

# [***How a Biden AI robocall in New Hampshire allegedly links back to a Texas strip mall***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B8T-5BM1-DY7V-G001-00000-00&context=1516831)

CNN Wire

February 7, 2024 Wednesday 10:45 PM GMT

Copyright 2024 Cable News Network All Rights Reserved

**Length:** 1091 words

**Byline:** By Casey Tolan, Donie O'Sullivan and Jeff Winter, CNN

**Dateline:** (CNN)

**Body**

Arlington, Texas (CNN) &#8212; The mystery of an AI-generated robocall imitating President Joe Biden's voice - which election security officials fear signals a new frontier in the disinformation battle ahead of the 2024 presidential election - has been traced back by authorities to a nondescript strip mall in the Dallas suburbs.

The New Hampshire attorney general [*identified*](https://www.doj.nh.gov/news/2024/20240206-voter-robocall-update.html) Walter Monk and his company Life Corporation as being behind the fake call, which authorities have estimated went to more than 20,000 people and [*urged Democrats not to vote*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/06/tech/nh-ag-robocall-update/index.html) in the state's primary.

Monk is a serial entrepreneur whose long list of companies have been working in the political robocalling industry for nearly two decades, according to a CNN review of campaign finance data and other records.

On Wednesday, 24 hours after authorities accused Life Corporation of being behind the fake Biden call, no one answered the door at the Arlington, Texas, office the company operates - which shares a small strip mall with a bubble tea shop, a dollar store and a blood donation center.

In a sign of Monk's sprawling corporate ties, the Life Corporation office lobby - visible through the locked door - lists eight additional company names on its wall. A multi-state anti-robocall task force identified Monk as the "founding owner" of Life Corporation in [*a letter*](https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/State-AG-Task-Force-NOTICE-Letter-to-LIFE-CORP-Feb.-2024-1.pdf) this week, and Monk has described himself as an owner or principal of some of the other companies in interviews or on their websites. Others share the same officers, including Monk's daughter, according to Texas corporate records.

Monk, 71, and other executives of the companies could not be reached for comment Wednesday. A person who answered the phone at one of Monk's ventures Tuesday said he was "very busy" and that the company is "undecided" on whether to issue a statement.

On his [*LinkedIn page*](https://www.linkedin.com/in/waltmonk/), Monk wrote that he's "obsessed (or is it possessed?)" with starting new businesses. He's [*told local news outlets*](https://fortworthinc.com/interviews/a-life-in-over-his-head/) that he ran an eclectic series of companies - from a lobster fishing outfit in Hawaii to a bar in South Dakota to a beef jerky plant in Minnesota - and decided to get into the political polling business after a discussion with a political consultant during one of his son's soccer games.

According to Federal Election Commission records, about 140 federal campaigns and political action committees reported paying companies tied to Monk between 2004 and 2022, spending about $770,000 in total. The companies made the most money from federal ***politics*** during the 2018 election cycle, and the spending has trailed off since then, with no campaign disbursements reported to any of the firms so far during the 2024 campaign cycle.

Most of the spending is described in campaign records as being for robocalls, polling, marketing, texting, or similar purposes. The companies received payments from both Republican and Democratic PACs and campaigns, although the top spenders were associated with the GOP.

The largest spender was [*Americas PAC*](https://www.factcheck.org/2020/07/americas-pac-2/), which works to convince minority voters to support Republicans and is largely funded by conservative megadonor Richard Uihlein. Americas PAC spent more than $100,000 for polling and research from Monk-associated company Voice Broadcasting between 2016 and 2018, but hasn't reported working with the firm since then.

Other political customers of Monk-tied companies include the Gun Owners of America PAC, former Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio's Senate campaign, and the Texas Democratic Party. And in addition to federal ***politics***, the companies have also been paid by various state-level campaigns, records show.

In one [*interview*](https://fortworthinc.com/awards-programs/eoe/2021-entrepreneur-of-excellence/) with a Fort Worth business publication, Monk claimed that his company was "sending millions of text messages and phone calls for both the Trump and Biden campaigns" in 2020 as well as "thousands of smaller races throughout the U.S. and Canada," with the firm taking in millions of dollars in sales. But neither the Trump or Biden campaigns reported any spending going directly to Voice Broadcasting or another company associated with Monk - although it's possible they could have served as subcontractors to other campaign vendors.

The New Hampshire attorney general said in a [*statement*](https://www.doj.nh.gov/news/2024/20240206-voter-robocall-update.html) this week that its office "is continuing to investigate whether Life Corporation worked with or at the direction of any other persons or entities" when it sent the AI-generated robocalls.

In 2003, Life Corporation and Monk were sued by then-Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott over calling people on the state's do-not-call list, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram reported. Monk told the newspaper that "we don't know what they're talking about for sure," and the outcome of the case is unclear. The same year, the Federal Communications Commission issued Monk and Life Corporation, along with nine other individuals, a [*citation*](https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-237113A1.pdf) over unsolicited advertising calls.

According to the New Hampshire attorney general, Life Corporation used a Texas-based provider named Lingo Telecom to send the AI-generated robocalls, and Lingo suspended its services to Life Corporation after it learned the calls were being investigated.

Alex Valenci, Lingo's chief compliance officer, said in a statement that the company "had no involvement whatsoever in the production of the call content" and is cooperating with state and federal investigators.

The fake audio was created using an AI voice creation tool named ElevenLabs, according to two separate analyses by the security company [*Pindrop*](https://www.pindrop.com/blog/pindrop-reveals-tts-engine-behind-biden-ai-robocall) and by digital forensic experts at University of California, Berkeley.

ElevenLabs told CNN in a statement that it is "dedicated to preventing the misuse of audio AI tools" and that it takes appropriate action in response to reports by authorities, but declined to comment on the specific Biden deepfake call.

Hany Farid, a digital forensics expert and UC Berkeley professor who has studied artificial intelligence, said the robocall showed that authorities needed to take the threat of AI disinformation in ***politics*** seriously as the technology becomes more easily accessible.

"This attempt to interfere with our election was clumsy and it still took two weeks to track down those responsible," Farid said. "What is going to happen when the attack is more sophisticated and better financed and is launched 24 hours before Election Day?"

CNN's Yahya Abou-Ghazala and Allison Gordon contributed to this report.

By Casey Tolan, Donie O'Sullivan and Jeff Winter, CNN

TM & © 2024 Cable News Network, Inc., a Time Warner Company. All rights reserved.

**Load-Date:** February 8, 2024

**End of Document**