



To: Arts Action Fund Members

From: Americans for the Arts Action Fund

Date: August 2, 2018

Re: Beto O'Rourke and the Arts, 2018 Candidate for Texas U.S. Senate



Name: Beto O'Rourke

Party: Democrat

Occupation: Member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Texas's 16th district (2013-present).

Incumbent: No. Challenger to incumbent Senator Ted Cruz (R).

Born: September 26, 1972 (age 45 years), El Paso, TX

Previous Public Offices Held: Member of the El Paso City Council from the 8th district (2005-2011). Representative, United States House of Representatives, (2013-Present). Member, El Paso City Council, (2005-2011).

Other Positions: Owner, Stanton Street Technology, (1999-2012).

Educational Background: Received his Bachelor of Arts in English Literature from Columbia University.

Contact Information:

- Campaign Website: <https://betofortexas.com/>
- Campaign Email: info@betofortexas.com
- Campaign Mailing Address: 303 N Oregon St Suite 210. El Paso, TX 79901
- Campaign Phone Number: 915-541-1400

Social Media Platforms:

- Facebook: @BetoORourkeTX16 104.9K followers
- Twitter: @BetoORourke 121k followers
- Instagram: N/A

2018 General Campaign Results:

- Likely R (Source: [Cooks Political Report](#))
- Beto O'Rourke won the Democratic primary election by 61.8% of the vote with 641,337 total votes. (Source: [Texas Tribune](#))

Personal Arts Background:

- Beto O'Rourke held a campaign event on June 29, 2018 at the Burleson Yard Beer Garden, offering free beer and a live musical performance by San Antonio artist Nina Diaz (Source: [San Antonio Current](#)).
- O'Rourke has campaigned in community centers across Texas and the Emporium for the Arts in Woodville on Feb. 9, 2018 (Source: [Dallas News](#)).

Notable Arts Quotes: N/A

Arts Action Fund Congressional Report Cards: N/A

Examples of Actions on the Arts

- **Funding for National Endowment for the Arts:**
 - Voted nay on a motion (H J Res 70) to suspend rules and pass a joint resolution that continues fiscal year 2013 appropriations for the National Park Services, Smithsonian Institute, National Gallery of Art, and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum for fiscal year 2014. Joint Resolution Failed in the House with a vote of 252 to 176 on October 1, 2013 (Source: [Congress.Gov](#)).
 - Voted no on House Amendment 904 sponsored by Rep. Glenn Grothman (R-WI) that would cut funding to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) by \$23 million each. The amendment failed by a recorded vote of 114 to 297 on July 18, 2018. (Source: [Congress.Gov](#))
- **Letters:**
 - Cosigned a letter to the Hon. Ken Calvert, Chairman, Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies and the Hon. Betty McCollum, Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies - Antiquities Act Protection for FY 2017 (Source: [Vote Smart](#)).
 - Cosigned letter to Chairman Simpson and Ranking Member Moran on April 19, 2013 - National Endowment for the Humanities Funding. (Source: [Vote Smart](#))

Membership:

- Beto is a member in the House Congressional Arts Caucus, 115th Congress. 159 members as of May 11, 2018. The list is maintained by Rep. Leonard Lance (R-NJ) and Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME) (Source: [Americans for the Arts](#)).

Information on the Arts and the Economy in Texas:

- In Texas, arts and culture was a \$42.7 billion industry—equivalent to 2.7 percent of the state economy—in 2015. There were a total of 358,431 arts and culture industry jobs.¹
- A 2017 analysis of Dun & Bradstreet data found 53,136 businesses employed 219,445 people in Texas involved in the creation or distribution of the arts—3.78 percent of all businesses and 1.59 percent of all employees.²

Sample Advocacy Questions on the Arts:

- The budget of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) was cut in half during the 1990s. With its current funding of \$153 million, the NEA spends just 47 cents per American—half the cost of a pack of gum. Would you support a plan to increase federal arts funding to the NEA to \$1 per American, so that arts organizations in your state or district can present even more accessible arts programs for all its residents?
- With the implementation of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), states now have more responsibility for providing a well-rounded education – including the arts. Would you support full funding (\$1.6 billion) of the Well-Rounded Education provisions of ESSA, including data collection of arts education programs by the states and advocating for the integration of the arts into STEM education?
- Nonprofit arts organizations are charities, and on average, 25 percent of their annual budgets rely on donations made by individual taxpayers to serve the public good. Unfortunately, the pool of itemizers has been significantly diminished as result of the recent changes in the federal tax reform law. Would you support a Universal Charitable Deduction, so all taxpayers have the incentive to donate?

About ArtsVote2018:

- The mission of ArtsVote2018 is to advance the role of arts in the 2018 midterm elections by providing arts advocates, arts leaders, elected officials, and media with needed information to effectively advocate for the arts.

¹Arts and cultural production are defined as those industries that produce arts and culture related commodities and generally follow the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS). Employment estimates for ACP-related industries are for “direct” employment. [Arts and Culture Production Satellite Account](#) (ACPSA), 2015; U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and National Endowment for the Arts, 2018.

²Findings count active U.S. businesses registered with Duns & Bradstreet in the following categories: museums and collections; performing arts; visual art/photography; film, radio, and television; design and publishing; schools and services. [Creative Industries: Business & Employment in the Arts](#), Americans for the Arts, 2017.