

February 20, 2025

Dear Chair Bowman, Vice-Chair Drazan, Vice-Chair Pham and member of the committee on rules

I am writing to express my strong support for the House Resolution 3 that honors the history and contributions of Black drag queens in Oregon. The rich cultural legacy of Black drag performers in our state deserves recognition and celebration, as it has played a pivotal role in shaping Oregon's LGBTQ+ community and broader social movements.

For decades, black drag queens have not only been at the forefront of entertainment but have also been powerful voices for social justice, self-expression, and resilience in the face of adversity. From the historic spaces they've created to the activism they've engaged in; their contributions go far beyond the stage. Their influence can be seen in the evolution of Oregon's drag scene with the creation of organizations such as The United Ebony Kingdom and the oldest LGBTQ organization, The Imperial Sovereign Rose Court, which brought forth great mentors such as Queen Irvina Lambert, Rose Empresses Rose Waters, Lady Elaine Peacock and Cicely. Our community has flourished due to their innovation, talent, and perseverance.

Notably, these performers have created safe spaces for people of color, empowering future generations of drag artists to express themselves freely and unapologetically. They've been essential in challenging societal norms, advocating for racial and LGBTQ+ equality, and pushing boundaries of beauty and performance art.

I urge you to support this resolution and help ensure that the legacy of Black drag in Oregon is forever honored and remembered.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Maria Council aka Maria Peters Lake

Rose Empress 36

President of Peacock Productions Inc., administrators of the Audria M. Edwards Scholarship Fund