

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

I support SB 1599. ODOT and the local transportation agencies need certainty about their budgets for planning, hiring, and allocation of funds. Delaying that certainty by delaying the vote on this referendum until the fall will create more turbulence and further damage the ability of those agencies to do their work.

Delaying the vote until the fall will accelerate the departure of experienced staff to safer and better-paying jobs in the private sector. Losing more experienced staff means that projects will be more costly, as explained in last week's hearing in the Joint Committee on Transportation Oversight. We need to retain these seasoned professionals to reduce the waste in our system.

Delaying this vote until the fall will worsen the performance of our transportation agencies at a time when rebuilding public confidence is crucial. We cannot afford their further loss of credibility.

I am glad to see SB 1599 pass out of committee and I urge all legislators to vote Aye on this bill when it comes before you.

My name is Joseph Stenger MD. I live in Portland and work on transportation policy.

Thank you for taking these comments into consideration.