

DAYLIGHT SAVING BILL 2023

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by **Hon Wilson Tucker**, and read a first time.

Second Reading

HON WILSON TUCKER (Mining and Pastoral) [10.15 am]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

Members would be aware that I no longer have the label of “Daylight Saving Party” attached to my name in this place; however, my commitment to advance the cause of daylight saving remains just as strong as when I was elected to Parliament. Given that half the population of Western Australia supports the idea, enough to trigger four referendums, I stand ready to open another debate about daylight saving. In my speech today, I will provide a summary of the bill and the consultation process that I undertook, and I will offer my own personal argument on why members should vote in favour of this bill.

The Daylight Saving Bill 2023 proposes to implement daylight saving time in Western Australia. Daylight saving time is when the clocks move forward by one hour during the summer months. This bill will achieve that goal by enabling a referendum to take place on daylight saving time, requiring that the referendum take place at the next state election and through implementing daylight saving time if, and when, the majority of electors at that referendum vote in favour of it. Principally, this will occur through clauses 5 and 6. Clause 5 provides that the following question be put to voters at the next state election: “Are you in favour of daylight saving being introduced in Western Australia by standard time in the State being advanced one hour from the first Sunday in October 2025 until the first Sunday in April 2026 and in similar fashion for each following year?”. Clause 6 defines summer time—AKA daylight saving time—to be one hour ahead of standard time between 2.00 am on the first Sunday in October and 2.00 am on the first Sunday in April of the following year. This would bring WA in line with the majority of the east coast of Australia in observing daylight saving time during the summer months and would avoid the increased time difference.

At the last state election, I stood on the platform that I would commission a private member’s bill to implement daylight saving time if I was elected to Parliament. In August 2022, I gave notice of that bill and I released its content for public consultation. I did so because daylight saving is one of those issues that affects everyone to varying degrees, and I felt as though it was important to hear what the people had to say. The consultation process occurred over a period of 6 months, from August 2022 to just before Christmas of that year. The Daylight Saving Party and I identified two key themes among the correspondence that we received.

Although it is true that we have had four referendums on daylight saving, an entire generation of young people has come of voting age since the last referendum in 2009 and has not had a say on the issue. To put things in perspective, a young person who was in year 10 in 2009 is now aged 28, and they never had a say on daylight saving. According to my notes, one respondent stated —

I’m 62 and have lived through all the daylight savings referendums WA has had. My two sons, along with the rest of the millennials haven’t. They haven’t had the pleasure of long summer days and being in sync with their families on the east coast. It is time for another referendum. Don’t leave it up to the parliamentarians. They have had their say, ask the young folk and perhaps we will all be successful this time around.

Too many individuals and businesses in Western Australia rely on support services in the eastern states, and they often experience frustration when butting up against the three-hour difference in time zones. The owner of an automotive parts shop in the goldfields told me, according to my notes —

We get our parts from near the docks in Melbourne. Our staff in Kalgoorlie typically go to lunch at around 12 noon or 1 pm. And by the time they come back, it’s close to end of business over there, which means that we can’t do simple things like pick up the phone, and see if they have a headlight a customer needs.

I ask members present: who here has not had to make up an extra hour or duck out of a business meeting to make a phone call to a bank or insurance company over east and experienced frustration with that three-hour gap in time zones? The majority of respondents whom I identified through consultation and via polling I conducted through Painted Dog Research want a referendum on daylight saving, as opposed to leaving it to the politicians. Based on this feedback, I commissioned the second and current version of the bill, which provides that a question be put to voters at the next state election as to whether they support the implementation of daylight saving time.

My arguments in favour of daylight saving largely match the messages of support that I received from members of the public, but with perhaps an added focus on lifestyle benefits. Western Australia is known as a laid-back place to live and work. We have some of the best beaches and natural geography in Australia. The problem is that the majority of us simply do not have enough daylight after work on weekdays to enjoy them. Perth, where the vast

majority of our state's population is concentrated, is the city with the largest north-south urban sprawl in the entire world. When a person gets home from work, be that in Yanchep or Mandurah, the time could very well be 7.00 pm or later. Given that most shops in those areas close at 9.00 pm and that darkness is only an hour or so away, there simply is not enough time to undertake activities such as outdoor recreation or socialising.

But daylight saving is not just about fun; it is also about business. Atlassian CEO, Mike Cannon-Brookes, correctly identified that Western Australia is located in a prime position to capitalise on the emergence of the Indo-Pacific region as a key global growth sector when he said —

“WA's key industries at the moment are at the forefront in a lot of cases—agriculture, mining—of being disrupted by technology or improved with technology, and that will itself create a whole lot of opportunities for that skills base and talent base,” ...

“WA is a lot closer to markets like India, the Middle East, to other areas where it is a few hours of the time shift which is very, very advantageous.

“If you think about the global economy, that proximity to Asia and technology is incredibly important, especially in those areas important to WA like mining and agriculture where there are huge export markets for those goods, that time zone can only be helpful.”

Given the location-agnostic working habit that the pandemic has helped to create, time zones are playing a more important role in how we communicate and do business. It would be remiss of us as a state to not use our time zone to our advantage to better align ourselves with both our trade partners in the Indo-Pacific region and our own people on the other side of the continent, and daylight saving can help us better balance both of these interests.

Just because WA said no four times, by a very small margin each time, I might add, does not mean that we as Parliamentarians should shy away from our obligation to revisit issues such as daylight saving. A lot has happened since the last referendum in 2009. WA has changed in terms of its population and its values. The majority of younger Western Australians now emerging as voters has not had its say on the topic of daylight saving, which at its heart represents a lifestyle change—one that would enhance the lives of the majority of Western Australians for the better.

Pursuant to standing order 126(1), I advise that this bill is not a uniform legislation bill. It does not ratify or give effect to an intergovernmental or multilateral agreement to which the government of the state is a party; nor does this bill, by reason of its subject matter, introduce a uniform scheme or uniform laws throughout the commonwealth.

I commend the bill to the house and table the explanatory memorandum.

[See paper [2618](#).]