

# Shiva Ayyadurai's Senate Campaign Was Being Promoted By Fake Facebook Accounts | BuzzFeed News

By Nina Jankowicz

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Patti Johnson is a die-hard Trump supporter. Her Facebook profile photo shows her in an American flag bikini with “Trump 16” handwritten across her chest in a white gel.

Since the summer, she’s also been working hard to promote the candidacy of V.A. Shiva Ayyadurai, a wealthy entrepreneur running as an independent to unseat Massachusetts Democratic Sen. Elizabeth Warren this November. He’s a distant third in the polls, but Ayyadurai has managed to attract attention for his slogan, “Only a REAL Indian can defeat the Fake Indian,” a dig at Warren’s claim to Native American heritage. He previously gained notoriety for a claim that he invented email, which is disputed by internet historians, and was known for being married to actor Fran Drescher. (They split in 2016.)

Johnson certainly felt he was worth fighting for; she was one of the “Top Fans” for Ayyadurai’s Facebook page. On Aug. 17, she shared a video to at least 10 different Facebook pages and groups showing Ayyadurai supporters protesting outside of Warren’s Cambridge home. In her posts she turned the pro-Warren mantra “Nevertheless, she persisted” on its head, writing instead, “nevertheless WE persisted #Shiva4Senate #MAGA #KAG.”

But three weeks ago, after inquiries from BuzzFeed News, Facebook deleted the Johnson account along with at least three other fake profiles that appear to have been part of a coordinated astroturfing campaign to benefit Ayyadurai. Facebook also removed three profiles and a page belonging to a key Ayyadurai campaign volunteer, Frank Licata.

A Facebook spokesperson told BuzzFeed News the company “disabled several accounts and Pages for violating our policies against fake accounts, spam, and

misrepresentation.”

Source: [Shiva Ayyadurai’s Senate Campaign Was Being Promoted By Fake Facebook Accounts | BuzzFeed](#)