

**US presidential election 2024**

## Donald Trump donor pours cash into Robert Kennedy Jr's White House run

Federal filings show businessman Timothy Mellon gave \$5mn to back Biden rival's presidential bid



Democratic presidential candidate Robert F Kennedy Jr attends The World Values Network's Presidential Candidate Series in New York City last week © Amr Alfiky/Reuters

**James Politi** in Washington and **Sam Learner** in New York YESTERDAY

---

A top Republican donor to Donald Trump's past presidential campaigns is helping to bankroll Robert F Kennedy Jr's long-shot White House bid, as conservative cash keeps flowing to Joe Biden's main challenger for the Democratic nomination.

According to federal filings released on Monday, Timothy Mellon gave \$5mn to American Values, the main political action committee, or outside spending group, supporting Kennedy's White House bid. Mellon, 81, is the grandson of Andrew Mellon, the former US Treasury secretary and senior banker, and a former executive in the transportation and infrastructure sector.

Mellon's support for Kennedy highlights the extent to which Biden's rival is [attracting money and sympathy](#) from conservative circles as he tries to mount a credible fight for the party's nomination.

Kennedy's scepticism of vaccinations and questioning of US support for Ukraine's war effort have drawn support from some Republicans, who also see his candidacy as likely to weaken [Biden](#) heading into the general election. Mellon was one of Trump's top donors in previous election cycles and has championed stringent curbs on immigration that are typically opposed by Democrats.

Kennedy, who is the nephew of the late former president John F Kennedy, has drawn criticism for espousing a number of conspiracy theories, most recently when a tape emerged of him claiming that Covid-19 was “ethnically targeted” to spare Ashkenazi Jews and Chinese people.

He remains [far from posing a serious threat](#) to Biden in the race for the Democratic nomination. According to the Realclearpolitics.com polling average, Biden has the backing of 63.2 per cent of Democrats, whereas Kennedy is supported by 13.7 per cent — a level that has steadily declined after reaching 20 per cent in early May.

But if Kennedy has enough funding to keep his White House bid alive, he could become a thorn in Biden's side, [forcing the Democrat leader to spend](#) energy and campaign money that he would otherwise have deployed in the general election.

Overall, American Values raised \$9.8mn in the first six months of the year, according to the federal filings, and an additional \$6.5mn in July, according to its press release.

The other top donor to the PAC was Gavin de Becker, a security consultant close to billionaire tech executive Jeff Bezos, who has previously donated to Democrats and Republicans. De Becker gave \$4.5mn to American Values.

Other top Kennedy supporters include Patrick Byrne, the former chief executive of Overstock.com, and venture capitalist Chamath Palihapitiya, as well as a large contribution from a group funded by Silicon Valley investor David Sacks.

---

[Copyright](#) The Financial Times Limited 2023. All rights reserved.

---