



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on October 22, 2020

Biden Campaign Drops Ad Depicting Wealthy Donor as Struggling Bar Owner

The Biden campaign [faced backlash](#) this week over a TV ad from last week that featured a Michigan bar owner who struggled to keep his business running during the COVID-19 outbreak.

What the ad conveniently didn't mention is that the man in question, Joe Malcoun, is, in fact, a wealthy tech investor who donated to Joe Biden's presidential campaign. He also supported Democratic Governor Gretchen Whitmer's stay-at-home order that keep businesses shuttered, even though it was that order that placed so many Michigan bars in dire financial straits.



YouTube

The ad, which has since been taken down, was posted to YouTube last Thursday and aired Sunday during NFL games on CBS. In the video, Malcoun is listed as the "co-owner" of The Blind Pig, a once-popular bar and music venue in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Malcoun blamed his business' misfortunes on President Trump's COVID-19 response.

"For 50 years, The Blind Pig has been open and crowded — but right now it's an empty room," he says in the one-minute ad, showing the empty venue. "This is the reality of Trump's COVID response."

"We don't know how much longer we can survive not having any revenue. A lot of restaurants, bars that have been mainstays for years will not make it through this. This is Donald Trump's economy," he continued. "There's no plan, you don't know how to move forward. It makes me so angry. My only hope for my family and this business and my community is that Joe Biden wins this election. That's the kind of person we need."

Notably, the ad made use of the song "Sabotage" by The Beastie Boys, marking the first time the group licensed one of its songs for use in a political advertisement.

Malcoun leaves out one bit of information: He's unlikely to face financial ruin due to The Blind Pig's closure, as he's a prominent "angel investor" in several local tech companies.

Back in April, Malcoun praised Whitmer's response to the virus, tweeting (in a tweet that has also since been deleted) that "she's doing it right" by continuing the state's stay-at-home order, which provoked protests and forced businesses such as The Blind Pig to remain closed longer.

Like so many liberals, Malcoun blames President Trump for wanting to reopen the economy quickly so that businesses can keep afloat and then, in the same breath, blames him for the economic fallout from the lockdowns enacted by governors against the president's wishes.

The Blind Pig briefly reopened in June, abiding by strict requirements such as mask-wearing, social distancing, aggressive cleaning, and limited guests. In an [interview with MLive](#), Malcoun said he



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decided to cancel future live events for the summer, pointing to low attendance and difficulty communicating updated coronavirus rules to the public.

“Now that we tried it and saw it’s really hard to communicate what it means to have a really socially distanced and live music show, we decided it’s not really worth trying. The very last thing we want is to be the epicenter of a new outbreak,” Malcoun told the outlet.

Malcoun donated \$5,000 to Biden for President in July. He founded CKM Capital Partners in 2013 after inheriting money from his wife’s grandfather, which he said was like “winning the lottery,” and eventually became an angel investor in local tech companies, according to a 2018 interview with [Click On Detroit](#).

Malcoun has also served as CEO of Nutshell, a customer relationship management software company, since 2014. During his tenure, the firm raised at least \$5.5 million in angel and venture capital, according to his Crain’s Detroit Business 40 under 40 profile.

In addition, the Biden campaign recently pulled a different ad after retired Lieutenant General Sean MacFarland raised concerns about depicting any military personnel in uniform in political messaging for any candidate. The ad included photos from Iraq showing the former vice president walking beside MacFarland, who spearheaded the fight against the Islamic State from 2015 to 2016.

“A number of people have understandably inferred that my appearance constitutes an endorsement of the former vice president. It does not,” MacFarland wrote last week in a LinkedIn post that has since been deleted. “To be clear, I have not endorsed President Trump, either. I’m not a political person, but this isn’t about just me. I object to the use of ANY military personnel in uniform in political ads — full stop. That goes double for generals and admirals, even if we have since retired, as I have.”



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