

Chad Johnson
OR GOP Precinct Committee Person
5415 Harlan Dr
Klamath Falls, OR 97603
OrGopPcp27@gmail.com
February 7th 2026

To:
Speaker of the Oregon House of Representatives
Senate President, Oregon Senate
Governor Tina Kotek

Re: Immediate Cease and Desist — Unlawful Alteration of Qualified Referendum Election Date
(Gas Tax Referendum)

Dear Speaker Julie Fahey, Senate President Rob Wagner, and Governor Kotek:

This letter serves as formal notice to immediately cease and desist any and all efforts to unilaterally change the election date for the Oregon Increase to Gas Tax, Payroll Tax, and Vehicle Registration Fees Referendum (the “Referendum”) from the November 3, 2026 General Election to the May 19, 2026 Primary Election.

We and the signatories we represent have a vested political and legal interest in ensuring that the referendum appears on the ballot on the date that it was qualified for placement by certified signatures, in accordance with Oregon law. Petitioners submitted sufficient signatures to qualify the Referendum for the November 2026 General Election ballot, as confirmed by the Oregon Secretary of State’s Elections Division.

Our opposition to the Legislature’s actions is grounded in the following:
Preservation of the People’s Right to an Election in the General Election Cycle. The referendum petition process in Oregon is a mechanism to allow citizens to challenge laws passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor. By collecting and submitting the required signatures, petitioners secured placement of this referendum for the November 2026 General Election, a date with historically higher voter participation.

Citation:

<https://www.salemreporter.com/2026/01/28/oregon-lawmakers-can-move-transportation-referendum-date-under-conditions-sos-says/>

Voter Turnout and Representation Concerns. The Legislature’s effort to reschedule the vote to the May 19 primary artificially suppresses turnout and minimizes the participation of the electorate — including independent and unaffiliated voters — who traditionally vote in larger numbers in general elections. Historical turnout data confirms substantially lower participation in May primaries compared to November general elections.

Salem Reporter

Procedural Abuse of Emergency Clauses to Evade Accountability. Any law enacted with an emergency clause to expedite this change undermines the will of the voters and appears designed to insulate elected officials from electoral consequences in a general election year.

Respect for the Referendum Qualification Process. The referendum was duly qualified by Oregon voters who exercised their constitutional and statutory rights; artificially altering the election timing circumvents the intent of the citizens who signed the petition and invested effort to secure a November 2026 ballot placement.

Oregon Capital Chronicle

Accordingly, this letter constitutes a demand that:

All actions, legislation, procedural maneuvers, or attempts to re-calendar the gas tax/transportation referendum to May 2026 be halted immediately;

No bill containing an emergency clause or similar procedural device to alter the election date be advanced;

The Referendum must be allowed to stand on the general election ballot on November 3, 2026, as originally qualified.

We intend to pursue all available remedies — including litigation and complaint to appropriate oversight bodies — to protect the referendum process and the voters' rights should you proceed with efforts to move the referendum date.

This notice is provided without prejudice to any other rights and remedies available under Oregon law.

Furthermore, Oregonians are currently at a breaking point, and this gas tax represents a fundamental failure in fiscal stewardship."

The Economic Reality

"We are told these increases are 'necessary,' yet Oregon's population growth has slowed to levels not seen since the 1980s.

People and businesses are voting with their feet. When we increase the gas tax from \$0.40 to \$0.46 and skyrocket vehicle title fees from \$77 to \$216, we aren't just 'funding roads'—we are accelerating the exodus of our tax base to neighboring states like Washington and Idaho that offer more competitive environments."

Waste and Mismanagement

"The state does not have a revenue problem; it has a spending and accountability problem. When you have DMV Voter registration and unsecured elections that allow , illegally allow proxy voting, we don't get the best and the brightest lawmakers, all of you Democrats show us with your activist rhetoric and the condition of this state, poor Oregon, that is the factual truth.

Recent audits have uncovered staggering mismanagement, including millions in misreported funds within the Oregon Health Authority and systemic 'material weaknesses' in internal controls.

Why should Oregonians pay more at the pump when the state hasn't proven it can responsibly manage the billions it already collects?"

A Call for Fiscal Discipline

"Instead of leaning on a party-line vote to tax working families, this legislature should be auditing existing programs for waste, fraud, and abuse.

We should be prioritizing core infrastructure over bloated administrative bureaucracies and 'pet projects.'

Conclusion

"The 250,000 Oregonians who signed this referendum did so because they are tired of being treated like an ATM for a government that refuses to live within its means. I urge you to respect the will of the voters, stop these hikes, and return to a path of constitutional fiscal restraint. Thank you."

Key Facts

The Referendum: Citizens collected over 250,000 signatures to put HB 3991 on the November 2026 ballot.

The Tax Hike: HB 3991 seeks to raise the gas tax to \$0.46/gallon and more than double vehicle title fees (from \$77 up to \$216).

Out-Migration: Oregon's growth was a nominal 0.2% in 2025—one of the slowest in the nation—while neighboring Washington added over 70,000 residents in the same period.

Respectfully,
Chad Johnson
Or Gop Precinct Committee Person
Precinct 27