



COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION
LIBRARY COMMISSION
Recommendation #20230515-5: Regarding
Opposition to legislation pending in the 88th Texas Legislature

WHEREAS, drag performance is an art form where people dress up and perform, often in highly stylized ways, usually involving variations of gender presentation; and

WHEREAS, multiple bills have been introduced into the 88th regular session of the Texas legislature that relate to drag performance; and

WHEREAS, these bills could result in a loss of funding to public libraries that present drag performance, a reclassification of establishments as sexually oriented businesses if they present drag performance, and impose overly expansive definitions of drag that could hamper public presentations by transgender and gender non-conforming people; and

WHEREAS, drag performance is a legitimate cultural and artistic form, protected by both the US Constitution and Texas Constitution; and

WHEREAS, from Milton Berle to RuPaul Charles, drag performance has significant roots and a substantial impact in American pop culture history; and

WHEREAS, a central mission of the Austin Public Library is to share arts and culture from a variety of perspectives; and

WHEREAS, the decision to attend an event that includes drag performance is an individual choice.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE AUSTIN LIBRARY COMMISSION:

The commission finds these bills would harm the LGBTQIA community, in particular transgender and gender non-conforming people, and interfere with the public's constitutional right to access a variety of culture and entertainment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED;

The Commission urges the Austin City Council to direct the City Manager to monitor and oppose these and other similar bills that would impact the ability of the Austin Public Library to incorporate drag performance in its programming or impede the ability for transgender or gender non-conforming people to participate in library programming.

Date of Approval: May 15, 2023

Record of vote: Unanimous on a 7-0 vote

Attest: *Laura B/r*