



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on September 21, 2016

Trump Advisor Publishes Story About Clinton Campaign Repeatedly Charging One-time Donors

Back in March Carol Mahre, an 81-year-old grandmother and lifelong Democrat, decided to contribute \$25 to the Hillary for America campaign. She gave a staff member her account information and on March 16 \$25 was deducted from her US Bank checking account.

Later that day another \$25 was deducted from her account. On March 29 \$19 was deducted from her account, payable to the Hillary for America campaign.

Transaction Description	Amount
	\$17.03
	\$50.00
HILLARY FOR AMERICA HTTPSWWWW.HILL NY	\$25.00
HILLARY FOR AMERICA HTTPSWWWW.HILL NY	\$25.00
	\$140.40
	\$5.35
	\$8.56
	\$36.00
	\$10.70
	\$36.76
HILLARY FOR AMERICA 844-432-2016 NY	\$19.00
	\$23.75
	\$2.79
	\$15.62
	\$10.17
	\$8.02
	\$85.65

She [tried unsuccessfully](#) to get the campaign to reverse the charges and asked her son Roger, a local attorney in Maplewood, Minnesota, for help. He picked up where she left off, calling the campaign headquarters many times but getting only a voicemail message saying that lines were busy.

Roger upped the ante and filed a fraud report with the Minnesota attorney general’s office, and asked a local CBS affiliate, KARE 11, for help. The station reported on the complaint in June, learning that Roger had no luck in resolving the issue either:

Mahre had her son Roger, an attorney, help her dispute the unauthorized charges on her credit card. Roger Mahre said over a period of three days in late April and early May, he placed dozens of calls to Hillary for America before someone finally answered the phone.

“I finally got through,” said Roger. “When I talked to the person at the other end and explained what was going on he seemed nice enough.”

Roger says the Hillary campaign representative promised to cancel the charges that weren’t authorized and make sure that no further payments were taken from Carol’s credit card.

“I asked him for email confirmation of that and he said he would get it to me,” said Roger “and I have never seen anything.”

On Carol’s bank statement a month later two more deductions to the Hillary for America campaign appeared in the amount of \$25 each.

Two reporters from KARE 11 tried again:

On May 27, KARE 11 emailed the Hillary Clinton press account. Six days later, there’s been no response. KARE investigative reporter A.J. Lagoe also tweeted to Hillary for America’s Communications Director Jennifer Palmieri and Press Secretary Brian Fallon. They’ve also failed to respond.

Enter Jared Kushner. He is Donald Trump’s son-in-law (he’s married to Ivanka), the owner of a high-powered real estate company and a newspaper publishing company, the *New York Observer*. He’s also one of Trump’s key campaign advisors, heading up his “transition” team should Trump be elected president in November.



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Kushner had a member of his staff at the *Observer*, Liz Crokin, look into the incident which resulted in an “exclusive” report published on September 15. Said the report:

[Carol Mahre’s experience] follows a pattern in which unwitting donors are charged multiple times, but always for a total less than \$100, which is a key trigger point for banks’ internal action systems. [According to the numbers, however, Mahre had \$119 taken from her account.]

Crokin’s investigation turned up rampant unauthorized charges to low-income donors that, she said, have resulted in “one of the nation’s biggest banks receiv[ing] up to 100 phone calls a day from Clinton’s small donors asking for refunds for unauthorized charges to their bankcards made by Clinton’s campaign.” Crokin relied on numerous sources for her report, who asked for anonymity to keep from putting their jobs at risk. Said one source:

We don’t investigate fraudulent charges unless they are over \$100. The Clinton campaign knows this, that’s why we don’t see any charges over the \$100 amount, they’ll stop the charges just below \$100. We’ll see her campaign overcharge donors by \$20, \$40 or \$60 but never more than \$100....

The people who call us are just the ones who catch the fraudulent charges. I can’t imagine how many more people are getting overcharged by Hillary’s campaign and they have no idea.

Wrote Crokin:

The source, who has worked for Wells Fargo for over 10 years, said that the total amount they refund customers on a daily basis who have been overcharged by Clinton’s campaign “varies” but the bank usually issues refunds that total between \$700 and \$1,200 per day.

Searches by this writer for confirmation of the story at TruthorFiction.com and FactCheck.org turned up nothing. But Snopes had this to say about Kushner’s “exclusive” report:

WHAT’S TRUE: A Minnesota woman reported that she incurred a couple of additional overcharges by the Clinton campaign after making a one-time donation of \$25.

WHAT’S UNDETERMINED: Whether campaign donation overcharges are deliberate and widespread, rather than the rare product of isolated glitches or user error.

Snopes couldn’t find confirmation that others, hundreds of others, were being ripped off by the Clinton campaign:

The *Observer* article stated an anonymous source had told them that about 100 people per day were complaining about spurious Clinton campaign charges to Wells Fargo alone, a figure which spread across all financial institutions would suggest that thousands and thousands of Clinton donors were reporting similar fraud issues every month.

But — even though this “fraud” has supposedly been taking place since Spring 2016 — we weren’t able to find instances of more such complaints on Facebook, Twitter, or any other social media platform or forum, outside of two January 2016 Twitter pleas from someone seeking assistance in canceling a recurring donation.

However, Snopes did turn up a high degree of reluctance by Wells Fargo to discuss the matter with them:

We contacted Wells Fargo’s fraud department in an attempt to verify the breadth of fraudulent charge issue, and after placing us on hold, a representative ambiguously stated that the rumor “had nothing to do” specifically with the campaign of Hillary Clinton (which could mean anything from



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“the rumor is baseless” to “it’s a merchant/processor issue”). We also contacted Wells Fargo’s media relations division, who said nothing beyond “We have no comment at this time.”

It’s possible that Wells Fargo, undergoing intense scrutiny over creating thousands of phony accounts, just doesn’t want to add to their current woes. It’s also possible that Carol Maher inadvertently signed up for a recurring draft against her USBank account. That’s unlikely, of course, as those charges were random and in differing amounts.

The best that can be said of the incident, barring others coming forward with similar stories of overcharging by the Clinton campaign, was offered by investigative reporter Mish Shedlock:

I cannot prove any of this. Nor can anyone else unless they have a recording of the call. But there is a moral to this story, two actually:

Do not give [your] credit card or bank account information out to anyone who calls you.

Do not give money to untrustworthy people or known liars. It will only give you grief.

A graduate of an Ivy League school and a former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American magazine and blogs frequently at [LightFromTheRight.com](#), primarily on economics and politics. He can be reached at badelman@thenewamerican.com.



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