust their hours - perhaps they work flexi hours - to make sure that one of them is around when the kids get home from school. That is great. When we had young kids, it was not a bad idea to get the kids to bed and out of the way so that mum and dad could have some time together to discuss issues. That is a fact. We see too little of that today. One in every two marriages breaks down because communication between the parents is missing. It is something that people have not taken into account. It is more than just about family. Society has changed dramatically. I shake my head when I hear all these ideas that people come up with, saying that they will all be happy together. I can imagine every family that lives in Midland running around Scarborough Beach. We should consider the travel time to and from the beach. It is absolutely amazing to hear these ideas.

I mentioned country kids. There is nothing worse than trying to get six, seven or eight-year-olds out of bed and stick them on a bus at 7.30 am when it is really only 6.30 am. Kids sleep in during the cool of the morning. It is hard enough to get them up now. At least the sun goes down by about 7.30 pm. When we get home in the evening, the kids would have played or done some homework, had their tea and been put to bed. They at least get a reasonable sleep if it is not too hot at night. I know that things have changed and a lot of homes are airconditioned, but not every school bus is airconditioned. I do not think any energy will be saved if daylight saving is introduced, as some people have indicated.

I have looked at the flexi hours that people work now. One of the great benefits of working flexi hours is avoiding what we used to call peak-hour traffic. Once upon a time if we left Parliament House at 4.45 pm, we would be in front of the peak hour that commenced at five o'clock. Our arteries got quite clogged between 5.00 pm and 6.00 pm. I am talking about our road arteries, not our own arteries.

Hon Graham Giffard: You're a picture of health.

Hon BRUCE DONALDSON: I have that red wine every now and again that keeps the veins flowing. These days the traffic starts to build up on the Mitchell and Kwinana Freeways at about four o'clock. It takes over an hour to get into town on the Mitchell Freeway from 7.30 am, whereas if one gets onto the freeway at 8.50 am, one can get into the city within 25 minutes. Members should look at the traffic flowing on the Mitchell Freeway between 6.30 am and 6.45 am. This is without daylight saving. There has been a big change in flexi hours and how people work. That has a lot to do with how our society has changed with both partners in many families working. One of them starts a bit earlier and comes home earlier for when the kids get home from school, which is fair, reasonable and very sensible. I am not saying that daylight saving will be the end of the world and it will take longer to travel into the city. People are already working flexi hours.

There is already a two-hour time difference between the east and west coasts of Australia. There is always a three-hour difference between the east and west coasts of the United States. That is not a bad-sized country to look at. All year round we operate with a two-hour difference between us and the eastern states, without daylight saving. It becomes a three-hour difference in summer. Let us look at businesses. We are talking about a one-hour difference. Some businesspeople say that their head offices are in Melbourne and Sydney and that extra hour destroys their business. What a load of rubbish! There are e-mails, and people start work earlier anyway. With the availability of modern technology and IT, that argument is a load of rubbish. One hour makes no difference to businesses that operate out of Western Australia that deal with the eastern states. It is necessary only to talk to smart businesspeople to find that out.

Western Australia produced \$51 billion worth of exports in the past 12 months. Where was most of that money gathered from? It was Asia. By far, most of our exports go to Asia, which is in the same time zone as Western Australia. For that reason we should look at a comparable state such as Queensland. I give great credit to Peter Beattie for saying no to daylight saving; he has shown great leadership. Queensland has a single house of

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Parliament and his government has a huge majority. If he wanted daylight saving tomorrow, he could ram it through. He is smart enough to know that the Queensland people are not interested in it. Queensland attracts great numbers of Asian tourists. It is already two hours ahead of Asia and it does not want to be three hours ahead. Queensland does a lot of business in Asia. In the "good old days" when stamp duty was being inflicted on almost every transaction, where did many leading companies go? Queensland. They established their head offices there to bypass some of the revenue impositions that would have otherwise been foisted on them in other states. Queensland is a very comparable state because, in addition, it has similar daylight conditions. Queensland has said no. We have to ask ourselves the question: why? People are most interested to hear what Peter Beattie had to say. Queensland is comparable to Western Australia except that it does not have the huge mineral and oil and gas resources that we enjoy.

Esperance is 23 minutes solar time ahead of Perth because of its longitude. As such, the sun reaches Esperance about half an hour before it reaches Perth. It is light fairly early down there. The hotel I stay at when I am in Esperance is on the foreshore, and every morning I see people there walking, jogging and cycling - the whole lot. In addition, the sun goes down in Esperance about half an hour before it does in Perth. People in Esperance are very happy with the way things are down there. When I went to the Esperance show, people said to me that they hoped I was not going to vote for daylight saving. I made it very clear to them - before I was lynched - that I would not vote for it. There is a half-hour difference; Esperance could almost be on South Australian time.

Country people have often been accused of using arguments such as that regarding curtains fading. That argument went out with the ark. Another argument was that cows would not know when to get milked. I do not know whether members have watched a dairy farm in action. The cows all line up at a certain time. It is to do with the sun. Daylight saving will mean that dairy farmers will have to get up earlier because the cows all queue up to walk down the paddocks into the races. They go into the holding yards. The leader goes in and all the other cows follow in turn and go into a herringbone pattern. Lord help any young cow that might happen to push forward because it will get a very sharp reminder from all the other cows in the yard. It is fascinating to see the way in which they organise themselves. It will mean that dairy farmers will have to get up a little earlier. I am talking about them getting up at about four o'clock in the morning. It is a long day for them because they do other things during the day. They have voted a resounding no to daylight saving because it does not suit the way they operate.

The last time daylight saving was operating some schools adjusted their hours to start one hour later. Instead of starting at 9.00 am they started at 10.00 am; therefore, the buses were running at the same time of day as they had been when there was no daylight saving. Wheat and stock farming requires farmers to work with the sun. In that sense, daylight saving will not make any difference. However, it makes a big difference to farmers who will be getting up an hour earlier when it is very much cooler and when they should be relaxing to help them cope with the heat in the middle of the day.

I will not support this bill. Between 65 and 70 per cent of my electors, at the very least, will be very disappointed if this bill is passed. I do not believe that a three-year trial is necessary. I agree with the proposed amendment that has been foreshadowed by Hon Norman Moore; that is, if this bill is passed a referendum should be held in the middle of 2008 instead of 2009. If that were to occur, the whole issue would be out of the way and in the lead-up to the next state election the focus would be on the policies of the government and how it has performed versus the opposition's policies and how it is perceived as an alternative government. Daylight saving will cloud the issues in an election campaign. Holding a referendum in 2009 would not make sense. If this bill is passed, people will be able to make up their minds about daylight saving by 2008, having experienced it for the balance of this year and into 2007 and the 2007-08 summer. The issue of daylight saving could then be put behind us and people could focus on the way in which the state is governed.

I am concerned, and a lot of our supporters and, perhaps, non-supporters in the Agricultural Region are disappointed, that this bill is before the house today and that it will be voted on either today or tomorrow night - it is in the lap of the gods. They consider that there are more pressing issues facing this state than another daylight saving trial. After all, we have already had three referenda on this issue. Nothing much has changed since then, and if a referendum were held tomorrow the result would not be any different from the result of the last referendum. People get carried away with the idea that by shifting the clocks forward one hour Western Australia will become a vibrant state.

The liquor laws will assist the small bars that it is proposed will be established and people will be able to drink longer if this bill is passed. I can imagine some of the nightclub spots will be very vibrant by one or two o'clock in the morning, and I certainly would not like to be living near them.

A lot of issues have been bypassed, and I do not believe that families getting together in the evening because of the time difference - it has nothing to do with the solar time; it simply means changing the clock - will create

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utopia. Communication between parents is important in this day and age, and it is also important that the kids spend quality time with their parents. Currently, in the middle of summer it is 7.30 pm before the sun goes down and that allows parents to spend quality time with their kids. I cannot see that the kids need to be prancing around at nine o'clock before they go to bed. That leaves very little time for mum and dad to contemplate their lives, what they are doing and what they want to achieve.

Therefore, I will oppose this bill. I wish I could have two or three votes, instead of just one, to represent not only my electorate but, as I said earlier, the very people who are our supporters in the Liberal Party and who came down to our state conference, the very forum to put forward and debate these issues. To turn around and fly in the face of our very own supporters, I find really untenable.

HON GRAHAM GIFFARD (North Metropolitan) [4.00 pm]: I will take a few minutes to speak in support of this bill. I am speaking as someone who in the course of the campaign for this bill initially objected to it. However, I have changed my attitude to the bill from opposing the bill to supporting it. My personal view on daylight saving is and always has been that I support daylight saving. As some members know, I am from Victoria.

Hon Bruce Donaldson: We will make allowances!

Hon Ken Travers interjected.

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: Yes, webbed fingers and the whole bit!

I have lived under daylight saving and I understand well the benefits that flow from daylight saving and the advantages that it offers families and family life. However, for a number of reasons I did not originally support the bill when momentum for it started to grow. Firstly, I was quite put out by some of the arguments that were being advanced in favour of daylight saving. Hon Bruce Donaldson has talked about some of those arguments in the criticisms he made about the campaign for daylight saving. I share his concern in the sense that the claim that daylight saving would transform our lives was oversold. Although I believe overall that daylight saving is beneficial, I objected to the rather grand claims about everybody taking up tennis and going for walks in the park and our health report card being transformed by daylight saving. I do think that, overall, daylight saving is beneficial to community life, but I think that the advantages impact unevenly in that people who are generally outdoors people will as a consequence of this bill have more opportunity for outdoor leisure. Therefore, fit people will remain just as fit, or perhaps get a little fitter, but those people who do not participate in outdoor activities will not in my view be impacted on very much by the legislation. People who play tennis will have greater opportunities for playing tennis and kids particularly will have greater opportunities for playing outside. When we consider reports on the health of kids who are growing up now, it is something that we would generally encourage. Notwithstanding that, the claims about its advantages were terribly oversold.

I also thought that the suggestion that business wants daylight saving was six of one and half a dozen of the other. A number of interjectors and speakers have alluded to and Hon Kim Chance talked about the most populous time line in the world. I am not sure whether that means that Western Australia will have more business with the eastern states within that time line. However, it is a case of six of one and half a dozen of the other; whatever we pick up at one end, we will tend to lose at the other end. I expect that for the Western Australian economy and the business community there will be greater links and a greater level of business interaction with the eastern states than with Asia. Although that may be changing, I would be surprised if the level of business activity between Asian and Western Australian firms exceeded the level of interaction between west coast businesses and businesses in the eastern states. Therefore, they tend to nullify each other. However, my expectation is that there would probably still be advantages for the business community as a whole in its relationship with businesses in the eastern states.

I indicate that the third reason that I was reluctant to, and did not want to, support the bill was that we have had three referendums before, and Western Australians have on each occasion said no, they do not want daylight saving. I believe referendums are very significant events in our electoral and political history, and they are not to be taken lightly and most certainly not to be ignored. The fact that we have already had three referendums persuaded me that, on balance, I was not inclined to support the bill.

However, as the debate has gone on, I have talked to my colleagues, members of the community and businesspeople, and I have been convinced otherwise. I want to cite the three main reasons that I have revised my position on this bill. Firstly and probably most importantly is the feedback that I have had from constituents. I represent the people of the North Metropolitan Region. Members probably know that historically people in the North Metropolitan Region, particularly in the upper North Metropolitan Region, favour daylight saving probably a little more strongly than does the rest of the Western Australian community. Therefore, it is not surprising that I have received strong feedback in my office about people's views. Of course, technology is advancing at a very rapid pace. I have received in my office between 9 000 and 12 000 e-mails; I am not

absolutely sure of the exact number. I am sure that each member has received an equivalent number in his or her office. From what I can see from those e-mails - I have not done a final tally yet - the yes case is clearly more mobilised and more organised within that electronic forum. In that click-this-button mechanism, the yes case is clearly outperforming the no case. The yes case people clearly have access to larger databases than do the no case people. That is not insignificant, because I have not experienced a community campaign of that magnitude before. It has really been quite a significant campaign in that sense. I have been a member for six and a half years, and I do not think I have received anywhere near 10 000 responses on any issue, apart from, of course, the four-yearly elections. I received a lot of e-mails in my office.

I acknowledge what people say about the value of those e-mails and the weight that is put on them. If all that people are required to do is click a button to send a pro forma letter to a member, that does not represent a great deal of effort on their part. However, there are dangers in completely dismissing that, because if people have clicked a button, they are not inclined to sit down and write a letter. They will not do both. Most people will say that they have done that; they have registered their support for daylight saving. Therefore, we must acknowledge that thousands and thousands of people have been motivated to contact their members of Parliament. They may have done that by writing a letter or clicking a button on a computer. One of the reasons for people clicking a button on a computer will be access to technology. A lot of those people who are writing long letters probably do not have a computer in their home; they probably do not have access to that technology. It cannot simply be said that one letter is worth a thousand, or any number, of e-mails. It must be appreciated that every e-mail and every letter has a name attached to it. They are all individuals. I did not hear Hon Ken Travers say "except me"!

Hon Ken Travers: Sorry?

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: That was his cue for that line from *The Life of Brian*!

It must be acknowledged that each of those responses is legitimate, whichever way the response was made. However, it is hard to get a sense of the extent of community feeling when we are relying only on the people who are contacting us. Invariably, the most organised people will elicit the most responses from their support bases and get them to the local member. Interestingly, my office has tallied 198 telephone calls on the issue, and they are split 99-99 between the yes and no votes. It is a lot different from the e-mails and letters, which run about three to one in favour of the yes vote. The phone calls are split 50-50, which is really interesting.

I was concerned about the weight I could put on these approaches, and I wanted to get a sense of what my electorate was thinking, rather than what was going on across the state. I decided to randomly select constituents in my electorate, and my office then telephoned them. It was probably not a pure scientific method, but it was the best we could do to get a good appreciation of what the electorate was thinking. I have a list of the names of the people who were telephoned, where they lived and what their responses were. We telephoned 300 people, which is a reasonable number. The survey produced a very interesting result. Of the 300 people we telephoned in the North Metropolitan Region, 196 agreed with the introduction of daylight saving. That is 65 per cent of respondents. Eighty-three respondents were opposed - that is, 27.7 per cent - and 21 were undecided, which is seven per cent. The number in support was only slightly lower than the rough guess I have done on the e-mails and letters I received in my office. That surprised me; it was higher than I thought it would be. It was a very revealing statistic. The figure of 300 was a reasonably healthy number, and I draw it to the attention of my North Metropolitan Region colleagues. Of 300 randomly selected people, 65 per cent said yes. I notice that *The West Australian* today reported a poll of 408 people across the state, which found that 56 per cent of respondents supported a three-year trial of daylight saving from 3 December. That is slightly down on the result I got in the North Metropolitan Region but, as I said, we know that the North Metropolitan Region has supported daylight saving in the past - more than have other areas.

We also asked the respondents how long they thought the trial period for daylight saving should be, and asked them to nominate one, two or three years. Of course, I do not have any figures for those who said "no" instantly, because they did not want a trial at all, but of those 196 who responded in the positive, 25 did not nominate a period. Their responses were a bit ambiguous. They were a mix of "just get on with it" or "do not know", but they did not want to nominate a year, so we put them in the "did not nominate" category. However, 15 out of 196 people said clearly and emphatically, "Just get on with it, make it indefinite, don't put a limit on it, and don't have a trial."

Hon Norman Moore: Did you get their names?

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: I did.

Hon Simon O'Brien: They would all be on Electrac.

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: It is fantastic what can be done with Electrac.

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In total, 117 out of 196 people nominated a three-year trial; so a clear majority of those who favoured daylight saving supported a three-year trial. Nineteen said two or more years, and 20 said at least one year. A clear majority of the people, 117, whom I contacted in the North Metropolitan Region support a three-year trial.

Hon Simon O'Brien: How many was that - 117?

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: Yes, 117 of the 196 who said "yes".

Hon Simon O'Brien: Right, but it is 117 out of 300.

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: Yes.

Hon Simon O'Brien: Plus you need to allow for the ones who said "just get on with it".

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: Yes, that is right.

Hon Norman Moore: It would be interesting to know what the noes would say if they had to have a trial. Would they go for one, two or three years?

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: People who said "no" just did not want to -

Hon Norman Moore: I do not blame them.

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: I insisted that my staff ask that question, but those people did not want to answer it. Their response was, "I've said 'no'; are you hard of hearing?"

Hon Simon O'Brien: The beauty of the Electrac system is that you can now go back to these people and ask them what they want to do.

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: We can just write it down on a list. We do not need Electrac.

Hon Norman Moore: How does Electrac work?

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: Do not start.

Hon Ken Travers: Get Simon; he seems to know.

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: I cannot even open it.

Hon Ken Travers: Simon will run courses for it.

The PRESIDENT: Members, the Electrac issue is to be dealt with after order of the day 300.

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: They did not give me a password; I do not know how it works.

Talking more and more with my parliamentary colleagues was a persuasive factor for me as well. Certainly the quality of the feedback that I have just referred to was very influential in changing my mind about where I stood on this bill. My parliamentary colleagues convinced me that overall the benefits would be positive, and there would be demonstrable gains for business. They also pointed out that people aged up to about 31 or 32 years have not had an opportunity to vote on daylight saving yet. It is time that those people were given an opportunity to have their say as well.

Hon Barry House: Some of them might not have any kids.

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: Yes, and they have a view on it. Let us not assume that they all say "no". As I have indicated - and I indicated in the media - I spoke to the Premier. People try to put words into our mouths all the time. I will not use the "p" word, but I had a discussion with the Premier. He told me his position: a three-year trial, an absolute commitment to the referendum, and people can make up their own minds at that point which way they want to go on the issue. The Premier is someone for whom I have much respect. I was interested to hear his views and I was grateful for the opportunity to have discussions with him on this issue. He pointed out that he would be supporting it and his advice to me was that I should support it. It was nothing more or less than that. I was keen to hear his views and I took them on board. In light of the views that had been expressed to me by my parliamentary colleagues previously, and the very strong feedback that I was getting from my electorate, I decided that I would revise my position and support the bill. That is what I have decided to do.

My support for the bill is contingent on the bill remaining in its current form. I support the three-year trial and I refer members to the statistics that I have gathered from my electorate. My constituents who support daylight saving clearly support the three-year trial and I am of a mind to take notice of that and to respond to them in a positive way. I am also absolutely committed to the referendum. We cannot have three referenda that return a no result and not have a referendum to revisit the issue. We must have a referendum at the end of this trial, and that is what the bill proposes. The only way to overturn the decision of a previous referendum is to have a new one. If clause 5 were in trouble, my support for the bill would be severely, probably fatally, diminished. I do not support reducing the trial period to two years, chiefly because there is nothing like enough support for the

proposition coming from my electorate. I am mindful of representing the views of my electorate when I vote on this bill. I will support the bill in its current form.

HON KIM CHANCE (Agricultural - Leader of the House) [4.21 pm]: I particularly thank Hon Graham Giffard for his contribution because until then it had been a “vote no” party. I will be joining that group. I will not be voting for the trial.

The Leader of the Opposition asked “why now?”, as did my colleague from the Agricultural Region Hon Murray Criddle. Why now and not earlier? The answer is very simple: daylight saving has not been a priority for the Carpenter government. It is as simple as that. When the question arose, obviously the government had to deal with it, but it has not been a priority. It is now; we need to get on with it if we are going to get through the debate in time to get the trial in place this year. Why a referendum? I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that this is something that affects everyone, and I think the figures we have just heard from Hon Graham Giffard, and which are probably repeated in every other electorate office in Western Australia, indicate the extent to which people have a view, often a very strong view, for or against the question.

Then there is the issue of enhanced lifestyle. Having said that I am not voting for the trial, I want to challenge one or two things. I will not take a lot of time because it does not take much time to say yes or no to what is essentially a very simple question. We have heard from proponents of the yes case some fairly outrageous claims about the potential benefits that might derive from daylight saving. Indeed, the term itself is misleading. No daylight is actually saved when we fiddle around with the clock; nor is there necessarily a general cohort that is advantaged by daylight saving. It advantages some and disadvantages others because it does not save daylight or create anything new; it simply shifts the clock. The advantage of additional sunlight hours - I concede there is an advantage in additional hours being available to people between their ceasing work and going indoors for the night - is an exact trade-off for those people who are deprived of the same amount of time in the morning. Some of us - I note the Premier is one - actually enjoy those daylight hours in the morning. We will take those hours off the thousands of people who use that time in the morning for recreation. When I am on my treading or walking my dog or whatever I do in the morning, I will be one of the thousands of people who will not have the benefit of that extra hour of daylight. It is a trade-off. Some people prefer to conduct their recreation in the afternoon. Good on them. If they want an extra hour, that is fine. Some of us do not want that extra hour and cannot use it. Some of us have working hours that go beyond the afternoon and into the evening. Our mornings will be taken off us. It is a personal matter, but I think we are allowed to be personal in this debate. It is a simple trade-off one way or the other.

I refer to the proposal to have a two-year trial of daylight saving instead of a three-year trial. Members have not had a lot of time to deal with this legislation but to the extent that we have, we have thought about this matter individually and collectively. Generally, members have applied themselves very well to answering a difficult question. In consideration of their electorate, some members have made a choice that does not coincide with their personal choice. Hon Graham Giffard is clearly one of those members, and I know that other members have also done that. However, to be confronted with the question about whether to amend the legislation to provide for a two-year trial instead of a three-year trial fundamentally changes the issue that we have been dealing with on the day that the debate on the matter is to begin, which complicates the issue unnecessarily. All members of the government have arrived at a collective decision about how to handle the bill. We will not all vote the same way, but we have made a collective decision about how we will deal with it. To ask us to consider another matter that has not been considered by us collectively is probably unfair and will probably result in a negative vote. A two-year trial would probably kill the proposition to trial daylight saving.

I will deal with the question of business very quickly. A lot of business is done between the east coast and the west coast of Australia. Clearly, the conduct of that business, particularly business done through the Australian Stock Exchange, is somewhat inhibited by the additional hour's difference. Members must remember who we are in Western Australia and what we are and with whom we do business. I have already said by way of interjection that we live in the most populated time zone in the world. How important is that in terms of the amount of business we do? Western Australia, along with Queensland in particular, is an outward-looking state. Western Australia does more business with the countries to the north of Australia than any other state, including Queensland. Western Australia's business is done almost exclusively with our neighbours to the north of Australia. If the business is not done exclusively with the northern neighbours, it is conducted with the East Asian region of which we form a part, and with the countries on the Indian Ocean rim. That is the part of the world where we do business. We do not largely do business with the eastern states. Some businesses might order some parts from the eastern states, but inventory is ordered by e-mail in any case. Not a lot of business is done between the east coast and the west coast of Australia outside of the stock exchange. It is terribly important that we do not separate ourselves from the time zone of the region with which we do business. Which other countries are on that time zone? Singapore is on that time zone, and it is the second biggest trade hub in the

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world. Beijing is also on that time zone. That is the country with which much of our state does its business. I ask members to consider how important this matter is regarding China. Today I had lunch with a major Chinese steel investor, Ansteel and its partner, Gindalbie. What I had not realised until I was told by some people at the lunch is that China has only one time zone. It is a huge country but it has only one time zone. The Chinese believe it is important that its time zone is unified. We have the advantage of being on the same time zone as Beijing and the rest of China, and yet we will shift that advantage if this bill is passed. I note the time and that the President is seeking my attention.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to sessional orders.

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