

Senate Hopeful Takes Credit for Warren's 2020 Dropout

ZACK HUFFMAN March 13, 2018



BOSTON (CN) – An ex-Republican frontrunner for the U.S. Senate race in Massachusetts is taking credit for the surprise announcement by Senator Elizabeth Warren that she will not run for president in 2020.

Shiva Ayyadurai, who is running now as an Independent, has made Warren's ancestry a focal point of his Senate campaign. In the year since announcing his candidacy, the Mumbai-born biomedical engineer has sent Warren two DNA kits to corner the progressive senator about whether she has Native American heritage.

"My bold and relentless DNA-test challenge has scared the hell out of not only Elizabeth Warren but also the Massachusetts GOP establishment," Ayyadurai said in a phone interview Tuesday. "They both know that only a real Indian can defeat the fake Indian."

As a vocal critic of President Donald Trump, Warren has long been considered a potential contender for the Democratic nomination in 2020. She put that buzz to rest on Saturday, however, in an interview with Chuck Todd on NBC's "Meet The Press," and then again while speaking with Jim Acosta on CNN, saying she will instead focus on her 2018 re-election campaign.

Before refiling as an Independent, Ayyadurai was one of five declared potential GOP opponents in the Massachusetts Senate race, which also includes a sitting state representative and the founder of Better for America, which advocates for third-party access to statewide ballots.

An estranged second husband to the actress Fran Drescher, Ayyadurai may be new to the political scene but is well practiced in the public spotlight.

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology graduate has drawn controversy for purporting to have invented email — a claim he has attempted to bolster with [multiple lawsuits](#) against publications that [dispute](#) the title.

Ayyadurai first sent Warren a home DNA test in July 2017 but his campaign did not become national news until the [editorial board at the Berkshire Eagle](#) joined in the call. Having previously endorsed Warren for her first term in 2012, the Eagle editorial writers recommended that Warren take a DNA test to move past the issue.

The controversy over Warren's heritage goes back to her 2012 campaign against Republican incumbent Scott Brown. During the election, The Boston Herald uncovered a 1996 [article](#) from Harvard University's student newspaper The Crimson, which touted then-professor

CNS Trends



[Jury Convicts NY Governor's Ex-Top Aide of Corruption](#)



[Charlottesville Car Attack Witness Sues Alex Jones, Others](#)



[Spat Over 'Stairway to Heaven' Riff Hits Ninth Circuit](#)



[Zinke Defends Budget Cuts Amid Travel Spending Flap](#)



[Study of Artificially Elongated Skulls Breaks Ground on Medieval Migration](#)



[Judge Slams Fake Drug Houses But Won't Toss Criminal Charges](#)



[Expert Slammed for New Figures in Kansas Voter ID Trial](#)



[Freezer Meltdown at Fertility Clinic Spurs Class Actions](#)



[Millionaire New Yorkers to Rally in Albany for Tax Hike](#)

CNS Feed

Warren as an example of diversity among the faculty. The article came at a time when Harvard was under fire for lacking diversity.

As the Herald [hammered](#) Warren with almost daily articles or editorials on the issue, national conservative outlets quickly pounced on the narrative, adding racially charged nicknames such as "Fauxcahontas" and "Spouting Bull." While the charges put Warren on the defensive, they eventually backfired on Brown when his campaign staffers were [caught on camera](#) at a rally shouting war whoops and doing tomahawk chops to mock Warren.

Brown has since apologized for the actions of his staff, but President Trump has kept the scandal going by repeatedly referring to the senator as "Pocahontas."

As far back as 2012, Warren has consistently said that she was told by her grandparents, while growing up in Oklahoma, that they had Native American ancestors.

Warren has never attempted to present anything more than anecdotal evidence, but at the same time, opponents have never been able to produce evidence that Warren benefitted professionally or academically by claiming to be part Native American.

A spokesperson for Warren's re-election campaign declined to comment on either her heritage or her White House prospects for 2020.

Supporters may be disappointed by Warren's absence from the presidential campaign trail, but optimism for her Senate re-election remains high.

"She is running for re-election in 2018. That is a fact that we are inspired by," Adam Green, co-founder of the Progressive Change Campaign Committee, said in an email. "One way or another, 2020 will take care of itself later — and Democrats will be best served by running a bold, inspiring, economic populist candidate who campaigns on fighting our broken economic and political system."

Related

[GOP Invokes Obscure Senate Rule to Silence Warren During Sessions Debate](#)
February 8, 2017
In "Government"

[Trump, Honoring Navajos, Revives 'Pocahontas' Jab at Warren](#)
November 27, 2017
In "Government"

[Booker, Warren Galvanize at Conference of Health Care Advocates](#)
January 25, 2018
In "Congress"

[Return To Top](#)

[Columns](#) · [Law](#) · [National](#) · [Regional](#) · [International](#) · [About Us](#) · [Terms of Use](#) · [Privacy Policy](#)

Courthouse News
@CourthouseNews

Researcher Takes Heat for Study at Heart of Voter ID Trial [bit.ly/2DoELj6](#) @JonParton_



♡ ↗ 8h

Courthouse News
@CourthouseNews

Students Enjoy Broad Support for Planned Protest of Gun Violence [bit.ly/2p9rA1b](#) @mxm_chi

