

New Time Zones: Fixing the Current Economic Crisis

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Time Zones and the Economic Crisis

We are currently caught in a global economic crisis. We need to reduce our time zones in North America as China and India have done in order to increase our competitiveness in the world market place. The desks of the leaders of all three NAFTA¹ partner countries, including President Barak Obama are piled high with urgent economic issues that need to be fixed and fixed in a hurry. Facing its greatest deficit of nearly one trillion dollars and a national debt of more than ten trillion dollars, there are concerns that the US is beginning to lose its economic edge. The credit crunch has weakened or destroyed previously unassailable economic institutions, job losses continue to mount as the housing credit market continues to unravel and the big three North American automobile manufacturers burn cash at unsustainable rates.

But there is one move that would cost next to nothing yet have a profound positive effect on the economy of all three NAFTA partner countries and particularly the USA and Canada. The simple solution is that all three NAFTA countries can increase their unity, their security and their productivity by reducing the number of North American time zones. A reduction of one single time zone would result in a 100% increase in the overlap of the amount of time spent working by both Americans and Canadian workers across the continent.

While electronic communication via the Internet has greatly enhanced communications across the globe over the past twenty years, it has not and cannot replace real time communication between individuals and private and government agencies and institutions. Governing our countries, responding to emergencies or trading in the stock market requires real time communications which cannot be replaced by email or text messages.

Reducing the number of time zones from six to five would increase the amount of time that all North Americans could communicate directly with each other across the Continent during an eight hour working day from five to six hours. That is an increase of one extra hour in an eight hour shift or a total of three extra hours per 24 hour day. Increasing the synchrony of our existing time zones would enhance communication between both government and non-government organizations and individuals, which has the potential of immeasurably improving our security and our productivity and therefore our economy.

¹North American Free Trade Agreement of the three partner countries, Canada, Mexico and the United States including the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America.

There are many reasons that time zones could bolster the economy and increase the productivity of North Americans. One clear example concerns the vast majority of taxpayers. The public expect their governments to be as efficient as possible with their money. But how can our national government services possibly be efficient when there are only 45 minutes out of each seven and a half hour government working day that offices in all four time zones are working concurrently? Out of that same workday, a person in a government office in Washington, DC or Ottawa, Ontario has a maximum of two hours and thirty minutes in which to contact a colleague in any office in the Pacific Time Zone excluding standard lunch and coffee breaks!

Competing with China and India

We hear more and more that China and India are beginning to emerge as powerful economic forces in direct competition with the USA. Both countries have greatly consolidated their time zones. China is slightly wider than the contiguous USA and spans four time zones yet it exists on a single time zone! India too has reduced its time zones from two to one. If China and India can each function on a single time zone, surely we North Americans could modernize our system of keeping time by eliminating one time zone. Public discussion and serious consideration by governments should be given to the proposal: *That the contiguous USA (and Canada west of the Atlantic Time Zone) be reduced to three time zones from four.*

One Simple, Effective Solution:

Others have suggested reducing the number of time zones by one or two zones, but it is not apparent that before now, anyone has suggested a method which would result in a single hour transition between adjacent time zones from Newfoundland to Hawaii. What will it take? There is no cost for new machinery, no investment in new bureaucracies. All that is needed is goodwill on the part of a majority of Americans, Canadians and Mexicans to compromise by delaying time by one half hour in the east and advancing clocks one half hour in the west. Residents living in the New Atlantic, New Eastern and New Central time zones would set their clocks back half an hour from present while those in the New Western, Alaskan and Hawaiian-Aleutian time zones would advance their clocks half an hour. These one half hour adjustments would cause less disruption than the current practice of moving clocks an entire hour twice yearly to accommodate Daylight Saving Time.

Perhaps, above all, it is important to maintain North America's competitive advantage by coordinating time changes within and between the major trading partners in NAFTA in order to meet the objective of the US Department of Transport which is to: "... harmonize and optimize our financial, industrial, transportation and communications links...." This could well be the most cost effective decision taken by government since the adoption of Standard Time by the major North American railways on October 11, 1883.

The time has come to re-examine our existing system of time zones before China and India begin to outcompete North America in the world market place.

I invite you to [study the material offered on this site](#) and [offer your opinion on the chat page](#). I welcome discussion and constructive criticism.

Current and Revised Time Zones - Click to Enlarge Map	
 <p>Current North American Time Zones</p>	 <p>New Time Zones for a New Century Increasing Unity, Security and Productivity of the North American Free Trade Zone with New Time Zones</p>
Current Time Zones- download printable pdf	Revised Time Zones - download printable pdf

Distribution of US Population by Time Zone:

Existing

Eastern.....47.0%
 Central.....32.9%
 Mountain.....5.4%
 Pacific.....14.1%
 Alaska and Hawaii.....0.6 %

Proposed

Eastern.....52.0%
 Central.....24.1%
 Western.....22.9%
 Alaska and Hawaii.....0.6%

Distribution of Canadian Population by Time Zone

Existing

Newfoundland.....1.6 %
Atlantic.....5.6%
Eastern.....62.5%
Central.....6.7%
Mountain.....10.5%
Pacific.....13.2%

Proposed

Newfoundland.....1.6 %
Atlantic.....5.6%
Eastern.....62.5%
Central.....6.7%
Western.....23.7%