



# Ebony Pyramid Entertainment

## PRESS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 1, 2016

### EPE CANCELS PAGEANT EVENT IN NORTH CAROLINA OVER ANTI-LGBT LAW

**Washington, DC** – After further evaluation and consultation, Ebony Pyramid Entertainment (EPE) has decided to cancel its Legendary International Pageant in Charlotte, North Carolina, previously scheduled for August 2016. This decision comes after the North Carolina General Assembly passed legislation, signed by Republican Governor Pat McCrory altering a 30 year state law that had allowed private sector employees to sue their employers under state law for discrimination. The law also has Anti-LGBT clauses that would allow someone to be fired from their job for being gay, turned away at a hotel for being gay and even forced to show genitals to a police officer if the officer thinks they may be transgender.

The Legendary International court, Tommie Ross, Miss Legendary International; Monte R. St. James, Mr. Legendary International; and CoCo Van Cartier, Miss Legendary International Plus, its contestants, supporters, and attendee are the very individuals affected by this law. So, to convene our group in one central location could cause the event to be targeted for discrimination or worse. Miss Legendary International, Tommie Ross said, "After the decades of progress I have made, coming to terms with who I am, and having the strength and courage to live my authentic life would seem to have been in vain. So for me, this issue is much more than a restroom choice. It is an issue of self acceptance and the ability to live my life as the woman I am." These sentiments and concerns are echoed by the other court members, potential contestants, and supporter of the Legendary International Pageant.

EPE informed the Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority, its host hotel, event venue, official charity, and vendors of its decision, earlier in the week. DaJuan Patrick Xavier, President/CEO of EPE said, "The City of Charlotte has treated us with the utmost respect and we thank them for that. But, it is all negated when the state override Charlotte's efforts to become all inclusive and seek dignity and respect for its citizens and visitors. It is because of the new North Carolina state law that I cannot and will not, in good conscious, host an LGBT event in a state that has shown us how they feel. I refuse to allow the Legendary International Pageant, contestants, and supporters to be the target of small minded and ignorant individuals. While I understand that no one or state is perfect, but as Maya Angelou said, 'When someone shows you who they are, believe them!'"

Ebony Pyramid Entertainment plans to reschedule the Legendary International Pageant for late-January or early-February 2017, in Florida. Details are being worked out with the staff and court. Issues such as this are good example of why the LGBTQ community hosts Prides and Pageants. To give a voice, educate, and stand up for the rights of ALL! Please continue to stand with us.

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