

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

I am opposed to SB1599 and any/all measures which may be attempted to circumvent valid Oregon voter's will. There is NO reason (other than political) to move the vote to repeal taxes for which the legislature passed against the bipartisan testimony from the November ballot. Additionally, attempts to remove safeguards to protect the rights of Oregon voters from said legislature acting without voter approval is simply wrong. If you attempt to pass this bill - we the voters will simply challenge it as well. Under NO circumstances should ANY voter find what you are doing acceptable - regardless of party affiliation. SB 1599, which will require a majority vote in both houses of the legislature and Kotek's signature to become law, would redraft from the ground up Oregon election law. Its many changes operate along three primary axes, each of which attempts to destroy fairness and citizen input to the ballot measure process. This bill eliminates the citizen committee, putting a legislative committee in charge instead of voters. Under ordinary procedure, the Secretary of State holds a hearing on the explanatory statement drafted by the citizen committee. SB1599 does not address the hearing, but sets deadlines that would, at best, severely shorten the notice the Secretary of State is to give Oregonians regarding their right to be heard on the explanatory statement - or organize any resistance. The bill then attempts, perhaps unconstitutionally, to give the Supreme Court a deadline of March 12 to rule on any petition objecting to the explanatory statement, for which only select legislators can draft without 3rd party review or verification - which could be extremely misleading to the voters, effectively censoring any opposition. These are extremely underhanded (and possibly illegal) tactics for which a legislature operating by the people for the people should NEVER need to seek.