

Key tech investor leaves VC firm amid harassment claims

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Shervin Pischevar, an early Uber investor and a founder of high-speed transport startup Hyperloop One, said Thursday he is breaking ties with his Silicon Valley venture capital firm to fight sexual harassment allegations.

The decision came less than two weeks after the prominent tech industry investor took a leave of absence from Sherpa Capital, Virgin Hyperloop One and the boards of companies in his investment portfolio to pursue a lawsuit he hopes will show he is the target of a "smear campaign."

"I have decided on my own accord to end my association with Sherpa Capital, effective immediately," Pischevar said in a released statement.

"I refuse to allow my enemies to drag my Sherpa family into their fight with me."

Pischevar has denied claims by several women of [sexual harassment](#).

Five women told Bloomberg News that Pischevar sexually assaulted or harassed them while meeting them in a professional context. Some of the alleged events took place as early as 2013.

Pischevar allegedly groped a sixth woman, an executive at the Uber ride-sharing company.

Pischevar, co-founder and managing director of Sherpa Capital, is

considered one of the most powerful investors in Silicon Valley.

He was an early [investor](#) in Uber as well as the vacation rental firm Airbnb.

As an Uber board member and adviser, the Iranian-American Pischevar defended founder Travis Kalanick during a probe into misconduct at the ridesharing firm.

Silicon Valley and many of its venture capitalists have long faced accusations of sexism and of turning a blind eye to sexual harassment.

But after a former Uber employee revealed she had been sexually harassed at the company, more women in the technology industries came forward with similar claims.

The revelations are part of a watershed moment in the United States that has seen powerful figures in Hollywood, journalism and politics felled over sexual misconduct claims.

Richard Branson's Virgin Group announced last month an investment in Hyperloop One in a partnership aimed at establishing rail transport at near-supersonic speeds in sealed tubes.

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