

Submitter: Renee Lyn Dodge
On Behalf Of: Self
Committee: Joint Special Committee On Referendum Petition
2026-302
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1599

My name is Renee Lyn Dodge, and I am an Oregon voter. I am submitting this testimony in strong opposition to SB 1599 (-302) as it relates to moving a voter-initiated referendum to a smaller election date.

Oregon's referendum process exists to ensure that the will of the people is heard through broad, fair, and accessible elections. When Oregonians take the time to gather signatures, engage their communities, and place a measure before voters, that process deserves to occur during a high-participation election, not one that limits turnout.

Moving a referendum to a smaller or off-cycle election:

Reduces voter participation and representation

Undermines the intent of Oregon's vote-by-mail system, which was designed to expand—not restrict—democratic participation

Creates the appearance of manipulating election timing to influence outcomes rather than reflect public will

Regardless of where someone stands on a specific policy, changing election timing to reduce voter turnout erodes trust in our democratic process. Referendums should be decided by as many Oregonians as possible—not quietly resolved during low-visibility elections.

I urge lawmakers to respect the integrity of Oregon's referendum process and oppose any effort to move citizen-led measures to smaller election dates. Democracy works best when participation is maximized, not minimized.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Renee Lyn Dodge
Jackson County, Oregon]