

**BRENT BARTON**

**Candidate for Senate District 26, 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?*

**Arts and culture serve as a unique economic bellwether in that the arts both drive and reflect the economy. One way Oregon can create and attract jobs is by protecting and expanding arts education in public schools. This investment improves overall student performance and, ultimately, workforce productivity. Business cannot flourish in Oregon without quality schools and a vibrant community, both of which require investment in arts education.**

*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. As a former trustee of Oregon Ballet Theatre, I have witnessed the tremendous benefits of this 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 consider this fund sweep a breach of public trust. Accordingly, I was one of two legislators of the majority party to vote against sweeping the Cultural Trust. I am planning to sponsor statutory fixes that make the Oregon Cultural "Trust" as close to a legal trust as possible, and I look forward to coordinating these efforts with the CAC.**

*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?*

**I love the arts above all else, especially opera. In addition to serving as a former trustee of Oregon Ballet Theatre, I subscribe to the Portland Opera and White Bird. I am also a member of the Portland Art Museum. I usually attend at least one performance each year by the Artists Reparatory Theatre, Third Rail, Oregon Symphony, and San Francisco Opera. I am a sure bet to attend almost any production of a Shakespeare play or live broadcast by the Metropolitan Opera. I also ran a foreign film series my last two years of law school.**