



To: Arts Action Fund Members
From: Americans for the Arts Action Fund
Date: 20 February 2016
Re: Jeb Bush and the Arts*

*Note: Jeb Bush suspended his Presidential campaign on 2/20/2016.



Name: Jeb Bush
Party: Republican
Born: 11 February 1953, Midland, Texas
Previous Public Offices Held: Governor of Florida, 1999-2007; Florida Secretary of Commerce, 1987-1988
Other Jobs Held: Banker; Consultant; Small Business Owner
Educational Background: B.A. in Latin American Studies, University of Texas Austin

2016 Presidential Campaign Information:

Declaration Location: Miami Dade College, Miami, Florida;
June 15, 2015
Campaign Website: <https://jeb2016.com/>
Campaign Email: Info@Jeb2016.com
Headquarters Address: Jeb 2016, Inc.
P.O. Box 440641
Miami, FL 33144
Headquarters Phone: Unlisted
Campaign Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/jebbush>
Campaign Twitter: [@JebBush](https://twitter.com/JebBush) 485,000 Followers

Jeb!
2016

Positions on the Arts

Personal Arts Background

- While Jeb Bush himself has little personal arts background, his wife Columba is a big personal supporter of the arts and grew up wanting to be an artist. In fact, she is friends with pop artist Romero Britto and has painted in his studio. (Source: [The Atlantic](#))
- After Bush became Governor in 1999, the family relocated to Tallahassee, and First Lady Columba organized exhibits of the works of Salvador Dalí, Diego Rivera, and Frida Kahlo, and of her favorite local artists in the governor's mansion. (Source: [The Atlantic](#))
- Columba has stated that Jeb is "*an artist at what he does.*" In response, family friend Bart Hudson said "*That's the highest compliment [Columba Bush] can give someone,*" he said. "*It means that she appreciates the depths of what he does.*" (Source: [The Atlantic](#))
- As first lady, Mrs. Bush commonly visited local schools in partnership with the Florida Alliance for Arts Education. These visits were designed to elicit press coverage that would showcase what the arts could do for local communities. Governor and Mrs. Bush also hosted numerous fundraisers at the governor's mansion for the alliance, and Bush would sometimes appear in person at these fundraisers. (Source: [Orlando Sentinel](#))

Policy Views on the Arts and Education

- Bush supports Common Core education standards, but has also stated "*For those states choosing a path other than Common Core, I say this: Aim even higher, be bolder, raise standards and ask more of our students and the system.*" (Source: [Huffington Post](#))
- Bush believes that assessments are critical tools, but that "*we should have fewer and better tests*" to encourage and evaluate students' education. (Source: [The Associated Press](#))
- In 2010, under Bush's administration, Florida replaced the Common Core Standards with the Florida Sunshine State Standards, which include dance, music, theatre, and visual arts. (Source: [InTech2000](#))

Examples of Actions Taken on the Arts

- After initially cutting overall arts funding in Florida from \$28.1 million to \$6 million in 2003 due to declining economic conditions, Bush eventually raised the overall arts budget to \$32.6 million by the end of his second term as Governor. (Sources: [2004 SunSentinel](#), [2005 SunSentinel](#))
- The Bush administration raised the Arts for Complete Education line item funding for the Department of Education to approximately \$310,000 per year. This funding has fallen to \$110,000 per year since Bush left office. (Sources: [SB 2000](#), [2015 Florida School Board Funding Report](#))
- Bush launched a 501(c)(3) in 2007 called the Foundation for Excellence which annually presents the Arts for Life! Award. The Arts for Life! program was founded by Mrs. Bush in 1999. Arts for Life! has given over a quarter of a million dollars in scholarships to graduating

high school seniors who demonstrate exemplary skill in their chosen art form. (Source: [Arts for Life!](#))

Arts and the Economy in Florida

- The Florida Cultural Alliance released an Economic Impact of Florida's Arts and Culture In 2004. It was based on figures from fiscal year 2001, Bush's second year in office. The report concluded that the *"annual statewide impact has grown from \$1.7 billion in 1997 to over \$2.9 billion and now supports over 28,000 full-time equivalent jobs."* The report goes on to mention *"An estimated 7 million out-of-state tourists visited Florida's cultural facilities or attended cultural events as a primary activity. These "cultural" tourists spent \$4.5 billion, adding \$9.3 billion to the state's gross regional product and creating 103,713 full-time equivalent jobs with a payroll of \$2.6 billion."* (Sources: [DailyKos](#))
- Currently, *"Arts and related areas are a \$3.1 billion industry in Florida, support more than 88,000 jobs and help attract 57.8 million people, including tourists and residents, each year, according to the Florida Cultural Alliance."* (Source: [Ticket Sarasota](#))

Americans for the Arts Facts & Figures for Florida:

- Creative Industries: There are 185,138 people employed by 54,994 Arts-Related businesses. This represents 3.6% of all businesses and 1.9% of all employees in Florida ([Americans for the Arts](#))
- Economic Impact: In the city of Miami alone nonprofit arts organizations and their audiences spent \$576 million in Fiscal Year 2010, and contributed over \$57 million of revenue to state and local governments ([Americans for the Arts](#))
- In Fiscal Year 2016 the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs received \$39,458,772 in legislative appropriations (Source: [Americans for the Arts](#))

Sample Advocacy Questions on the Arts

- As Governor, you and the First Lady supported and brought attention to the arts by displaying art and hosting fundraisers for arts education. As President, what would you do to continue support for the arts?
- The Arts for Life! organization that you and the First Lady founded and continue to support has given hundreds of thousands of dollars in scholarships to high school seniors. What kind of impact do you think arts education has on America's children?
- At the beginning of your first term as Governor, you severely cut public funding for the arts. Florida was eventually able to increase spending as the economy improved. What changes did you see in the creative economy as a result of this restoration of spending?

Actions on the Arts during the 2016 Presidential Campaign

- On October 15, 2015, Jeb Bush praised arts education at a small gathering of political activists in Bedford, New Hampshire. After being asked about his education policy, Bush devoted a large part of his answer to expressing his opinion about the benefits of arts education, saying “*art...makes students better*” (Source: [Americans for the Arts Action Fund](#))