

WILL MI DEMOCRATS CHAMPION WOMEN'S RIGHTS AS SANTORUM SURGES THROUGH OUR STATE?

[YouTube]dZJ3KnxG5xM[/youtube]

I noted the other day how tired I am of MI's Democrats asking women to ignore the anti-choice stance of so many of our Democrats, a stance which led to MI Democrat Bart Stupak dictating what kind of medical insurance women across the country can get.

Well, in the next 2 weeks, the party will have the opportunity to take the same stand the President just took and the same stand former Governor Jennifer Granholm, herself a Catholic, has taken, solidly in favor of health equality for women.

Over the next two weeks, of course, Rick Santorum will be wandering around our state, trying to score a decisive victory against Mitt Romney by preaching that women should not be encouraged to work outside the home, that women should not serve in combat for fear it would distract their male counterparts from doing their jobs, that women who are raped should "make the best" of it by carrying their rapist's child, and, yes, that health insurance should not cover contraception. In short, Santorum will be calling for downright regressive treatment of women as a way to beat Mitt in his home state.

Not even Republican women support these extreme stances.

All that might not matter for Democrats—we might have the luxury of sitting back and laughing at their contest—except for one thing. Rick Santorum will also, as he has been doing, distinguish himself from Mitt Romney by

championing manufacturing. Our issue.
Manufacturing.

And while his policies wouldn't actually help manufacturing as much as, say, cracking down on China's cheating would, he will nevertheless be speaking to the plight of those working in manufacturing, even while preaching against the autonomy and equality of women.

If Santorum wins—as he is poised to do—this year's electoral match-up may actually get decided here in MI. This year's electoral match-up may get defined, at least locally, in the next two weeks. And that means it's time to lay out what Democrats—what all people who believe women should not be second class citizens—stand for.

While Santorum wanders around our state we absolutely have to remind voters that the new manufacturing jobs were brought by Granholm's outreach and Obama's energy investments. We absolutely have to remind Michiganders that Santorum also opposed the auto bailout.

But I hope we're also making that case that whereas Santorum believes in the dignity of just half the electorate, there is a party that champions—or damn well better champion—the dignity of all the electorate.