

1. Please complete the following general information. Thank you.

Candidate's Name: - Thomas R. Cuba

Candidate's Web site: - TomCuba.net

2. Please check the office below that you're running for in 2010:

Florida House of Representatives

3. If you're running for either the Florida Senate or House of Representatives, please indicate the district below:

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4. Background: According to Dun & Bradstreet January 2010 data, there are over 47,564 arts-related businesses in Florida that employ over 184,436 people. In 2008, Florida's arts and culture not-for-profit industry generated over \$3.1 billion in local economic activity and delivered more than \$446.5 million in local and state government revenue. The arts and cultural industry is even recognized as critical to Florida's economic development in Enterprise Florida's Roadmap to Florida's Future 2010-2015 Strategic Plan for Economic Development. Statement: State appropriations and policies to advance Florida's creative industries (including arts, cultural, historical, humanities, science, and arts education resources) are extremely important to Florida's strong economic and innovative future.

I strongly agree.

5. Background: In the last three years, Florida's funding for its arts and cultural resources has been reduced from \$34.7 million in FY 2006-2007 to \$950,000 for FY 2010-2011. Florida now ranks 49th in per capita funding in state appropriations for its investment in arts and cultural resources, only 5 cents per Floridian. These drastic state cuts weaken the infrastructure that sustains this critically important industry, an industry vital to our state's overall economic and qualitative well being. Statement: Restoring state investments in Florida's vibrant arts and cultural resources produce significant returns. Increases not only to restore but also to advance funding for the arts and culture is essential to sustain Florida's creative industries' impact on economic development, jobs, tourism, downtown revitalization, health and wellness, student achievement, crime prevention, and quality of life.

No opinion at this time.

Comments - I find this question to be a little too vague. In question 1, the topic was art in education. Question 2 seems to deal with something else. I would need some clarification. As a person who grew up in the arts and in practicing several, this is not a new quandary. Is graffiti an art? It is in some places. Is that the extreme to which this question will go or is it more limited to fine arts? Are culinary arts included or just the clarinet?

6. Background: State and national research indicates that arts education is critical to help prepare students for a future workforce that will depend upon creativity and innovation. The Florida Department of Education recently completed research that demonstrates (1) For the general population, the more music and arts classes taken, the higher the student achievement in all measures; (2) For students on “free and reduced lunch,” an indicator of socioeconomic levels, the more music and arts classes taken, the higher the student achievement in all measures; (3) For students divided by ethnicity, the more music and arts classes taken, the higher the student achievement in all measures; (4) The more arts classes taken, the less likely a student is to dropout of school. Statement: Local, state, and federal policy makers must work collectively and collaboratively to provide adequate funding and policy support to ensure that all our students can study one or more of the fine arts (music, dance, theater, and art) taught by certified fine arts teachers as a requirement of their graduation.

No opinion at this time.

As a scientist familiar with statistics, I would want to know more about the studies before basing an answer on the data provided. Correlation does not intimate cause and effect. I do know that art training exercises portions of the mind left unstimulated in some other topics and it is an important tool in bringing our children into adulthood.

7. Please share with us below your thoughts about and experiences with arts and cultural resources -- thank you so much:

I am familiar with the arts. My mother was an off-broadway director (or so she claims - I was in college and in the Navy and only saw one of her productions). My sister now teaches operatic voice and runs a theatre. Two cousins are in the music industry. I myself participated in theatre and played in a few small time soft rock bands as a young adult. My current art form of choice is the written word. My experience has taught me the value of the arts and the stimulative effect they can have on an individual. My appreciation is high. What to do about the arts is less well defined, for I am not familiar with the current programs, funding, and opportunities.