

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

The referendum process exists to place major decisions directly in the hands of voters — not to adjust the rules after the public has done the work. Tens of thousands of Oregonians signed the No Gas Tax referendum with the clear understanding that it would be decided in the November 2026 general election, when participation is highest and access is broadest.

SB 1599 changes that expectation after the fact. Moving this vote to a May primary narrows participation, limits public engagement, and undermines the purpose of a citizen referendum. Lower turnout is not neutral — it materially alters who gets a voice.

Political convenience is not a justification for altering the rules midstream. The referendum process is meant to remove decisions like this from political calculation and place them with the people. Changing the election date because the outcome may be uncomfortable defeats that purpose.

Oregonians did their part in good faith. The Legislature should do the same.

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