

US

# Florida Transformers convention bans 'cross-dressing cosplay' under state's anti-drag law

Jun 09 • Written by Michael Baggs

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A Transformers convention, set to be held in Orlando, Florida, has banned 'cross-dressing cosplay' under state's anti-drag law.(Getty Images)

## A Transformers convention set to be held in Orlando, Florida is offering refunds to ticket holders after it was forced to change its cosplay rules because of Ron DeSantis' strict anti-drag laws.

In May 2023, the Florida governor [signed five anti-LGBTQ+ bills](#) into law, one of which [banned drag shows](#) where children may be present.

The vaguely-worded Florida Senate Bill 1438 had already sparked concerns that it could result in iconic shows such as the *Rocky Horror Picture Show*, or even pantomimes, being restricted in the state.

But no one predicted that it might stop people dressing up as fictional robots from outer space.

In a message to people planning to attend the convention, [TFCon told ticket-holders](#): "Due to Florida state law, cross-dressing will not be permitted as part of the cosplay contest or at the convention."

"TFcon has always been a convention where all Transformers fans can come together regardless of any differences," [it added in a tweet](#), stating that if LGBTQ+ fans felt "unsafe", they could request a refund.



**TFcon (TORONTO in July, ORLANDO in Oct, LA in Mar)**

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TFcon has always been a convention where all Transformers fans can come together regardless of any differences.

If there are members of the LGBTQ+ community that bought tickets and feel unsafe attending TFcon Orlando this fall please email tfconusa@gmail.com to request a refund.

3:01 PM · Jun 8, 2023

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Fans have reacted in dismay to the announcement, with one describing TFCon as “one of the most inclusive conventions – let alone Transformers conventions – in North America.”

However, some have said the convention organisers are doing “the bare minimum” and called for the event to be cancelled and held outside of Florida.

The Florida convention is set to take place on 21-23 October 2023.

Florida’s anti-drag bill was signed into law by Republican governor and 2024 presidential hopeful Ron DeSantis on 17 May, along with an expansion to the state’s Don’t Say Gay law, a ban on trans-healthcare and restrictions on trans people’s rights to use public toilets and access to sports programmes.

DeSantis said he plans to make Florida “a refuge of sanity”, but his attacks on the LGBTQ+ community has resulted in a “mass migration” of trans people from the state.

A leading human rights organisation has warned LGBTQ+ people against visiting Florida.

The Transformers franchise hasn’t escaped attacks either.

In May 2023, bigots raged aged a Transformers cartoon series which featured a non-binary robot, despite the character – and clip they were angered by – having been introduced a year earlier.

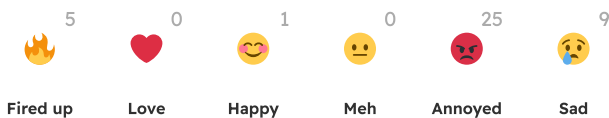
Anti-LGBTQ+ campaign group Libs Of TikTok has claimed the iconic franchise is “after your kids”.

PinkNews has contacted TFCon for comment.

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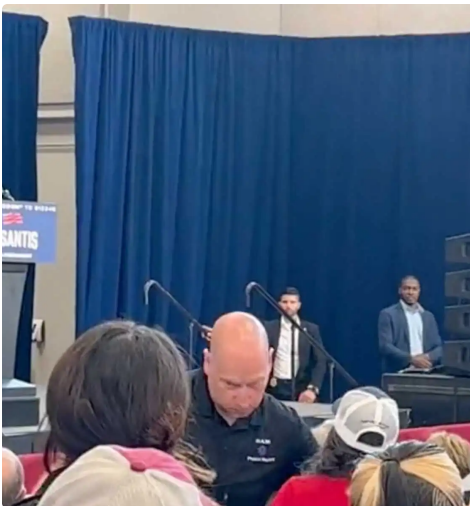
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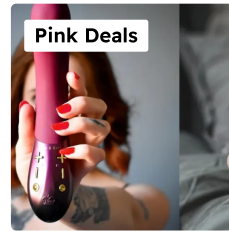
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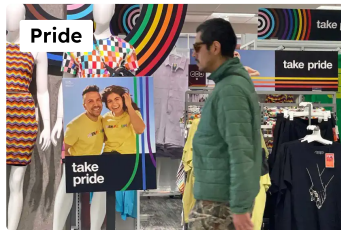


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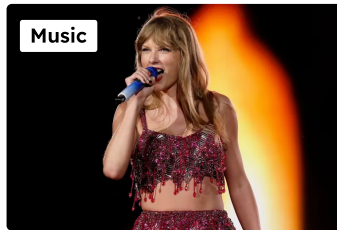
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