

## CD 18 Potential Nominee Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Amanda Edwards

*If you currently hold or have previously held public office, please list and describe those positions here.*  
Houston City Council, At-Large Pos. 4, elected 2015

*Are you currently a resident of the 18th Congressional District?*

Yes

*If you live in CD18, how long have you resided there?*

I was born, raised, and educated in CD 18, and continue to live in the district today.

*If you are not currently a resident of CD18, which Congressional District do you reside, and how long have you lived there?*

N/A

### **Background, Education, and Qualifications**

*High School attended and date of graduation*

Eisenhower HS, Aldine ISD, Class of 2000

*College attended, degree obtained, major, and year of graduation*

Emory University, B.A., Political Science, Class of 2004

*Graduate or other degrees obtained and year of graduation*

Harvard Law School, Class of 2007

*Any Board Certifications. If you are an attorney, please list the states in which you are admitted to the bar and years admitted.*

My professional memberships include the Texas State Bar (2007) and the Pro Bono College of Texas (2010).

*What uniquely qualifies you to represent the constituents of CD18 as their Representative in Congress?*

Twenty years ago, I got my start working for the late Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee in her D.C. Congressional office, so I understand first-hand the work of the office and demands of the District. Along with that training, I bring a broad range of experience, understanding of the interplay of the federal government with Houston's regional challenges, commitment to improving our economy and quality of life for everyone, proven passion for Houston and its people, and ability to execute a vision where everyone in our region can thrive. I built a strong reputation for constituent response as an At-Large City Council Member, and my service there taught me the importance of combining both the right policy and the necessary resources as the key tools in the toolkit of governance. My prior experience as a public finance attorney demonstrates my understanding of how to fund public projects on every level of government, including how to maximize much-needed federal resources for our district. My experience as an At-Large City Council Member and attorney means that I bring a rigorous perspective to addressing key issues, and I add to that a vision for creating opportunity for everyone to thrive.

*What is your best quality or attribute? What is your least favorable trait or working habit?*

My best quality is my work ethic. I relentlessly work hard to deliver for the members of the community and to get the outcomes we deserve. That is what enables me to persevere through difficult situations, because I know people are counting on me to deliver. My least favorable trait is my perfectionist tendencies in my work, because I want to deliver what the community deserves - the best. I set high standards for myself and others, which sometimes could be more balanced.

*What prior elective office have you run for and what was the result?*

I was elected to serve as an At-Large to the Houston City Council in 2015. I ran as a Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate in the 2020 primary. I ran for Mayor in 2023 and, when Congresswoman Jackson Lee entered the race, I pivoted to run for CD-18 in the 2024 primary earlier this year.

*Describe any community service you have been involved with over the past ten years.*

I am proud to be of service in the community I love. I was born and raised in the district and live there to this day. I have a deep passion for serving this community stemming from watching my mother help others at St. Elizabeth Hospital and my uncles run their shoe shop in 5th Ward where they mentored so many in the community.

Early in my career, and compelled by the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, I relocated to New Orleans. While there, I served as a judicial law clerk for Federal District Court Judge Ivan Lemelle and founded Project NOW: The New Orleans Writing Project, which inspired New Orleans youth to empower themselves and their community through the power of writing.

After moving back home to Houston, it was a great honor for me to serve as an At-Large Houston City Council member. During my tenure, I helped mobilize hundreds of volunteers to go door to door to assist vulnerable residents in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey; I helped women and minority-owned small businesses gain access to capital; and I created the Council Member Edwards Community Empowerment Signature Series and Empowerment Task Force, which convened town-halls and provided information and peer support for residents across the city; and built a comprehensive constituent services operation responding to a broad variety of resident needs.

After serving on City Council, I founded a non-profit to continue my service for senior citizens, women and those in need of disaster recovery assistance. We have conducted senior welfare-check phone banks, coordinated home-bound senior food and water drops after Winter Storm Uri, delivered fans to seniors to combat the heat, rebuilt storm-damaged housing, distributed food and cards for groceries in the aftermath of storms, and assisted with generators and debris removal. We have hosted women's conferences to address the particular issues women face in our communities, and senior conferences to empower them at this stage in their lives.

I served as Board President of Project Row Houses and led many efforts to empower the Third Ward community, including a collaboration to educate Pre-K students who lack housing.

I attend St. Monica Catholic Church in Acres Homes, where I have been a member of the Knights of St. Peter Claver - Ladies Auxiliary, a service organization, for decades.

I have held community leadership positions including:

Project Row Houses - Former Board President 2009 - 2014;

Houston Area Urban League Young Professionals - Civic Engagement Chair 2008-14;

Texas Lyceum Board Member - 2014- 2020;

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. - 2001 - current; and

The Houston Chapter of The Links, Inc. 2017 - current.

### ***Affiliations, Tributes, and Awards***

*Are you a member of or affiliated with any professional organizations? Please list here.*

I have belonged to, and held leadership roles in, a number of professional organizations, including: Accelerator for America 2020 - present; Houston Exponential Board of Directors - 2018-2020; National Association of Bond Lawyers - 2008 - 2016. I also served as the Project Row Houses Board President from 2013 - 2014; New DEAL Leaders (Future of Work Lead) - 2016 - 2023; and National League of Cities - Board of Directors 2018 - 2020.

*Have you held any leadership positions with those groups, and if so, what was your position?*

Yes, please see above.

*Have you received any honors or recognitions that may be relevant to the positions of United States Representative? If so, please describe here.*

I have received honors and recognitions including:

Unsung Hero Award, National Coalition of 100 Black Women – Houston Metro Chapter - 2023

Power 50, National Bar Association - 2022

Greater Houston Women's Chamber of Commerce Distinguished Legislator Award - 2019

Houston Area Urban League Young Professionals Advocacy Award - 2019

Higher Heights Chisholm 50 Awardee - 2019

Children at Risk Public Policy Award - 2018

Vanguard Award, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., 68th Boule - 2018

Aloysius Wickliff Community Service Award – Houston Lawyers Association - 2018

2017 Emory's 40 Under Forty Award

Houston Woman Magazine's 50 Most Influential Women of 2016

Higher Heights "Black Women Lead" Award - 2016

2016 Top 30 Influential Women of Houston Honorees - 2016

2016 National Bar Association 40 Under 40 Nation's Best Advocates - 2016

2016 Rising Texas Star, Super Lawyers - 2016

Walker's Legacy Power 50 List - 2016

The National Black Lawyers Top 40 Under 40 - 2015

Future Leader Award, Chambers Women in Law Awards, USA - 2015

Outstanding Young Houstonian Award, Houston Junior Chamber of Commerce - 2013

### ***Philosophy and Issues***

*Should you become the Representative for CD18, what do you hope to accomplish during your first term in office? Before the completion of your service as a member of Congress?*

In my first term in office, I will build an effective team with a strong constituent services ethic at home and a strong policy and political acumen in D.C. Informed by my background as a public finance attorney, I will identify and advocate for federal funding into the district to promote our community needs. I will continue to advance the the Juneteenth commission to study the impact of slavery on their descendants and the establishment of an Emancipation National Historic Trail from Galveston to Houston, two final priorities of Congresswoman Jackson Lee.

Before the completion of my service in Congress, I hope I can prove my effectiveness to this community and earn the chance to build the seniority that can give real weight to the priorities of CD 18 in Congress, and that can allow us to secure the full amount of federal resources we need and deserve.

*If you are elected to this position, on which committee(s) of Congress would you most like to serve and why?*

Given our community's extensive and growing infrastructure needs and lack of multimodal transportation; the importance of energy and related industries to our local economy; the deep health and environmental needs of our district; and the foundational impact of law and law enforcement on the lives of our residents, I would be very interested in serving on any two of the Transportation and Infrastructure, Energy and Commerce, or Judiciary Committees.

*In what way do you believe your individual philosophy may impact your service as a member of Congress?*

Growing up, my father was diagnosed with and passed away from cancer. By watching his battle with cancer – and later, my mother's – I learned at an early age that public service and policy can be a matter of life and death in many households. If elected, I will never forget the urgency of the decisions I will be called to make on behalf of people whose lives are lying in the balance.

*Why do you want to be a member of Congress?*

I am running to continue the strong legacy of servant leadership in the 18th Congressional District. Previously represented by the legendary Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, the late Congressman Mickey Leland, Congressman Craig Washington, and most recently by the late Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, the people of the 18th Congressional District deserve the next leg of this relay to be strong, bold, effective and focused on the people. If elected, I will actively advocate for the constituents of District 18, and use my public finance background to fight for our rightful share of federal resources. I will serve as a facilitator and liaison for residents of District 18 wherever they interact with various facets of government, to ensure that they are receiving the services and care they deserve. And I will engage with broader national policy questions in a way that reflects and honors the values of the people of District 18, including by protecting our democracy and protecting the rights of marginalized communities.

As with any long journey, there comes a time where a fresh perspective and new leadership is needed. We are at that moment in our collective journey; we are seeing that today with the passing of the national torch to Vice President Kamala Harris. I am excited to bring that a new approach – an approach based on delivering real solutions to our most difficult problems – to Congress on behalf of the people of 18th Congressional District.

*In what ways do the principles of the Democratic Party inform or reflect your personal philosophy?*

The Democratic Party represents the belief that each of us, regardless of race, gender, age, ability, geography, or background, deserves dignity and a chance to truly thrive. That belief has guided me throughout my life and career. Through my hiring practices, my advocacy for equitable outcomes for all communities, and my community empowerment work, I have and will continue to live out these values.

*What are the three most important issues Congress must deal with and what is your proposal for doing so?*

The issues I hear about most from residents are (1) healthcare, including the need to expand access to quality, affordable healthcare and the need to protect abortion access and reproductive rights; (2) economic issues and the need to expand opportunity for small-business owners and those seeking jobs in

an evolving economy; and (3) the infrastructure needs – including transportation, flood infrastructure, the energy grid, and our housing stock – that are the foundation of our communities.

On healthcare, I propose to:

- Increase access by supporting the improvement and expansion of the Affordable Care Act coverage.
- Preserve Medicare, Social Security, and other benefits that our seniors rely on to survive.
- Protect health privacy by expanding HIPAA to ensure that private medical decisions, especially decisions about women's reproductive health, truly stay private.
- Work to codify the protections of Roe v. Wade at the federal level.
- Fight against bounty-style abortion bans by pursuing protections that would prevent the stalking or hunting of people seeking abortion care.

On the economy, I propose to:

- Expand access to capital, training, and other resources for small business owners.
- Strengthen the rights of workers to unionize and collectively bargain.
- Fight for a true living wage for American workers.
- Create opportunities for workers by expanding apprenticeship programs and introduce innovative and modern approaches to job training.
- Tackle the soaring costs of higher education, champion initiatives to support community colleges, and fund innovative education initiatives in our neighborhood schools.
- Ensure that we are prepared for the future of work by providing support for job training for activities tied to carbon capture, etc., amid the Energy Transition.
- Encourage our students to be prepared for the workforce of tomorrow by incentivizing innovation in schools.

On infrastructure, I propose to:

- Champion an improved, efficient, long-term funding system to reform disaster recovery and address the unique infrastructure needs of the Houston region.
- Work across industries and communities to ensure Houston will lead the energy transition – and be the energy capital of the world of today and tomorrow
- Invest in multi-modal transportation infrastructure to support the anticipated 4 million people joining our region.
- Work to right-size our housing supply by expanding federal support for housing planning for cities and using federal resources to incentivize the building of new housing.
- Develop innovative solutions to protect our residents from gentrification and displacement, and champion increased resources for CDBG programs.
- Support policies that combat climate change, which continues to pose severe threats to the longevity of our community.

I provide additional proposed solutions to these issues in response to questions below.

*How can Congress (with Presidential support) better and more humanely control illegal immigration across the Southern Border or elsewhere?*

Governor Abbott signed SB 4 last year, a law that puts Texans at risk of harassment by law enforcement based on perceived immigration status, pipelines funding to private detention centers, and threatens to overwhelm our public safety apparatus and our courts. The cruelty of this law has already inspired other extreme proposals throughout the country – from an Iowa law that would have criminalized even some immigrant children, to the Project 2025 proposal that would effectively end legal status for Dreamers. This scapegoating via government policy has to end. We need true, comprehensive immigration reform that

would also include a pathway to citizenship. I would also work as a member of Congress to extend permanent legislative protection to Dreamers and those who have qualified for TPS status whose homelands have been devastated by war or natural disaster. We must work to make sure our country continues to welcome those who come here seeking a better life for themselves and their families.

*What, if anything, should Congress do to restore and protect abortion rights and rights of reproductive autonomy?*

With Texans living under a functional abortion ban since even before the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, we know that codifying *Roe* is the floor, not the ceiling, for protecting our reproductive rights. I would also prioritize protecting health privacy and codifying an expansion of HIPAA that ensures that private medical decisions, especially decisions about abortion and reproductive health, truly stay private. I would embrace a proposal championed by the late Congresswoman Jackson Lee, and fight against bounty-style abortion bans by pursuing protections that would prevent the stalking or hunting of people seeking abortion care. I would work to guarantee access to reproductive and hormonal medication, a category of medication that includes everything from medication abortion to drugs used in gender-affirming care to contraception to menopause treatment – and to protect the ability for people to grow their families as they see fit through IVF. Finally, I would also prioritize addressing the very specific reproductive needs of Black mothers. I would be excited to support Congresswoman Underwood's Omnibus bill, which addresses Black maternal mortality and other disproportionate health outcomes for Black women – especially important for CD 18, as Harris County is the worst in the nation for Black maternal mortality. And I would work to set aside research funding to address conditions that disproportionately affect marginalized communities.

*What do you plan to do to protect and expand voting rights and protect the basic tenets of democracy?*

From voter suppression to banning abortion, Texas's Republican state leadership has tested policy approaches on Texans before they get rolled out to the rest of the country. If elected, I will fight back, starting by supporting a comprehensive approach to securing our democracy, including expanding and protecting voting rights and addressing the gerrymandering that dilutes the votes of Black and Brown communities. I support such common-sense expansions of voting rights as universal vote by mail and automatic voter registration. I would also support Congressional action to reverse – by Constitutional amendment if necessary – the impacts of *Citizens United* and to establish a fair campaign finance system. I would be a champion to restore the protections of the Voting Rights Act – including the ability under Section 2 to create and protect coalition districts that the Fifth Circuit gutted last week in *Petteway v. Galveston County* – and would work hard to help pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Act.

*What policies and initiatives will you advocate to reduce student debt? What would be your approach to making higher education more affordable and accessible?*

Higher education is both a crucial driver for our economy and a mobility mechanism for our communities, and also clearly experiencing an increasing cost spiral that is putting Americans at risk. I support the efforts of the Biden-Harris Administration to extend student loan relief widely, but Congress should step in to codify those efforts legislatively. I support free tuition for community college. I will especially advocate for increased federal resources for HBCUs and MSIs, including CD 18's own HBCU, Texas Southern University. And I will work to stem the unchecked costs of higher education from the supply side and incentivize colleges and universities bring, and keep, their costs under control.

*What policies will you advocate to reduce poverty in our district? What are your strategies for economic development to lift individuals and families out of poverty?*

There are so many opportunities for us to fight poverty and create truly equitable economic opportunity for our community. As a City Councilmember, I created the City of Houston Women and Minority-Owned

Business Task Force, which was charged with determining how to reduce disparities relating to access to capital and empowering these businesses with resources to help scale up their operations. Entrepreneurship has always been an important path towards financial independence for marginalized groups, and I will continue to prioritize access to capital, training, and other resources for minority small business owners as a Member of Congress.

Having a criminal history too often represents a major barrier to employment. “Ban the box” policies are a commonsense method of addressing this barrier and making sure that all Houstonians are able to take part in our economy. As a City Council Member, I was an active part of the Criminal Re-Entry Network Program (CRNP) that helps provide wrap-around support for those who have been incarcerated so that they may successfully integrate in the community and work environments. I will support these kinds of community-based programs as a Member of Congress.

Further, as a Member of Congress, I would support workers’ rights by supporting the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, which expands workers’ collective bargaining rights, and strengthens workers’ access to fair union elections. I would support expanded child tax credits, paid family leave, and raising the federal minimum wage to create a true living wage, indexed to inflation. I would work to expand access to capital, training, and other resources for small business owners, and create opportunities for workers by expanding apprenticeship programs and job training.

*What can be done to lower the price of basic necessities such as food, shelter, healthcare, and other costs of living?*

Increased housing costs have caused too many members of our community to be outpriced and displaced – and the costs in some other major cities are even more severe. Unless we act, the trend will only continue; when I served on H-GAC, our regional planning body, I learned that our eight-county region will grow by 4.2 million people within 20 years. As a member of Congress, I would work to right-size our housing supply by expanding federal support for housing planning for cities, and by dedicating federal resources to incentivize the building of new affordable housing. We must also develop innovative solutions to protect our residents from gentrification and displacement; part of my constituent services would include a Housing Solutions Center to connect residents to resources and help them navigate the pitfalls that too often lead to residents losing their homes. Finally, I would champion increased resources for CDBG programs, which are important for the economic health of communities like ours.

We know that Texas has the most uninsured people in the country, in part because our right-wing state leadership has refused to expand Medicaid under the ACA, leaving approximately 4.9 million Texans without coverage. As a member of Congress, one of my main healthcare priorities will be seeking ways to expand and improve ACA coverage. Not only are many people still left without coverage, but even some people who have ACA coverage find themselves underinsured when facing severe circumstances. I will work to elevate the standard of the ACA to improve the formula to cover more hospitals and provide more support for the entrepreneurs and self-employed people who especially rely on ACA coverage, and support efforts to continue to move the needle on prescription drug costs.

*What is your view about the necessity (or lack thereof) for gun safety legislation and what proposals would you support (and which, if any, of them would you oppose)?*

Despite the increasing number of mass shootings in our state, Texas allows for the permitless carry of firearms almost everywhere. Having lost my own cousin at an early age to gun violence, I know how profoundly this epidemic impacts our families. As a Member of Congress, I will make common-sense gun control measures a key priority. I support strengthening background check laws and increasing the age of eligibility for firearms purchases, and banning the sale and manufacture of “ghost guns,” and banning

high-capacity magazines. I applaud efforts to hold gun manufacturers and negligent parents legally accountable in gun violence cases. I also support the expansion of community violence intervention programs, which are shown to make a difference in the safety and cohesion of our communities.

Just as important as keeping our communities safe from the widespread proliferation of guns is keeping us safe from gun violence at the hands of the police. I support ending no-knock warrants and qualified immunity, and support a community-based policing approach that mobilizes community leaders who are residents of the community they serve, and that invests in violence prevention rather than increased incarceration. If elected, I would build on the legacy of the late Congresswoman Jackson Lee by championing the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act as she did, and working to at last see it signed into law.

*The U.S. has used foreign policy to fight inhumane practices abroad and also to further our security and economic interests. What goals should the U.S. be furthering through foreign policy, if any? What tools should the U.S. use in accomplishing those goals (i.e., economic sanctions, military intervention, etc.)?* We can and should use our foreign policy to promote a world where more people are safe, more people have the resources they need, and more people are free. That means maintaining our leadership status internationally, and continuing to participate in international alliances and treaties, supporting our allies, and welcoming new allies into the international fold. When we refuse our seat at the table, we lose our ability to affect what happens in the room – and the world becomes less safe.

*How, specifically, do you plan to help the people of CD18?*

By introducing and supporting legislation addressing healthcare access, economic and educational equity, justice and voting rights, and protections for the LGBTQ+ community. I will engage with groups elevating the concerns of underrepresented residents and host regular community forums to understand and address residents' specific concerns. I will work towards criminal justice reforms with an eye toward the safety of marginalized groups, and will promote the protection of our civil and democratic rights. Informed by my background as a public finance attorney, I will also identify and secure federal grants and other resources to support efforts that fall in line with these values and objectives. I will consider it my duty and my commitment to foster a society where everyone, especially the diverse Houstonians who are the foundation of our region in so many ways, can thrive.

*What do you plan to make your signature issue as a member of Congress and how do you plan to address it?*

After the 51 inches of rainfall swept across our community, the aftermath of Harvey left so many of our residents without answers and a clear pathway for recovery. Arbitrary denials by FEMA, delayed policy on next steps for residents (i.e. whether there would be buyouts, elevation grants, and more) and slow allocation of financial resources allocated to our community all made one thing clear: we must overhaul disaster recovery in this country. Residents should not have to wait several months for policy decisions or disaster relief funding. I propose overhauling the disaster relief process starting in DC so that there is an evergreen revolving fund for hurricane and disaster relief from which allocations may be drawn down for localities to use in the event of disasters. Reducing the red tape and the delays can result in a community like ours realizing a full recovery.

## **Campaign Plans**

*How will you convince voters of CD18 to support you before November 5, 2024?*

The groundswell of support for my candidacy in this contest has been humbling. Much of this support is



coming from residents who were excited about my primary run in this district earlier this year, including some who were impressed with my candidacy but who ultimately supported the late Congresswoman Jackson Lee. Given my very recent, robust campaign for this seat, I have an active rapport with voters and know I can sustain their support by engaging in GOTV efforts and effectively communicating our message. Nationwide, we are seeing an unprecedented level of excitement for Vice President Kamala Harris and her historic presidential run that represents the passing of the torch to a new generation of leadership. Residents of CD 18 are ready for the same passing of the torch here at home.

*How will you support down-ballot Democratic candidates?*

One of the most concrete ways a candidate can support candidates down ballot is by running a robust campaign for office every cycle, regardless of incumbency or the perceived safety of the seat. By running a full campaign, and encouraging voters to vote all the way down the ballot, candidates that are higher on the ballot can use their megaphones to reach beyond the most habitual voters and give people all across their districts the information and encouragement they need to participate meaningfully in the electoral process.

*How much money do you expect to raise for your campaign?*

The total amount necessary for the race depends on several factors that are still in flux. Based on my history of fundraising success, I am confident in my ability to raise whatever amount is ultimately needed.

*How do you plan to raise the amount of money you have indicated in the previous question?*

History shows me to be a strong and dedicated fundraiser. I have raised millions of dollars in campaign funds over the past couple of years. I have a loyal and dedicated base of support, and I am confident in my ability to raise the necessary funds for this campaign.

### ***Democratic Credentials, Experience***

*When and why did you become a Democrat?*

I am a proud lifelong Democrat because the party represents the same values I learned growing up right here in this community: dignity, care, fairness, and hope.

*Which Democrat in your lifetime has most impressed you and why?*

Twenty years ago, I began my career in the office of the late Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee and learned not only the fundamentals of elected office, but the importance of passion, tenacity, and dedication, directly from her. Modeling her commitment to residents, I will ensure that constituent response is prioritized in my office if elected.

Today, like all of us, I am inspired and excited by Vice President Kamala Harris and her truly historic presidential run that represents a generational passing of the torch of leadership. Her intellectual toughness and her clear joy in service, even in the face of vile Republican attacks, are important models for our party and our country.

*What involvement have you had in grassroots Democratic activities?*

I have consistently volunteered for, donated to, and raised money for Democratic candidates and organizations, and even run for statewide office as a Democrat. Democratic organizations with which I have recently donated or volunteered include Houston Black American Democrats, Bayou Blue Dems, ROAD Women, LGBTQ Caucus, and the Southwest Democrats.

*Have you ever been a Republican or voted in a Republican primary? If so, when and why did you become a Democrat?*

No. I have been a proud Democrat throughout my career.

*Is there anything else about your background, experience, philosophy, leadership qualities, or skills as a campaigner which you would like to bring to the attention of the Democratic precinct chairs of the 18th Congressional District of Texas?*

I was born, raised, educated and still live in the 18th Congressional District, and my roots here are deep. My uncles owned the C & L shoe shop on Lyons Avenue in 5th Ward. My parents met and fell in love at Texas Southern University. This district is my heart, and I grew up with a deep understanding that our growth and potential is directly tied to the well-being of our people and our communities. I want us to realize that full potential, and to move this district forward in a way that is bold, innovative and inclusive – to create a CD-18 where everyone, no matter where they live, has an opportunity to thrive.

*Is there any other question which we have not asked you but which, in the interests of understanding why you would be the best person to succeed Sheila Jackson Lee, you would like to address?*

I began my career twenty years ago in the office of the late Congresswoman. Everything I know about Congress – and much of what I know about commitment, showing up, and advocating fiercely for this community – I learned directly from her. I believe it is time for new leadership and a fresh perspective, but I also believe I can carry her legacy forward. If elected, I am committed to the creation of a Juneteenth commission to study the impact of slavery on their descendants and the establishment of an Emancipation National Historic Trail from Galveston to Houston, which were two of Congresswoman Jackson Lee's final legislative priorities. I am further committed to building upon the Congresswoman's legacy, including by working to bring the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act across the legislative finish line, picking up her mantle of strong advocacy for the Violence Against Women Act when that legislation requires reauthorization, and embracing her strong leadership on voting rights. This district has a long and distinguished history of representation, most recently with the late Congresswoman Jackson Lee, and I understand and respect the importance of honoring that history.

But just as we honor our history, we must also build for our future. Having worked in DC for the late Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, and having served on national boards and on City Council, I have an extensive network in DC that will help me be effective on arrival, should I be elected. My background as a public finance attorney gives me the skill set to identify the federal funds our district is entitled to, and to bring them home for the projects that will improve our community. I am the candidate in this race that can build seniority in the seat in order to optimize its effectiveness. This seat belongs to the people of the 18th Congressional District, and together, we can create a community where we reach our full potential - both today and tomorrow.