

My name is Mitchell Zito from Mentor, Ohio and I am writing in the strongest opposition to HB 249.

The state government has no business telling men and women what clothes they can't or can't wear in public and when they perform. These gender based dress codes harken back to the laws we abolished over a hundred years ago that made it illegal to wear trousers and the decency laws of oppressive regimes across the world, a far cry from upholding freedom of speech.

Like all legislation that attempts to codify gender roles into law, this will also lead to the harassment and policing of men and women who have been deemed too unmasculine or too unfeminine for their own bodies.

Drag is just clothing, nothing deemed decent on one person can be indecent on another, to attempt to say so is discrimination on the basis of sex.

Drag is not a crime or a perversion. It is a tradition that goes back to theater and Shakespearean and Kabuki performers.

This legislation will also impact Cleveland's economy in a negative manner as theater performances of shows like Mrs. Doubtfire, Chicago, Hairspray, Tootsie, Matilda, Some Like it Hot, and Peter Pan (in which the title character is traditionally played by a woman) which sell thousands of tickets in the theatre district of Cleveland and Columbus alone would all be outlawed under this legislation.

It would also impact the ability for trans people to exist in general as the legislation is written so broadly that trans individuals are erroneously classified as crossdressers and would be legally barred from performing or existing in public.

VOTE NO ON HB 249