

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

I'm extremely disappointed in this attempt to change the voting date for the Transportation Tax Referendum from the general election in November to the primary election in May. The people have already spoken, and signed petitions with the understanding that this measure would be decided in the November election.

In your press release, you state that by having it on the May ballot "This would allow voters to weigh in on the measure as soon as possible and, once the outcome of the election is known, will clarify for lawmakers, cities, and counties what level of transportation funding can be expected this biennium." With all due respect, this comes across as pandering.

We all know that there is a big difference in voter turnout in primary elections v general elections, and we know that the Transportation Tax is very unpopular with voters. Hundreds of voters from all registration categories (R, D, I, U, C) rallied to gather signatures over the course of about 2 months. Volunteers were out from morning to bedtime no matter the weather. Not only were there hundreds of volunteers, but in my own community, people were searching for places to sign the petitions. We all worked too hard for this to get on the ballot only to have this referendum relegated to a low turnout election.

Furthermore, ODOT's budget has actually grown 34% since 2018, and there are other avenues of funding transportation costs; here is one from John Charles of the Cascade Policy Institute: <https://cascadepolicy.org/testimony/john-charles-testimony-re-25-special-session-transportation-funding/>.

THE PEOPLE HAVE SPOKEN!

Thank you