

Submitter: Elizabeth Farnum

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Special Committee On Referendum Petition
2026-302

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1599

SB 1599 would shift the statewide vote on the transportation measure referred by petition to the May 2026 primary election. While framed as an administrative change, the practical effect is to interfere with the referendum process and the constitutional rights reserved to the people under the Oregon Constitution. For these reasons, I strongly oppose SB 1599.

Oregonians have a long and proud tradition of direct democracy. The referendum is not a courtesy granted by the Legislature; it is a constitutional right belonging to the people. Legislative actions that alter timelines, change election dates, or otherwise affect the conditions under which a referred measure is considered raise serious concerns about fairness, transparency, and respect for that right.

Moreover, the official referendum signature sheets explicitly stated that, if sufficient valid signatures were collected, the measure would appear on the November ballot. That representation formed the basis on which voters agreed to sign. Changing the election date after signatures have been gathered contradicts that understanding and undermines public trust in the referendum process.

For these reasons, please vote no on SB 1599. Thank you.