

**Opening Statement for Republican Leader Gus Bilirakis
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
Hearing on “Changing Times: Revisiting Spring Forward, Fall Back”
March 9, 2022**

As Prepared for Delivery

Good morning, everyone.

Thank you, madam chair, for holding this hearing and examining the issue of Daylight Savings Time and our “spring forward” coming on Sunday this upcoming weekend. And thank you to our witnesses for testifying and providing your expertise on this matter, I look forward to hearing each of your perspectives.

Since 1918, when Daylight Savings Time was first enacted, it has received many praises and criticisms, as well as many attempted revisions from this body of Congress.

I know that almost 40 years ago, this Committee held a hearing on legislation to extend Daylight Savings Time, a hearing which my Dad sat on this dais when he served on the Subcommittee on Energy Conservation.

Back then, the legislation would have extended this practice with the aim to decrease energy consumption during the spring and summer – a continuation of its original purpose, to reduce the usage of oil during the first World War.

While I have heard the original desired outcome of this practice may have diminished over the course of the last 100 years, a topic I hope to discuss today, I know that American's opinions of Daylight Savings Time have not.

This is a topic that I continue to hear about back home from my constituents, so hopefully this hearing serves to educate the members here today so we can make informed decisions moving forward.

And while there are certainly many topics that deserve our attention in this subcommittee, today's topic comes just a few days before we once again go through a ritual many of us don't understand or care for.

This Sunday, we will likely experience an almost seamless change as our phones now have the ability to reset the time on their own. I say "almost" seamless, because while this transition may be easy for our devices, it is not so much for our bodies. Humans are not as simple as winding a watch back or forward or resetting the time on our microwave. The toll the time change has on our bodies and our minds can be severe, even when it may not be apparent and can cause health effects like increased depression and greater risk of heart attack and strokes. I'm glad to have the perspective of Dr. Malow on the panel, so we can further examine the impacts changing the clocks has on our bodies and on our mental health.

We also need to examine the effects Daylight Savings Time has on the economy. In my home state of Florida, the Sunshine State, we take our daylight very seriously. In fact, Florida's legislature passed a state bill that would make daylight savings time permanent year-round. But the policy requires Congressional approval to take effect. That's another reason why I am glad that we're holding this bipartisan hearing to learn more about the impacts of Daylight Savings and how Congress can consider time changes nationwide.

A lot of our industries, like travel and tourism, rely on daylight later to provide Floridians and tourists with goods and services. Simply put, the longer the sun is out in the afternoon and evening, the more consumers will be outside participating in local economies. That's why I'm pleased we will hear from Lyle Beckwith, Senior Vice President at the National Association of Convenience Stores, so we can learn more about how the change in time impacts the businesses in our great economy.

So again, thank you madam chair for holding this hearing. And I look forward to an engaging discussion. I yield back