

March 16, 2026

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Julie Hazlett. I am here today because this bill is very important to me, not only because I am the mother of two beautiful young children, but also because I am a performer in Columbus and have been dancing and performing in the West Drag Family for the last 15 years. I am an AFAB entertainer (assigned female at birth) who wears wigs, nails, costumes and a lot of glitter.

Stating drag entertainers are harmful to juveniles, are obscene in nature and have no place in public venues is not only dangerous, but very misguided and untrue. Just as in movies, television shows and theater, drag is used as an artform and is a way of entertaining and teaching about love and acceptance. I am proud to say that my children have been around gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and non-binary people and performers their entire lives. My daughter's Godfather is one of my best friends and happens to be a drag queen. Her Godmother, my sister, has also performed as a drag king. They have seen many drag performances in their lives including drag brunches, family friendly drag shows and pride events. My daughter has also performed alongside myself and my West Family in events such as the AIDS Walk Ohio, The Columbus Arts Festival and fundraising events for the Gay Softball World Series.

Saying that drag entertainers and performers are overly sexual in their content when in the presence of minors is laughable. Drag entertainers are NOT performing for your children to try and convince them to join in some sort of LGBT conspiracy. If people do not want their children to witness a drag performance, they simply should not attend. I certainly do not take my children to any public events that do not align with my beliefs and morals; however, I will always stand on the principle that we all belong in public spaces and deserve to be treated with decency and respect. Suggesting that I, as a parent, cannot determine what I want my children to be exposed to is government overreach. And what would be the limitations of the Indecent Exposure Modernization Act? Back in October during House Bill 249's proponent hearing, there was outrage regarding a drag queen doing a high kick, briefly showing their crotch. Will cheerleaders no longer be able to do jumps and high kicks in public places while wearing their uniforms? Will gymnasts not be able to do the splits? Should I no longer be doing cartwheels on the beach with my children while wearing a bathing suit? In October I heard so much rhetoric on how offensive it was that a trans woman dared to use the women's locker room at the YMCA, even though it was mentioned that she wasn't bothering anyone. She was simply existing. Also, that whole scenario had absolutely nothing to do with this legislation. It appears to me that we want to prohibit trans people, mainly trans women, from existing in public, or anywhere at all for that matter. Let's not forget that crimes

against children such as sexual abuse, sex trafficking, etc. are NOT being carried out by drag queens or trans women. More children are being harmed by your local churches than anywhere else. If I had to choose someone to be around my child, I would choose the drag performer over the priest any day.

Now that I have told you what our drag queens, kings, male/female/non-binary and trans entertainers are not doing, I'll tell you what they ARE doing. They are raising over 2 million dollars for charities such as Kaleidoscope Youth Center, Mozaic Ohio, Equitas Health, Pets Without Parents and the Muscular Dystrophy Association just to name a few. They provide a safe space for LGBT children through Studio West, an immersive dance studio where ANY child (or adult) can dance, create and grow without judgement. They are leading by example on how to live, love and support each other in difficulty times; times where hurtful legislation will ban their existence or their abilities to do what they love and make a living while doing it.

This legislation will do nothing to protect children. I think we can all agree that we do not want to cause harm to children. I will, however, NOT stand by and let my drag family, or any drag performer in the state of Ohio be demonized for putting on a show in our public places. We all know the difference between what is acceptable for adults and what is acceptable for children. As a proponent witness stated in October, "There is a time and a place." I absolutely agree. Children and the general public do not see the same shows that are put on at our show bar. To imply otherwise is ludicrous. It was also said, "One person's first amendment rights should not be sacrificed at the expense of another's." Again, I agree. The work and awareness that the drag community brings not only to Columbus, but Ohio in general is important and lifesaving. We also look pretty fabulous doing it.

Sincerely,

Julie Hazlett