



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 29th Legislature
Third Session

Standing Committee
on
Alberta's Economic Future

Bill 203, Alberta Standard Time Act
Subcommittee
Public Input Meeting in Grande Prairie

Friday, September 8, 2017
10 a.m.

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**Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 29th Legislature
Third Session**

Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future

Subcommittee

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Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future

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Tom Pura, Marketing and Communications Manager	
Cris Seppola-Podsada, First Vice-chair	
 Sadie Macklin	EF-852
Donna Macklin	EF-852
Ken Belke	EF-853
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10 a.m.**Friday, September 8, 2017**

[Mr. Sucha in the chair]

Location: Grande Prairie

The Chair: Good morning, everyone, and I want to welcome everyone who is joining us online from Grande Prairie. I would like to recognize that we are on the traditional land of Treaty 8. I would like to call this meeting of the subcommittee of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future to order.

My name is Graham Sucha. I'm the MLA for Calgary-Shaw and the chair of the subcommittee and also the standing committee chair. For the record I would like all the members to introduce themselves as well, starting from my right.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Maria Fitzpatrick. I'm the MLA for Lethbridge-East.

Mr. Coolahan: Good morning. Craig Coolahan, the MLA for Calgary-Klein.

Mr. van Dijken: Good morning. Glenn van Dijken, MLA for Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock.

Mr. Drysdale: Good morning. Wayne Drysdale, MLA for Grande Prairie-Wapiti.

The Chair: Excellent. For the record I would also like to note that Mr. Drysdale is officially substituting for Mr. Gotfried.

Before we turn to the business at hand, a few operational items. If everyone can ensure that their cellphones are on silent mode. Just to note as well, audio of these proceedings is streamed live online and recorded by *Alberta Hansard*. Audio access and meeting transcripts can be obtained via the Legislative Assembly website.

Before we hear from our first presenter, I'd like to make a few comments about Bill 203, Alberta Standard Time Act, that the committee has been tasked to review. Bill 203 proposes that if passed, as of November 2018 the Daylight Saving Time Act would be repealed, and Alberta would remain on Alberta standard time. Alberta standard time is defined as being six hours behind Co-ordinated Universal Time and would be the equivalent of Mountain Daylight Time, the same time we are currently on.

On April 3, 2017, the Legislative Assembly referred Bill 203 to the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future for review. As part of the review the committee has heard from numerous stakeholders, and over 13,000 Albertans have submitted written submissions. On August 8, 2017, the committee established this subcommittee to hold public meetings within Alberta to gather additional feedback on the bill. The subcommittee has been directed to hold meetings in Grande Prairie, Edmonton, Calgary, and Lethbridge and report back to the committee on what it hears. The committee has also heard oral presentations from key stakeholders on Bill 203. A decision has also been made to accept additional written submissions until September 15, 2017.

Just as a reminder to presenters, you have five minutes to make your presentation. If supplementary materials from your presentation are available and you wish to present them to the subcommittee, please provide them to the committee clerk, who is present here at the time. You can submit it to him via e-mail as well. The committee clerk will keep track of the presentation's time and will signal when you have one minute remaining in your presentation and also when your presentation time has expired.

With that, I will call the committee clerk to call the first presenter.

Mr. Roth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Tom Pura.

Mr. Pura: Actually, Dennis Bell and Cris Seppola-Podsada will be . . .

Mr. Roth: Okay. Sure.

Mr. Bell: Good morning.

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: Good morning.

The Chair: For the record and the sake of those who are joining us, if you can provide us with your name and the organization you represent.

Grande Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Bell: My name is Dennis Bell. I'm chair of the board of directors for the Grande Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce.

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: I'm Cris Seppola-Podsada, first vice-chair, Grande Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Bell: Just to start off, this subject came up around our board table, and we decided to do a survey of our membership and just see what the thoughts were. We got the results of that survey, and we discussed it again last night at our board meeting. It came back pretty much a dead tie, a three-way tie. That seemed to be the same consensus around the board table, too, with our board members.

We did bring a package today, and there are some questions there. Maybe you want to pull up . . .

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: Yeah. I think that we should address what the three-way tie was. It was stay the same, go to Central Standard Time, or Mountain Standard Time. The results were pretty much literally split into thirds with a couple of people who had no opinion.

We also allowed people to have comments on our survey. We will be submitting those. Some of them are interesting, but some of them really show the spectrum of how people really seem to be undecided on this issue. Some said, "I think it would be most advantageous to be the same time as BC Peace." Another one was: "Why is this . . . an issue? There are more pressing [issues] to deal with." Another one is "Leave it as it is. Most of the continent observes daylight saving time and so should we," which I think maybe points to: is this a national issue rather than a provincial issue? That came up a little bit. Another was: "Why would we want to be 2 hours difference to a province that borders us?"

The comments were all over the place, and we just found it so interesting that there really was no clear, decisive position we could take because even we around the board table couldn't come to that. What we really figured was that maybe this issue deserves some more research. Some of the questions that came out of this were:

What is the cost of implementing a change?

What are the national & international ramifications?

Will any change create more or less confusion?

What are the cost benefits to a change versus no change?

We really thought that question was important. We can't make a decision without these answers is what we felt. And

Would this be better handled on a national level?
as was mentioned.

We found the results really interesting, even talking, again, around the board room table. I'm actually in all three of these. Personally, I would prefer not to change the clock. Businesswise I have remote employees across the country, so it would be hard for

me to be three hours different from Ontario, for example. Yeah. It's a tough question.

Mr. Bell: Yeah. The difference is between, you know, a personal aspect of it and a business aspect, where you have shift workers and you're paying overtime at certain times of the year just to make that change. It really affects the bottom line. Also, the companies that do business with eastern Canada and how it would affect them: that's kind of where we ended up at. We're in a dead heat.

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: Representing our members means asking for answers to the questions that are proposed.

Mr. Bell: Yes.

The Chair: Excellent. Well, thank you very much.

Mr. Bell: We do have these packages we'll leave.

The Chair: You know, it's interesting to hear the three-way tie. It's always the dilemma that we're tasked with from time to time.

I'll open it up for questions from committee members.

Ms Fitzpatrick: First of all, thank you very much for your presentation. The first question I have is: how many of your members responded to this survey?

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: It looks like about 150 out of the 1,300 we would have sent to.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Okay. In the responses you received, did people talk about how it would impact their business or how it would impact the people who access their business?

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: We did hear comments about – actually, maybe you could speak to that since you were talking about that earlier.

Mr. Bell: Well, as far as the business goes, it was the shift change. The larger companies that run 24 hours a day those two times of the year: you know, they pay overtime, and it affects them financially. It's a big financial impact to them.

Ms Fitzpatrick: The reason I asked that was that in my former life I worked for the federal government for 32 and a half years, and I worked in corrections, where there was shift work. It was a huge bottom line for corrections to be paying twice a year on overtime or changing shifts, which is why I asked.

The other reason I asked is that I suspect there are some golf courses in your area, and I know that we had a presentation by the Alberta branch of the national association, and they indicated that 85 per cent of their business was in the evening, so it would have a significant impact if we went to the other time rather than the time we're in right now.

10:10

The third point that I wanted to make to you was that the day I moved into my office after I was elected, I had three people come to my office and say: stop changing the time. And then every time the clock has changed since, I have a stream of people coming into the office, e-mails, letters, all kinds of things, talking about how it affects them.

The next part of my question is about the schools, the hospital. Have they provided some response to you?

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: Our mandate is to represent our members, which are businesses, so we don't have any data based on that just

because we're representing those 1,300 organizations who want us to do that, I guess, and they don't include schools at this time.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Okay. But I would suspect that many of your members have children who are in school.

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: I would think so, yeah.

Mr. Bell: There was some reference in some of the responses to their kids and school, I believe.

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: Yeah. I mean, again, I totally agree that all of these points are valid. Our position, I suppose, is that our members and even our board members couldn't decide on a true position because it was very evenly split. So I guess, again, that's why we would say that maybe a little bit more research to be able to make an informed decision would be an important step to take.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Mr. van Dijken.

Mr. van Dijken: Thank you, Chair. Thank you for coming forward with your presentation. It's the first time I've heard a national interest versus a provincial interest, that this is something that should be considered as a national discussion, and I think there's some validity to that. I also am interested in the concept of more research needed to really understand the implications. As you said, you have a very personal opinion, what would work for you personally, but the personal opinion might vary based on the information that's received through research.

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: And it's much less down the line. Yeah.

Mr. van Dijken: Right. Yeah.

As Member Fitzpatrick had alluded to, we did have some presentations from different stakeholders, and the golf course individuals were adamant that they needed that extra hour in the summer. There would be no impact to their business if we stayed on daylight savings time, the way we do now, but if we moved to, like, one time year-round, Mountain Standard Time, it would be difficult for them to justify. We also heard from other presenters – the Calgary and Edmonton airport authorities, WestJet, the Oilers, and the Flames – how that would impact their businesses. Do you feel that there would be a change in your survey results or an adjustment to your survey results if more information was made available to Albertans on the ramifications of moving towards Alberta standard time?

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: Our position is one hundred per cent yes. I think that in order to make that informed decision, we need the information, and I think a lack of information shows in these results, in that split between the three different options that people were provided.

Mr. Bell: I just have a question on the wording. Why is it Alberta standard time? I've got a lot of relatives from British Columbia, and I've taken flak for years with them saying: where does Alberta have their own time? Is there any reason for that?

The Chair: You would have to ask the person who brought forth the bill. Unfortunately, Thomas Dang is not present. But that's what's enshrined in the legislation, so that what's we have to go off at this moment.

Mr. van Dijken: If I may, Chair.

The Chair: Yeah.

Mr. van Dijken: I do believe that it was to recognize that we were not, then, following what would be Mountain Standard Time and yet not be within Central Time, so there had to be a way to delineate yourself from any of the other nomenclature or whatever you want to call that. That's what came up as designed in the bill, so Alberta standard time was the choice. It is a private member's bill, so the member would have had to make those decisions.

The Chair: Any other questions from members? Oh. Sorry, Mr. Coolahan; I had you on the list.

Mr. Coolahan: Yeah. Just to clarify about Alberta standard time, I believe you're right, Mr. van Dijken. You know, Mountain Standard Time goes all the way through North America, so it was to distinguish that it was unique.

Thank you so much for your presentation today. That's great. You know, in just discussing the volume of responses we've had to this, it is really unprecedented, and it goes to show that all Albertans are affected by this or at least think about it all the time in one way or another. So it's remarkable. You think about the volume. About 75 per cent of people actually have said that we would like to do away with it, and there were very personal reasons. A lot of them have to do with children and statistics around heart attacks and car accidents and whatnot. But then we hear very salient arguments around business reasons why we should not change it, too. So it's a very difficult decision, and every presentation we hear makes it more difficult.

One of the questions I wanted to ask: being the chamber here in Grande Prairie, how much of your business is actually tied to British Columbia?

Mr. Bell: There's quite a bit, yeah, just because of our proximity, you know. As far as the percentage, I couldn't say, but it is very huge.

Personally, the company I work for: we do a lot of business in British Columbia and in the Peace district in B.C.

Mr. Coolahan: I mean, yeah, your proximity, of course, might make it even larger, but all over the province it seems to be large.

I think your point about it being a national issue is interesting, too, because I think what we heard from businesses prior was that a unilateral decision is an issue. My question to you, because other jurisdictions are looking at doing this as well, is: if B.C. were to do away with DST, would you be here, then, arguing that we have to make it closer to them again?

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: I don't know that we can answer that from a chamber perspective. I'd want to ask members about that issue. My assumption is that the hour difference is probably preferable as compared to two, just based on some of the comments that we had. To ask that question of us, we'd want to go back to at least the board and see what they'd have to say.

Mr. Coolahan: Yeah.

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: But, again, based on the comments that we've had, I would assume that it being an hour difference is fine.

Mr. Coolahan: And for the majority of the respondents, when you got this fascinating third, which is actually almost predictable at this point because there are so many opinions and so diverse, was it the personal reason? Was that a third?

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: Yeah. So it was essentially to leave it the same, with the changes, which I think, personally, people may not like. Then there was: do we, you know, stay on whatever the name is, Central Standard Time or Mountain Standard Time? There was a direct split there as well. It really, in my opinion, depended on how that person runs their business. If they worked with more people in the west, they would feel one way. If they were to work with more people in the east, they would feel the other way. Again, that's my experience as well, speaking as just a normal human being. But as we're representing our members, there was no decisive answer that came out of the survey, which I actually found quite surprising.

Mr. Coolahan: Yeah.

Mr. Bell: It would be interesting to see, you know, for the larger centres, Edmonton and Calgary, how it played out there. I don't know of any other chambers doing a survey. But just because of our close proximity to B.C., whether that's going to be different than Edmonton or Calgary . . .

Mr. Coolahan: Yeah. My guess is that it would be very similar. Is one of your clients the airport?

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: One of our members, yeah.

Mr. Coolahan: Sorry; one of your members. How did they respond to your . . .

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: It was an anonymous survey.

Mr. Coolahan: Oh. I see. Okay.
That's all for now, Chair. Thank you.

The Chair: Excellent.

Any questions from members? Excellent.

This is just for my own context – and I know they alluded to this – but one of the things that this report helps us do is give context to the rest of Albertans, and some Albertans, especially if they're new to the province, are very unaware of Grande Prairie or what kind of businesses you're leading. If you could provide us with sort of the Coles Notes of who your membership is. I know that you alluded to some of the work that you did with British Columbia. That would probably be very helpful for Albertans who are tuning in who might not be as familiar with Grande Prairie.

10:20

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: Absolutely. Our chamber is 102 years old this year, I believe, which is amazing, and we have 1,300 members, so we're actually the third-largest chamber within the province. We're quite proud of that. We feel that we represent our members quite well. We really represent any industry that we have up here, so maybe you can run down that list: forestry, oil and gas, hospitality . . .

Mr. Bell: Logging. Yeah, all of them.

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: Small business.

Mr. Bell: Nonprofits.

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: Definitely. We live in a very entrepreneurial city, as I'm sure you're well aware, so we get any variety of industry, which we feel very fortunate to be able to represent.

Mr. Bell: We also work very closely with the Alberta chamber. Because of our size, when we, you know, meet with them, they listen. Even on a national level, at the Canadian chamber level, Grande Prairie seems to have a pretty strong voice. Yeah, we've done some good things up here.

Mr. Coolahan: Thanks a lot.

The Chair: Well, thank you very much. You're going to give my colleague in Lethbridge a run for her money here.

I want to thank you for presenting as well and look forward to seeing those documents. If you can ensure that our committee clerk has those as well.

Mr. Bell: Thank you.

Mrs. Seppola-Podsada: Thank you very much.

The Chair: We'll go to the clerk to call up the next member.

Mr. Roth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Sadie Macklin.

The Chair: Hi, Ms Macklin. If you can just state your name for the record as well, please.

Ms S. Macklin: My name is Sadie Macklin.

The Chair: Please proceed.

Sadie Macklin

Ms S. Macklin: Well, I was born and raised in Grande Prairie from three generations of a farm family. One of the things that – just before I get into what I was going to say, subsequent to what the chamber was saying, another industry that's been around here for a long time, of course, is agriculture. It's also integral to the rest of the industries because it also supports a lot of the businesses. The merchants and stuff like that rely on having farmers a lot of times to sell their product to.

The other thing I wanted to mention. You'd just asked a little bit about the context of the region. When it comes to the Peace region, something that the rest of the province might not understand or be aware of is that the B.C. Peace stays on a single time year-round. There is not a time change in the B.C. Peace. Half the time the Alberta Peace is on the same time as the B.C. Peace, and half the time Alberta is on a different time from the B.C. Peace and the B.C. Peace is on the same time as the rest of B.C.

As you might understand, daylight is a very important commodity up here in the north. It becomes a very valuable thing in the winter especially. One of the things that's challenging is that when you wake up in the morning, it's dark, and by the time you get done with work or school or things, it's pretty near dark again. It's hard to know whether you'd want to move the time forward so that you get a little bit more daylight afterwards or whether you're going to spend all your daylight time working. Again, it's a bit of a catch-22 on that topic. It'd be nice to have a little bit more time outside in the daytime, but our modern world tends to be a lot more working indoors, especially in the winter, so that makes a challenge.

Another thing for farmers is that during the busy spring and harvest seasons, when the businesses close, it's only about halfway through the day, and the machines are working, so there's another half a day for the machines to break down. I think that I would rather have the businesses opening earlier and closing earlier than staying open later so that the farmers are a little more rested before they're calling in to the businesses to find out whether they've got the parts

and are doing a rush drive into town to get the parts rather than trying to drive in late and get there before the stores close.

The other thing is that it can be really hard to get to sleep when the sun is high in the sky, you know, in the summertime.

Those are some of the main points that I had.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms Macklin.

I'll open it up for questions. Mr. van Dijken.

Mr. van Dijken: Thank you. Thank you for your presentation, Ms Macklin. B.C. Peace stays on essentially Pacific Time year round, I guess it would be.

Mr. Drysdale: Mountain Standard.

Mr. van Dijken: They stay on Mountain Standard Time? Okay.

So they're the same time during the winter as we are? Okay. That's interesting. Do you have any recollection as to when they decided to do that?

Ms S. Macklin: My mom is in the room. Can I ask her to come up and join us?

The Chair: Yeah. Sure.

Just for the sake of *Alberta Hansard*, if you can introduce yourself for the record as well.

Donna Macklin

Mrs. D. Macklin: Donna Macklin. Yeah. Since daylight has come in, I think they've always stayed on Mountain Time. They've been on Mountain Time with Alberta because the natural alliance is with Grande Prairie, and they've stayed on that since Alberta went daylight. Yeah, we're the ones that changed.

Mr. van Dijken: Yeah. We recognize that Saskatchewan stays on one time year-round. It gets us back to that conversation about: is this a national conversation, or is this a provincial decision? I think what MLA Coolahan was talking about also is that what makes people, industry, and businesses concerned a lot of the time is when we go out of sync with other regions that they're trading with. If we could have that national conversation, it might be helpful in making a decision together. Do you have any sense as to how that works for the individuals in B.C. that do not have to change their clocks? They're working with it. Are they happy with the fact that they stay on the same time all the time?

Mrs. D. Macklin: Yeah, I think they are. You know, it's a change. You have to remember that it's another hour's difference. When you go to Alberta, it's an hour's difference from spring to summer to winter and the same with B.C., then. It's that hour. One time you're out of sync, and one time you're in, so you have to remember that each season. But other than that, I think they're happy with it.

Ms S. Macklin: One thing: I think they expanded. I think Fort St. John joined with the rest of the B.C. Peace to stay on a standard time just in the last year or two here, so they've expanded the boundaries a little bit just in the last little bit.

10:30

The Chair: Mr. Coolahan.

Mr. Coolahan: Thank you. Thank you so much for your presentation. It's good to hear from the agricultural sector, too. We did hear a lot of submissions. There were a lot of submissions from the agricultural sector. Frankly, most of them were indifferent, saying that cows can't tell the time or chickens can't tell the time.

But you actually brought in a different aspect. It was a machinery aspect, so that's interesting. Are there any safety issues to running machinery with prolonged darkness in the morning time?

Ms S. Macklin: We wouldn't start running our machinery in the morning because the dew is on the ground and that sort of thing. The morning is when we're doing our repairs and inspecting things. What we're ending up doing is running our equipment later into the evening, and it's a matter of how late the sun is setting and when the dew is setting, then, when we have to shut it down in the evening, so how long a day where they're sitting on the tractor getting tired.

Mr. Coolahan: Uh-huh. Sure. That was interesting to hear. Your perspective is quite a bit different than most of the submissions, who would rather stay closer to the Saskatchewan time on the extended daylight saving time, where you'd like to go the other way.

Mrs. D. Macklin: We're on the western side of the time zone here, so you can almost cease at midnight in the summertime. It's really a long time after you can access businesses.

Mr. Coolahan: Yeah. In that scenario do you think that the industry around the repairs and whatnot would have to adjust? No?

Mrs. D. Macklin: No. It's already a long time, late after business is closed.

Mr. Coolahan: Yeah. Thank you.

The Chair: Any other questions from members?

Excellent. Well, thank you both very much for presenting as well. Mr. Roth.

Mr. Roth: Thanks, Mr. Chair.

Ken Belke.

Mr. Belke: Good morning.

The Chair: Good morning. Could you just state your name for the record, Mr. Belke?

Ken Belke

Mr. Belke: My name is Ken Belke. I'm a retired businessman. I have lived in the Peace Country my entire life, and I operated the Avis car and truck rental franchises in Alberta and B.C. for 38 years. I've travelled extensively since then by ground throughout North America, so I'm very familiar with the time change when the GPS says it's six minutes till your campground and you're in the south end of Chicago and your wife says: we're not staying here.

I am glad I have an opportunity to present because in the people that I talk to, my neighbours and other businesspeople, and even reading the letters to the editor there's a sense of confusion. What I'm finding is that in everyone, and I haven't spoken to everyone but everyone I spoke to, is the sense that there's a debate between being on daylight saving and not being on daylight saving. They seem to just get a deer in the headlights look when you say: "But no. We're going to Central Standard Time. That's the same time as Winnipeg, Chicago, Nashville, Mexico City."

It really doesn't become an issue in the summer, but as soon as winter hits, that's when it hits. This also gives you the two-hour time difference between here and B.C., so people are just, "Oh, this is just too hard," and they just walk away. They have strong opinions on whether it should be daylight savings or not, whether

there's a change, but when they get into grappling with "What's Mountain Standard Time? What's Alberta standard time? What's Mountain Daylight Time?" they're totally confused. That's where my concern is. I think that we need to be taking and saying: how many people that are in favour of ending daylight saving time really want to go on Central Standard Time in the winter?

The other thing is that the time zones are set based on the sun moving around the world, so ideally the centre of your time zone should be high noon, and the sun should be at the highest point. Well, that's somewhere around Winnipeg. In Grande Prairie it's probably going to be at 1:30 in the afternoon in the winter. Is that going to have effects on kids going to school, people going to work? In the winter sunrise will be one hour later, so they're going to be going to work at a darker, colder time of the year or day in the winter.

I can understand. I like daylight savings in the summer, but I cannot see roaring out there and boosting 20 cars an hour earlier in the morning. I think there are some problems that need to be thought about. When I see that there are the massive numbers of people in support of this change, then I talk to people in the street, neighbours that are in favour, and I say, "But do you realize we'd be at the same time as Chicago?" they say: "Oh my God. No." And there's a two-hour time difference with B.C. That's my major concern.

If we do go ahead, the point still is that the rest of North America, with the exception of Arizona and Saskatchewan and a little bit of B.C., will change every year. How do we educate all of North America and Mexico that we are not changing any longer? We are going to be on a new, innovative time zone. We have a new way of doing time. How do we teach everyone else in the world? Will it affect world trade, interprovincial trade? Will it affect NAFTA and trade agreements? What's the effect going to be on communications and travel systems? When you turn on your TV tonight, what will the TV schedule look like when we are on Central Time in the winter and everyone else expects us to be on Mountain Standard Time? How do you pick up a football game or a hockey game and know what time it is? Are there safety issues? The time zones were put in so that railways could operate safely. Suddenly we are eliminating Mountain Standard Time. We're taking a whole standard time zone out of the structure. It does give us some neat stuff, long afternoons, but is it workable in a world economy?

The Chair: Sorry to interrupt. The five minutes have expired, but I'll allow committee members, if we wish, to continue with some of the questions that Mr. Belke is proposing. Yeah. We'll just extend your time.

Mr. Belke: Thank you very much. I only have one other point. Computers. Avis had a world-wide, on-live computer system. We put the computer into Fort St. John. It worked fine, and all of a sudden: bang. We had to go to manual rental agreements because B.C. didn't change time in the north. Obviously, computer systems have taken that into adjustment now, but if we go to Central Standard Time, we're actually going the opposite way, so will world computers have problems?

Lastly, I personally feel that in the winter northwestern Alberta up the Mackenzie highway and as far south as Grande Cache should be the same time as B.C. or at least in the summer they should be the same time as the Northwest Territories. We should somehow be linking to the pattern of travel. We have a lot of people that travel from the north down here, and we do a lot of business with B.C.

Thank you very much. I appreciate the extension and the opportunity to speak to you.

The Chair: I'll open it up for questions here.

Mr. Coolahan: Thanks so much for your presentation. I'm interested about a couple of things. You're expressing that when you talk to your neighbours, they're not clear on where we would be going. They weren't clear from the bill itself and the discussion is what you're saying.

10:40

Mr. Belke: I'm saying that they believe that Bill 203 will put us back on Mountain Standard Time, and when they pick up a newspaper and it says "MDT," they see what they want to see. They see MST even though it clearly says MDT. There's a lot of confusion that we are not going to go back on Mountain Standard Time.

Mr. Coolahan: Okay. Thank you.

As a business owner in a rental car agency, notwithstanding the computer issue, do you think moving further away from B.C. time would have maybe some potential car renters go elsewhere to rent a vehicle?

Mr. Belke: I do not know the answer. Certainly, there is a lot of traffic that travels between Alberta and B.C., the ski industry, people renting cars in one town and the other. It's a pretty significant thing to get up and ski all day in Valemount and drive back to Jasper and suddenly discover that all the restaurants have closed. They will have been closed for an hour when you get back to Jasper if you've been skiing in Valemount. I think that in Revelstoke and that tourist area you may see some challenges depending upon whether they're currently in mountain standard or mountain daylight.

Just to be a devil's advocate, the question is: if you drive through three time zones in two hours, do you get jet lag?

Mr. Coolahan: Just one final question. What is your personal preference?

Mr. Belke: I am against going on Central Standard Time, totally against it. I think that the risks to the Alberta economy, the confusion in world business would be horrific. I think the inconvenience for people travelling and trying to phone home and keep in touch with family in other areas would be chaos. It would cause a lot of personal and financial challenges, and until we've lived with it, we wouldn't know what those are. For that reason it needs a lot of research. I'm happy with the way it is, but I certainly would not be concerned about us going on Mountain Standard Time year-round, either of the two. I am against going to Central Standard Time.

Mr. Coolahan: Thank you so much.

Mr. Drysdale: Mr. Coolahan just asked my question. I failed to get clarity there. I get it that the chamber was a third, third, and third. Those are kind of the calls I get in my office, so I wanted to see what your recommendation is. I assume now, then, it's Mountain Standard Time or you're okay with daylight saving time, so either of them two, but not the year-round daylight saving time.

Mr. Belke: Wayne, that's correct. The big thing is that I'm against going away from that standard format of having your time similar to where the sun is in the sky. I think that we have lots of people walking around and saying that they want to get away from daylight saving time because it affects their body rhythms, their kids. Well, I'm sure the sun is the reality there, and where the sun is in the sky – I don't think it's been researched, but I believe that the sun should be at the top of the day in the middle of the day, at noon, not later in the day.

Mr. Drysdale: Thanks for that. I'm going to assume that Ms Macklin wanted to stay with Mountain Standard Time. I don't know if it's appropriate to get an indication from her.

Ms. S. Macklin: I'm of mixed mood.

Mr. Drysdale: Good. Thank you.

The Chair: Excellent.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Actually, I thought your presentation was very thoughtful, and you obviously considered many different things. I actually lived in Yellowknife for almost eight years, and when Ms Macklin said, you know, that you go to work in the dark and you come back in the dark, well, that was what it was in the wintertime in Yellowknife when I lived there. Even though the sun actually dipped just below the horizon in the summertime, basically we had legal daylight for 24 hours for six weeks every year. When you talked about the sun being at the highest point in the sky as the reference for midday, depending on how far north you are, in Yellowknife the sun didn't rise high in the sky; the sun went around. So if you woke up and it was daylight, you would never be able to tell what time it was by the sun because the sun went around rather than up and down.

You also made reference to the railway and safety issues. Now, maybe I misunderstand, but I believe the railway runs pretty much 24 hours now, as do airports. Maybe the time that you would catch a flight may be different, and if you're flying to Chicago, you know, you would be leaving at one time and you would be arriving and it's the same time still at home. But when I look at Alberta and I look at Canada, when I look globally, workplaces seem to be almost running on a 24/7 basis now. That didn't happen when the initial daylight saving bill was initiated in Alberta.

In preparing for this committee, we certainly did some research. We know that several jurisdictions, B.C. included, are considering legislation to stop changing the clock, but there were also, I believe, 23 of the American states – and theirs is a national decision – lobbying the feds to stop changing the time within the States. If that kind of thing happened, then we'd go back to pretty much the same layout as we had. Our decision would be certainly whether it's Mountain Standard or Central Standard.

You talked to people on the street, and you said that they all seemed to have the same concerns. I think I mentioned earlier that the first day I was in my office, people were coming into my office saying: stop changing the time. It is a stream of people coming into my office every time the clock changes.

I had a conversation with the mayor of Lethbridge, with several of the councillors in Lethbridge, and I said: what are your thoughts on this? Every one of them said that if you go from Lethbridge-East to Lethbridge-West twice a year, it's high accident time going from east to west or west to east. If the times change, it's four times that those high accident times happen. So they all said to me: stop changing the clock.

A bill came forward, and we have to make a decision. We're doing consultation, and I truly thank you for providing your input because we do have to consider it. Certainly, as we do the presentations, it does become harder and harder to look at a decision and think what kind of impact this is going to have on everybody in the province.

I received a couple of e-mails this week, actually, because they know I'm on the subcommittee, and what they said to me was that over 75 per cent of the people in the province, as people, as individuals, want the clock to stop changing. The question always is whether it's mountain or central, and to me that's the biggest question. I know how it impacted my kids. I know how it impacted

me in terms of going to work when the clock changes and that you've got to adjust your own biorhythm.

So I just want to say thank you for sharing your perspective because it was very thoughtful. Thank you.

10:50

Mr. Belke: The thing that's really important and helped me get it in perspective is when I looked at the maps, and I attached some maps with the package I've left for you. You look at the rest of the world trying to travel to or do business with Alberta and how hugely inconsistent we would be at Central Standard Time. You know, Saskatchewan is half central, half mountain. Well, if you look at the time zones running north and south through the world, suddenly we're taking this extension that's pushing the limits, no different than how the limits are pushed when you go into Grande Prairie and over to Fort St. John, Dawson Creek, saying that that's Mountain Standard. But we're pushing the central off to where you're significantly off the deep end as an extreme relative to the rest of time zones world-wide.

Please look at the maps. That, I think, gives a better explanation of where my concern lies. My concern lies with something that we're creating that's inconsistent. We have to have consistent systems to work within the world, to work with our bodies, to work with health and safety issues. So please look at the maps. It gets some of the fog out of the confusion, and that's what I'm concerned about. This is two things. Number one, we're not aligning with the world, and, number two, the public at large sees it as a debate between two issues, between a new, innovative way of telling time.

Thank you very much for listening to me.

Ms Fitzpatrick: One last comment if I may. When you looked at the maps, did you look at the map that shows how much of the world actually uses different time zones? The reason I'm asking is because China, which – I don't know – normally would cover, like, five or six or seven time zones, uses the same time right across the whole country. They don't change their times at all.

Mr. Belke: I didn't look at that, but one of my neighbours, when she realized that this was the change and not a simple doing away with daylight saving, said: well, that's similar to what China did with the revolution, where everybody went to the same time zone, and it didn't work, and they've now gone to four time zones. But I never looked at it, so I don't know the answer to that.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Well, I don't believe they went to four time zones. I could be wrong. I'll go back and check, but when I checked the map last week, the whole country is on one time zone.

Mr. Belke: I just looked at North America, and I googled time zones for North America and did three or four different sites to try and get my head around where it was because it was confusing for me.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Belke, I just want to confirm, too, that you have submitted those maps to the clerk as well. Oh, yeah. Excellent.

Any other questions as well? Excellent.

Well, thank you so much for presenting. It was very thorough.

Mr. Belke: Thank you so much for the opportunity.

Mr. Roth: Is Ron Potts here?

There are no other registered presenters at this time, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: I know that a lot of individuals have come here with different perspectives, so at this time I'll allow for members who are in the audience, if they wish to present or provide feedback to the subcommittee in relation to our review of Bill 203, to feel free to come forward and present to the subcommittee if you wish.

Excellent. And just for the record if you could state your name.

Rod Barrand

Mr. Barrand: Good morning. My name is Rod Barrand. I'm a resident of Grande Prairie, for 35 years now. I originally came from the prairies, the Saskatoon area. I grew up on time change when I was an early age. That changed when I was around 12, 13 years old, but before that – and I should maybe mention that my parents were great advocates of going to Central Standard Time. They grew up on the prairies themselves. One of the things that was the main issue – and this has been brought up before as I've been listening to the presenters here and also ourselves on that – is what it does to the biological rhythm of ourselves, even. As a kid, growing up and going to school, it took about a week to get really changed around, okay? I noticed that my parents, my grandparents had to take medication doing that, and that had an adverse effect also on them to try and get that change, to gradually change.

My dad worked on the railroad, and that in itself is right now – you're talking and you're absolutely right – 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You just go get 'er. That change itself – he worked on railway time, and then he lived a different time, which was difficult on him, too.

You're absolutely right. It has been recorded where time change does affect accidents and different things like that.

One of the things I look at here is that it doesn't matter which way we go. I'd like to be able to stay on one time. I hear a lot of feedback, too. I talked to my neighbours and stuff like that. Again, they would just like to stay at one time. Don't mess with it anymore.

The extra daylight in the summertime is nice. You're absolutely right. We like golfing and stuff, too, but I don't think that's going to make a big difference in which way we actually go here.

As for the international market, I looked at it here, too. In the early days here, before Saskatchewan changed and stuff like that, all our trade was based on the international market side, okay? That all had to go through – the stock exchange is one area, stuff like that, but since then we've come a long way with computers and hand-held devices and stuff like that. That's instantaneous now. We don't have to rely anymore on picking the phone up and getting our information. It's right there in our hands. So I don't see the value – okay? – of making a change.

Why don't we just stay on one time? The world will live with it. They've done it in other zones already. Ours is no different, you know. Our basic economy will work around it just fine because everything is based on 24/7. It's not on an eight-hour day; it's 24/7, basically. Like I said, everything is instantaneous. It's not as if we're back in the Stone Age again.

That's pretty much what I really wanted to say here in that sense.

The Chair: Okay. I'll open it up for questions from some committee members.

Mr. Coolahan: Just a quick clarification. I understand that, yeah, you just want to quit switching the clocks. You don't care which way we go, and you don't think it's going to make a big impact.

Mr. Barrand: Well, I think that if we stay in one area – like, I've got grandkids here, too, and they do find it a little difficult when

they go to school and stuff like that, that change. Unfortunately, both my parents have passed on here, but I also had a son that needed medication – unfortunately, he's no longer with us – but that really raised havoc with him and stuff like that. As a personal thing, I totally understand the implications that it does cause and that.

That's pretty well it, yeah.

Mr. Coolahan: Yeah. Thank you.

The Chair: Excellent.

Any other members?

I just want to ask a contextual question here as well and allude to this. When you go to McMahon Stadium during a Stamps game and half the stadium is green, you can kind of see where everyone has migrated from in the city of Calgary. Of the online respondents, about 75 per cent of people have indicated that they have a very similar opinion to yourself, so I was wondering if you, having been here for 35 years, could give us sort of the Coles Notes of the demographic and where a lot of people have moved to Grande Prairie from.

Mr. Barrand: You know, when I first moved up here and that, I was surprised how many Saskatchewan people had moved to the Peace region. It grew on me, okay? And there are still plenty. I know that when I was growing up back in Saskatchewan, which wasn't a very lucrative province at that time, you either grew up to be a Mountie or a farmer. Really, that was the idea. As kids growing up there, the family farm at that point in time didn't seem like it was going to prosper very much. Young generations moved to where there was work, and Alberta was the place to go to find that work and also to get an education. I'm not saying that Saskatchewan doesn't have a good education system but to get into the technical side. That's where they really prospered, computer sciences and stuff like that and, again, the arts. Yeah, a lot of them came. You don't find that so much nowadays, okay? Not back then, but when I first moved and stuff, I certainly noticed it.

Staying on one time change I think would be beneficial for everybody. Even though I have a large number of relatives still back there, would I live there? I like Alberta. It's home now even though my blood runs green.

Mr. Coolahan: I was going to ask that question, but you answered it for me.

The Chair: Excellent.

Any other questions from subcommittee members? Excellent.

Thank you so much for presenting to us.

11:00

Mr. Barrand: Yeah. You're welcome. Thanks for having me.

Mr. Coolahan: Thank you.

The Chair: Excellent.

Joyce Wales

Ms Wales: My name is Joyce Wales. I was born and raised here in Grande Prairie on a farm. I can't figure out why the government wants to make it so complicated when all you have to do is go back to Mountain Standard Time in November, when we switch back to Mountain Standard Time. Next April we'll just stay on standard time, and that way we're only one hour different than B.C. We may be the same time as Saskatchewan. I don't know that part. Why

would you switch to Central Standard Time when we're actually in a Mountain Standard Time zone? That's where I have the problem.

I went to school. I had to walk half a mile to catch the school bus on the old standard time. Yes, it was dark, it was cold, but that's just the way it was. I do hope that you do set us on one time zone but not Central Standard Time because we're right on the western edge of the time zone.

I know that when my dad was a farmer, in the fall when the dew comes, you have to wait till at least noon or 1 o'clock on the old time before your crops are dry enough that you can start harvesting them. It's an hour earlier now, so you have to wait till 1 or 2 o'clock before you can even start to harvest because the dew hasn't dried up yet. That's where I'm coming from.

Just forget this central standard. I don't know where that came from. If we're going to do anything, just change it in November, when we go back to Mountain Time, and then next spring we'll stay on Mountain Standard Time and forget this daylight stuff.

Mr. Coolahan: Thank you, Ms Wales. You know, if all 14,000 submissions said that, it would be so easy. Unfortunately, it wasn't that. I appreciate what you're saying, but many, many submissions also stated that we enjoy the long evenings, particularly minor sports associations and golf associations and items like that. I guess my question, then, for you: do you not see any benefit to going to central?

Ms Wales: No. Why would we want to be two hours different than B.C.? Our sun isn't going to change. The sun is still not going to be quite in the centre because we're right on the western end of the thing. We're not a Central Time zone; we're a Mountain Standard Time zone. I didn't realize this until I came today, but I can see why the golf courses would want to stay on the daylight savings time, but I work 24 hours. I've had to sleep during the day because I've done graveyard shifts and stuff, and you have to adjust. I just can't see it. Just please, please go to Mountain Standard Time and forget this daylight savings time.

That's all I have to say. I'm sorry I'm so miserable.

The Chair: It's important that we get very candid feedback in relation to this moving forward. That's why we're here.

Any other members wishing to ask any questions?

Excellent. Thank you very much.

Are there any other members within the public that wish to provide any feedback?

Ms S. Macklin: Somebody said something that reminded me of something. Can I contribute a little bit more?

The Chair: Yeah. Absolutely. Just because this is audiofeed, can you just repeat your name for the record?

Ms S. Macklin: Sadie Macklin.

What another person had said prompted – I was speaking to somebody last night who's a fireman locally. While it's not statistical or anything like that, I asked him if they experience more call-outs around the time that the time change happens. I thought that that might show up here in the north specifically. His response was that they don't see any indication of a rise in call-outs around the time change, which I thought was surprising.

The Chair: Excellent. Thank you very much, Ms Macklin.

I'll allow a final opportunity if anyone else wishes to provide any feedback for the panel.

Gerald Hunt

Mr. Hunt: My name is Gerald Hunt. I'm retired, and I've lived in Grande Prairie for 50 years. When I was first made aware of this, I was confused when we were talking about daylight saving time and changing the time zone. I personally like daylight saving time. I like the long hours in the wintertime.

We're talking about industry going 24/7. That doesn't change too much. You may have overtime if you work on a technicality, when you check in, when you don't check in: that's the clock. If you come in to work at 8, you work for eight hours, that's what you get paid. When technicality comes in, you pay overtime. But I think what daylight saving time does is that people who have to work outside, farmers, oil field workers, truckers: it means that they work in daylight, not in headlights. There's a safety factor there.

Now, 24 hours: that's a different type of operation. The time doesn't really affect it much. Pay does, but time doesn't. The railroad used to have to when we had daylight saving time, when we ran on the clock. When it went back, the trains pulled over to the side and sat for an hour to stay in sync. They don't have to do that anymore.

There's talk about the difference of northern B.C. being on the same time as we are part of the time. The reason for that is the oil and gas. It's the work in the area, and it's convenient because you're on the same time and you're scheduling. You can do the same amount of work. That, I think, is an indication where there was a need for it and it's been used.

The one thing I cannot understand is why we're thinking about going to the same time as Saskatchewan. We're not that close to Saskatchewan in our commerce, and nowhere have I found an advantage. Like, to me, they haven't been able to come up and say: "Okay. That's a good idea. We should go for it." There's no justification for it. Then the question I'm asking now: can you tell me why there would be a justification?

The Chair: Having spoken with Mr. Dang in relation to this, some of the indications he made in relation to why paralleling with Saskatchewan would be better is just because of working within the eastern seaboard for economic development. Specifically, like, the New York Stock Exchange and corporate offices within the time zone there would put us, if we were parallel with B.C. over the winter, three hours off sync with them. That was his indication that he provided for me to provide some context, but that's why we're out here, to discuss with other members, find out the other side of the story.

Mr. Hunt: I think that if you look where the Central Time zone is, our commerce is not as strong there as it is to the west or farther east. Like I say, I can't see a definite, you know, advantage for us. Now, I don't know how much commerce is coming out of Manitoba to here. Manitoba is more going north and south rather than east and west.

That's it. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. Oh, sorry, sir, Mr. Hunt; Mr. Drysdale actually has a question for you.

Mr. Hunt: Oh, sorry.

The Chair: It's all right.

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Hunt. I just want to be clear in my notes. Are you supporting that we switch to daylight saving time or stay on Mountain Standard Time all year-round?

Mr. Hunt: I'd prefer daylight saving time.

Mr. Drysdale: So making the change twice a year.

Mr. Hunt: Making the change. Okay?

Mr. Drysdale: Yup. Thanks very much.

The Chair: Yeah. Thanks for that clarification.

11:10

Mr. van Dijken: One question you brought into the mix. Judging by the amount of commerce being done with Central Time versus the commerce being done with the people to the west and even farther east, I guess, if we got an analysis done and it showed that we have potential for a significant loss in commerce or a significant change – in one of the presentations we received earlier in the week, from WestJet, they were concerned about the fact that they have a lot of customers to the west coming to Calgary to make connections. Do you think that that would have an effect on the decision that Albertans would make, if they saw that there was significant impact to our commerce?

Mr. Hunt: I think it would, yes.

The Chair: Any other questions? Excellent.

Well, thank you very much, Mr. Hunt.

Mr. Hunt: Now I can go, eh?

The Chair: Now you can go. Thank you.

Any other members within the public wishing to provide some feedback?

Valerie Hunt

Mrs. Hunt: Hi. I'm Valerie Hunt. I just have a very brief thing to say here. When I read this article in the paper about, you know, maybe doing away with daylight saving time, my view was, "Sure; it doesn't matter; let's stay on one time all year," until yesterday, when it was brought to my attention, which I think is where some confusion comes in, that we would go to Central Time. I assumed that when they said that they were going to get rid of daylight saving, we would stay on Mountain Time. I have no idea why except for what you just briefly mentioned now about going with eastern central time. No. I'm dead against that. I say that we could maybe get rid of daylight saving, stay on mountain. So Pacific to B.C., mountain, central, eastern, Atlantic: that's my view. Okay?

The Chair: Thank you very much. Any questions for Mrs. Hunt? No? Excellent.

Any other members wishing to provide some feedback for the subcommittee?

Trudy Buelow

Ms Buelow: Hi. Trudy Buelow. I was born and raised here in Grande Prairie, so, you know, I'm very familiar with everything here. As far as a one-time forever, that doesn't bother me. I don't agree with Central Time. I believe we should be looking at Mountain Standard Time to see continuity. An hour from B.C. is Alberta; an hour from Alberta is Saskatchewan; an hour from there is moving farther east. To have us the same as Saskatchewan and then a two-hour change to B.C. I think can cause a ton of grief in all aspects.

I think that businesswise you send trucks out at 8 o'clock here. Well, is that 6 o'clock there, or is that 10 o'clock there? I mean,

you've just got an awful lot of room for error on and on. I think even for our shopping. We have a huge trading area in Grande Prairie. We have, you know, 250,000 to 300,000 people, and a lot of those come from B.C.

Now, I get that the B.C. Peace is, you know, the same as us for six months and different for six months. It still will create some issues there because obviously there's – and I apologize. I'm not a hundred per cent sure who we're going to match when, but there is the fact that we could have a two-hour difference for the shoppers, the business, the tourists, everything, and I think two hours is too much. I think that one hour, one hour, one hour is fine, and stay on the same Mountain Standard Time.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms Buelow.

Any questions?

Ms Buelow: Thank you.

The Chair: Excellent.

Any other members wishing to provide some feedback for the subcommittee?

Ms Borstad: Excuse me. We came in late. My husband has an appointment, so we can't stay, but when I have read up on . . .

The Chair: I apologize for interrupting. Just because we're audiostreaming, would you mind providing your full name for the record, please.

Barbara Borstad

Ms Borstad: Barbara Borstad. I live in the city of Grande Prairie, formerly the county.

I've read up on it quite a bit, and obviously, I'm sure, you've read up on it a lot more. The greatest thing we have in the north is our evenings, and for anybody who travels to warmer places, where it's dark at 7, you know, it always seems very strange. When it's warm, it should be light out. From what I'm reading on a lot of the children's sports events and what have you, they're going to have an hour less all the time. I think our daylight evenings in the summer, with that long evening, are what keeps us in the north, or we couldn't stand it from the winter. It's like payback time. I don't know about anybody else, but I really like the evenings. I guess that's not a business aspect. I don't know. Is that of some interest?

The Chair: Mr. Coolahan, I think, has a follow-up for you.

Mr. Coolahan: Yeah. Thank you for that presentation. I think that some of the things we've heard just before you, too, around whether to go central or mountain, and I think some of the logic behind going to central for this bill was exactly what you're talking about, the longer hours going that way. If you go back, we won't have that anymore. So just for clarification for the people that came before you, we've heard quite a bit about that from minor sports leagues and golf associations and whatnot.

Ms Borstad: Well, even if it's not for children, for people that come off work, how many women want to go out for a jog at 8 o'clock or 9 o'clock if it's dark? By the time they get their family dealt with, their work dealt with, it doesn't seem feasible.

Thank you very much. Thanks, Wayne.

Mr. Drysdale: Just so I can be clear, are you saying: leave it the way it is, that we switch it twice a year?

Ms Borstad: Yes.

Mr. Drysdale: Okay.

Ms Borstad: We have bigger things to worry about. I think that for most people, if they can't change the clock, they can get help. As you know, farmers will do what they have to do anyway. But that evening, I think for the well-being and the health of people, is uplifting mentally.

The Chair: Excellent. Thank you, Ms Borstad.

I'll open it up for any additional people that wish to provide any feedback for the subcommittee.

Seeing and hearing none, right now we do have some additional appointments that will be appearing before the subcommittee after 1 o'clock this afternoon. At this time I will move that we recess until 1 o'clock. People are welcome to return at that time.

I think I speak for all committee members that we've seen quite a diverse and also a very good presence from people who have a lot of tradition and history from Grande Prairie. I want to thank everyone for coming in who's provided us with feedback so far today. We look forward to hearing some more this afternoon.

[The subcommittee adjourned at 11:19 a.m.]

