



As the Michigan Republican presidential primary approaches on February 28, Detroit native and presidential candidate Mitt Romney faces a showdown with former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum.

Santorum has become a formidable challenger to Romney since [his unexpected primary win in Colorado, Minnesota and Missouri](#) on February 7.

Just a few weeks ago in Michigan, where Romney handily won that state's 2008 Republican primary, Romney seemed certain as the winner. Latest polls however show Romney and Santorum sparring for first place across several polls. This places Romney in a stiff fight to win in the state where his father was a former governor, and in a primary where every delegate vote becomes the turning point of this year's election.

The enduring doubt that prevails within the Republican party as it selects a suitable candidate signals the process could last until the last primary in Utah on June 26, or even through to the Republican National Convention in Tampa, Florida in August. If by then, neither of the remaining candidates have the required 1144 delegates, an alternative candidate could be brokered from the convention floor.

This dramatic change within the Republican primary race exposes an underlining dilemma for the Republican Party, of what kind of candidate best reflects current party ideals – a conservative to the core, or a more moderate representative that could win wider support. While some conservative Republicans doubt Romney's conservatism, many still believe his diverse legislative record makes him the best candidate to win majority public appeal for 2012 general elections. In a USA Today/Gallup Poll survey done recently, 54 percent of those polled believed Romney has the best chance of winning the general elections, versus 29 percent for Santorum.

Meanwhile, Santorum portrays himself as a true conservative, gearing the tone of the campaign toward a politically polarizing religious platform, using biblically potent language to support his arguments. He has criticized the current administration for its stance on requiring that health insurance from religious employers provides female employees birth control. Santorum also objects to the administration's recent decision to reject the Keystone Pipeline, arguing that it is a policy that "elevates the Earth above man."

On Sunday, Ron Paul in an interview on CNN's State of the Union said he doubted Santorum could beat Obama and doubted Santorum's claim of genuine conservatism.

"Well, I don't see how that's possible," says Paul on a Santorum win over Obama. "I don't see how anybody can get away with that inconsistency pretending he's a conservative. And his voting record is...an atrocious voting record, how liberal he's been in all the things he's voted for over the many years he was in the Senate and in the House."