

# **Mondaire Jones**

## **Key Issues Facing the District**

*In order to provide our members with as much information about each candidate as possible prior to the forum, we are asking that you provide a list of the 3-5 most important issues you see affecting Downtown Manhattan, and give us a brief description of your plans for tackling these issues if you are elected.*

### **1. The Affordable Housing Crisis**

As someone who was raised in Section 8 housing in New York and is now a renter in New York's 10th Congressional District, our affordable housing crisis is personal to me. Simply put, we must do everything to address the severe shortage of affordable housing and help the homeless in Manhattan. As a member of Congress, I played a pivotal role in securing the passage of Build Back Better in the House, the single largest affordable housing investment in history with tens of billions of dollars in new NYCHA funding and other housing affordability relief. But with the median rent in Manhattan reaching an all-time high of \$4,000 in May and the number of homeless New Yorkers at its highest level since the Great Depression, it's beyond clear we must do far, far more. I support the campaign for a fully affordable building at 5 WTC, I helped introduce the Homes for All Act with Rep. Ilhan Omar to ensure the federal government guarantees housing as a human right, and I'll never stop fighting for federal housing funding for New York City.

### **2. Climate Resiliency and Infrastructure**

The climate crisis is here, and it will have devastating, unthinkable consequences for Lower Manhattan unless we act immediately. That is why I am already hard at work in Congress combating the climate crisis by co-sponsoring the full Green New Deal and introducing the Fossil Free Finance Act, which would divest our economy from the greatest sources of carbon pollution. I also played a key role in passing the House version of Build Back Better, which contains an unprecedented \$550 billion investment in climate action, and I have continued to push the White House to resume negotiations with Sen. Joe Manchin starting with the climate provisions of this legislation. Moreover, I played a pivotal role in negotiating the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which funds new resiliency projects, invests in green energy, and advances environmental justice. I will continue my work to fund New York climate resiliency projects, specifically championing funding for projects along the East River and the Hudson River, and I'll always work to ensure community voices are heard loud and clear throughout the process.

### **3. Protecting Fundamental Rights**

There is no denying that the far-right, 6-3 majority on the Supreme Court – and Republican Party leadership as a whole – are waging an all-out assault on fundamental rights and our democracy. This has a direct impact on everyone in America, from Lower Manhattan to every other corner of our country. As someone who is both Black and gay, this is personal to me. As a progressive leader in Congress, I will continue to take bold, aggressive action to counter this

assault on our rights – even when it means pushing members of our party to fight harder for the things we say we believe in. This term, I was one of the earliest voices calling on the Senate to abolish the filibuster so that that chamber would follow our lead in the House by passing the Equality Act, the Women’s Health Protection Act, and the Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act (which I co-authored). New York’s 10th District is the birthplace of the LGBTQ+ Liberation Movement, and we must continue to be the beating heart of progress in America. It is women like my single mother, who worked multiple jobs just to provide for our family – Black and brown folks, and the poorest in our society – who will suffer most from the Court’s devastating decisions, from overturning *Roe v. Wade* to already having gutted the Voting Rights Act, to targeting marriage equality and same-sex intimacy. That is why I joined Rep. Jerry Nadler and Sen. Ed Markey to introduce the Judiciary Act, my bill to add four seats to the Supreme Court in order to restore balance and integrity to the institution. The American people, and increasingly my colleagues, are on our side. Lives, and our entire way of life, are at stake.

#### **4. Stopping Gun Violence**

I was 11 years old when Columbine occurred. As horrified as I was at the time, I never imagined mass shoots – including school shootings – would become the norm in this country. Here in New York, there has been a terrifying spike in shootings and hate crimes, yet the far-right in Congress and the Supreme Court – backed by the NRA – are doing everything they can to stop us from making our communities safer by ending gun violence. I recently helped pass the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act – first gun safety reforms to be signed into law in decades – but I know we must do far more to save lives. Following the Uvalde mass shooting, I helped pass the Protecting Our Kids Act in the House, and I was attacked on Tucker Carlson and in other far-right media for calling for abolishing the filibuster to pass that legislation, as well as an assault weapons ban and my bill to add four seats to the Supreme Court to prevent further expansion of the Second Amendment such as in the *Bruen* decision. I also support imposing liability for gun manufacturers, distributors, and retailers who negligently market or sell their products, and I will continue working to shut down the iron pipeline that is flooding our streets with illegal guns from states with lax gun laws. I’ll never stop fighting to stop gun violence because every single New Yorker has the right to feel – and actually be – safe in their neighborhood.

#### **5. Revitalizing Small Businesses**

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit the small businesses of Lower Manhattan hard, and rising prices and costs are making their recovery even harder. As a member of Congress, I have successfully fought to bring much-needed relief to our small businesses. I am proud to have helped pass the American Rescue Plan, which included \$7.25 billion for an expansion of the Paycheck Protection Program, as well as \$28.6 billion for the Restaurant Revitalization Fund. These forgivable loans have been a lifeline for our small businesses. In New York’s 10th District, the American Rescue Plan resulted in tens of millions of dollars in PPP emergency support for small businesses, from Nuyorican Poets Café in the East Village to the Muslim Community Network in FiDi. Moreover, I have pushed to fully fund the Minority Business Development Agency, the only federal agency charged with addressing the unique needs of minority-owned businesses. And because the increasing concentration of economic power in

the hands of the largest corporations threatens to deny our small businesses a fair shot to compete, I introduced the Prohibiting Anticompetitive Mergers Act alongside Senator Elizabeth Warren. Finally, given the exorbitant costs of employer-sponsored health care, I cosponsor the Medicare for All Act to cut costs for our small businesses.