ROSE INSTITUTE
OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
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Proposition 7

Daylight Saving Time

Placed on the Ballot by the Legislature

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Purpose

Prop. 7 would repeal a 1949 ballot initiative that established seasonal Daylight Saving Time (DST) in California. This measure would potentially create a pathway for year-round DST by allowing the state legislature, pending approval by the federal government, to decide how the state sets its clocks.

Background[1]

Californians approved Prop. 12, a ballot initiative that established seasonal DST, in 1949. The federal government has required states to follow the Standard Time Act since 1918, but it allows each state to determine whether to observe DST during a fixed seasonal period.

In 2017, Assembly members Kansen Chu (D-25) and Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher (D-80) sponsored AB 807, a bill that would repeal Prop. 12 and thereby allow the state legislature to consider changing DST.[2] The bill passed 26-9 in the California Senate in May 2018 and 68-6 in the Assembly in June 2018. Since ballot initiatives cannot be repealed without the consent of the voters, the legislature referred the bill to the 2018 ballot.

Proposal

This measure would repeal Prop. 12 and allow the state legislature, with a two-thirds vote, to change the DST system in California, if the change is allowed by the federal government. Potential changes include establishing year-round DST. However, the legislature would need approval from the federal government to do so. Until state and federal approval, California would observe the current DST period.

Fiscal Impact[3]

The Legislative Analyst's Office notes that this measure would have no direct fiscal impact since policy change would require additional action by the state and federal government. If the legislature did alter DST, the LAO expects that changes in energy usage, worker productivity, and safety would have minor effects on state and local finances.

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[1] https://ballotpedia.org/California_Proposition_7,_Permanent_Daylight_Saving_Time_Measure_(2018)

[2] https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB807

[3] https://lao.ca.gov/ballot/2018/prop7-110618.pdf

Supporters
Assemblyman Kansen Chu is the main sponsor. Ninety-four of the 109 state legislators present voted to pass AB 807, approving the measure. Governor Jerry Brown enthusiastically supported the measure, declaring "*Fiat lux!*" (the UC Berkeley motto meaning "let there be light") in his signing statement.

As of August 13, no campaign contributions have been reported.[4]

Arguments of Supporters[5]
Supporters say Prop. 7 would:
- free Californians from the inconvenience of switching their schedules biannually
- decrease the number of heart attacks, crimes, and accidents related to the time change
- potentially increase daylight leisure hours after work and school

Opponents
Fifteen members voted against the measure. Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson (D-19) and Senator Jim Nielsen (R-4) have been the most outspoken critics.

As of August 13, no campaign contributions have been reported.[6]

Arguments of Opponents[7]
Opponents say Prop. 7:
- wastes time discussing a trivial matter when more important issues are on the ballot
- is irrelevant since the federal government is not likely to allow such a change
- could lead to darker mornings and be dangerous for kids heading to school before sunrise

Conclusion
Voting Yes on Prop. 7 would allow the state legislature, with a two-thirds vote, to approve changes to DST, pending federal agreement. Without approval from both the state legislature and federal government, California would keep its current DST period.

Voting No on Prop. 7 would maintain the current DST period from early March to early November.

For more information on Proposition 7, visit:
www.roseinstitute.org
www.YesProp7.info

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[4] http://cal-access.sos.ca.gov/Campaign/Measures/Detail.aspx?id=1407102&session=2017&view=general
[5] https://ballotpedia.org/California_Proposition_7,_Permanent_Daylight_Saving_Time_Measure_(2018)'
https://www.mercurynews.com/2018/06/22/year-round-daylight-saving-time-awaits-governors-signature/
http://www.latimes.com/politics/la-pol-sac-skelton-daylight-saving-time-20180705-story.html#
[6] http://cal-access.sos.ca.gov/Campaign/Measures/Detail.aspx?id=1407102&session=2017&view=general
[7] https://ballotpedia.org/California_Proposition_7,_Permanent_Daylight_Saving_Time_Measure_(2018)
http://www.latimes.com/politics/la-pol-sac-skelton-daylight-saving-time-20180705-story.html#