

May 20, 2026  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Chair of the Select Special Citizen Initiative Proposal Review Committee Brandon Lundy issued the following statement on recommending a referendum question to Cabinet:**

“The Select Special Citizen Initiative Proposal Review Committee, established to review Thomas Lukaszuk’s Forever Canada petition, has passed a motion that the Special Select Committee on Citizen Initiative Petition Review recommend the Government of Alberta include a question on the October 19, 2026 provincial referendum that includes an option for Albertans to vote for Alberta to remain in Canada.

“More than 400,000 Albertans signed Mr. Lukaszuk’s Forever Canada petition. Combined with the reported 301,000 who signed the Alberta Independence petition, this means over 700,000 Albertans want – and deserve – the opportunity to have their voices heard in a referendum.

“Mr. Lukaszuk’s application required him to choose how his petition would be decided – either a vote in the Legislature or a referendum – and he explicitly chose a referendum. The law is also clear: once a citizen initiative reaches the required signature threshold, it proceeds according to that selected path – in this case, to a referendum.

“What we’re doing now is following that law and respecting the expectations of those Albertans who signed Mr. Lukaszuk’s petition in good faith, understanding it would result in a referendum.

“This expectation not new. It was promoted from the outset by Mr. Lukaszuk in his launch news release, campaign information, and in multiple media interviews. It was also supported by the Alberta NDP – including Leader Naheed Nenshi and Deputy Leader Rakhi Pancholi – who repeatedly asked the Premier during Question Period to call a referendum. If you ask Albertans to sign on to a referendum, you don’t get to change your position once you succeed.

“Our caucus and Premier Danielle Smith continue to support a strong and sovereign Alberta within a united Canada. But supporting Canada also means respecting democratic participation. When hundreds of thousands of Albertans engage in a process designed to end in a referendum, we don’t ignore them – we follow through.

“Albertans will be informed once Cabinet has decided whether a question will proceed to a referendum and what that question will be.

“With its work now complete, the Select Special Committee will submit a final report to the Legislative Assembly and be dissolved.”

-30-

#### **Additional Information:**

- Selected examples of when Thomas Lukaszuk called for a referendum (emphasis added):
  - **“Our referendum question** means Albertans can vote YES and affirm their desire to stay Canadian.” – Thomas Lukaszuk, [Forever Canada News Release](#), May 20, 2025
  - “I have filed an application with Elections Alberta to have a petition in Alberta on that question. And if we get enough signatures, which I have no doubt in my mind that we will, **we will have a referendum in this province**, but not about separating, about staying in Canada.” – Thomas Lukaszuk, [CTV News: Former Alberta conservative MLA launches petition to stop Alberta separation](#), May 22, 2025
  - “If we’re **going to have a referendum anyway**, on Alberta’s place in Canada, that conversation must be led by loyal Canadians, and it must be based on facts not disinformation. So, I chose to ask a question whether you agree that Alberta must remain in Canada and any form of separation must be rejected, to which the answer should be yes. And I want to have that kind of a positive, nation building conversation...If our question gets approved, I firmly believe that **that will be the question on the referendum.**” – Thomas Lukaszuk, [CTV News: Alberta Primetime](#), May 29, 2025
  - “The [#ForeverCanadian](#) petition **and referendum** will not be won by money, but they will be won by our love for Canada.” – Thomas Lukaszuk, [@LukaszukAB Post on X](#), May 30, 2025
  - “Everything you need to know about the [#ForeverCanadian](#) **referendum petition**. [#ableg #cdnpoli](#)” – Thomas Lukaszuk, [@LukaszukAB Post on X](#), May 30, 2025

- “The #ForeverCanadian movement has just completed our strategy pivot. From a successful petition signature gathering campaign, we transformed into **a referendum campaign** force. We’re ready. We’re focused. We’re even stronger. Join us and sign up at: <https://t.co/Xq9yBfTCGG> #ableg” - Thomas Lukaszuk, [@LukaszukAB Post on X](#), Feb. 7, 2026
  - “We will be further collecting lists of supporters to make sure that on **referendum day**, we can make sure that everybody comes out and votes. So, I am on the assumption because I cannot not be on the assumption, that **there will be a referendum**, so it is incumbent upon Forever Canadian to **be ready for a referendum. We have to win this referendum.** We have to win it with a high majority. So, we put separatism to bed.” – Thomas Lukaszuk, [CTV News: Alberta Primetime](#), Feb. 10, 2026
  - “Yes, I am delighted that she’s **using our question as the question that will be on the referendum.**” – Thomas Lukaszuk, [Calgary Herald: Braid: Pro-Canada question could get the nod in upcoming referendum](#), April 24, 2026
  - “**To win a referendum**, we must get out the vote.” – Thomas Lukaszuk, [Thomas A. Lukaszuk Facebook Post](#), May 8, 2026
- Selected examples of when the Alberta NDP called for a referendum:
    - Naheed Nenshi:
      - “And I will say this today to Danielle Smith: if you want to flirt with separatism, put your money where your mouth is. **Call the referendum.** Premier, if you want a referendum on the ballot, **put a referendum on the ballot.** We need to have democratic outlets like a possible **separation referendum** to allow people to voice their opinions.” – Naheed Nenshi, [Press Conference](#), April 30, 2025
      - “So, I’m going to say this very, very clearly to Premier Smith. You want a referendum? **Give us the referendum now.**” – Naheed Nenshi, [Press Conference](#), May 3, 2025
      - “You want a referendum? **Give us the referendum now. Call the referendum, call it now,**” – Naheed Nenshi, [The Tyee: Nenshi focuses on Smith and separation at NDP Convention](#), May 5, 2025
    - Rakhi Pancholi:
      - “Half a million Albertans deserve to have their voices heard and deserve to have them heard now.” – Rakhi Pancholi, [Citizen Initiative Petition Committee](#), April 21, 2026

Lori Sigurdson:

- "It's time to stop toying with the future of this province. If the Premier truly believes it's right, then **call the referendum now.**" – Lori Sigurdson, [Hansard](#), May 13, 2025

**Media contact:**

Daniel Verrier  
Manager of Communications and Media Relations  
[Daniel.Verrier@assembly.ab.ca](mailto:Daniel.Verrier@assembly.ab.ca)  
587-357-5976