

SB 1599 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Rep. Gomberg

Joint Special Committee On Referendum Petition 2026-302**Action Date:** 02/12/26**Action:** Do Pass the A-Eng bill.**House Vote****Yeas:** 3 - Bowman, Chotzen, Gomberg**Nays:** 2 - Boshart Davis, Elmer**Senate Vote****Yeas:** 2 - Jama, Pham**Nays:** 1 - Starr**Fiscal:** Has minimal fiscal impact**Revenue:** No revenue impact**Prepared By:** Melissa Leoni, LPRO Analyst**Meeting Dates:** 2/9, 2/11, 2/12**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

The measure reschedules the date for the portions of Chapter 1 of Oregon Laws 2025 (House Bill 3991) that are referred by Referendum Petition 2026-302 to the primary election held on May 19, 2026. It requires the use of the latest ballot title certified by the Attorney General on the ballot and voters' pamphlet if the Supreme Court review process has not been completed by March 12, 2026. It also establishes alternative processes and timelines for the referendum, including having a joint legislative committee prepare the explanatory statement and financial estimate for printing in the voters' pamphlet. The measure declares an emergency, effective on its passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Timing of the election
- History of the transportation package
- Expectations of Oregonians
- Contents of the referendum petition
- History of tax measures and referrals
- Oregon Department of Transportation budget impacts and development process

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

During the 2025 1st Special Session, the legislature adopted HB 3991, which included fuel tax increases, revisions to weight-mile tax tables and flat fee rates, increases to passenger vehicle registration fees and title fees, and a requirement that plug-in electric and hybrid vehicles participate in the road usage charge program. The measure also increased the statewide employee payroll tax that provides funding for transit services throughout the state, increased the annual allotment from the Oregon Department of Transportation to the Oregon Travel Information Council for maintenance and operation of roadside rest areas, repealed the toll program established by House Bill 2017 (2017), and treated diesel fuel as a motor fuel rather than a use fuel.

On November 10, 2025, a referendum was filed with the Secretary of State (SOS) to refer parts of HB 3991, including the fuel taxes, passenger vehicle registration fees and title fees, and transit payroll tax. On December 30, 2025, the SOS completed signature verification and determined that Referendum 2026-302 had qualified for the ballot for the November 3, 2026, general election.

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Ballot Title

Under ORS 250.035, the ballot title of any state initiative or referred measure must contain a subject matter caption of not more than 15 words; “simple and understandable” statements of not more than 25 words each describing the result if the measure is approved and if it is rejected; and a “concise and impartial statement” of not more than 125 words summarizing the measure and its major effect.

The SOS received a [certified ballot title from the Attorney General](#) for Referendum 2026-302 on February 6, 2026. Any registered voter who submitted written comments on the draft ballot title and is dissatisfied with that ballot title may petition the Oregon Supreme Court by February 23, 2026.

Explanatory Statement

An explanatory statement is an “impartial, simple, and understandable” statement explaining the measure that cannot exceed 500 words, according to ORS 251.215. It is printed in the voters’ pamphlet.

Financial Estimate

Under ORS 250.125, a financial estimate for a state measure is printed on the ballot and in the voters’ pamphlet and describes the following:

- The amount of direct expenditure, direct reduction of expenditure, direct reduction in state revenues, direct tax revenue or indebtedness, and interest that will be required to meet the provisions of the measure if it is enacted
- The aggregate amount of direct expenditure, direct reduction of expenditure, direct reduction in revenues, direct tax revenue or indebtedness, and interest that will be required by any city, county, or district to meet the provisions of the measure if it is enacted