

Submitter: Angelita Sanchez
On Behalf Of: Petitioners
Committee: Joint Special Committee On Referendum Petition
2026-302
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1599

Chair and Members of the Committee:

My name is Angelita Sanchez. I was a captain for Linn County and our No Tax Oregon Referendum, Petition 2026-302. I also served as the courier, personally transporting tens of thousands of signatures across the winter mountain pass so they could be submitted by hand, in person and on time.

I oppose SB 1599. This referendum was not symbolic to me. It was physical, time-sensitive, and carried out in good faith under the rules as they existed.

This petition aligns with how I have governed. My involvement in this referendum is not isolated. Throughout my public service, I have consistently supported referring major decisions to the ballot, particularly when they involve fees instead of taxes, imposed without a direct vote of the people.

At the local level, I have repeatedly raised concerns about fees passed without voter approval. Not because infrastructure or services are unimportant — but because how we fund them matters, and who decides matters.

I believe Oregonians deserve a say in how their money is used. People will support investment when they are respected. When voters are given the opportunity to decide for themselves, something important happens:

They take ownership. People are far more willing to contribute, even to large or complex projects when:

- they are asked directly,
- they understand the purpose,
- and they can see an end product they are proud of.

That is how you build trust. That is how you build durable public support. And that is why the referendum process exists.

The people upheld their responsibility. Volunteers gathered signatures in winter conditions. County teams coordinated under tight deadlines. I ensured signatures were delivered despite weather and terrain because the law gave us a clear expectation: If the people did the work, the question would go to voters in the

November 2026 general election.

That expectation matters. SB 1599 changes the rules after the work was done. Every voter who signed this petition did so believing the decision would be made in a general election, when participation is highest and access is broadest. SB 1599 moves that decision to a May primary, after signatures were gathered, verified, and delivered.

As someone who physically carried those signatures, I can say plainly: SB1599 was not what voters were told, and it is not what they agreed to.

Political convenience is not a justification. This bill has been described publicly as a political move. I appreciate the candor, but that admission matters.

The referendum process is designed to remove decisions like this from political convenience and place them directly in the hands of the people. Altering the election date midstream because the outcome may be uncomfortable defeats the very purpose of a referendum.

Lower turnout is not neutral. May primary elections consistently see lower turnout than November general elections. Moving this vote narrows participation rather than expanding it the opposite of what a citizen referendum is meant to do. It also prohibits time to gather signatures to list citizen opposition statements in the Voter Pamphlet.

Respect the process and the people. Tens of thousands of signatures were gathered and transported under difficult conditions because Oregonians believed their voices would be respected.

Changing the rules after the fact sends a dangerous message: that when people use their constitutional rights effectively, the rules can be adjusted around them. That's horrific.

I urge you to vote NO on SB 1599 and allow Referendum 2026-302 to be decided in November 2026, with full turnout, full transparency, and full public participation, just as the petition states.