

HouArts 2023 Mayoral Forum

Amanda K. Edwards

Gilbert Garcia

John Whitmire

Lee Kaplan

Robert Gallegos

Robin Williams

Sheila Jackson Lee

HouArts 2025 Special Elections

Amanda Edwards | District 18

Christian Menefee | District 18

Jolanda Jones | District 18

Stephen Huey | District 18

Vincent Duncan | District 18

Alejandra Salinas | At-Large City Council

Kathy Tatum | At-Large City Council

HouArts 2025 Special Elections

Keith Coleman | District 8

Todd Ivey | District 9

Amanda Edwards | District 18

Christian Menefee | District 18

Sterling | District 22

Jarvis Johnson | District 29

Jonathan Mitchell | District 36

Marvalette Hunter | District 38

HouArts 2023 Mayoral Forum

Amanda K. Edwards

1. Do you have an Arts & Culture policy plan or policy statement?

If so, please send a copy.

While I do not currently have an Arts & Culture policy plan, my core focus is about building a Houston where each of us can thrive here, including the artistic community that brings such value and character to our city. As a former Project Row Houses Board President and At-Large Houston City Council Member, I know the significance of supporting both large and small performance and visual arts & culture in our community. Arts & culture is one of our most significant gems in our city. I look forward to working with cultural advocates like Cultural Launch to fully address the needs of Houston's artists. My vision for this community is to make Houston's Arts & Culture a more prominent part of the Houston narrative and ensure that we promote and support this gem both internally and externally. While I was on City Council, I led a widespread effort that resulted in the SuperBowl paying for Art murals painted by the community in different parts of our city.

2. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when traveling?

Like any proud Houstonian, I love the variety of arts opportunities available to us as residents, from world-renowned endeavors like Houston Opera to one-of-a-kind events like the Art Car festival. But one of my most fulfilling volunteer accomplishments over the course of my career was serving as board president of Project Row Houses, a phenomenal local organization dedicated to providing cultural and artistic opportunities as it builds community within the Third Ward area.

3. What specific strategies would your administration undertake to ensure the growth and stability of the creative sector?

Just like too many Houston residents, artists often struggle to make ends meet, taking on work outside of their creative field just to pay the bills, and too many of these jobs do not pay a living wage. That is why the City of Houston's recent efforts on minimum wage have been so important, and why I will fight to continue to expand wage and benefits protections as mayor. I will ensure that arts funding through our local agreement with HAA is adequate, and I will implement a citywide arts &

innovation festival to provide more awareness about the vast arts community in Houston. I will also use the convening power of the mayor to bring artists and arts organizations together with public and private funders and local developers to address the particular needs of artists with respect to live/work options. Solving these issues starts with a collaborative stakeholder effort to identify the specific housing and workspace barriers artists are up against and – through research including a survey of other cities’ best practices -- to identify potential solutions that will work here in Houston.

4. What opportunities exist for Houston’s artists and creative community to work more closely with city departments?

A significant number of our city construction contracts have a percentage of public art funding attached to them. I will enhance that avenue of securing public art. I want Houston to be known nationally for its public art murals and visual arts performances so I will increase these elements. Another way of supporting underserved communities would be to examine where opportunities exist to use our landmark district designation to support our diverse neighborhoods, unique landmarks, and cultural spaces. These designations can really highlight the cultural spirit of our neighborhoods and provide a point of connection for small businesses, artists and community residents. As mayor, I will also advocate for creative partnerships that can target arts engagement directly to communities with the least access, including through arts-specific after-school and summer enrichment programs for young people.

5. The amount of public funding for the arts through grants is currently limited to HOT funds. Would you consider any additional funding mechanisms and if so, please explain?

A significant number of our city construction contracts have a percentage of public art funding attached to them. I will enhance that avenue of securing public art. I want Houston to be known nationally for its public art murals and visual arts performances so I will increase these elements. Another way of supporting underserved communities would be to examine where opportunities exist to use our landmark district designation to support our diverse neighborhoods, unique landmarks, and cultural spaces. These designations can really highlight the cultural spirit of our neighborhoods and provide a point of connection for small businesses, artists and

community residents. As mayor, I will also advocate for creative partnerships that can target arts engagement directly to communities with the least access, including through arts-specific after-school and summer enrichment programs for young people.

6. Which recommendations would you prioritize from the FY22 Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs (MOCA) Equity Review?

The FY22 MOCA Equity Review highlights some important progress the city has made toward a civic art program that represents the full representational breadth of our city; it also makes clear that we have some way to go to fulfill that goal. What connects the different observations and recommendations in the report is the need for real, substantive community involvement in our decision-making as a city. Whether deciding about city art acquisitions or whether and how our public development projects incorporate public art, it matters that community voices are at the decision-making table. As mayor, I will prioritize actively seeking and incorporating input from all of our diverse communities as we make Houston a truly world class city with respect to art and culture.

Gilbert Garcia

1. Do you have an Arts & Culture policy plan or policy statement?

If so, please send a copy.

I support increasing the Quality of Life for all Houstonians and Art and Culture play an important role in achieving that goal. To show my dedication to this important issue, I released a 7-point Pledge to Houston to elevate Houston to be one of the great world cities. Art and culture enhance the aesthetic apparel of Houston but also contribute to community unity, education, and economic development.

2. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when traveling?

I am passionate about the arts and my wife DeeDee and I are large donors. We support, finance and produce Broadway shows. We have been involved in the production of "Tina", "Cinderella", "New York New York" and "Over The Rainbow." I am an official Tony nominated producer of New York, New York. I feel supporting these shows is an excellent way to contribute to the cultural landscape and bring the joy of theater to audiences. In Houston I personally support financially and attend plays and musicals at The Hobby Center, The Miller Outdoor Theatre, The Alley, and the AD Players and even the funny Houston Night Court. Supporting and attending local productions is crucial for nurturing the art community and promoting a thriving cultural environment. I also love concerts and attend every chance that I can! In addition I am on the Board of the Children's Museum and I support their summer programming and love the educational programs they put on for children.

3. What specific strategies would your administration undertake to ensure the growth and stability of the creative sector?

I think Education is an important part to ensure the stability of the creative sector so I would work with all the school districts to ensure students have access to arts programming. This would also ensure appreciation for the arts and encourage possible creative careers for some students. I would also advocate for our arts organizations and artists with favorable art policies making sure every group has a seat at the table so that every voice is heard. I would collaborate with other government entities to ensure our communities are enriched with art by supporting

more marketing and increasing visibility for our artists. This may mean that we use social media to highlight our local artists to attract more audiences and encourage a thriving art scene.

4. What opportunities exist for Houston's artists and creative community to work more closely with city departments?

Public Art can be added to city projects murals or mini murals or sculptures and housing to make areas more desirable and vibrant. City Buildings can also incorporate public art and art shows/exhibits in libraries and city buildings and parks and even surrounding areas like the airport. Which would create opportunities for artists to show their work and engage the community. By collaborating with city departments new grants can be sought to fund public art initiatives. These grants can support the creation and maintenance of public art installations. Public- private partnerships are another valuable avenue for securing funding and resources to support the arts. I believe opportunities exist to work with the super neighborhood alliances to identify needs in each area of town to create a comprehensive plan for public art. This would ensure that the projects would align with the specific characteristics of each neighborhood making them more meaningful and impactful. During my time as Metro Chairman, I was intentional in adding art at different Metro locations created by Houston artists. This showcased the local talent we have in our diverse community.

5. The amount of public funding for the arts through grants is currently limited to HOT funds. Would you consider any additional funding mechanisms and if so, please explain?

I would be open to exploring different options for funding the Arts in Houston. I would encourage more Public/ Private Partnerships and work with developers to ensure art is part of each development.

6. Which recommendations would you prioritize from the FY22 Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs (MOCA) Equity Review?

I believe the city's art collection implemented in the Civic Art Collection funded by the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) SHOULD reflect the ethnicities of the citizens of Houston as determined in the census. This will ensure that we strive for

diversity and representation in the collection that will celebrate the rich cultural heritage and diverse identities of all of Houston's residents. I have first hand experience and commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion. My firm Garcia Hamilton and Associates is minority owned and run and I have won many diversity awards. It would be my goal to foster a sense of belonging and cultural pride among different communities by including art from various ethnicities.

John Whitmire

1. Do you have an Arts & Culture policy plan or policy statement?

If so, please send a copy.

At this time I have not published policy plans or statements on any issue, but my thoughts on Arts & Culture are the city of Houston should 1) continue to increase exposure to the arts and cultural events throughout the city; 2) foster the growth of a strong arts community that truly reflects Houston's diversity; and 3) use City-controlled funds to leverage more state, federal, and private sector funding for the arts. I am especially interested in providing young Houstonians with the opportunity to experience and participate in diverse artistic and cultural experiences.

2. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when traveling?

As my schedule allows, I enjoy attending arts events. While traveling to Chicago, I was able to see "Hamilton," but visiting museums here at home is a pleasure.

3. What specific strategies would your administration undertake to ensure the growth and stability of the creative sector?

First, my administration will continue to support Houston-based artists through HAA grants and will actively seek additional state and federal support. Second, we will work to include more representatives from Houston's diverse communities in the grant selection process and encourage individual artists and groups throughout Houston to seek funds. Third, we will work to involve the arts and design community in more City projects. Finally, we will work to encourage public-private partnerships to increase the amount of funding that is available to the Houston arts and creative community and do what we can to stimulate the continued philanthropic support of the arts.

4. What opportunities exist for Houston's artists and creative community to work more closely with city departments?

We should include art and design early in almost everything the City does. By working with Houston's arts and creative community, we can improve the experience people have when coming in contact with the City.

5. The amount of public funding for the arts through grants is currently limited to HOT funds. Would you consider any additional funding mechanisms and if so, please explain?

In addition to HOT funds, there are funds for civic art collected through the Civic Art Ordinance. Currently, only vertical projects are eligible for civic art funds; we should consider including some horizontal projects. We will also encourage the private sector to include more art in their projects.

6. Which recommendations would you prioritize from the FY22 Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs (MOCA) Equity Review?

I will prioritize inclusion and transparency — widening who benefits from the City's programs (both those who create and those who experience art) and ensuring Houstonians can see how their City funds are being spent and how we are progressing in achieving our diversity goals.

Lee Kaplan

1. Do you have an Arts & Culture policy plan or policy statement?

If so, please send a copy.

I don't have a specific plan, but I have long been a supporter of the arts and that would continue as Mayor.

2. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when traveling?

My wife Diana and I have been season ticketholders to the Ballet since we first arrived in Houston after law school. Diana has been Chair of the Board of the Lawndale Art Center and we have frequently donated to other arts-related groups. Through my longtime association with Troop 212 in Third Ward, I have encouraged and participated in multiple Eagle projects, as for example the recent painting of a mural by Scouts on a building at the Pilgrim Congregational United Church of Christ. Finally, I am an amateur painter and have several pieces hanging in my firm's offices.

3. What specific strategies would your administration undertake to ensure the growth and stability of the creative sector?

Making our city safer and cleaner will ensure the growth and stability of every part of our city, including the creative community. Beyond that, I publicly support the creative community and will use my public voice to promote key artistic projects.

4. What opportunities exist for Houston's artists and creative community to work more closely with city departments?

I will continue to support Houston's Civic Art Program. Beyond that, I believe that everyone's contributions will be necessary to make Houston the best it can be. Therefore, I will seek input from the creative community for solutions to issues throughout our government.

5. The amount of public funding for the arts through grants is currently limited to HOT funds. Would you consider any additional funding mechanisms and if so, please explain?

I believe that Houston must take care of basic city services first. They are tackling crime, picking up the trash in every neighborhood, and addressing our critical infrastructure needs and preventing major flooding. These steps will help every aspect of our community. Once these needs are properly addressed, I would consider more funding for the arts.

6. Which recommendations would you prioritize from the FY22 Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs (MOCA) Equity Review?

I would prioritize the recommendation to publicly release an annual Equity Review report and present findings to cultural organizations locally and nationally to encourage the implementation of best practices around inclusion of everyone in the artistic community in public art collections.

Robert Gallegos

1. Do you have an Arts & Culture policy plan or policy statement?

If so, please send a copy.

As mayor I will build on the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs (MOCA) to make sure the City's Civic Art Program reflects the diversity of our city. I will advocate the importance of continuing the City of Houston's Civic Art Program Equity Review each year. It will give artists in our diverse communities the opportunity to be part of our City's Civic Art Program.

2. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when traveling?

As the district council member representing downtown, I was instrumental in bringing the Dia De Los Muertos Downtown Festival and evening parade to Houston which has been very successful. When traveling I enjoy attending plays and cultural events in the city I am visiting.

3. What specific strategies would your administration undertake to ensure the growth and stability of the creative sector?

My administration will work with Independent School Districts (ISDs) within the city on the importance of art education for public school students to expand their awareness in the arts and culture which will provide a larger base of future artists, patrons and supporters.

4. What opportunities exist for Houston's artists and creative community to work more closely with city departments?

As mayor I would have MOCA work with city departments to encourage artists to be involved in the design and aesthetics of infrastructure projects.

5. The amount of public funding for the arts through grants is currently limited to HOT funds. Would you consider any additional funding mechanisms and if so, please explain?

As mayor I will ask MOCA to work with Management Districts and Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZ) to agree to spend a percentage of their funds in cultural districts and/or community assets. I would have my administration push for state Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) funding to be used with the passing of state bill 1057 as an additional funding mechanism.

6. Which recommendations would you prioritize from the FY22 Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs (MOCA) Equity Review?

Changes to the Civic Art Program Selection Process and Program Practices have resulted in more diversity among applicants, panelists, and commission opportunity finalists. Gathering information on race/ethnicity and gender from all artists applicants resulted in more nuanced racial/ethnic and gender representation and broader demonstration of cultural diversity within the Civic Art Collection.

Robin Williams

1. Do you have an Arts & Culture policy plan or policy statement?

If so, please send a copy.

I currently do not have an Arts & Culture policy but I have openly supported various artists. I will stand and fight for artists publicly.

2. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when traveling?

I have always been enamored by the arts and the cultures that created it. Throughout my campaign I have hosted “poetry slams” and spoke at different cultural festivals. Providing artists with a platform to express or share their gifts/talents is imperative to my campaign. While traveling, I am instantly drawn towards local artists and their stories. I try to “purchase with a purpose” and pay artists their desired fee. Many artists work full time on their crafts and take pride in building up their image.

3. What specific strategies would your administration undertake to ensure the growth and stability of the creative sector?

I currently have an amazing poet on my team and I understand the magnitude of growing the creative sector at city hall. “Earl The Poet” has set the tempo for future artists to join my administration. Houston is full of dynamic artists and I plan on weaving artists into every aspect of different cultures. In addition, Houston is the most diverse city in the United States. I truly believe in the culture and the different “fruits it bears”

4. What opportunities exist for Houston’s artists and creative community to work more closely with city departments?

City hall currently has a poet position available. However, I plan on expanding opportunities for local artists. In addition, providing new incentives for artists joining my administration. Having an artist to articulate the concerns of mental health, crime,

flooding, and homelessness can bring awareness that changes need to happen.

5. The amount of public funding for the arts through grants is currently limited to HOT funds. Would you consider any additional funding mechanisms and if so, please explain?

Yes, I would add additional funding to the arts. However, I would honestly have to review the budget to ensure that every organization is granted the proper funds.

6. Which recommendations would you prioritize from the FY22 Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs (MOCA) Equity Review?

Artist demographics, gender, ethnicity, program changes that have an impact on artist opportunities, and the collection process of the civic art collection are recommendations that I would prioritize from the FY22 MOCA review.

Sheila Jackson Lee

1. Do you have an Arts & Culture policy plan or policy statement?

If so, please send a copy.

The arts and culture community must be an integral part of the life and governance of the city of Houston. To achieve this, I will prioritize regular meetings with the arts community to ensure their voices are heard and to understand the diverse aspects of the creative community in which the city can actively participate.

As mayor, my plan would be to foster increased collaboration among all facets of arts and culture, including performing arts, visual arts, neighborhood arts, and small arts — the city would facilitate this collaboration. No community can thrive without adequate funding, so I would seek to expand the availability of funding for Houston's arts and culture community. Our administration would explore creative opportunities within the bounds of the law to enhance public financing. I would also seek additional funding from the national endowment of the arts and utilize incoming state funds to the city, working diligently to secure more support and ensure a wide variety of arts and culture organizations receive sufficient funding to keep their doors open and programs running.

Throughout my life, I have been a strong advocate for diversity in all its aspects, including gender representation. Houston's creative community is richly diverse, and our administration will continue to foster that diversity while ensuring that no group feels underfunded or unrecognized. This commitment is essential for positive and inclusive policies. Additionally, I believe that entertainment is an integral part of the arts. Therefore, our administration will have a special focus on building up the entertainment sector within the creative community. We will seize opportunities such as traveling Broadway shows and performers to position Houston as a destination city and an internationally renowned hub for entertainment, arts, and Culture.

Finally, my policy, developed through continued discussions with the creative community, will include a rebranding of Houston to establish it as the best and most diverse arts and culture community in the nation. This is not an impossible task. By recognizing the immense assets of Houston and the diversity within our arts and culture community, we can communicate to national opinion makers the numerous levels of art forms, from physical structures to performing arts, visual arts, and large and small arts companies and organizations. It will be a vital part of my administration to utilize the entities that promote our city to showcase the arts as

one of the defining stories of Houston's identity. This will firmly establish Houston as a premier destination city for the arts.

2. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when traveling?

I view the arts as a vital lifeline in Houston and any city in America. My involvement in the arts has been long standing and I might say extensive. I am very pleased to have been a member of the Houston Industrial Board that created one of the most significant art facilities in the country, the Wortham Theatre. The creative work the board did was to use industrial bonds to help provide the city's contribution to this facility. I have been a member of the Houston Grand Opera Board, a member of the Ensemble board, a founding member of the Houston Museum of African American Culture (HMAAC). I have worked to provide resources to MECA, and the Houston Ambassadors Folklorico. I am excited to have also been a founding member of one of our special museums, the Children's Museum. I have advocated for and supported the new downtown mural initiative, and as a member of Congress, I have been one of the strongest supporters of the National Endowment for the Arts. I also believe in supporting small art organizations and cultural events and neighborhood arts, and I encourage and participate in the High School for Performing Arts in their artistic presentations. When traveling, I view the art and culture of my destination as an important part of my visit if I have the appropriate time to do so. But in Washington, D.C., I have been a strong supporter of the Kennedy Center and have hosted a musical program at the Kennedy Center highlighting the art of gospel music for ten years. I am the Chair of the Jazz Caucus in the US Congress, and was the leader and initiator through legislation to bring the historic sculpture of Sojourner Truth to the US Capitol and supporting bringing the statue of Rosa Parks to the US Capitol. I would like to think that my view of the arts is, again, that it is living, that it gives life, and that it gives substance to our communities, and I will want to continue that in a large way with Houston's arts and culture community.

3. What specific strategies would your administration undertake to ensure the growth and stability of the creative sector?

I would seek to meet with the creative sector of our community every quarter and listen to their needs and suggestions for amplifying the uniqueness and excellence of Houston's art community. I will establish in my office a cultural arts ambassador

outside of the regular structure where the ambassador will seek to engage with every part of the cultural art community. Through this process, we will gain a better understanding of the needs of the cultural arts and the visual arts community. We will emphasize that the arts are essential for education and bring more students into the activities of the arts. We will strengthen education by giving more students access to the arts. My administration will amplify and ensure the growth of all of the arts. Finally, through the regular meetings held every quarter, we will consistently be able to stay ahead of the needs of the creative arts community and seek collaborative partners in corporate Houston and through Houston's foundations to seek additional stability and growth for the creative sector.

4. What opportunities exist for Houston's artists and creative community to work more closely with city departments?

The city will benefit from the creative community working with its many departments, as it will be an open door to have collaborative activities with the city and the creative community. Specifically, our parks and recreation could benefit from more art installations. The people in the parks will benefit from more arts — new art installed will be for our neighborhoods and their visitors to enjoy. I'd like to have more open space in the parks: hearing from the creative community, I will take suggestions as to how that would be best utilized. I will put together time at the Houston Planning Department for the arts community to speak, so that they may contribute to enhanced planning that would reflect the input from the creative community. And it would be helpful that the Public Works Department would engage with our creative sector to contribute to the overall beautification of our city and the public works projects that are built regularly. Finally, it is important that the mayor's cabinet is aware of the creative community, and as we continue our quarterly meetings, we will maintain a good relationship that will further develop creative art input. This will help establish Houston's brand as a destination city, which in reality has the best art assets and the best creative community that is welcoming to artists around the world and around the nation. We will ensure artists are welcome and that we support the creative community.

5. The amount of public funding for the arts through grants is currently limited to HOT funds. Would you consider any additional funding mechanisms and if so, please explain?

Regarding additional funding mechanisms for the arts, yes, I would consider them. I believe Houston has the best arts program in the nation and is competitive with other major West and East Coast cities. We must tell the stories of the different museums, musical forums, dance, visual arts, and sculptures that exist in this city. Besides the HOT funds, a mayor must take leadership in seeking an enhanced corporate funding investment. We must explore potential use of capital funds and general funds, and my team would study the possibility. However, in addition, I have been very effective in bringing federal funds to Houston, and I will seek enhanced opportunities to receive federal grants and direct funding through the National Endowment for the Arts, supported by the city's applications. I also know that national foundations, not tied to a specific state, offer possibilities for specific programmatic arts, including our unique museums. I believe that a unified arts community would be successful in securing these additional funds, and I will be a real partner to the creative community in seeking more resources. I will also promote the arts community through our channels, such as Houston First, among others.

6. Which recommendations would you prioritize from the FY22 Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs (MOCA) Equity Review?

Every artist and every art community must be valued. Houston's art and creative community is strengthened when every aspect of our arts community has a seat at the table and no part of the creative community is diminished. Our priorities will be increasing opportunities for women artists and ensuring that art diversity is represented in all neighborhoods, from River Oaks to the East End, from Fifth Ward to Southwest, from Third Ward to Northeast, and everywhere in between. We should actively seek ethnic and racial diversity, and I believe my administration will be able to include all aspects of the creative community. Specifically, I will also ensure that we include a focus on increasing gender diversity in our creative community. We cannot be fearful of broad outreach and must strive to reach the ultimate diversity of our city. My administration will discover the hidden art treasures in Houston, such as downtown's Sam Houston Park, the historic homes, and the heritage house in the midst of downtown Houston. We will also highlight the various sculptures in downtown Houston. We will achieve equity by recognizing and supporting both visual and performing arts all over Houston. Our funding will reflect that equity. My funding approach will be a reflection of the different art types, from performance to visual arts. By meeting with the arts community, we will receive input from artists. We

cannot be fearful of broad outreach and must strive to reach the ultimate diversity in our city.

HouArts 2025 Special Elections

Amanda Edwards | District 18

1. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when you travel?

I have long been deeply involved in Houston's arts community. I first began my participation in arts and culture as a young child who was engaged in performance arts that culminated in performances at The Ensemble. My passion for art led to my induction into the National Art Honor Society Student in high school. From my participation with groups like HGO Young Professionals when I first returned to Houston to my many years as a board member and later as president of Project Row Houses in the Historic Third Ward, arts have been front and center in my experiences here in Houston. Our work at Project Row Houses used art to empower residents, celebrate cultural identity, and strengthen the community. My participation in the arts was also reflected through my service as a City Council Member when I commissioned public art murals to be painted in communities by artists and residents in connection with our efforts to host the Super Bowl in 2017.

I believe art is essential to how we understand ourselves and one another — it builds connection, creativity, and pride. When I travel, I make a point to visit local galleries and cultural spaces to connect with the stories that shape each place.

2. Would you support restoring full funding to National Public Radio and PBS?

For more than 50 years NPR and PBS have been essential components of American life and our public communication infrastructure. In this day and age of misinformation, I think it is crucial to restore full funding to National Public Radio and PBS as they provide such an essential service to millions of Americans.

3. Would you be willing to support a request for appropriations directly to the county or the City specifically for arts? Each congress person can submit requests for their district every year.

Yes, I would support a request for appropriations directly to Houston for the arts. Not only would I encourage arts funding through Community Impact Grants, but I would also host workshops to educate groups how to apply for said funding. Houston is

the most diverse city in America. We have so many stories to tell and so many facets of the city. I think the city should have funding to encourage artists to tell the many stories and lift the many voices in this city.

4. Would you support continued funding at the 2024 level or higher for the National Endowment to the Arts?

Art enriches our communities, drives innovation, and amplifies the voices that make America vibrant and diverse. In recent years, NEA grants have helped fund things like Art League of Houston's summer studio art program for youth, Arts Connect Houston, and the Houston Youth Symphony. Programs like these and many more deserve to be funded. I've been clear that I will stand up to attacks on programs that strengthen our nation, including the National Endowment for the Arts. I will fight to preserve funding at least at 2024 levels and work to ensure artists and cultural institutions have the support they need to flourish.

5. How would you support arts in Congressional District 18?

I would support the arts in our district by championing policies and funding that help local artists, organizations, and community spaces thrive. The arts are not only a source of inspiration and pride, they are engines for education, small business growth, and community development. I will work to ensure federal programs like the National Endowment for the Arts continue to invest directly in our neighborhoods, especially in schools and underserved communities. I believe art plays a crucial role in education and I would support funding arts education through legislation. I also believe in fostering partnerships (via Community Impact Grants) between artists, local governments, and nonprofits to make the arts more accessible and visible in every part of the district. As I mentioned previously, I will make Community Impact Grants more accessible to organizations by hosting workshops on how to access them. I will work to ensure that disaster recovery dollars reach arts-based organizations quickly when crises occur. In addition, I will establish an Arts Advisory Council to advise my office and help guide policy decisions that support our vibrant creative community.

Christian Menefee | District 18

1. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when you travel?

For me, the arts are one of the most powerful ways to connect with people and understand the world around us. Whether it's through music, theater, or visual art, creativity offers a way to explore ideas and experiences that goes beyond everyday politics. Art can make bold statements about justice, hope, and identity, but it can also offer peace and reflection, a retreat from all the noise of daily life and public debate.

In Houston, I try to stay connected to our incredible arts community by attending local performances, exhibits, and cultural festivals that celebrate the city's diversity. My wife and I also love incorporating the arts into our date nights whenever we get the chance as a way to unwind and share in something inspiring together.

2. Would you support restoring full funding to National Public Radio and PBS?

Absolutely. Whether it's covering important news stories that keep our communities informed or producing educational programming like Sesame Street that generations of Americans have grown up with, NPR and PBS play an essential role in our society. It's a shame that their funding has been cut, because these public institutions provide trusted, high-quality content that reaches every corner of the country. I would fully support restoring their funding to previous levels so they can continue serving the public good.

3. Would you be willing to support a request for appropriations directly to the county or the City specifically for arts? Each congress person can submit requests for their district every year.

Yes, I would be proud to support appropriations requests directly to Harris County or the City of Houston for arts and cultural initiatives. The 18th Congressional District is home to some of the most important cultural institutions in the country, including the Houston Theater District, which anchors a thriving creative economy. Supporting the arts isn't just about enriching our cultural life, it also means supporting good-paying

jobs, small businesses, and tourism that strengthen our local economy. Federal investment in the arts provides a direct benefit to our city and our residents, and I would work to ensure Houston gets its fair share of that support.

4. Would you support continued funding at the 2024 level or higher for the National Endowment to the Arts?

Yes, I'd absolutely support funding the National Endowment for the Arts at the 2024 level or higher. Supporting the NEA is just common sense, it's an investment in who we are and who we want to be. These investments support local artists, create jobs, and help tell the stories that make our country what it is.

5. How would you support arts in Congressional District 18?

I'd work to make sure the arts in District 18 get the recognition and resources they deserve. This district is home to some of the most vibrant cultural institutions in the country from the Houston Theater District to our incredible local galleries, musicians, and community arts programs. I'd fight to bring federal dollars directly into our community through arts appropriations and grant opportunities, so those institutions and local artists can continue to grow and thrive.

Beyond funding, I'd use my platform to highlight the arts as essential to who we are as Houstonians. The arts create jobs, attract tourism, and give young people creative outlets that strengthen our neighborhoods. Supporting the arts is part of building a strong, connected, and forward-looking Houston.

Jolanda Jones | District 18

1. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when you travel?

I love the arts. I love artistic expression for me on a variety of fronts, including fashion, and I've often been misunderstood because I am artsy and eclectic. I believe if more emphasis were placed on the arts in school, then it would become more readily accepted and understood.

My father was an arts major at Texas Southern University, and one of his challenges, that I believe led to his suicide, was that people didn't appreciate how art could be so important to Black man of his generation. My uncle told me a story about how he and my father were driving back from Los Angeles visiting family, and the sunrise was so beautiful that my dad pulled the car over to the side of the highway just to draw it. If more people would have understood my father's love of painting and would've accepted him for it, perhaps he might still be alive.

I actually believe more arts education could do a lot to combat mental illness, especially as it relates to depression and anxiety. I strongly believe that public art and arts education needs to be valued and funded at higher levels.

2. Would you support restoring full funding to National Public Radio and PBS?

Yes. These networks are not only an outlet for artistic expression, but for free speech in general.

3. Would you be willing to support a request for appropriations directly to the county or the City specifically for arts? Each congress person can submit requests for their district every year.

Yes. I would support funding for public art, for arts education, for community-based arts and music programs, and for economic development dollars for programs using art to increase tourism and otherwise create jobs.

4. Would you support continued funding at the 2024 level or higher for the National Endowment to the Arts?

Following in the footsteps of the late Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, I would support and advocate for continued and higher funding for the NEA.

5. How would you support arts in Congressional District 18?

In addition to advocating for more funding, I would lift up and attend local cultural events in the district. I would continue and promote the 18th Congressional District Art Competition for high school students, where winning artworks are displayed at the nation's capitol. Given my love for fashion, I would work to create an 18th Congressional District fashion competition for original creations – think Project Runway but without all the drama.

Stephen Huey | District 18

1. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when you travel?

I have long enjoyed the vibrant arts community in Houston. Many people I have known have worked in organizations throughout our city such as the Houston Symphony, Houston Ballet, Houston Grand Opera, River Oaks Chamber Orchestra and many others. My wife has also performed in several of them. We also enjoy patronizing smaller arts organization all over the city, and have many friends who participate in the theater, dance, music and visual arts scenes. I'm grateful that many of these exist due to helpful grants. My wife and I highly value art and its power to transform, and we consider it a priority for our family. Art brings vital representation to a community. Travel is a favorite pastime for our family, and we have noticed how much beauty sets the tone in other cities' public spaces and would like to see more of that here. Houston should have more investment in the arts, not less.

2. Would you support restoring full funding to National Public Radio and PBS?

Absolutely! Since childhood, I have enjoyed programs created by public broadcasting. It was a very significant development for our country in the 20th century, so it's tragic to see it under attack in the 21st century.

3. Would you be willing to support a request for appropriations directly to the county or the City specifically for arts? Each congress person can submit requests for their district every year.

Yes, it would be my honor to do so.

4. Would you support continued funding at the 2024 level or higher for the National Endowment to the Arts?

Certainly, and generally I'd want to see more funding.

5. How would you support arts in Congressional District 18?

We the people get to choose what kind of society we want to have. At times, it feels like access to arts and cultural events is very limited based on geography and where there are concentrations of funding. People throughout our city would benefit from investment in broader accessibility. Each neighborhood needs local beautiful spaces for people to enjoy together, and funding and support to increase the number of nearby arts and culture activities. Also, I have always felt we need more arts enrichment for students, not less. As someone who enjoyed a very well-rounded education, I believe the arts are a critical component to developing the whole person. Some people go on to do something with it for a living, but even if they do not, their experiences with the arts shape them in a positive way. I remember from my time at Rice University how a friend double majored in engineering and art, and is now a successful product designer. If she had not also pursued her passion in art, she may not have become the excellent product designer she is today. For all of us, experiences in the arts and humanities have enhanced the way we appreciate and engage with the world. Connections are built between peoples which further understanding. So I believe children in the 18th district will be inspired by more opportunities in the arts. A friend created the Art Bus here in Houston, and another friend ran an interactive theater program for schools, and we need to support more endeavors such as these. But it doesn't stop with children. All of us benefit from access to a large arts scene in Houston, and we need to support the artists to ensure these opportunities remain accessible to all Houstonians. We should keep an eye out for new opportunities. I know a musician who worked with the city on a program to position live music in public spaces here. There is significant support available for arts in the city, but some communities have less available right now, and we can identify key neighborhoods that need a boost to start something new. In my position, I'll be able to amplify requests for local support. The entire nation would benefit from a policy to encourage arts growth in local communities, and I would advocate for increased federal funding.

Vincent Duncan | District 18

1. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when you travel?

Yes, I participate in the Cultural Arts here in Houston and Abroad because I have always been fascinated with artistic creativity. It's a good way for me to get out, meet people whose views differ from mine, and gain insight into others perspectives. As a builder involved in politics, details matter. When it comes to cultural arts, I pay close attention to every detail in the performances, sculptures, poems, music and murals. The same focus will serve me well in representing the diverse people of Congressional District 18.

2. Would you support restoring full funding to National Public Radio and PBS?

Yes, I would support restoring funding to the National Public Radio and PBS, the name says it all "Public" .Funding public radio a television should not be subjected to the opinions of any Political Party or Politicians.

3. Would you be willing to support a request for appropriations directly to the county or the City specifically for arts? Each congress person can submit requests for their district every year.

With regards to the Cultural Arts I would reach out to the Arts community to gain their input on what the needs are. The Arts are like Sports they give us time to Reflect or Cheer for a common interest and these things create a sense of togetherness and community spirit. Yes I would be willing to support a request directly to Harris County or the City of Houston.

4. Would you support continued funding at the 2024 level or higher for the National Endowment to the Arts?

Budgets are in a state of constant change we would have to review the Budget and if the funds are available we could possibly continue funding at 2024 levels.

5. How would you support arts in Congressional District 18?

I would support the Cultural Arts going to different events enjoying the Arts and making myself available to see and hear the needs of the Houston Community.

Alejandra Salinas | At-Large City Council

1. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture in Houston?

My wife, Elizabeth, and I are big fans of the Houston arts scene. One of our favorite date night activities is taking in a show at the Alley Theatre and Stages or visiting an exhibit at the Menil or Museum of Fine Arts. In fact, our very first date was the Alley Theatre's production of *The Humans*.

As a member of Leadership Houston, I was also fortunate enough to visit Freedmen's Town Museums and Buffalo Soldiers National Museum, where I learned more about the incredibly rich history of African American trailblazers in Houston.

My Leadership Houston class recently unveiled its 2025 project, *Seats of History: A Tribute to Houston's Wards Through Art* at Johnny Goyen Park beside the University of Houston Downtown. "Painted by students from Houston's six wards with muralist EMPYRE these benches are more than places to sit. Each bench tells the story of a ward reflecting its history and spirit while connecting the past to the future in a way that sparks engagement and celebrates the rich cultural tapestry of our city."

Most recently, we also attended our first Mariachi Festival, which was a remarkable display of Latino music, talent, and pride.

2. What specific strategies would your administration undertake to ensure the growth and stability of the creative sector by making it possible for individual artists to live and work in the City?

Affordability is more and more of a challenge for all Houstonians. There are a few things the city can do:

The cost of housing (for rent and for purchase):

While housing is more affordable and accessible in Houston than many other large cities, prices continue to rise beyond the levels many Houstonians can afford.

The city needs to maintain a pro-housing environment, encouraging responsible housing development (e.g., safe housing that does not contribute to flooding and has the infrastructure to support it), and investing in infrastructure that can support additional housing. Common sense tells us that we need to increase housing supply in order to bring prices down.

I support the city's Livable Places Initiative, which incentivizes smaller, neighborhood-scale homes such as garage apartments, courtyard style developments and other developments of eight units or less. My hope is that the initiative works to increase the supply of housing that is affordable, particularly for working-class Houstonians.

Reliable public transportation:

Until recently, we've made slow but steady progress on transit, pedestrian, and bicycle infrastructure. Depending on where you live, you don't always have to own and maintain a car in Houston. I support multi-modal transportation and the city's Complete Streets initiative.

In the short term, I support Council Member Ramirez' initiative under Prop A to give City Council more power over decisions about infrastructure projects which have been approved and/or are underway. In the long term, we must get this and future administrations back on track when it comes to affordable, reliable, transportation choices.

Direct funding:

I support the Houston Arts Alliance grant programs. I have proposed that the city seriously beef-up and professionalize its grant-writing activity. I suspect we are leaving millions on the table, some of which could contribute to arts funding.

3. Would you, and if yes please provide two (2) examples, give directives to city departments to include arts and culture in their work?

Yes.

I would like the city's Public Works Department to create a Vibrant Crosswalk public arts / safety program. According to the Chronicle, "Safety experts at the National Association of City Transportation Officials recommend "high-visibility" markings because they get drivers to yield to pedestrians. NACTO has even specifically celebrated rainbow crosswalks."

I'd like to explore starting a "Welcome to District____" competition where local artists design welcome signs that capture the heart and soul of each of our City Council districts. Public works would install the winning signs.

4. The amount of public funding for the arts through grants is currently limited to HOT funds. Although HOT funds continue to grow as the number of hotel rooms expand, the arts and culture field is growing more quickly, thus putting pressure on the amount of funding that is available to the field. Would you consider an additional funding mechanism, and if so, please explain?

I would always consider additional arts funding, but must caution that the city's precarious financial position makes that unlikely in the near future. I would consider a percent-for-art program on all infrastructure projects that meet appropriate criteria.

Kathy Tatum | At-Large City Council

1. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture in Houston?

I have advertised so many artists on social media and provided the arts grant links, to Houston, commissioners courts grants, Arts Endowment

I've been to so many press conferences on the arts that are in and around buildings in Houston highlighting them

I've been to deluxe theater ensemble desert watch many many orchestra and also performances at The Hobby Center

2. What specific strategies would your administration undertake to ensure the growth and stability of the creative sector by making it possible for individual artists to live and work in the City?

Grant writing teams

Highlighting other art and fighting for HOT funds

Local corporation in Communities given back to art fund

Empty building Art outreach and nonprofits

3. Would you, and if yes please provide two (2) examples, give directives to city departments to include arts and culture in their work?

One of the directives is that the ecosystem of Arts is not separate from crime prevention mental health suicide prevention it cannot talk about after school care we cannot talk about how do we better jobs and ecosystem of an environment and the out of town people coming here for conventions and hotels they're going to have to put some money towards the Aesthetics of what our community looks like and we need more color on these concrete buildings if we're going to compete with other cities

Fund more Art Buses that travel the city visiting underserved communities, hospitals, schools, parks

4. The amount of public funding for the arts through grants is currently limited to HOT funds. Although HOT funds continue to grow as the number of hotel rooms expand, the arts and culture field is growing more quickly, thus putting pressure on the amount of funding that is available to the field. Would you consider an additional funding mechanism, and if so, please explain?

Yes Endowment that go Domestic Violence Agencies, Human trafficking survivors mental health and health many victims need outlets to enhance their talents and release stress. Our city thinks it's separate but it's not and use these technics in parks and individuals outreaches

I'm raising funds for our conventional kitchen which 6000 sq feet were have talented artist and we right next to the park. We will have 100000 sq ft other rooms for artist and murals to paint

Also helping orchestra class raise \$5000 for their violin class

Another schools performance arts travel and supplies

I have purchase paintings, sculptures earrings necklaces by cane from local artists

HouArts 2026 Congressional District Elections

Keith Coleman | District 8

1. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when you travel?

At the local level, I actively support arts and cultural initiatives by attending gallery openings, community festivals, and public events that strengthen civic engagement. I have been invited to speak at libraries throughout the Houston area in recognition of both Black History Month and Veterans' Day, reflecting my commitment to education, service, and public dialogue.

I am also engaged with historical institutions dedicated to preserving African American history, the Civil Rights Movement, and the broader history of Texas. These efforts extend beyond my professional life and into my family life as well. When traveling with my family, we make a point to visit museums, cultural centers, and historic sites to deepen our understanding of America's past.

Most recently, our travels included visits to Little Rock Central High School, a landmark of the 1957 Little Rock Nine, and the National Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee. These experiences reinforce my belief in the importance of historical preservation, civic education, and the ongoing pursuit of equal justice.

2. Would you be willing to support Community Project Funding requests specifically for arts-related appropriations?

Yes

3. Would you support changing the name of the Donald J. Trump Kennedy Center back to John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts?

Yes

4. Would you support continued funding at the 2024 level or higher for the National Endowment to the Arts?

Yes

5. How would you support arts in your Congressional District?

My vision for the district's cultural landscape centers on three primary objectives: amplifying local artists, expanding public access to art, and sustaining our historical institutions. I plan to actively promote local painters, musicians, writers, and dancers, while expanding venues such as community showcases and pop-up galleries. I am also dedicated to The Keith Coleman Historical Museum's presence and am excited to showcase diverse historical and cultural displays to enrich the culture of the Montgomery County area.

My background in national service has provided me with unique insights into pivotal moments in modern history, including my involvement in the D-Day 50th-year reenactment ceremony and the dialogue surrounding the Iran-Contra Hearings. My service has been formally recognized through commendations, including a coin of one of the original Tuskegee Airman and flags flown in my honor over both Iraq and the U.S. Capitol. I bring this same dedication to historical preservation to the museum's expansion, which will feature exhibits on significant global events such as Somalia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, specifically highlighting my personal involvement in these historical events.

6. Would you support restoring full funding to National Public Radio and PBS?

Yes

Todd Ivey | District 9

1. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when you travel?

I attend various events and offerings around the city including theatre, concerts, museums, and festivals.

2. Would you be willing to support Community Project Funding requests specifically for arts-related appropriations?

Absolutely.

3. Would you support changing the name of the Donald J. Trump Kennedy Center back to John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts?

Absolutely.

4. Would you support continued funding at the 2024 level or higher for the National Endowment to the Arts?

Absolutely.

5. How would you support arts in your Congressional District?

I would continue to support the arts throughout Houston. I would sponsor events in the district highlighting the arts to engage the community. I would legislate and advocate for increased funding for the arts.

6. Would you support restoring full funding to National Public Radio and PBS?

Absolutely.

Amanda Edwards | District 18

1. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when you travel?

I have long been deeply involved in Houston's arts community. I first began my participation in arts and culture as a young child who was engaged in performance arts that culminated in performances at The Ensemble. My passion for art led to my induction into the National Art Honor Society Student in high school. From my participation with groups like HGO Young Professionals when I first returned to Houston to my many years as a board member and later as president of Project Row Houses in the Historic Third Ward, arts have been front and center in my experiences here in Houston. Our work at Project Row Houses used art to empower residents, celebrate cultural identity, and strengthen the community. My participation in the arts was also reflected through my service as a City Council Member when I commissioned public art murals to be painted in communities by artists and residents in connection with our efforts to host the Super Bowl in 2017.

I believe art is essential to how we understand ourselves and one another — it builds connection, creativity, and pride. When I travel, I make a point to visit local galleries and cultural spaces to connect with the stories that shape each place.

2. Would you support restoring full funding to National Public Radio and PBS?

For more than 50 years NPR and PBS have been essential components of American life and our public communication infrastructure. In this day and age of misinformation, I think it is crucial to restore full funding to National Public Radio and PBS as they provide such an essential service to millions of Americans.

3. Would you be willing to support a request for appropriations directly to the county or the City specifically for arts? Each congress person can submit requests for their district every year.

Yes, I would support a request for appropriations directly to Houston for the arts. Not only would I encourage arts funding through Community Impact Grants, but I would also host workshops to educate groups how to apply for said funding. Houston is

the most diverse city in America. We have so many stories to tell and so many facets of the city. I think the city should have funding to encourage artists to tell the many stories and lift the many voices in this city.

4. Would you support continued funding at the 2024 level or higher for the National Endowment to the Arts?

Art enriches our communities, drives innovation, and amplifies the voices that make America vibrant and diverse. In recent years, NEA grants have helped fund things like Art League of Houston's summer studio art program for youth, Arts Connect Houston, and the Houston Youth Symphony. Programs like these and many more deserve to be funded. I've been clear that I will stand up to attacks on programs that strengthen our nation, including the National Endowment for the Arts. I will fight to preserve funding at least at 2024 levels and work to ensure artists and cultural institutions have the support they need to flourish.

5. How would you support arts in Congressional District 18?

I would support the arts in our district by championing policies and funding that help local artists, organizations, and community spaces thrive. The arts are not only a source of inspiration and pride, they are engines for education, small business growth, and community development. I will work to ensure federal programs like the National Endowment for the Arts continue to invest directly in our neighborhoods, especially in schools and underserved communities. I believe art plays a crucial role in education and I would support funding arts education through legislation. I also believe in fostering partnerships (via Community Impact Grants) between artists, local governments, and nonprofits to make the arts more accessible and visible in every part of the district. As I mentioned previously, I will make Community Impact Grants more accessible to organizations by hosting workshops on how to access them. I will work to ensure that disaster recovery dollars reach arts-based organizations quickly when crises occur. In addition, I will establish an Arts Advisory Council to advise my office and help guide policy decisions that support our vibrant creative community.

Christian Menefee | District 18

1. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when you travel?

For me, the arts are one of the most powerful ways to connect with people and understand the world around us. Whether it's through music, theater, or visual art, creativity offers a way to explore ideas and experiences that goes beyond everyday politics. Art can make bold statements about justice, hope, and identity, but it can also offer peace and reflection, a retreat from all the noise of daily life and public debate.

In Houston, I try to stay connected to our incredible arts community by attending local performances, exhibits, and cultural festivals that celebrate the city's diversity. My wife and I also love incorporating the arts into our date nights whenever we get the chance as a way to unwind and share in something inspiring together.

2. Would you support restoring full funding to National Public Radio and PBS?

Absolutely. Whether it's covering important news stories that keep our communities informed or producing educational programming like Sesame Street that generations of Americans have grown up with, NPR and PBS play an essential role in our society. It's a shame that their funding has been cut, because these public institutions provide trusted, high-quality content that reaches every corner of the country. I would fully support restoring their funding to previous levels so they can continue serving the public good.

3. Would you be willing to support a request for appropriations directly to the county or the City specifically for arts? Each congress person can submit requests for their district every year.

Yes, I would be proud to support appropriations requests directly to Harris County or the City of Houston for arts and cultural initiatives. The 18th Congressional District is home to some of the most important cultural institutions in the country, including the Houston Theater District, which anchors a thriving creative economy. Supporting the arts isn't just about enriching our cultural life, it also means supporting good-paying

jobs, small businesses, and tourism that strengthen our local economy. Federal investment in the arts provides a direct benefit to our city and our residents, and I would work to ensure Houston gets its fair share of that support.

4. Would you support continued funding at the 2024 level or higher for the National Endowment to the Arts?

Yes, I'd absolutely support funding the National Endowment for the Arts at the 2024 level or higher. Supporting the NEA is just common sense, it's an investment in who we are and who we want to be. These investments support local artists, create jobs, and help tell the stories that make our country what it is.

5. How would you support arts in Congressional District 18?

I'd work to make sure the arts in District 18 get the recognition and resources they deserve. This district is home to some of the most vibrant cultural institutions in the country from the Houston Theater District to our incredible local galleries, musicians, and community arts programs. I'd fight to bring federal dollars directly into our community through arts appropriations and grant opportunities, so those institutions and local artists can continue to grow and thrive.

Beyond funding, I'd use my platform to highlight the arts as essential to who we are as Houstonians. The arts create jobs, attract tourism, and give young people creative outlets that strengthen our neighborhoods. Supporting the arts is part of building a strong, connected, and forward-looking Houston.

Sterling | District 22

1. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when you travel?

When I travel, I try to schedule it so I catch a live performance (mostly jazz) and walk the streets to see murals and graffiti. Depending on the city, I'll seek specific architectural motifs. If I have the time, I will go to local art and history museums. In Houston, when a musician or art exhibition that I've been following comes to town, I check them out.

2. Would you be willing to support Community Project Funding requests specifically for arts-related appropriations?

Yes, depending on which subcommittee it falls under and a demonstrated business case of how a specific appropriation benefits the community, I would be willing to support the request.

3. Would you support changing the name of the Donald J. Trump Kennedy Center back to John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts?

Yes, I believe that the Kennedy Center was dedicated as a memorial for President John F. Kennedy, and as such should only bear his name.

4. Would you support continued funding at the 2024 level or higher for the National Endowment to the Arts?

Yes, I support continued funding of the National Endowment to the Arts at the 2024 level or higher.

5. How would you support arts in your Congressional District?

I will say that my appreciation for the arts began with exposure in grade school. I can prioritize supporting arts and cultural programs in education and within the community, and featuring homegrown talent and community festivals.

6. Would you support restoring full funding to National Public Radio and PBS?

Yes, I support restoring full funding to NPR and PBS.

Jarvis Johnson | District 29

1. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when you travel?

I don't just attend the arts, I invest in them. As a Houston City Council Member and State Representative, I helped secure funding for the redevelopment of the historic Deluxe Theater, preserving a cultural landmark while creating space for community-based arts and performances. When I travel, I seek out local theaters, museums, and cultural spaces because the arts tell the true story of a community.

2. Would you be willing to support Community Project Funding requests specifically for arts-related appropriations?

Yes, without hesitation. Arts funding is economic development, education, and community healing. I have a proven record of securing public dollars for community projects, and I would absolutely support targeted funding requests that strengthen local arts organizations and creative spaces.

3. Would you support changing the name of the Donald J. Trump Kennedy Center back to John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts?

Yes. The Kennedy Center should honor President Kennedy's legacy of public service, democracy, and cultural investment. Republicans politicizing a national arts institution is unnecessary and divisive. The arts should unite us, not serve partisan ego.

4. Would you support continued funding at the 2024 level or higher for the National Endowment to the Arts?

Yes. The National Endowment for the Arts should be funded at least at current levels and ideally higher.

5. How would you support arts in your Congressional District?

I would support arts in the district by securing federal funding, partnering with local organizations, and ensuring artists are included in economic development plans. That means supporting cultural districts, youth arts programs, and protecting affordable creative spaces so artists are not priced out of their own communities.

6. Would you support restoring full funding to National Public Radio and PBS?

Absolutely. NPR and PBS provide trusted journalism, educational programming, and cultural content that many communities rely on, especially those underserved by commercial media.

Jonathan Mitchell | District 36

1. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when you travel?

I support the arts the same way most working families do, by actually participating in them. I attend live concerts, local events, and cultural festivals when my schedule allows. I play some music myself, so music and creative expression are already part of my life. When I travel for work, I make a point to experience local culture, whether that's live music, museums, or community events. I believe arts and culture are strongest when they are original and community driven.

2. Would you be willing to support Community Project Funding requests specifically for arts-related appropriations?

I would, when they are local, transparent, and accountable. If funding is requested for arts projects that genuinely serve the community, support local artists, create jobs, or provide educational value, especially for the youth, I'm open to supporting them. What I won't support is wasteful spending, vanity projects, or funding that benefits officials or executives more than the actual community.

3. Would you support changing the name of the Donald J. Trump Kennedy Center back to John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts?

No. I don't care what the building is called. Changing names doesn't improve access to the arts, doesn't help artists, and doesn't solve a single real problem facing working Americans. Congress has far more important things to focus on. I'm focused on helping my constituents, and a name change doesn't help or benefit them in any meaningful way.

4. Would you support continued funding at the 2024 level or higher for the National Endowment to the Arts?

I would support funding that is justified, efficient, and clearly benefits communities, especially at the local level. Any continued or increased funding needs oversight to ensure taxpayer dollars are going to artists, educators, and community programs,

not wasteful government overhead.

5. How would you support arts in your Congressional District?

By supporting policies that allow local arts to grow naturally through community grants, education programs, and partnerships with schools and local organizations. I believe the arts thrive best when communities have the freedom and resources to support them locally, not under excessive federal oversight. My focus would be on access, education, and local impact.

6. Would you support restoring full funding to National Public Radio and PBS?

I'm open to discussions, but funding should be evaluated the same way as any other taxpayer expense, based on relevance, transparency, and public benefit. If funding exists, it should prioritize educational programming and public service content, not partisan or ideological agendas.

Marvalette Hunter | District 38

1. How do you personally participate in the arts and culture both in Houston and when you travel?

As a lifelong lover of the arts and culture, I make it a point to engage both as a participant and a supporter. Here in Houston, I regularly attend performances, exhibitions, and community arts events, and I'm especially drawn to spaces that showcase local artists and reflect the city's rich cultural diversity. I believe the arts are strongest when they are accessible and rooted in community. When I travel, I seek out museums, historic sites, theaters, and cultural districts as a way to understand a place through its people and stories. Whether it's a major institution or a neighborhood gallery, engaging with the arts is how I connect across cultures, gain perspective, and bring new ideas and inspiration back home to Houston.

2. Would you be willing to support Community Project Funding requests specifically for arts-related appropriations?

Yes, I would support Community Project Funding request for the arts and art-related projects.

3. Would you support changing the name of the Donald J. Trump Kennedy Center back to John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts?

Yes, I would support changing the name of the Kennedy Center back to John F. Kennedy Center and it would be my honor to do so.

4. Would you support continued funding at the 2024 level or higher for the National Endowment to the Arts?

Yes, I would support continued funding at the 2024 level for the National Endowment for the Arts and consider an increase, if warranted.

5. How would you support arts in your Congressional District?

There are numerous ways in which I would support the arts in Congressional District 38:

- Advocate for strong federal support for the National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities.
- Champion arts education and after-school programs in TX-38 schools.
- Support local artists and cultural organizations through funding, visibility, and partnerships.
- Promote public art and cultural spaces that reflect the district's diversity and history.
- Use the congressional platform to highlight the economic and community impact of the arts and expand access for all residents.

6. Would you support restoring full funding to National Public Radio and PBS?

Yes, I would support restoring full funding to NPR and PBS.