

Lies About Abdul

A Citizen's Guide to the AIPAC Attack Ad

If you have turned on a TV in Michigan recently, you may have seen an ad claiming that Senate candidate Abdul El-Sayed has a “long history of disrespecting women.” The ad is funded by millions of dollars in spending from the United Democracy Project, a super PAC affiliated with AIPAC, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee.¹

AIPAC wants to defeat El-Sayed because he has called for ending U.S. military aid to Israel,² and has supported the consensus of human rights groups that Israel has committed genocide in Gaza. AIPAC has told its supporters that El-Sayed is a “direct threat to the U.S.-Israel relationship.”³

But AIPAC does not want Michigan voters to know that it is trying to defeat him over his criticism of Israel. They know that Democratic voters don't want their tax money going to fund bombs for Israel.⁴ So the ad isn't about Israel. Instead, it tries to portray El-Sayed as sexist.

Voters might wonder: ***Are the ad's claims accurate? Does El-Sayed really have a “long history of disrespecting women”?***

No. The ad is shamelessly lying. You can check the sources for its claims yourself. This is an effort to mislead voters in order to ensure that a pro-Israel candidate wins. They're blanketing the airwaves with it because they think you won't look into whether it's true or false. Here is a guide to what El-Sayed actually said, and how the AIPAC ad twists it.

THE AD SAYS

He called Michelle Obama's work with children “uninspired” and “ineffectual.”

THE FACTS

The quotes come from an op-ed about childhood obesity that El-Sayed wrote in 2010.⁵ The ad deliberately misquotes El-Sayed. As a public health expert, El-Sayed said that “America's political leadership” as a whole had been “uninspired” in addressing the obesity crisis among children. He then discussed Obama's “Let's Move” campaign as one of the few efforts to tackle the problem, calling the program “commendable, if ineffectual.” El-Sayed's point was that the “Let's Move” campaign had failed to reduce childhood obesity rates, which is true.⁶ El-Sayed praised Obama's work, writing that “to her credit, Obama has attempted to tackle the issue in a non-partisan manner.” But he said that Let's Move was flawed, since it emphasized individual choices over structural factors like access to healthy foods.

That's it. That's all he said. He mildly critiqued Michelle Obama's program (not Obama herself) after praising it. Yet the ad wants you to believe that this constitutes “disrespecting women.” Read his article for yourself and see if you think that's a fair way to describe it.

THE AD SAYS

El-Sayed claimed Gretchen Whitmer was “bought and sold.”

THE FACTS

When El-Sayed ran against Gretchen Whitmer for governor in 2018, he criticized her heavy ties to the health insurance industry.⁷ Whitmer’s father was the chief executive of Blue Cross Blue Shield, and his successor as CEO, Daniel Loepp, was the one who first encouraged Gretchen Whitmer to enter politics. Lobbyists for Blue Cross Blue Shield threw Whitmer a fundraiser that netted \$144,000 in a single day, and the company’s executives directly encouraged employees to attend Whitmer’s fundraiser.⁸

In the 2018 race, Whitmer was the only one of the three candidates who did not support single-payer healthcare, calling it “not realistic for Michigan.” Single-payer healthcare, which would replace private health insurance with a universal government insurance program, would be a major financial benefit to consumers, but devastating for the profits of corporations like Blue Cross Blue Shield.

El-Sayed did say that politicians like Whitmer (and not just Whitmer) were “bought and sold.” What he meant is that these corporations make heavy campaign contributions, and then the politicians serve their interests while in office. This criticism has nothing to do with Whitmer’s sex. It is a criticism of the financial interests behind her political rise.

THE AD SAYS

“In a discrimination lawsuit, El-Sayed was accused of telling a woman he didn’t want to work with anyone over 40.”

THE FACTS

El-Sayed has never faced a discrimination lawsuit. The ad deliberately misrepresents what actually happened, trying to make you think he was sued. He wasn’t. El-Sayed was quoted in a legal document in a discrimination lawsuit against the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, where he worked.⁹ Nowhere in the 150-page complaint is El-Sayed accused of doing anything discriminatory. El-Sayed was only reported to have said he was enthusiastic to be working with a young team. And the ad doesn’t even quote him correctly. He was not accused of saying that he “didn’t want to work with” anyone over 40, but that he was excited that everyone on the team was under 40.

Note that this has nothing to do with “disrespecting women.” El-Sayed is not accused of saying *anything* sexist. His supposed remark (it was overheard, so we don’t know the exact words of it) was just about being excited to work with other under-40s. Nobody claimed he discriminated against old people. Perhaps you think the comment is unfair to older people, and he shouldn’t have felt this way. But being excited to be around other young people is quite typical for young people. Now that El-Sayed himself is over 40, he probably thinks a little differently!

THE AD SAYS

“An employee said he was offered payment to keep silent after witnessing El-Sayed disparaging women.”

THE FACTS

The employee was a member of El-Sayed’s security team, Jordan Domingue, who resigned earlier this year. He told the *Michigan Enjoyer* that he was offered compensation in exchange for signing a separation

agreement.¹⁰ But he did not say that agreement was offered because El-Sayed disparaged women and wanted to cover it up. Instead, Domingue indicated that he was a supporter of Israel, and he resigned out of concerns that El-Sayed had “concerning foreign policy positions” and was too sympathetic to Israel’s enemies. He didn’t sign a non-disparagement agreement because he wanted to be free to “warn voters” that El-Sayed was too anti-Israel, citing El-Sayed’s decision to campaign with leftist streamer Hasan Piker.

Domingue’s tweets, which the ad cites as its source, do not quote any specific statements by El-Sayed “disparaging women,” but they do repeatedly accuse him of being sympathetic to Hamas and Hezbollah. Domingue did claim that El-Sayed once used “offensive language” when discussing opponent Mallory McMorrow, but did not specify what El-Sayed supposedly said.¹¹ Elsewhere, Domingue said he suspected that El-Sayed once said something “offensive or misogynistic” in a private meeting with Gretchen Whitmer, but admitted he had not been in the meeting and was purely guessing.¹²

Once again, we see that a controversy supposedly about sexism is actually about El-Sayed’s opposition to U.S. military aid to Israel.

The ad concludes: “A history of disrespecting women: That’s the real Abdul El-Sayed.”

But as you can see, there is no evidence that Abdul El-Sayed has ever disrespected women. AIPAC has tried to find the most damning examples from El-Sayed’s entire career. **And they have come up with nothing.**

SOURCES — CHECK THEM YOURSELF

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4. “Poll Finds Nearly Three-Quarters of Democratic Voters Oppose Aid to Israel,” *Al Jazeera*, May 21, 2026.
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6. “US Child and Teen Obesity Rates Reach Record High,” *ABC News*, Feb. 24, 2026.
7. Zaid Jilani, “A Blue Cross CEO Encouraged a Michigan Woman to Get Into Politics. Now She’s Running for Governor and Says Single Payer Is Unrealistic,” *The Intercept*, July 18, 2018.
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9. *Complaint against the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai (PDF)*, filed Oct. 28, 2022.
10. “El-Sayed’s Former Chief Security Officer Says He’s Unfit for Senate,” *Michigan Enjoyer*, April 1, 2026.
11. Jordan Domingue, *post on X regarding Mallory McMorrow*, March 18, 2026.
12. Jordan Domingue, *post on X regarding a private meeting with Gretchen Whitmer*, March 8, 2026.

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