

To: Members of the House Judiciary Committee

From: Eileen Galvin

Date: March 16, 2026

Subject: Testimony in Opposition to H.B. 249

I am writing today to express my strong opposition to H.B. 249. While framed as a measure for public decency, this legislation utilizes language so broad that it threatens the fundamental civil liberties of all citizens, regardless of whether they are professional entertainers.

I am a 37-year-old Ohio native. I have lived in Columbus all my life. I attended Duxberry Elementary before our family moved to Hilliard, where I attended Hilliard Sixth Grade Station, Memorial Middle School, Davidson High School, and ultimately went on to graduate with a B.A. and M.A. in Linguistics from The Ohio State University in 2012. I now work in higher education. I am also a transgender woman and a performance artist of 15 years. In that time, I have befriended a strong community of fellow performers who are also educators, activists, artists, and passionate individuals who work hard to use their art form to give back to the community and make it a better place. As a performer and as a trans person, this bill would not only limit my constitutional freedom in my home state, but would also set a precedent for the government overreach into the private lives of its constituents.

The primary issues with this bill are those of **vagueness in the statutory language** and **unconstitutional infringement on freedom of expression**.

- **Legal Vagueness:** The criteria for what constitutes "physical markers" of a gender identity different from one's biological sex are dangerously subjective. This creates a "gray area" that leaves ordinary citizens—including theater actors, historical reenactors, and transgender individuals—vulnerable to selective enforcement and harassment.
- **Infringement on Freedom of Expression:** By mandating that specific types of dress or makeup be relegated solely to "adult cabarets," the bill effectively criminalizes self-expression in the public square. Drag is a long-standing form of artistic performance and satire that does not inherently equate to "adult" content.

Public safety is best served by clear, objective laws—not by policing clothing, makeup, or personal identity. I respectfully urge the committee to vote No on H.B. 249, and work to advance legislation that will actually benefit its constituents.

Sincerely,
Eileen Galvin