

Energy Bill's Proposed Daylight-Savings-Time Change Is Untimely *Language Ignores Realities of Fixing Software Nationally and Internationally*

McKinleyville, CA – June 29, 2005 – The Energy Policy Act of 2005 as passed by the House of Representatives contains a potentially costly “energy saving” provision regarding daylight savings time. It calls for a change in start and end dates of daylight savings time (DST) observed in the United States, with the new DST period stretching from March to November. This change would take effect in March 2006 if the House language prevails over Senate language, which does not contain the extension.

“It’s not a matter of whether the proposal is right or wrong. It’s a matter of practicality,” noted Dave Thewlis, Executive Director of the Calendaring and Scheduling Consortium. “Members of the Consortium suggest a simple delay of the effective date to insure that calendar and scheduling vendors and consumers have ample time to prepare for any changes.”

If the House language survives, software and hardware calendaring and scheduling products based on the Internet Engineering Task Force’s (IETF) iCalendar standard will need to be changed. Users of such products—universities, companies of all sizes, and many other types of organizations—as well as their suppliers will face a major challenge:

- Vendors may be unable to issue “patches” to the problem in so short a time, and if they did, their customers—with millions of end users—may be unable to deploy those fixes in so short a time.
- As a corollary, organizations in the U.S. that depend on such products could have great difficulty in making the necessary changes to remain synchronized with colleagues outside of the US.

“The proposed change generally affects any calendaring and scheduling product whether or not it’s based on the iCalendar standard,” added Thewlis. “Anything that keeps a calendar, including cell phones, is potentially affected. Many embedded environmental systems such as building management systems, time-lock control, work-shift and time clocks, may also be affected. The problem will also affect any division the U.S. government itself that depends on a software or hardware calendaring solution.”

Documents addressing the issues for both US and international users are posted at the Consortium website (www.calconnect.org).

The Calendaring and Scheduling Consortium

The Consortium focuses on the interoperable exchange of calendaring and scheduling information between dissimilar programs, platforms, and technologies. The mission is to provide mechanisms to allow calendaring and scheduling methodologies to interoperate, to promote understanding of these methodologies, and to enable calendaring and scheduling tools and applications to enter the mainstream of computing. Members are California State University (Fresno), Carnegie Mellon University, Dartmouth College, Duke University, EVDB, Isamet, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Meeting Maker, M.I.T., The Mozilla Foundation, Novell, Open Source Application Foundation, Oracle Corporation, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Stanford

University, Symbian, UC Berkeley, University of Washington, University of Wisconsin Madison, and Yahoo! Inc. Launched December 2004, the Consortium will hold a series of interoperability testing events, Roundtables and Technical Committee meetings to achieve its objectives within a five-year time frame.

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