



## Arts South Dakota

### CANDIDATES SURVEY ON THE ARTS AND GOVERNMENT

As a service to our statewide membership, Arts South Dakota conducted a survey of South Dakota's candidates, asking for their perspectives on the arts and government.

As the state's only arts advocacy group, Arts South Dakota is the public partner to the state arts agency. We do not endorse candidates for public office and all responses are published verbatim. Candidates are listed alphabetically.

#### Candidates for Governor

**QUESTION 1:** What is your personal background and experience in the arts? (check all that apply)

**Kurt Evans**, Libertarian: CANDIDATE CHOSE NOT TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY

**Kristi Noem**, Republican: CANDIDATE PROVIDED A STATEMENT AND DID NOT COMPLETE THE SURVEY (*see additional comments*)

**Billie Sutton**, Democrat: Instrumental, Vocal, Film/Media, Literary Arts

**QUESTION 2:** What arts activities have you attended, participated in, or supported in the last year? (check all that apply)

**Kurt Evans**, Libertarian: CANDIDATE CHOSE NOT TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY

**Kristi Noem**, Republican: CANDIDATE PROVIDED A STATEMENT AND DID NOT COMPLETE THE SURVEY (*see additional comments*)

**Billie Sutton**, Democrat: Music, Theater, Theater, Film/Media

**QUESTION 3:** Are you aware of an agency of state government – the South Dakota Arts Council (SDAC) – whose purpose is to recognize the importance of creativity in the lives of all South Dakotans, the Council makes quality arts accessible throughout the state by providing encouragement, grants, services and information to artists, arts organizations, schools and the public?

**Kurt Evans**, Libertarian: CANDIDATE CHOSE NOT TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY

**Kristi Noem**, Republican: CANDIDATE PROVIDED A STATEMENT AND DID NOT COMPLETE THE SURVEY (*see additional comments*)

**Billie Sutton**, Democrat: Very Aware

**Questions 4:** DO YOU BELIEVE THE SOUTH DAKOTA ARTS COUNCIL, UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM, SHOULD RECEIVE STATE FUNDING FROM THE HALF-PENNY TOURISM TAX? Matching funds received from the National Endowment for the Arts benefited all South Dakotans and generated \$24.57 for every \$1 invested by the state of South Dakota.

**Kurt Evans**, Libertarian: CANDIDATE CHOSE NOT TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY

**Kristi Noem**, Republican: CANDIDATE PROVIDED A STATEMENT AND DID NOT COMPLETE THE SURVEY (*see additional comments*)

**Billie Sutton**, Democrat: Yes

**QUESTION 5:** We believe arts education stimulates creativity, communications and learning, and that arts education is an essential tool for reaching youth at risk. HOW IMPORTANT ARE THE ARTS TO THE EDUCATION OF ALL SOUTH DAKOTA CHILDREN?

**Kurt Evans**, Libertarian: CANDIDATE CHOSE NOT TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY

**Kristi Noem**, Republican: CANDIDATE PROVIDED A STATEMENT AND DID NOT COMPLETE THE SURVEY (*see additional comments*)

**Billie Sutton**, Democrat: I have seen the benefits of the arts in our schools, communities, and families. Music, the visual arts, writing and poetry, the performing arts and design/architecture offer so much to all of us — but especially to our youth. They give young people confidence,



creativity and a sense of place. Art education is also very important to developing well-rounded students who have had the chance to explore their multiple forms of intelligence. As governor I will be an advocate for the arts in our schools.

**QUESTION 6:** We believe the arts are an intrinsic part of the well-being of our communities, and that the arts play an important role in economic development and tourism. WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE POTENTIAL FOR CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH DAKOTA, AND HOW WOULD YOU ENCOURAGE THAT DEVELOPMENT?

**Kurt Evans**, Libertarian: CANDIDATE CHOSE NOT TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY

**Kristi Noem**, Republican: CANDIDATE PROVIDED A STATEMENT AND DID NOT COMPLETE THE SURVEY (*see additional comments*)

**Billie Sutton**, Democrat: One big example of art making a difference in South Dakota came last year when Dale Lamphere and his supporting cast unveiled the Dignity sculpture near Chamberlain. Everybody was so proud of the 50-foot tall sculpture. It draws people to Chamberlain from all over, and people from very different backgrounds find it inspiring and meaningful for lots of different reasons. Yet it also ties us all together in a way that only art can do. We have more opportunities to incorporate art into our cultural and economic development efforts in South Dakota, just like Dignity, and I will support those collaborations as governor.

**QUESTION 7:** We seek the support and endorsement of individuals, businesses and government. WHAT IS YOUR POSITION ON THE ROLE OF PUBLIC FUNDING FOR THE ARTS AT THE NATIONAL, STATE AND LOCAL LEVEL?

**Kurt Evans**, Libertarian: CANDIDATE CHOSE NOT TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY

**Kristi Noem**, Republican: CANDIDATE PROVIDED A STATEMENT AND DID NOT COMPLETE THE SURVEY (*see additional comments*)

**Billie Sutton**, Democrat: I support the collaborative efforts made by the legislature, the hospitality and tourism industry, and previous governors to create a dedicated funding source for promotion of tourism and the arts. Any future changes in the current structure should be a result of working together with all parties, including the arts community.

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We welcome any additional comments or experiences you would like to make with regards to the arts in South Dakota. Please use the space below. With a reach of over 5,000 individuals, organizations and businesses, Arts South Dakota will share your responses with our statewide constituents in the Fall issue of Arts Alive, in our weekly e-newsletter, in our monthly column distributed to every weekly and daily newspaper in South Dakota, on our social media channels, and on our website, <https://artssouthdakota.org>.

**Kurt Evans**, Libertarian: CANDIDATE CHOSE NOT TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY

**Kristi Noem**, Republican: CANDIDATE PROVIDED A STATEMENT AND DID NOT COMPLETE THE SURVEY "Growing up, the arts - music, in particular - was a big part of our family's life. At one point, I think my dad even hoped we'd have a family band! Today, my sister-in-law carries the creative torch as an artist herself. That appreciation for the arts is alive in much of South Dakota and has produced incredible talent, including Oscar Howe, Terry Redlin, Dale Lamphere, Benjamin Victor and others. As a member of the U.S. House, I've looked to celebrate that creativity through the Congressional Art Competition. I was blown away by the young artists we have in our state, most of whom were supported by dedicated teachers. While athletes get to celebrate their accomplishments with regular game-time victories, there isn't always that community of celebration for our young artists. As such, it was special to recognize these students by hanging their artwork in the U.S. Capitol. As governor, I will continue to foster that kind of supportive environment for South Dakota's arts community, something only made possible because of organizations like this. Thank you for all you do to enrich South Dakota."

**Billie Sutton**, Democrat: The arts are tremendously important to all South Dakotans. They play a vital role in education, economic development, and tourism. Even more importantly, they help us all to have a greater appreciation for our unique culture and identity as South Dakotans. I believe South Dakota should support and encourage the arts in communities all across the state, and I look forward to advocating for the arts as governor.

**ArtsSouthDakota.org**

*Arts South Dakota, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, enriches the lives of South Dakotans and their visitors, by advancing the arts through service, education and advocacy.*

*Candidate responses are listed in alphabetical order.*

