



March 20, 2025

The Honorable Josh Shapiro

Governor of Pennsylvania
Office of the Governor
508 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Shapiro,

We, the undersigned representatives of Pennsylvania's three LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce, the Three Rivers Business Alliance, the Keystone Business Alliance, and the Independence Business Alliance, write to express our profound concern and unequivocal opposition to the proposed legislation introduced by State Representative Robert Leadbeter, which seeks to criminalize drag performances in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

This bill, as outlined in Representative Leadbeter's memorandum, proposes to amend existing laws to classify drag shows as adult-oriented businesses and impose severe penalties on individuals who allow minors to attend such performances. The vague and broad language of this proposal raises alarming implications:

- **Threat to LGBTQ+ Visibility:** By broadly defining drag performances, this legislation could criminalize events such as Pride celebrations, drag story hours, and other cultural expressions vital to the LGBTQ+ community. Such actions would suppress the visibility and expression of LGBTQ+ individuals statewide.
- **Economic and Cultural Impact:** This bill will have a clear, negative impact on Pennsylvania's economy. Pennsylvania has a rich history of embracing diversity, which significantly contributes to our cultural vibrancy and economic prosperity. This bill threatens to tarnish our state's reputation as an inclusive and welcoming place for all, potentially deterring tourism, business investments, and the retention of talent.
- **Legal and Constitutional Concerns:** The proposed legislation raises serious First Amendment issues by attempting to regulate artistic expression based on content and viewpoint. Similar laws in other states have faced legal challenges, resulting in costly and time-consuming injunctions and rulings deeming them unconstitutional.

In light of these concerns, we respectfully urge you to:

1. **Advocate Against the Bill's Advancement:** Utilize your leadership to ensure that this discriminatory proposal does not progress out of committee, thereby preventing it from reaching the legislative floor for a vote.
2. **Commit to a Veto:** Publicly affirm your intention to veto this bill should it pass the legislature, reinforcing Pennsylvania's commitment to upholding civil rights and protecting all its citizens from discriminatory practices.



It is essential to our local and state economy that all employees, customers, and visitors – and their families – feel safe and welcome in all towns in Pennsylvania. Our organizations are dedicated to fostering inclusive business environments that celebrate diversity and promote equality. We stand ready to collaborate with your administration to advance policies that protect and uplift the LGBTQ+ community and all marginalized groups within our Commonwealth.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter and for your steadfast commitment to justice and equality in Pennsylvania.

Sincerely,



Zachary Wilcha
Chief Executive Officer
Independence Business Alliance



Harry Young
Executive Director
Keystone Business Alliance



Jordan Botta
Executive Director
Three Rivers Business Alliance