

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

As an Oregonian and a voter in Eugene, I am writing to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 1599. This bill represents an obvious attempt to manipulate the democratic process by moving the vote on Referendum Petition 2026-302 from the November general election to the May primary. This shift is clearly designed to take advantage of lower voter turnout, and to exclude the voices of Oregon's nearly one million non-affiliated voters, who are far less likely to participate in a primary election.

When over 250,000 citizens signed this petition, they did so understanding that this \$4.3 billion tax increase would be decided by the Oregonians in November. SB 1599 breaks that trust, and effectively disenfranchises nearly one million Oregonians. Furthermore, it bypasses standard transparency by hand-picking a legislative committee to write the explanatory statements, rather than following the established non-partisan process.

Oregonians are already struggling with high inflation and a rising cost of living, and growing distrust in our elected representatives. We deserve a fair, transparent, and high-turnout election on a measure that directly impacts our gas prices and payroll taxes, and need to rebuild trust in our democratic process. Vote "no" on SB 1599 and allow the people to be heard at the proper time.