

From: [Canyon Woodward](#)
To: [Wayne, Jonathan](#)
Cc: [lcdc chair](#); [Dunn, Michael](#)
Subject: Critical information regarding investigation into push polling in District 13
Date: Thursday, October 15, 2020 5:58:22 PM
Attachments: [Screen Shot 2020-10-14 at 3.58.14 PM.png](#)
[Screen Shot 2020-10-14 at 4.01.17 PM.png](#)

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Dear Mr. Wayne,

I am writing to provide additional information relevant to the Staff's "Update on Investigation of Survey in State Senate District #13" that we received today. Tomorrow the Commissioners will be deliberating on this complaint. I am writing to communicate critical information in light of the Senate Republican caucus's admission that they sponsored the activities in question. The information contained in this communication speaks directly to the critical question of illegal independent expenditure coordination between the Maine Senate Republican Majority PAC and District 13 State Senate candidate Mr. Dow, who is also the Principle Officer of this PAC.

According to the Staff's update, "Joshua A. Tardy and Shawn Roderick, who coordinates political campaigns of Republican nominees for the Maine Senate,[...] explained that the research was funded through two payments by PACs associated with the Senate Republican caucus:

9/16/2020 | Maine Senate Republican Majority PAC | \$50,750.00
9/17/2020 | Maine Prosperity Alliance | \$2,500.00"

According to reporting by the Portland Press Herald following the Ethics Commission's unanimous decision to investigate, Dana Dow [denied any involvement](#) in this scheme. However, Mr. Dow is the Principle Officer of the Maine Senate Republican Majority PAC and therefore by definition according to Maine [election law](#) is "deemed to have participated in all spending decisions" by the PAC. The expenditures to pay for the phone and text advocacy in District 13 were clearly made to benefit Mr. Dow's campaign. Therefore his participation in the decision to make the expenditure by the PAC constitutes improper coordination with himself as a candidate.

The Ethics Commission Staff wrote the following in their initial report September 22nd: *"Based on our research of polling industry practices from Gallup, Pew Research, and the New York Times, Commission staff suggests that the Senate District #13 survey fails to make demographic inquiries consistent with standard polling industry practices. (Information from the Pew Research Center and the American Association for Public Opinion Research is attached on pages 9 ETH 21-42.) Lastly, based on the two operative questions staff agrees with the LCDC that the primary purpose of the poll may be to influence the voting position of the call recipients."*

The Payee behind these activities, Red Maverick Media, is not a polling firm and nowhere on its website does it list polling as a service that it provides. Red Maverick Media is a political

consultancy that specializes in unethical attacks against candidates.

On the front page of their website they showcase their mantra “Don't hit at all if it is honorably possible to avoid hitting. **BUT NEVER HIT SOFTLY.**”

And while they do not list polling as a service, they do advertise the following:

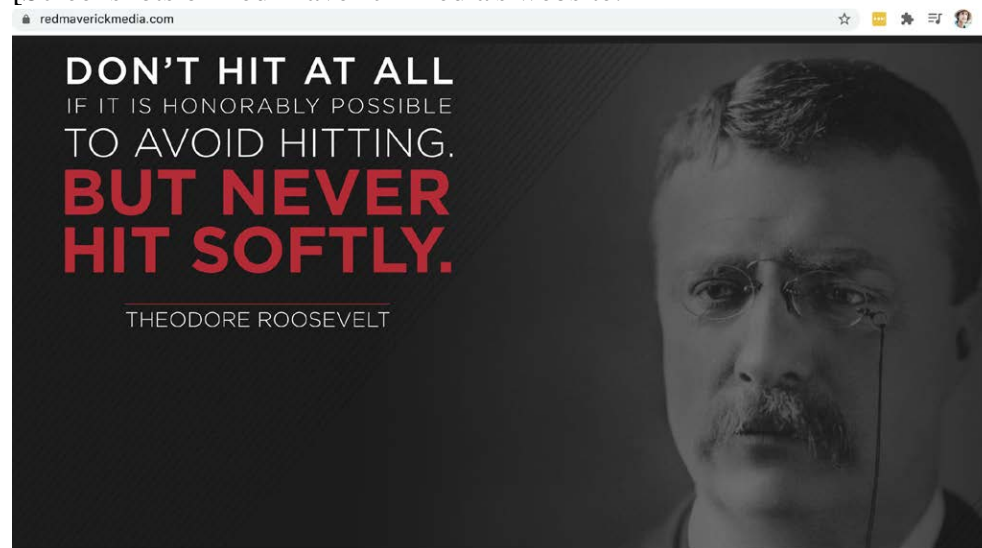
"TELEPHONE VOTER CONTACT

Making sure voters don't hang up. That's the Maverick difference.

*Telephone vendors are a dime a dozen in political campaigns. Everyone is always trying to tell you they can do it cheaper, but there aren't too many consultants who talk about how they can do it better—until Red Maverick Media. We know a strong phone program is an important part of any political campaign, but only if you do it right. **Using a mix of automated and live calls will make the voter aware of your message without becoming frustrated with the delivery. Just as important, we target the right voters with the message they need to hear, in the form they'll listen.** The right targets. The right message. The right delivery. The right price. That's the Maverick difference!"* (Emphasis added.)

The telephone voter contact delivered throughout District 13 by Red Maverick Media was intentionally disguised as a legitimate poll using a made up name "Public Opinion Research" with a dead-end phone number. This is obviously not in line with standard polling industry practices. Indeed, the calls were intended to deliver a message to District 13 voters in a way that would influence their voting position. The tactic that Red Maverick Media chose to accomplish this aim was to impersonate a legitimate public opinion poll. Clearly Red Maverick believed that this impersonation would achieve their stated goal to "target the right voters with the message they need to hear, in the form they'll listen."

[Screenshots of Red Maverick Media's website:



The screenshot shows a dark-themed website with four service cards. Each card features an icon, a title, a short paragraph, and a 'read more/less' link. The 'Telephone Voter Contact' link is highlighted with a blue border.

- ONLINE ENGAGEMENT**
If someone talks to you about New Media, don't hire them. At Red Maverick Media we talk about Online Engagement.
[read more/less](#)
- TELEVISION AND RADIO PRODUCTION**
Television and radio done the Maverick Way makes your campaign successful.
[read more/less](#)
- TELEPHONE VOTER CONTACT**
Making sure voters don't hang up. That's the Maverick difference.
[read more/less](#)
Telephone vendors are a dime a dozen in political campaigns. Everyone is always trying to tell you they can do it cheaper, but there aren't too many consultants who talk about how they can do it better—until Red Maverick Media. We know a strong phone program is an important part of any political campaign, but only if you do it right. Using a mix of automated and live calls will make the voter aware of your message without becoming frustrated with the delivery. Just as important, we target the right voters with the message they need to hear, in the form they'll listen. The right targets. The right message. The right delivery. The right price. That's the Maverick difference!
- FUNDRAISING**
You have to raise money to be successful. You have to be successful to raise money.
[read more/less](#)

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Canyon Woodward