

68<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session

Senator Estenson

Representatives: Prichard, Frelich, Klemin, Koppelman, Marschall, Motschenbacher, D. Ruby, Tveit, and VanWinkle

I am writing this testimony in opposition to HB #1333. The authors who drafted HB #1333 have clearly never been to a Drag Show and do not understand the people who appear on stage nor do these same Legislators even consider the Worlds history of theater.

How many of you even attended a Drag Show? I can honestly say I have attended Drag Shows and let me tell you what you would have observed had you attended this event with an open mind and approached the show with no preconceived judgements.

What you would have witnessed by attending a Drag Show is individuals who perform in Drago Shows take their art/craft very seriously. These people do their act just as any actor on a Broadway stage or those in films. These individuals rehearse their acts, they wear costumes and do their makeup just like those who perform in New York or in LA, Denver, Chicago, Miami, any place where people are allowed the freedom to perform.

Drag Shows are not perverse or obscene. In fact, if you would look back in history you would see that in 17<sup>th</sup> Century during the Shakespearean times, men dressed and played female roles. Back in this era, women were not allowed to perform in theater, so men had to play the female role in plays. This was widely accepted and not deemed unusual or something to be concerned about.

The term “Drag” is derived from the fact that men played and dressed as women during this time but this also described how the female costume would “drag” across the floor. Hence, that is how the term dressing drag came about. Men in this era also wore what we call tights now. Times have changed and with time changing so has clothing however more notable is the attitude and insecurity of those who regard men dressing in female costumes as unusual and highbrow.

I personally watched individuals get on stage and sing, dance, tell jokes and talk with those of us in the audience. The audience enjoyed the performances and the actors, and in turn, the performers performed their hearts out. At the end of the show, everyone was clapping and standing on their feet as all the performers came back on stage to close the show. There wasn’t anything harmful or inappropriate about the show I attended, and I also took my daughter. My daughters were not harmed, scarred or in any danger of being assaulted or corrupted any more than they would be going to the local mall or going to any other public event.

I wanted my daughters to see these performances and have them experience the diverse event that highlights people who dressed in drag. I wanted my daughter to see that there isn't anything wrong with the people who perform and that diversity should be celebrated amongst all communities.

Why is it that now, our Legislators feel the need to be the "MORAL POLICE"? It is not our legislators place to tell a parent what kind of live event we should take our children too. Drag Shows do not harm children. Children are more likely to be harmed at a circus, if an animal gets away or monster truck shows where the decibels in the arena are so loud that peoples hearing can be damaged. For that matter, concerts of any kind should be prohibited. Again, the decibels from the musical instruments can harm the hearing of children.

If something offends you then don't attend the event. I find pageants offensive so I don't attend them. The females parading around in bikinis and high heels I find perverse. What is the purpose of that but only to appease the male population. There is no value what so ever of a female walking around on stage in hardly anything and in heels. Same for the evening gowns portion of pageants. I also can say that the uniforms of some athletic sports is less than desirable. Why are the volleyball shorts so tight and short; very form fitting and totally not necessary to the sport. Wrestlers have tight, form fitting gear. Maybe I find that offensive and think all of these sports wear need to be changed because in my eyes I don't like it. That is what this legislative group, the authors of this bill are doing.

As a parent I have the right to take my child to a concert, movie or whatever I choose and these legislators have no right to impose their beliefs on me and my family. Freedom of speech also includes singing and dancing. Why do the authors of this bill acting to infringe on the actors and spectators of Drag Shows. The legislators should be impose their personal beliefs onto the citizens of North Dakota because of their own personal take on something that they have never participated in or watched.

I find it laughable how we have GOP Congressman who dressed in drag and now GOP are condemning the very thing that has been done and pictures to prove the crossdressing Congressmen have emerged.

When will the witch hunt end? Let people earn a living doing what they love and also let the people who attend these shows be able to support these people while having fun watching the performances.

The GOP party is not the moral compass for ND. Stop saying your protecting children when your own party refuses to support public school lunch bills and child care bill for North Dakota. Just be honest and admit this is an attach on the LGBTQAI community.

The GOP is poised to take away medical care, medication, books, out children in schools, meal shame or limit school lunches, omit a transgender youth from having pronouns and chosen name used and also telling parents and doctors what they can and can't do to save trans youths but also mandating birth certificate measures just to make a few people comfortable. Yes, a few because there isn't an outcry of people in ND who feel their rights are being violated by transgender people or the LGBTQAI community. It is insecurity and ignorance of a few who need to either get in themselves secure with the fact that the world isn't a carbon copy of themselves or they need to educate themselves.

Stop looking for trouble where there isn't any. The legislative body has more important issues to work on vs what I do with my kids on the weekends.

Respectfully,  
Kristie Miller