

MICHIGAN TRUTH SQUAD



MICHIGAN TRUTH SQUAD ANALYSIS: "JOBS"

Who: Rick Snyder

Elected office seeking: Governor

Party: Republican

Primary or general election ad: Primary

Featured campaign material: TV ad

QUESTIONABLE STATEMENTS:

"Let's start from scratch. Throw out the high taxes,

[The Tax Foundation](#) shows that Michigan's state and local taxes rank 27th highest in the nation in tax burden, taking 9.4 percent of personal income, compared to a national average of 9.7 percent. The state with the lowest unemployment and highest per capita income in the Midwest, Minnesota, has a tax burden of 10.2 percent.

...silly regulations

It's not clear what regulations Snyder considers "silly." He is not specific. Would he throw out regulations that ensure food is pure? Air and water pollution regulations? Requirements that barbers and hair stylists be licensed? [His website](#) flashes on screen, so viewers could read his white papers on this and other subjects if they're so inclined. But even there, he doesn't say what "silly regulations" he would "throw out."

He has proposed to substantially reduce the time it takes for the state to provide air and water pollution permits, but do to so would likely reduce or eliminate the ability for the public to make input into those decisions. And he also says on his website he wants to protect Michigan's natural environment, including efforts to protect against invasive species – steps that will likely mean more regulations.

and bring in tough, smart management. (Type on screen): "Let's create jobs. Now."

As governor, he does have the power to hire advisers and department heads and could bring in "tough, smart management." But it's hard to see how he will find the best management, given the relatively low salaries paid to top state officials compared to comparable positions in the private sector. For instance, the head of the state Department of Public Health oversees a \$13 billion budget, has 4,000 employees, and makes about \$160,000. The [heads of hospitals in the Mid-Michigan area](#) are paid up to five times as much.

"No politician can do that."

Why not? These are pretty standard Republican ideas shared by all five GOP gubernatorial candidates. This also was the agenda of former Gov. John Engler, who served as politician for 32 years and is considered a great success by his party.

"I know how to make businesses grow and thrive. We don't have time to try another politician." (Type on screen): "Reform taxes to create jobs. Cut regulations. Create good, permanent jobs. Treat citizens like customers. Manage Michigan like a business."

Snyder is making the case that his business experience qualifies him to be governor, but he doesn't make the connection about how his private sector triumphs will translate into success in the public sector. At one point in his career, Snyder was president Gateway, [a computer company that had more than \\$6 billion in revenues. The state's budget is \\$44 billion](#), funding diverse areas including the environment, Medicaid, 551 school districts, 1,242 townships, 83 counties, 15 universities, 28 community colleges, natural resources, the judiciary, community health, food assistance and more.

The ad again lists broad ideas, like reforming taxes, creating "good, permanent" jobs and treating citizens like customers. The viewer isn't given any information about how Snyder will accomplish those goals as governor.

OVERALL IMPRESSION:

This is the sixth TV ad for Rick Snyder and this one again stresses his business experience. He might be onto something here, as fed-up voters would probably like a blank slate. And his ideas to cut taxes, cut regulations and create good, permanent jobs are probably popular, too. The problem is, viewers are left wondering, "Where's the beef?" We don't know how he'll accomplish such big feats. And we don't know how being a businessman uniquely qualifies him to do this, as opposed to being a politician. Viewers also are left with the impression that the governor can make all this happen quickly. In reality, the governor can propose legislation, but lawmakers must pass it. And it's rarely a speedy process.

FOUL OR NO FOUL:

Warning for lack of specifics on Snyder's economic plan and implying he'll be able to create jobs "now" if he's governor.