

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

I am writing to you to state my dissatisfaction with the malfeasance of the Oregon Secretary of State, the Oregon Senators, and the Governor of Oregon, for their repudiation in breaking their contract with the citizens of the State of Oregon. The “No Tax Referendum” was noted at the top to be voted on during the November 2026 ballot, yet the Oregon Legislature’s rush to pass Senate Bill 1599—shifting Referendum Petition 2026-302 to the low-turnout May 19 primary under an “emergency clause”—exposes partisan manipulation, not genuine crisis response. Leaders claim urgency over ODOT’s \$242 million shortfall, yet as of February 5, 2026, no bills address it directly; not one bill has been presented, such as amending HB 2017’s restrictive 6% maintenance cap or providing fiscal relief for this so-called “emergency.” Introduced measures like SB 1542 and SB 1543 are procedural, lacking immediate action, further proving that the Oregon Legislature is lacking an actual “emergency.” This selective “emergency” aims to disenfranchise voters, as May primaries draw 30-40% turnout versus 70-80% in November generals, suppressing diverse voices. A real crisis would prompt substantive fixes, not ballot gamesmanship that erodes democratic trust.

This is morally wrong and shouldn’t be allowed, as there is no “emergency.” The No Tax Referendum gained enough signatures to demand a spot on the November 2026 ballot in record time. At this point, if the No Tax Referendum isn’t put on the November 2026 ballot, you leave the citizens of Oregon no choice but to file a declaratory judgment action under ORS Chapter 28 in state circuit court, seeking a ruling that the emergency clause in Senate Bill 1599 violates the Oregon Constitution (Article IV, Section 28) by failing to adequately state the specific facts and reasons constituting the emergency.

This lawsuit would include anyone who allows this referendum or votes for this referendum to be put on the May 2026 ballot, or anyone who has allowed it to happen. At this point, it already will include the Oregon Secretary of State, the Oregon Governor, the chief sponsors of SB 1599, and we are also looking at including the Oregon Attorney General considering he is allowing this to happen. It is time the citizens of Oregon are actually heard and taken seriously. This authoritarian Oregon government that doesn’t care about the promises they have given Oregonians will not go without the people filing their grievances accordingly. We the Oregonians have had enough.

Respectfully,

Roger