

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

Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jonathan Gill. I am an Oregon resident, and I submit this testimony in unequivocal and forceful opposition to Senate Bill 1599.

SB 1599 is a legally unsound bill that exemplifies legislative overreach, weak statutory drafting, and disregard for constitutional constraints. If enacted, it will expand state power at the expense of individual rights, dilute due process protections, and expose the State of Oregon to foreseeable legal challenge and liability.

Constitutional and Due Process Concerns

SB 1599 is fundamentally flawed in that it regulates lawful conduct through broad, presumptive mechanisms rather than individualized findings. Legislation that imposes penalties, restrictions, or disabilities without a clear nexus to adjudicated wrongdoing runs afoul of basic due process principles under both the Oregon Constitution and the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

Laws must be narrowly tailored to address a demonstrated harm. SB 1599 is not. It relies on generalized assumptions rather than evidence, substituting legislative convenience for constitutional rigor. This approach invites arbitrary enforcement and undermines the rule of law.

Overbreadth and Vagueness

SB 1599 is further vulnerable to challenge on overbreadth and vagueness grounds. When statutory language is expansive, imprecise, or grants excessive discretion to administrative agencies or enforcement bodies, it fails to provide adequate notice of prohibited conduct and encourages inconsistent application.

Oregonians should not be required to guess at the meaning or scope of the law, nor should they be subjected to regulatory schemes that shift standards after the fact. SB 1599 does exactly that.

Separation of Powers and Administrative Expansion

The bill also reflects a troubling pattern of the Legislature delegating substantive policy decisions to unelected agencies, effectively bypassing democratic accountability. When the Legislature enacts open-ended mandates and leaves critical definitions, enforcement standards, or penalties to administrative rulemaking, it abdicates its constitutional responsibility.

This kind of delegation is not harmless. It concentrates power, insulates decision-makers from voter accountability, and increases the likelihood of inconsistent or politically motivated enforcement.

Fiscal Irresponsibility and Legal Exposure

SB 1599 imposes new administrative, enforcement, and compliance burdens without a credible demonstration of cost-effectiveness. Worse, by advancing a legally questionable framework, the bill exposes the state to litigation risk, including constitutional challenges, injunctions, and attorney-fee awards—all paid for by Oregon taxpayers.

At a time when Oregon faces severe and well-documented crises in public safety, addiction, homelessness, and core service delivery, allocating resources toward legally fragile and ideologically driven legislation is irresponsible.

Conclusion

SB 1599 is not merely bad policy—it is bad law. It weakens due process, expands government power without sufficient justification, and disregards constitutional limits that exist to protect citizens from exactly this type of legislative excess.

I urge this Committee to reject SB 1599 in its entirety and to recommit to legislation that is constitutionally sound, narrowly tailored, evidence-based, and respectful of individual rights.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Respectfully,

Jonathan Gill
Oregon Resident