

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

My name is Janet, and I am one of the more than 250,000 Oregonians who signed the referendum petition on the transportation tax bill last year. When we signed, the petition clearly stated that the measure would be voted on at the General Election on November 3, 2026. That representation mattered. It shaped people's expectations, their trust in the process, and their willingness to participate.

Changing the election date after the fact after voters have already exercised their constitutional right to refer a law undermines that trust. It sends the message that the rules can be rewritten whenever the outcome might be inconvenient for those in power.

A referendum is the people's check on the Legislature. It is one of the few tools Oregonians have to hold government accountable. When more than a quarter-million people sign a petition with the understanding that their vote will occur in November, moving it to a low turnout May election dilutes that voice. It changes the conditions under which the public agreed to participate.

This is not about whether someone supports or opposes the transportation bill. It is about honoring the process that Oregonians relied on when they signed. It is about respecting the commitment the state made to its own voters.

I urge you to keep the referendum on the November 2026 ballot, as stated on the petition, and as voters were promised. The integrity of our democratic process depends on it