

Candidate: Mark Begich
Party: Democrat
State: AK
District: 1



1. **Question:** What arts activities have you attended, participated in, or supported in the last year?

Music Theater Visual Arts Dance Literary Arts Other None

Additional Comments (optional):

Alaska has a vibrant and growing arts community. My family frequently participates in arts activities around Anchorage, ranging from performances of the Anchorage Concert Association, Anchorage high school plays, and First Friday gallery openings all around Anchorage. As mayor of Anchorage I have also participated in several arts activities and sponsored several, such as a community effort to paint utility boxes with kids, the Mayor's Arts Awards, the annual Salmon on Parade, and sponsoring the local film festival. I also participated in a joint project between the US Conference of Mayors and the American Institute of Architects that was cosponsored by NEA. The project help initiate the construction of a new convention center in Anchorage.

2. **Background:** The budget of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) was cut in half during the 1990s. With its current funding of \$144.7 million, the NEA spends just 48 cents per American—about the cost of a pack of gum.
Question: Do you support a significant funding increase for the National Endowment for the Arts, so that arts organizations in your district can present more high quality arts programs for all of its citizens?

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Undecided

Additional Comments (optional):

As I mentioned above, Alaska has a growing arts community but it faces daily financial pressures. Alaska still is developing its private philanthropy to support the arts and relies on federal public support. I strongly support increased funding for NEA and will support such efforts in the US Senate.

3. **Background:** Prior to the budget cuts of the 1990s, the NEA partnered with local arts agencies to re-grant funds in their communities, ensuring strong local input and control over artistic programming, especially in rural and underserved areas. After the cuts, however, the re-granting partnership ended because of insufficient funds.
Question: Do you support dedicated funding for an NEA re-granting program for local arts agencies?

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Undecided

Additional Comments (optional):

As mayor of Anchorage I have seen first-hand the need for local arts agencies. I increased local funding for the arts for the first time.

4. **Background:** The *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) defines the arts as a core academic subject, allowing school districts to use federal funding for arts education instruction. However, implementation of NCLB has dramatically reduced the time spent teaching the arts around the country and increased the need for federal-level research measuring the status and condition of the arts.
Question: Do you support strengthening arts education and research through the reauthorization of NCLB?

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Undecided

Additional Comments (optional):

I actually do not support reauthorization of NCLB. I think the legislation has been a disaster for our public schools and we need to start over. We need education policy that support local initiatives and returns control to local school districts. That said, I strongly support local expanded arts education instruction in our schools. In Anchorage we have very diverse public school choices for parents and children, including schools with strong arts education programs.

5. **Background:** The Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which has been level-funded at about \$400 million for several years, is a major provider of arts programming on public television and radio.
Question: Do you support increased funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting?

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Undecided

Additional Comments (optional):

Public television and radio are critical sources of news and other programming in Alaska. I strongly support increased funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and its arts programs. Each year, I join our public radio station during their pledge drives to help raise important local support.

6. **Background:** Currently, art collectors can claim a fair market value tax deduction for works that they donate to cultural organizations, but artists can claim only the cost of materials when they donate work that they have created.
Question: Do you support bipartisan legislation to correct this inequity and to ensure that museums, libraries, and other cultural organizations receive donations?