

Testimony for LD 396

Dear Representative Daughtry and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee,

My name is Sarah Premer and I am an 8th grader at Orono Middle School. I am testifying in support of LD 396 An Act to Provide for a Later Starting Time for High Schools.

Mornings are crazy at my house, I wake to an empty house and am trusted to make the bus, or it's a tornado mixing my parents' meetings and my little brother needing to be taken to daycare. You may look at my situation and think, 'it's great we have a public school bus,' but there are mornings that I miss my bus. You might think that I could just ask for a ride, but sometimes and I'm home alone or it's a bigger inconvenience for my family with their hands already full especially with my parents having full time jobs; and walking is only an option for the start and end of the year due to weather and sport seasons. The main reason I miss the bus is because of how early I have to wake up to make the bus. Some students live far away, and need to wake extra early to drive long distances. These chaotic mornings result in students weary, strained and not able to achieve their potential in class.

Extra curricular activities are socially positive and good for students' health. As an athlete that does two sports a season, extra curricular activities also make my schedule full. When we have games, it can be challenging to do my homework and still get to bed on time, with worry of oversleeping or snoozing my alarm. Later starting time would allow me to feel more confident in my achieving my homework and academic goals, while still allowing me to participate in important out of school activities.

Electronic devices seem like a necessity to this generation, while it's been scientifically proven that screens make it more challenging to fall asleep. Many high schoolers stay awake too late with their screens, further impacting their sleep cycle and making it harder for them to wake on time. In their final years of evolving into grown adults, teenagers' hormones cause them to sleep and wake up later. [Research](#) also shows that teenagers are more suited with later wake and therefore school start time.

Forcing students to pay attention in the morning, with lack of sleep, makes it difficult to motivate them to participate in class. Starting later would give students time to get situated, and allow them to be better engaged in lessons. For these reasons, I encourage you to support this bill, changing public high school start times. Thank you for your time and consideration.