

DOUG AINGE

Candidate for House District 30, Democrat

Recognizing that job creation is a top priority in the current economic condition in Oregon and that investment in the creative arts & culture sector function as a jobs-driver, what policies or practices will you implement to continue to grow jobs in the sector and/or encourage more creative businesses to locate in Oregon?

As a teacher of more than thirty years, I know that early exposure to the arts often ignites a lifelong passion in young people. Part of a quality education is making sure that young people have access to a wide variety of performing arts and ability to pursue them. One of the wonderful things about performing arts is that, from an economic standpoint, the industry is inherently local. Since the money spent by audiences is immediately re-circulated back into the local economy, it is an excellent method of economic stimulus. In regards to legislative action, Oregon has a long history of supporting a burgeoning film industry. As a legislator, I will work to provide small businesses in the theatre and motion picture industry with grants and loans to help grow the industry, and provide new jobs.

The Oregon Cultural Trust is an innovative, statewide private-public partnership raising significant new contributed funds. Each year, the Trust is directed by law to keep 58% of its annual revenues in the Trust endowment, and distribute 42% in direct support of Oregon's arts, heritage and humanities. Donors to the Trust are eligible for an Oregon income tax credit for contributions, after first making a matching gift to one or more of nearly 1,300 cultural nonprofits. Do you support the current Cultural Trust tax credit?

Yes, I absolutely support the Cultural Trust tax credit.

During 2009, \$1.8 million dollars was "swept" by the Legislature from the Cultural Trust for general government purposes to rebalance the state budget. Would you support statutory language that clearly describes the purpose and better protects the donor intent of contributions made for the purpose of growing the Trust endowment?

Yes, I believe that when people contribute to a specific program, the money should go to that specific program. Raiding any such trust fund undermines the public confidence, and in the long term, will reduce private donations for such causes.

In what specific ways have you supported arts and culture – as a private citizen, as a public or private employee, and/or as an elected official?

As both a teacher and father, I have always made of point to attend and promote the arts. In addition to donating to the Art Club at Banks High School, I regularly attend all of my school's plays and performances, and I believe that my attendance encourages students by seeing an athletic coach supporting them. As a father, I know the value of funding young people's involvement in the arts. My daughter was able to attend the school of her choice in large part due to a choir scholarship, and singing is a passion she still enjoys today. Lastly, in my own classroom, I always try to find ways of encouraging artistic expression within my assignments, be it allowing students the option to crate murals, paintings, creative writing, or other artistic expression.