

Submitter: Kimberlee Van Patten  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Rules  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HR3

February 19, 2025

Chair Bowman, Vice-Chair Drazan, Vice-Chair Pham and members of the committee on rules.

For the record, my name is Kimberlee Van Patten and I am the 23rd elected Rose Emperor of the Imperial Sovereign Rose Court and Co-Founder of Peacock Productions, Inc.

I am writing today to express my full support for House Resolution 3 of the Eighty-third Legislative Assembly.

I became involved with the Imperial Sovereign Rose Court (ISRC) just out of high school in 1984 when I met reigning Rose Empress XXVI Rosey Waters at an all-ages nightclub. My cousin Christopher, our friend Glen and I sat for hours, wide-eyed, as Rosey spun tales of the ISRC and the LGBTQ community in the lobby of that club. Later I found out that Rosey was the first Black Rose Empress to be elected by the community in an open, city-wide election.

I was thrilled to attend Rosey's stepping down as Rose Empress at the 1984 Coronation, "Halloween... The Ultimate Chapter" at the Hilton Hotel in downtown Portland. The event was GRAND and featured a huge stage with a two-story haunted mansion constructed by students at Madison High School under the direction of drama teacher Michael Hibbard. Fog oozed from the balcony as Rosey and her Emperor Gary made their appearance to open the evening. I was completely thrilled with the level of theatrics and professionalism of the production.

That night, I met Princess XIII Lady Elaine Peacock and Princess XI Misty Waters. Peacock was a candidate for Rose Empress XXVII but didn't win until 2 years later becoming the Landmark Rose Empress XXIX. Misty was Peacock's trans sister. Their mother was Audria M. Edwards who is thought to be the first Black president of any Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) chapter in the U.S. Upon Audria's passing in 1987, Lady Elaine Peacock and Misty Waters established the Audria M. Edwards Scholarship Fund in memoriam. They also designated Peacock in the Park (a drag show held each June at the Amphitheater of Washington Park) as the primary fundraiser for the newly founded scholarship fund.

Fast forward to 1993, my partner Maria Peters Lake became the first Black female

Rose Empress (XXXVI) of the ISRC. On October 27, 1993, just three days after Maria claimed the throne, Lady Elaine Peacock died and on December 15th of that same year, Misty Waters died, both due to complications from HIV/AIDS. The reading of Peacock's last will and testament revealed that she wanted Maria and I to assume control of Peacock in the Park and the Audria M. Edwards Scholarship Fund.

Since 1994, Maria has hosted all "Peacock" events including Peacock in the Park, Peacock After Dark, The Soul Food & Gospel Shows, The Medieval Feasts, The All-Ages Shows and our newest "Experience" shows which feature individuals in a one-person format.

In 1999, Maria and I incorporated Peacock Productions, Inc. which administers the Audria M. Edwards Scholarship Fund and has granted \$476,950 to LGBTQ students and/or children of LGBTQ parents residing in Oregon and Southwest Washington who are pursuing their post-secondary education. Funding for the Scholarship are raised dollar by dollar at drag shows produced and predominantly featuring Black drag queens.

I cannot overstate the importance of the Black drag community in Portland and how it has impacted my life for the good. Rosey, Peacock, Misty, Maria, Poison, Lawanda, Irvina, Rochelle, Cicely, Krystal, Desi, Samone, Waneesha, Taneesha, Tiara, Karess, Diva, T'Kara, Arcadian, Alexis, Devlin and many others have been close personal friends for decades. I have found community and family in these individuals, and I support any acknowledgement that can be given to them for their many contributions of culture, charity, fundraising and enlightenment. The work they do to bridge the gaps between various facets of the community is immeasurable.

Co-Founder/Secretary/Treasurer Peacock Productions,  
Rose Emperor XXIII  
Kimberlee Van Patten