

Answers by - Leland Cheung Democratic Candidate for Lieutenant Governor

Questions for Lieutenant Governor Candidates:

(Note: Questions 1-3 can be answered with a yes or no, but please feel free to elaborate beyond a one word answer)

1. As Lt. Governor, would you commit to an open door policy for the Massachusetts artists community and the creative sector?

Throughout my tenure on the Cambridge City Council, I have worked to establish an open door policy between city government and members of the local creative industries. Last spring, I sponsored a committee meeting in which Helena Fruscio of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts joined local artisans, designers, producers, writers, and coders to discuss how the City of Cambridge can best empower fledgling businesses, strengthen existing industries, and enact policies that empower the creative industries. As a direct result of this initiative, the City put into place a variety of initiatives to strengthen small businesses and engage neighborhoods into the arts. I have been an advocate and supporter of funding and support for the arts – both public (the Cambridge Arts Council) and private (for example, the Together Festival).

2. Lt. Governors of our state have a great tradition of promoting the governor's policies throughout the state. If elected, would you advise the governor to make the promotion and support of our state's third largest economic sector, the creative economy, a top priority for your office? (The creative economy includes artists of all disciplines, arts and culture, the film sector, etc.)

Absolutely. I'm running for Lieutenant Governor to help build a Massachusetts that sees itself as one Commonwealth. As Governor Patrick's appointee to the board of our state's economic development agency, I've learned that there are incredible projects, talent, and job creation potential all across the Commonwealth in different fields - ranging from the arts to clean tech to information technology and beyond. I know that supporting the creative economy is vital to our success as a Commonwealth.

Not only does Leland want to support funding and education in the arts but he wants to make sure the artists themselves are being supported as well. Leland wants to put an end to the days of the starving artist and will work hard to make sure a career as an artist is reasonably obtainable and can provide reliable benefits and compensation. Leland also wants to eliminate the undergoing problems of age discrimination among the artist

community and make sure that mid-late career artists stand a chance in pursuing their dreams. We need to encourage our experienced artists to help mentor those just getting their feet wet and protect them with strong intellectual property laws. We must help artists create a more sustainable link that will allow their creative works to support their housing, health, and retirement costs. Leland does not want the profession of artistry to maintain its standing as a strongly desired but rarely supported dream.

3. The Lt. Governor sits on the Governor's Council, a clear sign that our state values his or her involvement in matters of justice. As Lt. Governor, would you commit your office to promoting justice for all workers, including artists of all disciplines, those involved in the arts, culture, the creative economy, and those who create intellectual property?

Absolutely. I have been involved in the arts community my entire tenure on the Cambridge City Council. From supporting local organizations to participating in Burning Man with local artists. I personally understand the commitment it takes to artistic expression, the economic benefit artists bring to the community.

In addition, Leland would like strong arts programs available in public schools starting from kindergarten. We must promote the arts in our children from an early age. Even if the child does not want to pursue an artistically centered career the creative and innovative techniques they gain from these programs will help in their performance in other subjects and apply to the innovative/creative aspects of their future career. It is also important to offer such artistry support because there are a substantial amount of creative jobs that contribute over \$1 billion of investment into the Commonwealth each year. We cannot afford to discount the creative market in our Commonwealth, we must give back what they give to us.

Leland wants to encourage schools emphasizing the arts in their curriculums. Funding towards arts education is well overshadowed by that offered to science and math. Leland wants to shed the light back on the importance of the arts for our children. Providing students with a strong arts curriculum will not only improve their creative and innovative thinking but studies have shown strong arts and music curriculums helps students improve their performance in math and reading as well.

4. Is there anything else you would like to share in regards to your policy and/or platforms that directly impacts artists of all disciplines and by extension the arts, culture, and creative economy communities?

Leland wants to maintain and encourage support toward the arts in the community and strongly disagrees with the House's budget proposal to cut funding by over 50%. It is time to change the outlook on the arts and shift its standing as a career in our Commonwealth from a longing dream to an obtainable profession.

Leland stands behind the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC) that feeds the community's hunger for promoting arts participation in the community. They have gathered the research that suggests arts participation helps make for a strong and sustainable community. The arts do more than offer a fun afternoon for a family they also provides thousands of jobs and billions of dollars throughout the Commonwealth that we cannot overlook in this technology focused society. The MCC does a great job encouraging arts participation by offering grants, partnerships, and services to nonprofit cultural organizations, schools, and artists.

Leland also supports Governor Patrick's plan to triple funding the Facilities Cultural Fund to \$15 million. This funding goes towards creating and restoring historical sites, facilities for teens in the arts, and expanding performance spaces amongst many other projects. This funding will help give life to projects that will create job growth and help us maintain the revenue the Commonwealth relies on by holding such a strong artistic tourism community.

Leland's full statement on the importance of arts in Massachusetts is available at www.LelandCheung.com/arts