

# P O E A X T R Y

BY AXTON

TO:

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## Ohio House of Representatives

### The Erasure of My Public Life

My name is Axton. I am a transgender man living in Ohio. I am writing to you today because HB 249 isn't just a policy change—it is a direct threat to my ability to walk out my front door and exist in my own community.

By expanding the definition of "adult cabaret" to include anyone whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth, this bill effectively labels my physical presence as "harmful" or "indecent." It suggests that simply by being visible in public, I am committing a performance that children shouldn't see.

### The Threat of Criminalization

Under this bill, if I am at a public park, a library, or a community event, and a minor is present, I could be accused of an "unlawful adult cabaret performance."

- This isn't about what I am doing; it is about who I am.
- It turns my identity into a crime.
- It subjects me to the risk of first-degree misdemeanors and fourth-degree felonies just for existing in spaces where other Ohioans are allowed to be without fear.

### Living Under a Microscope

This bill creates a "chilling effect" that will follow me everywhere. It tells my neighbors, local law enforcement, and strangers that they have the right to police my body and my gender expression. It invites harassment by suggesting that a trans person in public is inherently "obscene."

I am not a "performance." I am a human being. I hike our trails, I live in our neighborhoods, and I deserve to exist in public without being treated like a legal liability or a danger to children.

### Conclusion

HB 249 is a move to push transgender people out of public life. It uses vague, dangerous language to categorize us as "adult-only" content. This is a violation of my basic rights as an Ohioan. I am asking you to see me as a person, not a political talking point, and to vote NO on this bill.

Respectfully,

*Axton n.o. Mitchell*

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