

Submitter: Margo Schiewe  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Special Committee On Referendum Petition  
2026-302  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1599  
Letter Opposing SB 1599

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on SB 1599.

Last fall, more than 250,000 Oregonians—including both of us—signed the referendum petition to place Governor Tina Kotek’s transportation tax and fee increases on the November 2026 ballot. That signature effort was a clear expression of public will. Now, SB 1599 attempts to move that referendum from the November election to the May election, when voter turnout is significantly lower.

This change is not a minor procedural adjustment. It is an attempt to reduce participation and weaken the voice of Oregonians who demanded the right to vote on these tax and fee hikes. procedural adjustment. It is an attempt to reduce participation and weaken the voice of Oregonians who demanded the right to vote on these tax and fee hikes. Oregon law is clear that the referendum belongs on the November ballot, where the largest number of voters can weigh in.

Oregonians deserve transparency, fairness, and respect for the democratic process. Moving the referendum to a low-turnout election undermines those principles. After several recent attempts to limit or override public input, SB 1599 continues a troubling pattern of disregarding the will of the people.

I urge you to reject SB 1599 and uphold Oregonians’ right to a full and fair vote in November.

Respectively,  
Robert and Margo Schiewe