

Ben Westlund for Governor
MEDIA ADVISORY
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WESTLUND CELEBRATES CULTURAL TRUST GRANTS
Bi-Partisan Effort Results in Cultural & Economic Expansion

Contact: Stacey Dycus – Westlund for Governor
541-350-2781
Stacey@benwestlund.com
www.benwestlund.com

Bend, OR- (July 27, 2006) Today, State Senator and Independent Candidate for Governor Ben Westlund (I-Bend) praised the Oregon Cultural Trust's grants of \$1.1 million to 54 cultural non-profit organizations.

"Today, cultural organizations from around the state are able to continue their work fostering the independent, creative spirit of Oregon," said Westlund. "Arts and culture are not only integral to Oregon's quality of life, but they are also critical to its economic future. Our arts and culture community creates jobs and expands the horizon of economic and community development."

In 1999, Westlund traveled the state and brought together diverse and often competing interests to lay the groundwork for the Trust. In 2001, he led a bi-partisan effort to create Oregon's unique Cultural Trust (HB 2923). *The Oregonian* heralded the Trust legislation as the "best accomplishment" of the 2001 Legislature. Westlund is currently a member of the Oregon Cultural Trust Board, which administers the grants.

Mike Lindberg, former chair of the Cultural Trust Board and a Westlund supporter, also celebrated the announcement. "Everyday, Oregonians seek education, entertainment and a sense of identity from the thousands of cultural activities offered in their communities," said Lindberg. "I have watched Ben Westlund walk his talk by leading the fight to protect the arts in Oregon."

The Oregon Cultural Trust is funded by tax-deductible contributions from individuals and businesses that also make a matching contribution to qualifying non-profit arts and culture organizations. Additional funds for the Trust come from the sale of the Oregon "cultural" license plate.

Westlund has been a lifetime supporter of the arts. As a legislator, Ben has fought to preserve and restore Oregon Public Broadcasting's funding. Westlund has also been a strong supporter of "My Own Two Hands" a philanthropic effort to support the arts throughout the Central Oregon region. His website provides links and information on Oregon arts and culture programs:
www.westlundforgovernor.com/issues_arts.php

A successful entrepreneur and agri-businessman, Westlund served as a Republican in the state legislature since 1997, and was elected first as state representative from rural Central Oregon. Westlund was appointed in the final days of the 2003 session to fill a vacancy in the Senate and was elected to the seat in November 2004, receiving both the Democratic and Republican nominations and over 80% of the votes cast.

More information about Ben Westlund, current signature count, commercials and radio ads, and regional field offices can be found at www.westlundforgovernor.com. The toll-free number for Westlund's Bend headquarters is 1-877-544-9222.