

# 2022 Create the Vote Candidate Survey

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts on Arts and Culture in advance of the 2022 election. We'll post your responses on our website so that voters can make informed decisions about who will best represent the Arts and Culture community at the legislature.

We ask that you complete the survey by Friday, September 23rd. **We know your time is limited so we understand that your responses will be brief.**

Don't miss out on this important opportunity to be an Arts champion!

Email \*

goupilforstaterep@gmail.com

Please share your name

Christine Goupil

What office and district are you a candidate for?

State Representative 35th District

Every town in Connecticut can boast cultural assets that contribute to a vibrant community and improve the quality of life for its residents.

*What are some exciting arts and cultural events and organizations that you have experienced in your community?*

As First Selectman of the Town of Clinton I started the Arts Council and a Poet Laureate. Since then the Arts Council has transitioned to a 501c3 and we host monthly First Thursday music events, a sculpture mile along route 1 with funding from the Holycroft Foundation, an annual sculpture festival, and story telling events, all while supporting our local art galleries and theater companies with collaboration with local businesses. I also worked to form a Human Rights Committee who has supported, with grant funding, diversity thorough arts at our high school.

*If elected, will you work to strengthen the arts and culture community in the town(s) you serve? If so, how? If not, why?*

Yes

Sandwiched between Boston and New York, Connecticut is often dismissed as a “pass through” state when it comes to tourism. Yet, our state has many world class arts institutions and a rich cultural landscape.

*Why do you think arts and culture are important in Connecticut? What is unique about our state’s arts and culture?*

Arts fall into the category of incubators or activities which can create a spark in communities in need of revitalization. Arts and culture are necessary for any community to express themselves, bridge gaps and create a deeper understanding of the culture we live in. What is unique is the size of CT. We are able to market art/cultural events regionally which benefits our local and ancillary businesses.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, many people discovered that arts and creativity play a critical role in helping us cope with emotional stress and sustain our mental health. Art helped us process loss, fight loneliness, stay connected and feel hopeful.

*Can you share a way that the arts have helped you, your family or your community get through the difficult times of Covid? How will that experience influence choices about the arts you would make as a legislator?*

During COVID we were able to transition many of our arts venues to outdoors. Exposure to the arts increased because of COVID and vision for new spaces and forms of art.

The arts and creativity have a proven track record of economic benefit to our state. The National Endowment for the Arts' Office of Research & Analysis and the Bureau of Economic Analysis report that, in 2020, arts and cultural production in Connecticut added \$8.9 billion to our economy and accounted for 3.2 percent of our gross state product, while the arts and cultural industries employed 49,159 workers with wages and benefits totaling more than \$5.1 billion. ([https://nasaa-arts.org/nasaa\\_research/creative-economy-state-profiles/](https://nasaa-arts.org/nasaa_research/creative-economy-state-profiles/))

*Despite these contributions, the arts have historically been first on the chopping block when it comes to budget priorities. What would you do to help keep arts and creativity funded in our state at a level that recognizes their economic importance?*

This last session the legislature made a significant investment in tourism and the arts to bring us in-line with neighboring states. As a member of the Arts and Tourism Legislative Caucus I supported this investment.

Connecticut has not had an Arts Education Specialist at the State Department of Education (SDE) since 2016, when the last specialist left. This position is critical to assuring that our State and National Arts Education Standards are consistently implemented in all of Connecticut's school districts, especially those in under-resourced communities where students' access to the Arts is often extremely limited compared to affluent communities.

*If elected, would you support refilling the Arts Education Specialist at SDE? If not, why?*

I support it in principle. I will have to research the history of this position. Please reach out to me if you would like to discuss.

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