

Submitter: Dr. Todd M Price  
On Behalf Of: Global Counter-Terrorism Institute  
Committee: Joint Special Committee On Referendum Petition  
2026-302  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1599

Public Testimony on SB 1599

Submitted for the Record – Salem, Oregon  
from Global Counter-Terrorism Institute® | GCTI

Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on Senate Bill 1599.

I offer this statement from a non-partisan risk mitigation and democratic resilience perspective, informed by the Dynamic Threat Mitigation (DTM™) Model. This framework is used to assess how policy decisions may unintentionally increase long-term risks to public trust, social stability, and institutional legitimacy.

This testimony is not about the policy outcome of the referendum, nor does it assert improper intent by the Legislature or the Governor. Rather, it focuses on process risk.

From a DTM™ standpoint, moving a voter-initiated referendum from a general election with high participation to a lower-turnout election introduces several avoidable risks:

First, legitimacy risk.

Even when legally permissible, altering electoral timing after significant public mobilization can create a perception—fair or not—that rules are being changed mid-process. In risk analysis, perception matters because it directly affects institutional confidence.

Second, disenfranchisement risk.

Lower-turnout elections disproportionately reduce participation among working families, rural voters, and first-time voters. DTM™ modeling consistently shows that perceived exclusion, rather than policy disagreement, is a primary driver of long-term civic disengagement.

Third, trust-decay risk.

Repeated procedural conflicts between citizens and institutions accelerate erosion of trust. Over time, this increases protest intensity, information disorder, and governance friction—costs that extend well beyond any single legislative cycle.

These are second- and third-order effects. They are often invisible in short-term policy analysis but are well documented in resilience, security, and governance studies.

#### A Lower-Risk Path Forward

The DTM™ framework emphasizes de-escalation, predictability, and trust preservation. Lower-risk alternatives include:

Maintaining the original November ballot placement, preserving maximum voter participation and public expectation.

If timing changes are deemed necessary, employing an independent and transparent review process, supported by clear public justification.

Pairing any procedural change with mitigation measures, including expanded voter outreach and statutory safeguards protecting referendum rights going forward.

These options preserve legislative authority while reducing systemic risk.

#### Role of GCTI and DTM™

The Global Counter-Terrorism Institute® (GCTI) does not advocate political outcomes. Our role is to identify systemic risk and support democratic resilience.

For the record, we state clearly:

GCTI serves at the pleasure of the State of Oregon and its people.

Our interest is not who prevails in a vote, but whether Oregonians continue to trust the process by which decisions are made.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,  
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