

Second Reading

The Hon. JOHN HATZISTERGOS (Attorney General, and Minister for Justice) [8.57 p.m.]: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The Standard Time (Daylight Saving) Bill changes the Standard Time Act 1987 to extend the period of daylight saving each year. Following a period of discussion and consultation, Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory have reached an agreement on harmonising and extending daylight savings arrangements from April 2008. I understand that New South Wales is the first to introduce legislation giving effect to that agreement. Harmonisation of daylight savings arrangements among these south-eastern jurisdictions will reduce confusion about when daylight saving starts and finishes around Australia.

Presently, daylight saving in New South Wales runs from the last Sunday of October each year to the last Sunday in March. Under the new arrangements, daylight saving time will commence in New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia on the first Sunday of October each year and finish on the first Sunday in April—a full six months of the year. In effect, the bill will extend the period of daylight saving by three weeks in spring, at the beginning of daylight saving, and by one week in autumn, at the end. This is good news as it means more daylight leisure hours after work and school, giving people extra time to indulge in outdoor activities at the end of their working or school day.

The new arrangements will be phased in, and 2007 will remain unaffected by the changes. In 2008, however, there will be an extra week of daylight savings at the tail end of the 2007-08 daylight saving period. Daylight saving will end on the first Sunday of April—6 April 2008—for the first time. For the 2008-09 period daylight saving time will last for a full six months, commencing on the first Sunday in October 2008 and finishing on the first Sunday in April 2009. The commencement of new times in 2008 will help businesses and families prepare to take advantage of the changes.

At present start and finish dates for daylight saving in New South Wales, Victoria, the Australian Capital Territory and South Australia are aligned. Daylight saving in Tasmania and New Zealand commences earlier: on the first Sunday in October each year. Western Australia introduced daylight saving for the first time in 2006 for a three-year trial period. A referendum will be held in 2009 at the end of the trial to determine whether Western Australia will keep daylight saving and align its start and finish dates with south-eastern Australia. Harmonisation will provide significant benefits to business around Australia by reducing the regulatory burden and giving greater certainty.

Extra daylight hours may also provide new opportunities for retail, hospitality, sport and tourism businesses. There will be more time for shopping, beach going, sightseeing and sport, generating new opportunities and business for these sectors. Extended daylight saving will also allow more time for family activities outside the house. The extra hour of sunlight towards the end of the day, when many people are awake, also helps the environment through a decreased need for electric lighting. There will be more time for people to enjoy recreational activities, especially outdoor activities. The modern Australian lifestyle means that there are limited opportunities to exercise, and obesity rates are increasing. The extension of daylight saving time will provide more time after work to exercise outdoors and contribute to the greater health and wellbeing of people generally. I commend the bill to the House.