

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

The message in my testimony during yesterday's public hearing is very similar to what I've expressed repeatedly in the past. I've testified in uncounted transportation hearings including the Columbia River Crossing, HB-2017, HB-2025 and HB-3991. There has been a consistent failure and lack of accountability since the failure of the Columbia River Crossing project in 2013. Recently, the failure to deliver responsible results from the \$5.3 billion investment authorized by HB-2017 led to the current financial quagmire. All of those examples fit the same pattern.

I spoke for thousands who are annoyed and disgusted by the gamesmanship and manipulation of transportation legislation that began when ODOT announced a \$1.1 billion shortfall in February of 2025. Since that time we witnessed heavy handed tactics that played out on camera during the HB-2025 fiasco. Removing Senator Meek and others from the Transportation Committee was disturbing. The bill was a \$12.5 billion wish list that he dared to question.

Will current Committee members be replaced if they do not support HB-1599? I refrained from making legal arguments, deferring to Representative Diehl and others. I do question why the Governor and Democratic leadership apparently agree and abide by the Attorney General's legal opinions until now?

Please do not vote to move the bill forward. HB-1599 is an unnecessary erosion of the voter's will and trust.

Thank you,