

Chairman Brett Guthrie Opening Statement
November 20, 2025
Daylight and Destinations: Examining Time, Travel, and Tourism
Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade

Thank you, Chairman Bilirakis, and thank you to our witnesses for being here. Travel and tourism have long been and remain a cornerstone of the American economy – supporting small businesses, strengthening communities across the country, and sharing the beauty and success of this country with people from all over the world.

In Kentucky, travel and tourism are essential to our economy. In my district, the city of Bowling Green draws visitors from around the globe—whether they’re touring the National Corvette Museum or exploring the expansive caves, caverns, and underground rivers at Mammoth Cave National Park. Those experiences don’t just showcase Kentucky’s beauty and ingenuity; they fuel local jobs and economic opportunity.

You can’t talk about travel and tourism in Kentucky without talking about the Kentucky Derby— one of the largest drivers of travel and tourism across the country. The 2025 Derby brought in an estimated \$441 million to our state, and that impact goes beyond the city limits of Louisville. It has a significant impact on the entire Commonwealth and even the national economy.

And Kentucky’s bourbon trail is a great example of tourism invigorating the local economy.

But one factor that has an outsized impact on our robust travel and tourism industry in the U.S. is the twice-annual clock changing practice as a result of Daylight Saving Time. Daylight Saving Time affects more than our sleep schedules. It also impacts energy conservation, motor vehicle safety, health, and economic factors, to name a few. Shifting one hour of sunlight from the beginning to the end of the day, or vice versa, could have a serious effect on people’s ability to exercise outside, attend live events, or attract customers to their retail businesses.

In my district, where communities are divided between two time zones, these issues aren’t abstract, they are practical and personal. A change to how we observe Daylight Saving Time would have real and varying impacts for families, businesses, and travelers alike.

I have heard a range of arguments for and against the biennial time change, including the impact of more or less sunlight so our children can safely travel to and from school to impacts on energy efficiency, as well as concerns from Kentucky farmers who say the time change disrupts their morning harvest. No matter where we fall on the issue, I know that many of us have heard directly from constituents about this topic.

Given our committee's significant responsibility to oversee issues affecting interstate commerce, it's imperative that we revisit policies like Daylight Saving Time regularly to ensure federal law appropriately reflects the interests of all Americans.

Thank you again to our witnesses for joining us today, and I'm looking forward to our conversation. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.