

## **Pro Romney Super PAC Launches New Ads**

Struggling to maintain his frontrunner status, Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney is using his fundraising prowess to try to boost his image. A super PAC supporting Romney is going on the air with ads in eight states.

The Restore our Future super PAC is spending \$1.5 million in advertising in states that will hold primaries in February and March. The new wave of spending could serve to combat the growing popularity of former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum, who is now running head to head with Romney in national polls, propelled by support from conservative and Tea Party voters. Restore our Future spokeswoman Brittany Gross would not say which ads would air in any of the states, and whether they would attack Santorum. The super PAC has so far been mostly attacking former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, who previously seemed to be Romney's most formidable opponent.

The biggest ad buy is in Michigan, where the super PAC is spending \$640,000 in broadcast advertising. Already, Restore our Future is running a TV ad there attacking Gingrich for his "baggage," including the growth of earmark spending while he was speaker and his teaming up with former Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi for an ad on global warming.

The Romney campaign also announced a new TV ad buy in Michigan, a positive spot featuring Romney's childhood in Michigan and expressing his support for the auto industry. As is becoming increasingly typical of campaigns, the Romney campaign has released mostly positive ad spots, leaving the negative advertising to the super PAC.

Other Restore Our Future ad buys include: \$121,000 for broadcast and cable TV ads in Arizona; \$252,000 for TV and radio ads in Ohio; and \$184,000 for TV, cable, and radio ads in Tennessee. A series of smaller TV-only ad buys include \$118,000 in Georgia; \$84,000 in Alabama; \$68,000 in Mississippi; and \$40,000 in Oklahoma.

Arizona votes Feb. 28. Oklahoma, Tennessee, Ohio, and Georgia all vote on Super Tuesday, March 6. Mississippi and Alabama vote March 13. Georgia, Tennessee, and Alabama are all states where Gingrich plans to have a strong presence.

Though Romney is struggling to get the support of conservative voters, the new advertising blitz illustrates one major strength that Romney has: fundraising. The super PAC supporting Romney raised more than \$30 million as of the end of the 2011, while the super PAC supporting Gingrich had raised \$2 million (the \$10 million in contributions from the Sheldon Adelson family came after Jan. 1), and the super PAC supporting Santorum had raised less than \$1 million. While Santorum in particular has seen his fundraising surge along with his popularity, he will have a long way to go to catch up with Romney.

