

I have represented the Massachusetts Broadcasters Association (MBA) for over a dozen years. We thank you for the opportunity to testify this morning and appreciate your reaching out to understand the potential impacts that a change to Atlantic time could have on broadcasters.

Founded in 1954, the MBA is a voluntary trade association representing over 200 over-the-air radio and television broadcasters in the Commonwealth.

The MBA's chief responsibility is to protect and promote the interests of broadcasters. The MBA also assists members with broadcast and general business related challenges. We offer educational seminars, legal hotlines, lobbying representation, and the opportunity to network with other broadcasters, as well as provide broadcasters with the most up-to-date industry news and trends.

The MBA also works to promote careers in broadcasting via job fairs, Equal Employment Opportunity webinars and an online job bank.

Legislatively the MBA has appeared before committees of the Legislature on the issues of the media shield bill and also piracy radio. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on Atlantic time.

As much as the idea of additional afternoon daylight hours appeals to some of our members, it would be extraordinarily hard to implement for broadcasters. Let me run through some of the problems that our members raised with me.

The network news like ABC World News Tonight and CBS Evening News, which currently runs at 6:30 in our market would run at 7:30. This change would impact popular local program and syndicated shows such as Chronicle and Jeopardy.

All network shows will run one hour later and the network window from 8:00 to 11:00 would now become a window of 9 to midnight.

Local news is the chief method our stations use to serve in the public interest and also important to our bottom line. Not only would this not serve the public's demand for local news, sports and weather, it would have an effect on the economic health of all local broadcasters. The newscast is an economic engine to most every local TV broadcaster, losing eyeballs at midnight means losing revenue for the station.

Much of Berkshire County is in the Albany television area. They don't receive Boston newscasts. They don't receive Springfield newscasts; they get Albany, New York news. So the 11:00 local newscast in the Berkshires will run at midnight.

It should be noted that we would be out of alignment with the rest of the country for only a few months. So broadcast

stations would have to educate and then re-educate its audience both in November and in March of each year as favorite television programs, sporting events and news broadcast times bounce around.

Both radio and television receive syndicated shows. All of those shows would run at a different time than they currently do, one hour later. Syndicated shows cannot be moved because some of them are fed live, many of them are taped same day and contain news items that one part of the country cannot receive prior to national release.

Shows such as Inside Edition, Entertainment Tonight and Access Hollywood are wildly popular but their owners mandate a specific time, almost like an embargo before the show can be run to assure that no part of the country has information prior to other parts of the country. Syndicated shows such as Ellen are very similar.

If the afternoon and early evening syndicated shows are run an hour later inevitably local newscasts will be replaced. Again this does not serve your constituents or our bottom line.

Public radio will also be affected. Standard shows such as the BBC at 9 and the World News at 3 will run at 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. NPR's content depot delivers public radio content produced throughout the country and runs at a specific time. Because this requires coordination throughout the various time

zones, an additional time zone for a small part of the country increases costs and creates opportunity for mistakes.

But the most significant problem is live tv....events such as the Grammy's, the Academy Awards and the various music awards shows often run over and even now go past midnight. Many of you will recall the recent Academy Awards show where the best picture was incorrectly named, that error occurred at 12:10 a.m. If we were on Atlantic Time, it would have occurred after 1 o'clock in the morning and very few of us would have seen it.

Various sporting events would be impacted. Games which now start at 8:30 Eastern and end at around midnight would begin at 9:30 Atlantic and end around 1 a.m. This affects three of our sports teams, the Patriots, the Celtics and the Bruins, all of which play numerous contests on the West Coast. Celtic and Bruins games that currently begin at 10 or 10:30, would begin at 11 or 11:30. Even games played in New York or Philadelphia would start an hour later in Atlantic time – 8 or 8:30.

I imagine the Celtics, Bruins and particularly the New England Patriots would very much oppose Atlantic time. I can't imagine that the National Football League and its sponsors would be pleased to know that a portion of its audience would sign off well before 1 am for its night games. The NFL currently broadcasts Sunday night, Monday night and Thursday night. All of these games begin around 8:30. Those games would begin at 9:30 Atlantic Time. Every one of those nights leads into a

school day and a work day. Parents, teachers and employers everywhere would be unhappy when numerous overtired and red eyed students and employees arrive the next morning.

Many of the games of the recently concluded NCAA basketball tournament, frequently referred to as March Madness would not begin until well after 10 pm Atlantic Time.

We could ask the sports leagues to consider altering their schedule, but that would put the West Coast in a precarious situation where games that currently start at 5:30 on the West Coast would begin at 4:30. Given the population differences between the entire West Coast versus New England, you could imagine the outcome.

And for those of us who have not missed a single Saturday Night Live show this season, we would need to consider renaming the show to Sunday Morning Live because it would not begin until 12:30 am. on Sunday morning.

We understand that a lot of discussion is preliminary and also based on assumptions that other states may join us. Even if all of New England joined in this effort, without the entire Atlantic Seaboard or at least the areas from Washington, DC to New York, we would still be the outliers. With essentially a small percentage of the national population in this new Atlantic time zone it is unlikely that the national networks, national sport leagues and the major award shows will alter their schedules for us.

So while many of us were intrigued initially by this concept and certainly appreciative of the effort to provide additional afternoon sunshine, practically speaking this presents a serious issue to the broadcasters on both radio and television.

Thank you again for inviting us to appear and I am prepared to answer any questions you may have.