OLR Bill Analysis
sHB 5043

AN ACT CONCERNING THE ADOPTION OF ATLANTIC STANDARD TIME.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the governor to apply to the U.S. Secretary of Transportation to change the state’s standard time to Atlantic standard time (AST) once Massachusetts, New York, and Rhode Island enact language adopting AST. Connecticut, as does the rest of New England, currently uses eastern standard time and adjusts that by one hour during daylight savings time. Under the bill, the time change would go into effect after receiving federal approval.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019

BACKGROUND

Daylight Savings Time

Daylight saving time is currently regulated at the federal level by the U.S. Department of Transportation’s (U.S. DOT) Office of the General Counsel. Federal law allows states to observe daylight saving time in accordance with federal requirements or opt out of daylight saving time entirely. While federal law does not allow states to observe daylight saving time year round, a state may be able to effectively do so by moving to a more eastern time zone, such as AST, and then opting out of daylight saving time.

A state or local government can be moved to another time zone through an act of Congress or through regulations issued by U.S. DOT. According to U.S. DOT, states may request a time zone change by submitting a formal request from the governor or legislature to the federal transportation secretary. If the General Counsel’s Office determines that a requested change serves the convenience of commerce, it issues a proposed rule to make the change and invites
written public comment. If, after reviewing comments, the General Counsel believes the change would serve the convenience of commerce, he or she sends the recommendation to the Secretary of Transportation, who has the sole authority to change a time zone.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 13  Nay 2  (04/01/2019)