



Dear Candidate:

On behalf of the Georgia Arts Network and the Georgia Arts and Culture Venues Coalition, we are asking all candidates for statewide elected office the following questions. The responses will be shared in full with our respective newsletter subscribers and social media followers as well as shared on our website. We thank you in advance and look forward to sharing your responses with our constituencies.

Please return your completed survey to either president@gaartsnetwork.org or the PO Box below.

Sincerely,

Jessica Akers

Jessica Akers, President, Georgia Arts Network

Candidate Name: Sam Park

For which office are you running? State Rep. District 101

Would you please share your personal involvement in arts and culture (such as being an artist/performer, attending various events, supporting a spouse/child as they pursue the arts, donating to local organizations, or other items that may be personal to you)?

My mother was a professional organist and played in Korean churches. She taught me piano, and I can play some Chopin, though I need to practice more. As the State Rep. for House District 101, I am proud to represent the award-winning Aurora Theatre, which is located in the district. I also support the local arts in Georgia by attending the High Museum of Art in Atlanta and the Georgia Symphony Orchestra.

According to the [National Assembly of State Arts Agencies FY2019 State Arts Agency Legislative Appropriation Preview](#), Georgia ranks 49th in per capita funding for our State Arts Agency. Do you believe that this is an appropriate level of investment? And why or why not?

I support greater investment in the arts because the arts are critical to fostering creativity in the next generation to teach them how to think outside the box and solve increasingly complex problems.

What are your goals for arts education in our public school systems?

I'd like to see greater investment in arts education, and greater emphasis on fostering creativity in our public schools. With the film and television industry along with the music industry growing in Georgia, demand and opportunity in those fields should grow.

The mission of the Georgia Arts Network is to strengthen, connect,
and advocate for the arts in Georgia.

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Do you support the statewide legalization of gaming at casino resorts?

Currently, I do not. However, I am not wholly opposed either. At the very least, to have my support there would need to be dedicated funding going towards education, healthcare, and public safety. Ultimately, this would be an issue, I'd organize a few townhalls and vote as the majority of my constituents would want to ensure their voice is heard.

According to industry consultant [CSL's 2016 analysis of the Casino Impact on Performing Arts Venues](#), there is a negative impact on existing local arts and cultural entertainment venues when casino-owned and funded entertainment venues are constructed in the market. Were you aware of this detrimental consequence? Do you think these civic assets deserve formal protection?

a. Yes, I have been made aware of the negative impact that could occur. Right outside my district is the Infinite Energy Center, which expressed concerns. We also recently broke ground on the South Lawn redevelopment project, which has the ability to transform the downtown Lawrenceville corridor. I would want to make sure none of these venues or projects are negatively impacted.

b. Yes, I believe such assets deserve formal protection.

Other states that have legalized casino gaming have included language in the legislation to protect local arts and cultural facilities, including provisions to prohibit or limit the capacity of entertainment venues housed at casino resorts. Would you introduce protection for Georgia's arts and culture facilities? If so, what would you propose?

a. Yes, I would introduce protections for Georgia's arts and culture facilities. I'm proud to have Aurora Theatre in the district, and will do all I can to ensure such venues and our local arts are protected and supported in the state legislature.

b. As for a proposal, I'd like to see what limitations or prohibitions have been successful in other states that have legalized casino gambling. Determining where a casino may be located would be a critical component of any negotiation.

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