

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

Honorable Senators and Committee Members,

I am writing in strong opposition to Senate Bill 1599, which would move the vote on Referendum Petition 2026-302 from the November 2026 General Election to the May 19, 2026 Primary Election (or possibly a special election).

Over 250,000 Oregonians signed the petition specifically for a vote in November. Senate Bill 1599 directly subverts the will of the people who signed those petitions with the clear understanding that their vote would occur during the high-turnout general election. This bill is an obvious attempt to place the referendum in a historically low-turnout period—the May primary—where far fewer Oregonians vote. It even leaves open the possibility of a special election. Moving the vote suppresses participation and undermines the democratic process that 250,000 citizens invoked.

The bill also appears designed to extract money from Oregonians six months sooner. Many families and small businesses are already struggling and saying, “Adjust the budget—we can’t pay this.” If the measure fails in May, the tax increases would take effect much earlier than if the vote occurred in November. This is not an emergency. Recent publicity and budget updates have confirmed that transportation funding needs can be met without rushing these increases.

During the original legislative discussions, polls showed that 94% of Oregonians initially opposed these tax and fee hikes. Then 250,000 signers again said “no” by qualifying the referendum. Yet lawmakers are now trying to override that clear public rejection. You are our elected representatives. Your duty is to represent the will of the people—not to maneuver around it when the people speak too loudly. By pushing SB 1599, you are failing that duty. If you continue to ignore the people who signed the petition, who exactly are you representing? Whose will are you carrying out?

We demand that Referendum Petition 2026-302 remain on the November 2026 General Election ballot, exactly as promised to the 250,000+ Oregonians who signed it. Respectfully submitted,

Thank you for your time and for upholding the voice of the voters. Please vote NO on Senate Bill 1599.

Julie Spurbeck

Hillsboro, OR