

Submitter: Derek Bangs
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Special Committee On Referendum Petition
2026-302
Measure, Appointment or
Topic: SB1599

Chair and Members of the Committee,

?My name is Derek Bangs and I am a resident of Astoria, Oregon. I am writing today to express my firm opposition to Senate Bill 1599, which seeks to move the election date for Referendum Petition 2026-302 to the May primary.

?I oppose this change for the following reasons:

?No Legitimate Emergency: SB 1599 contains an "emergency clause," yet there is no fiscal emergency that justifies rushing this vote to May. State budgets have already been passed, and the most recent February 2026 revenue forecasts show that Oregon is seeing higher taxable income than originally anticipated. With a projected state surplus and a significant "kicker" expected, there is no reason to bypass the standard November election cycle.

?Voter Turnout & Fairness: Major tax increases—including the proposed 6-cent gas tax and payroll tax hikes—impact every working family in the State. These decisions should be made during a General Election when voter turnout is at its highest, not during a May primary where participation is historically much lower. Moving the date appears to be an attempt to win with a smaller, less representative slice of the electorate.

?Respect for the Democratic Process: Over 250,000 Oregonians signed the petition to put this measure on the ballot with the expectation it would be decided in November 2026. Changing the date now undermines the integrity of the petition process and feels like a tactical move to avoid the broader public scrutiny that comes with a General Election.

?Oregonians are already feeling the pinch of inflation and cost of living costs. We deserve the time and the platform of a full General Election to decide on these permanent tax increases.

?I urge you to vote NO on SB 1599 and allow the voters to speak in November.

?Sincerely,
?Derek Bangs
Astoria, OR