

South Dakota Senate Candidates Survey on the Arts & Government 2018



NAME	OFFICE SEEKING	PARTY	DISTRICT	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q4 - additional comments	Q5	Q6	Q7	Additional comments
Susan Wismer	State Senator	Democrat	1	Instrumental, Vocal	Music, Theater, Theater, Literary Arts	Very Aware	Yes	Actually, the State's portion ought to be funded by general tax dollars, not the "user fee" identification that comes with its current funding source. Funding a basic level of arts access is a responsibility of state government.	Very important, especially in a sparsely populated area where arts exposure opportunities can otherwise be so limited.	Ah...you guys are the experts there. I just like what I see you doing.	Public funding for the arts at the national and state level is important to maintain.	
Cory Allen Heidelberg	State Senator	Democratic	3	Vocal, Visual, Theater, Literary Arts	Music, Theater, Visual Arts, Dance, Theater, Film/Media, Literary Arts	Very Aware	Yes		Arts are an indispensable component of an adequate public education.	South Dakota inspires great art (e.g., Linda Hasselstrom's poetry, the rodeo movie "The Rider"). We need to welcome and support creative minds to our state.	The arts are vital to the general welfare. The arts deserve public funding.	
AL Novstrup	State Senator	Republican	3	None	Theater, Visual Arts, Dance, Theater	Very Aware	Yes		Success for each student depends upon that student having a passion. Many times art is that passion. For example, my daughter, Linda was passionate about Johnny Cavell dance. Dance helped form Linda's character. Today Linda is a dance teacher.	Weekend festivals such as Arts in the Park and Storybook Land Festival contribute to the quality of life.	I believe in a balanced approach to funding. My number one priority is taking care of those who are unable to take care of themselves, such as Aspire clients and nursing home residents. Education funding (K-16) and economic development are important to me. Arts funding is a part of education and economic development.	
Lee Schoenbeck	State Senator	Republican	5	None	Music, Theater, Theater, Literary Arts	Moderately Aware	Yes		Very	Important. Write checks to Black hills playhouse, lead opera house , harmony and other activities	Generally supportive, but would need to know specifics. I think we individuals should step up	Keep up good work
Teresa Ann Robbins	State Senator	Democrat	6	Instrumental, Vocal, Dance	Music, Theater, Visual Arts, Dance, Theater, Photography, Film/Media	Very Aware	Yes	Cultural heritage plays a significant role in SD tourism as an integral component of our Native American population and our heritage as a prairie state and westward expansion and development of our agricultural community.	Creative Art education enhances the educational experience of all students as it engages students in a creative manner to express and encourage the development of their identify and their personal capacity to express their identify. South Dakota has a rich diverse population with a significant Native American population with rich cultural expression of distinct heritage with music,dance and art expression. Increasing immigrant culture offers additional opportunities for South Dakota to encourage sharing of cultural expression and distinctions present with this diversity that affords enhanced educational opportunities.	Support for cultural heritage centers with schedules of performance and exhibitions to promote multi-cultural sharing might be an opportunity for diverse populations to share their heritage as they transition into the American culture without fear of loss of their individual cultural heritage.	Governmental support may provide the foundation for artistic expression and has responsibility to support the cultural heritage that was and remains the foundation of our South Dakotan population. Historical relevance and preservation of our heritage seems to afford the strongest rationale for financial support of the mission of the South Dakota Arts Council.	I am a strong supporter of the Arts as a significant foundation of self expression and the sharing and preservation of vital cultural heritage. The Arts provide enjoyment and enhanced sharing of personal expression and diversity in the perception of reality. The Arts offer numerous opportunities to reach across cultural barriers and to touch the hearts and souls of those who are witness to the freedom of their expression.
Laura Swier Kotelman	State Senator	Democrat	9	Instrumental, Vocal, Visual, Theater, Photography, Literary Arts, Culinary Arts	Music, Theater, Visual Arts, Theater, Literary Arts, Culinary Arts	Very Aware	Yes	I believe that having a thriving arts community is integral to a strong tourism economy.	I believe that the arts are essential for healthy, vibrant communities as they open other doors of communication and collaboration.	Art can turn thinking into doing, it utilizes our senses to challenge the way we see and think. I see art as an integral part of vibrant communities. Where there are projects underway, the questions of; how can this project reflect the community and what can be integrated into the project to express the uniqueness of this place, need to be asked.	I support public funding for arts at the state and local level, especially in state funded construction/ renovation projects.	

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Rachel Willson	State Senator	Democrat	10	Instrumental	Music	Moderately Aware	Yes		I was in band from 6th grade through college. I saw firsthand the impact it made on people's lives. Access to opportunities like band and other arts is crucial for the growth of children, especially those who are less privileged.	This is something where I would look to experts in the field to see what is most needed. I'd especially like to look to smaller communities and tribal communities throughout the state. Encouraging that development would require someone in our state government who is committed to pushing for funding and attention to the arts, and I would like to be that person.	Often times, when funded privately, arts education can be left out because it is not viewed as crucial or something that has a direct effect on our economic development. Because of this, public funding is extremely important to ensure access to the arts.	
Kevin Elsing	State Senator	Democratic	11	Instrumental, Vocal	Music, Theater, Visual Arts, Theater, Photography, Film/Media, Other	Moderately Aware	Yes		The arts are absolutely necessary to a quality education. We need to adequately fund our schools, including arts education. It should not be limited only to children whose families can "afford" it. The arts provide opportunities for self-expression and self-discipline that are especially important for at-risk children. The state needs to commit to developing pre-K and after-school opportunities for all children, a great place to involve arts-oriented programs. Since arts and design are so interwoven with STEM subjects, we should extend our scope to STEAM initiatives.	The arts contribute directly to local and state economies through employment, tourism, and by bringing communities together. A strong arts and culture scene attracts newcomers, fuels innovation, and helps keep people in their new home by strengthening the sense of community and quality of life. Shifting to an arts economy has rescued depressed communities when other industrial trends have passed. South Dakota communities can position themselves as rural artistic havens with the help of statewide initiatives.	At every level, public funding for the arts contributes to social and economic health.	As a former professional musician and the father of two talented high-schoolers, I've experienced firsthand the positive impact of participating in the performing and visual arts. Thanks for your dedication to growing the arts in South Dakota!
Craig Kennedy	State Senator	Democrat	18	Instrumental, Other	Music, Visual Arts, Photography, Film/Media	Very Aware	Yes		Arts education is essential, for all the reasons listed.	We need to recognize and honor all the cultures that make up South Dakota. We need to encourage and support cultural expression throughout the state, and use tourism dollars to highlight the various cultural opportunities.	Public funding is essential. Private funding is obviously important, but may not reach all areas and programs that should be encouraged, particularly in our schools.	
Stace Nelson	State Senator	Republican	19	Film/Media, Literary Arts	Culinary Arts	Moderately Aware	No	The USA is \$21 Trillion in debt, and South Dakotans are taxed enough already.	I believe it ranks after reading, writing, and math.	the free-market is the way to go. example: Freeman Chislic festival	I do not support it. Government should only do that for the people that they cannot do for themselves. Private funding.	
Ardon Wek	State Senator	Democrat	19	Vocal, Dance	Music, Theater, Visual Arts, Dance, Theater	Slightly Aware	Yes		The arts are an important and underappreciated aspect of educating South Dakota's children. Exposure to art stimulates minds. The arts play a role in students self awareness that no other subject can match. The arts are personal. They encourage self expression, build self confidence, and teach valuable social skills.	There is a great deal of potential for cultural development in South Dakota. Communities across the state are looking for ways to attract cultural events and to create venues that will help them enjoy culture. Development can be encouraged by exposing students to the arts at a young age. This will instill a love for the arts in many of them. Assisting communities with traveling art exhibits of all forms will also help to develop cultural appreciation.	The public should help fund the arts. A society is remembered by it's art. It is society's duty to ensure art is cultivated and enjoyed.	

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Dan Miller	State Senator	Democrat	20	Vocal, Dance, Theater, Film/Media, Literary Arts	Music, Theater, Visual Arts, Dance, Theater, Film/Media, Literary Arts	Very Aware	Yes	I am the Associate Professor of Theatre and the Director of Theatre at Dakota Wesleyan University, where I have proudly been teaching and directing plays and musicals since 2006. I have an extensive background in the arts. CV available if desired.	Extremely important!	The arts are a universally cultural phenomenon that exists in every society around the world. The arts teaches us how to express ourselves more effectively. It develops our ability to communicate our thoughts, ideas, creativity, imagination and feelings to others, improving our relationships and improving the environment around us. It helps us understand how our minds and the minds of others work. It helps us to see how the world in which we live affect who we are and who we will become. The arts are a great way to learn.	I think it is imperative and needs to be increased at a much, much higher level!	I am a native South Dakotan, born in Aberdeen, SD. My father worked many jobs to support his family and as a result I too have acquired that strong work ethic. I have been married to an amazing woman, Melissa, for 26 years. She is a high school English and Theatre teacher and a voracious reader and lover of books. We have two incredible children. Our daughter is working on her terminal MFA degree at the New York Film Academy in Los Angeles and our son is an IT specialist and an officer with the SD Army National Guard. He is also married to a teacher, Jenna, and they have three beautiful children, our precious grandchildren. I received my undergraduate BFA degree and my terminal MFA degree from the University of South Dakota in Vermillion. I am the Associate Professor of Theatre and the Director of Theatre at Dakota Wesleyan University, where I have proudly been teaching and directing plays and musicals since 2006, with a background in the arts that goes back even further than 2006. I am an incredibly big supporter and advocate for the arts!!!
Amanda Bachmann	State Senator	Democrat	24	Instrumental, Dance	Music, Theater, Visual Arts, Theater, Photography	Very Aware	Yes		Arts education is a vital part of childhood and must remain in our school systems and communities. Without the arts, children lose access to an outlet for creativity, expression, and exploration.	There is a massive amount of untapped potential in South Dakota, namely because we are hesitant to take risks on things that we think don't return a concrete product. A vibrant local and state arts community is something that would help us attract not only tourists but also new residents of the state.Â	The arts provide a public benefit and should be part of our budget at all levels of government.	
Peter Klebanoff	State Senator	Independent	25		Music, Theater, Film/Media, Poetry, fabric arts	Very aware	Yes, or some other state and federal funding source(s) which is secure and ensures stable on-going funding.		There is substantial reliable research that demonstrates the value of the arts in education and learning. This is one reason I assisted my wife in founding a center for creative pursuits at The Retreat at Pointer's Ridge.	Again, there is scientific and economic research supporting your beliefs that the arts are good for community and economic development. I have devoted substantial time and resources helping to promote the arts and community interaction with the arts with me involvement with SEAC, TRPR.	I believe that public funding for the arts is a valuable and necessary element of society. Our art is the record of our culture – much of what we know of cavemen and every period since we have learned from their art. Plus, as noted above, there is significant evidence that arts education and participation helps learning and development of creative skills and we damn sure need more of that.	
Kristine Ina Winter	State Senator	Democratic Party	30	Instrumental, Visual, Theater, Photography	Music, Visual Arts, Photography, Film/Media, Literary Arts, Culinary Arts	Moderately Aware	Yes		Essential.	Supporting local venues for local artists.	Support of the arts is a good expenditure of public funds.	Thank you for your work in supporting and advocating for art in South Dakota.

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Sherry Bea Smith	State Senator	Democrat	31	Theater, Literary Arts	Music, Theater, Visual Arts, Dance, Film/Media, Literary Arts	Very aware	Maybe	I would need to understand where those tax dollars are currently being allocated before committing to supporting the redistribution to include the SDAC.	Very important	I see that communities are weaving the legacy of the natives and settlers of SD into artistic projects, a perfect setting for blending history and contemporary life as educational for all generations. The partnering of organizations, local government and leaders, and educators could do much to advance cultural development.	Dare I say "Bread and Roses, Bread and Roses"? As a nurse, I understand the need for the balance of health for body, mind, and spirit. They are inextricable.	
Ryan Ryder	State Senator	Democrat	33	Theater, Other	Music, Film/Media	Slightly Aware	Yes		Very Important.	Strong potential. Should be tied to the education funding discussions.	Fully support.	Thank you for all of the work that you do!
Jeff Partridge	State Senator	Republican	34	Other	Other	Very Aware	Yes		Thank you for the letter; I am not a Survey responder; However, my voting record and my time on the Allied Arts Council here in Rapid City should suffice to say I am supportive.	Thank you for the letter; I am not a Survey responder; However, my voting record and my time on the Allied Arts Council here in Rapid City should suffice to say I am supportive.	Thank you for the letter; I am not a Survey responder; However, my voting record and my time on the Allied Arts Council here in Rapid City should suffice to say I am supportive.	Note: Candidate sent a personal email and did not respond to the survey questions. His remarks in support of the arts are included. Thank you for the letter; I am not a Survey responder; However, my voting record and my time on the Allied Arts Council here in Rapid City should suffice to say I am supportive.
Zach Van Wyk	State Senator	Dem	34	Instrumental, Visual, Culinary Arts	Music, Theater, Visual Arts, Theater, Culinary Arts	Moderately Aware	Maybe		Extremely.	I would like to see more public work spaces, like Art Ally in Rapid City, available to other communities.	It is a travesty that art programs continue to get cut from public schools. We must help preserve these electives.	
Pat Cromwell	State Senator	Democrat	35	Instrumental, Photography, Culinary Arts	Theater, Visual Arts, Dance, Theater, Photography, Film/Media	Very Aware	Yes		The arts are extremely important for children and in their education. As a social worker in child protective services, I found that something as simple as crayons and paper not only help soothe the young children in distress, it helped them communicate with me what their fears were or events took place. It made me a better social worker and advocate for the kids. The act of being able to express through any medium stirs the creative spirit and sparks new insights, exercises the mind and open the doors to a bigger world. We need more of that and especially in these days.	The potential is there. All people would benefit but the smallest communities would likely experience the biggest impact. There is a general sense of being invisible to the bigger world and worse yet, a sense of being viewed as simple minded. Simple things like a day long festival with a traveling theater group providing day-end entertainment could boost a community with a spark and feed the local creative spirit.	It is vitally important at national, state and local levels. It is celebration, expression, therapy and feeds the core of what we are and what we aspire to be. It exercises the mind and makes us better people.	