

Enrolled

House Resolution 3

Sponsored by Representatives NELSON, ISADORE; Representatives ANDERSEN, CHAICHI, CHOTZEN, FRAGALA, GAMBA, GRAYBER, HUDSON, KROPF, MARSH, MCDONALD, MUNOZ, NERON, NGUYEN H, NOSSE, RUIZ, SANCHEZ, VALDERRAMA, WALTERS, WATANABE

Whereas Oregon has a rich tradition of building, supporting and celebrating LGBTQ communities, and the Black drag community in Portland is among the most vibrant and storied in the entire United States; and

Whereas June is Pride Month, a time when many members of the LGBTQ community honor the history and struggles that led to the advancements in rights for LGBTQ people today; and

Whereas Juneteenth commemorates the emancipation of enslaved Black people and is celebrated today as a national and state holiday; and

Whereas Portland's Black drag community is deeply rooted in an illustrious history of fantasy, and members of the community have significantly contributed to the Black drag entertainment culture, fostering creativity and inclusivity since as far back as 1958; and

Whereas in 1969, Rochelle was crowned the first Black Rose Queen, Rose Queen X, at the "Days of Wine and Roses" Fall Ball; and

Whereas in 1970, Portland's Black drag community connected with the blossoming concept of the Court with the formation of two parallel nonprofit organizations, the Portland Forum and the Imperial Sovereign Rose Court (ISRC); and

Whereas prior to the election of the newly designated title of "Rose Empress," it was determined that, to ensure that nothing be taken away from Portland's own unique experiences in drag history, all past "Queens" would be assigned their appropriate chronological numbers, in sequence to the "Rose Empress" designation; and

Whereas in 1971, Talani was crowned the Portland Forum's first Black Rose Empress, Rose Empress XIII, and Lillian Carter was crowned Black Princess I; and

Whereas in 1973, Irvina, Lillian Carter, Leora and Desi presented a grand, first-in-the-nation all-Black Queens entrance at the ISRC Coronation; and

Whereas in 1975, the United Ebony Kingdom (UEK) was formed, and Irvina was crowned Queen I of the UEK that same year; and

Whereas 1975 also ushered in a new era as the last Sovereign Rose Empress gave her blessing to, and relinquished a portion of her territory to, the newly formed Imperial Court of the Emerald Empire (ISCEE) in Eugene; and

Whereas in 1976, ISRC elevated its first Black Monarch by public election, and upon his crowning, Rose Emperor II Harold became the first Black Emperor in the International Court System; and

Whereas on October 16, 1977, with deepest admiration for those trailblazers that helped build up the Black drag community in Oregon, Rose Empress XIX proclaimed "That each Empress shall bear one number and one number only, and the number from the year of their reign shall never be altered from what we, the people, have established in the past"; and

Whereas in 1977, LaWanda Jackson was crowned Rosebud 1977, a pioneering title that marked the beginning of her influential journey in drag culture; and

Whereas in 1978, territory would be adjusted again when ISRC granted sovereignty to the Imperial Sovereign Court of the Willamette Empire (ISCWE) in Salem; and

Whereas in 1980, Misty Waters was crowned ISRC's first Black Trans Princess XI; and

Whereas in 1983, Rosey Waters was crowned ISRC's first Black Rose Empress, Rose Empress XXVI; and

Whereas in 1986, Lady Elaine Peacock was crowned ISRC's Rose Empress XXIX; and

Whereas in 1988, Cicely was crowned ISRC's Rose Empress XXXI; and

Whereas also in 1988, the Portland Forum and ISRC merged, and the organization operated from that point forward as a newly unified ISRC; and

Whereas in 1993, Maria Peters Lake was crowned ISRC's first Black Female Rose Empress, Rose Empress XXXVI; and

Whereas in 1997, Diva Simone Slaughter was crowned ISCEE's first Black Empress, Empress XXIV; and

Whereas in 2000, Anastasia Dubois Rosebud was crowned Rosebud 2000, marking a pivotal moment in her longstanding legacy in drag performance; and

Whereas in 2001, Poison Waters, who is renowned for her advocacy work on behalf of BIPOC and LGBTQ communities in and around Portland, was crowned ISRC's Rose Empress XLIV; and

Whereas in 2001, DiVyne Shawnte Duv earned the title of Rosebud 2001, honoring her role as a trailblazer in drag and LGBTQ activism; and

Whereas in 2002, Michel'le Campbell Starr was recognized for her significant contributions to Portland's drag community when she was named Rosebud 2002; and

Whereas in 2008, Krystal Lynn Benoit was crowned ISRC's first Black Trans Rose Empress, Rose Empress L; and

Whereas in 2009, Karess Ann Slaughter was crowned ISCEE's Empress XXXVI; and

Whereas in 2010, Sheniqua Volt was crowned Miss Gay Pride; and

Whereas Isaiah Esquire's reign as Mr. Gay Pride 2010 marked a significant milestone in the community's celebration of diversity and LGBTQ visibility; and

Whereas in 2011, Sativa Platinum was crowned Rosebud 2011; and

Whereas in 2011, Kourtnei Capree Duv was crowned Sweethearts of Portland's Miss Sweetheart XXIII, a title that exemplified her commitment to the art of drag and community engagement and solidified her place in Portland's legendary LGBTQ entertainment scene; and

Whereas in 2012, Isaiah Esquire was crowned the first Mr. Gay Oregon United States, honoring his commitment to advocacy and representation; and

Whereas in 2012, Kourtnei Capree Duv earned the prestigious title of La Femme Magnifique International, showcasing her outstanding artistry and impact on a global scale; and

Whereas in 2012, Sheniqua Volt earned the title of Miss Poder Latino, cementing her influence at the intersection of the queer and Latino communities; and

Whereas in 2012, Sheniqua Volt was also honored as Miss Larubia; and

Whereas in 2014, Stefhannie Mercury DuPont Shade was crowned Miss Gay Pride; and

Whereas in 2014, Isaiah Esquire made history again as the first to be crowned Mr. NW FIERCE; and

Whereas in 2015, Kourtnei Capree Duv was crowned Miss NW FIERCE, solidifying her status as a boundary-breaking presence in the Northwest drag scene; and

Whereas in 2015, Kimber K. Shade was crowned Sweethearts of Portland's Miss Sweetheart XXVII; and

Whereas in 2017, Flawless Shade was crowned Sweethearts of Portland's Miss Sweetheart XXIX; and

Whereas in 2017, Aunjelle Volt was crowned Miss La Femme Magnifique International, representing the Portland drag scene with excellence and commitment to creativity; and

Whereas in 2019, Flawless Shade was crowned Miss Gay Oregon XLVII; and

Whereas in 2019, Kiesha Monet Volt was named Miss La Femme Magnifique International, establishing her as a key figure in Portland's drag and LGBTQ communities; and

Whereas in 2020, Poison Waters began teaching a "Histories of Drag Performance in Portland" class at Portland Community College, with a prominent segment dedicated to the history of Black drag in Oregon; and

Whereas in 2020, Rogue Storm Safari was crowned Sweethearts of Portland's Miss Sweetheart XXXII; and

Whereas Isaiah Esquire was recognized as one of the Top 50 Burlesque Performers in the World in 2020, 2021 and 2022, further cementing his influence and artistry within the international burlesque and drag scenes; and

Whereas Isaiah Esquire was honored with the Honorary Sweetheart Award in 2021, recognizing his contributions to the LGBTQ community; and

Whereas Isaiah Esquire was named a GLAPN Queer Hero in 2021, a testament to his advocacy and leadership within the queer community; and

Whereas in 2021, Coco Jem Holiday was crowned Sweethearts of Portland's Miss Sweetheart XXXIII, continuing to inspire others with her talent and advocacy in the Portland drag community; and

Whereas 2022 saw ISRC's first all-Black reign, when Arcadian Campbell Starr was crowned Rose Emperor XLV and T'Kara Campbell Starr was crowned Rose Empress LXIII; and

Whereas Isaiah Esquire received the Northwest Pioneer "Reigning a Difference" Award in 2022, highlighting his ongoing dedication to inclusivity and positive change; and

Whereas Isaiah Esquire was honored with the Drag Excellence Award at the White Tusk Awards 2023; and

Whereas in 2023, Flawless Shade was a finalist in "Painted with Raven," demonstrating her artistic flair and innovation in the realm of drag and performance; and

Whereas Flawless Shade also holds the title of Miss Gay Pride of Portland 2023-2024; and

Whereas in 2023, Alexis Campbell Starr was crowned ISRC's Rose Empress LXIV; and

Whereas in 2024, Devlin Lynn Phoénixx was crowned ISRC's Rose Empress LXV; and

Whereas in 2024, Flawless Shade starred in the music video for Logic's "Fear," a love letter to Portland that showcased Flawless Shade's dynamic talent and impact on both the drag and larger entertainment industries; and

Whereas in 2024, Isaiah Esquire was honored as Mx. International Pride by the Imperial Sovereign Rose Court; and

Whereas also in 2024, Rose Empress XLIV Poison Waters was named Queen Mother II of All Oregon, a lifelong title which was vacated by Queen Mother I of All Oregon Rose Empress XV Darcelle upon his death in 2023; and

Whereas Poison Waters is believed to be the first and only Black Queen Mother of a state within the International Court System; and

Whereas many of the founding title holders in Oregon remain actively involved in the Court system as highly respected members of the ISRC College of Monarchs; and

Whereas there have been decades of all-Black productions for various community charity organizations in Portland, including Peacock in the Park (1987-2004), Peacock After Dark (2008-2013), Hot Chocolate (2010-present), Race Talks: Uniting to Break the Chains of Racism presents the Annual History of Black Drag in Portland (2022-2025) and Elite Blackspereience PDX (2025); and

Whereas several all-Black production companies that support Black drag performances, events and media in Portland, including Demand Drag (2020-present), Kourtnei Capree Duv Entertainment (2003-present), Coco's Drag Closet (2020-present), Safari Productions (2018-present), Rogue Apostles (2022-present) and Melange Productions (2018-present) came together to present Juneteenth Spirit Week 2025; and

Whereas countless Black drag entertainers have made their mark in this state, and while many have sadly passed away, Oregon has benefited tremendously from the indelible contributions these pioneering performers have made to the Black drag scene in this state and across the country; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Oregon:

That we, the members of the House of Representatives of the Eighty-third Legislative Assembly, recognize and honor Oregon's rich history of Black drag, and we congratulate all those whose spirited contributions have made Oregon's Black drag community one of the most vibrant and vital in the nation.

Adopted by House June 18, 2025

Timothy G. Sekerak, Chief Clerk of House

Julie Fahey, Speaker of House