

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

To: Oregon State Legislature

Subject: Opposition to SB 1599 – Protecting the Referendum Process

Dear Legislators,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 1599, which seeks to move the public vote on Referendum Petition 2026-302 from the November general election to the May 19, 2026, primary election. This proposal undermines the integrity of Oregon's democratic process for several critical reasons:

Subverting Voter Intent: Over 250,000 Oregonians signed this referendum petition with the understanding that the vote would occur during the high-turnout November general election. Moving the date after the required signatures have been gathered disregards the explicit intent of those voters.

Lower Voter Participation: Historically, primary elections see significantly lower voter turnout than general elections. Shifting a major decision regarding transportation taxes and fees to a May primary effectively disenfranchises a large portion of the electorate who participate primarily in November.

Rushed Public Discourse: SB 1599 is moving through the legislature at an accelerated pace, which many feel denies citizens adequate time to organize, gather further input, and submit formal arguments for the Voters' Pamphlet by the proposed March 12 deadline.

Erosion of Public Trust: Altering the rules of a referendum "midstream" creates the appearance of political maneuvering to avoid a broader public mandate. For a healthy democracy, major policy changes must be decided when the greatest number of citizens are engaged.

I respectfully urge you to honor the established referendum process and the voices of the quarter-million Oregonians who signed this petition. Please vote NO on SB 1599 and allow this critical measure to remain on the November 2026 ballot as originally intended.

Sincerely,

K'cie L Branson
Corvallis,
U.S Oregon Congressional District 4
Oregon Senate District 8
Oregon House District 16