

## REPUBLICAN LAWMAKER TODD AKIN RELEASES WEB AD: EXPRESSES REGRET FOR OFFENSIVE RAPE REMARKS



Forced by the outrage his insensitive remarks have caused and by the criticism from even his own peers, Republican Senatorial candidate Todd Akin, released a TV spot that perhaps will help undo some of the damage the inflammatory remarks have brought in their wake. Answering questions regarding the need for abortions in the case of rape, he said that it was a difficult question to answer, because a woman has it in her to avoid pregnancy after legitimate rape. He had infamously said, "If it's a legitimate rape, the female body has ways to try to shut that whole thing down." If that wasn't enough and reflective of a rather flippant attitude towards such a serious subject he went to say, in spite of the options available to the victim, she still gets pregnant, even then abortion should not be a legal option available to the rape victim. "Let's assume that maybe that didn't work, or something," Akin said. "I think there should be some punishment, but the punishment ought to be on the rapist and not attacking the child." The remarks put his candidacy in danger with even senior Republicans condemning his remarks and asked him to step down from the race. In damage control mode, in the ad he says, "Rape is an evil act. I used the wrong words in the wrong way, and for that I apologize." "The fact is, rape can lead to pregnancy. The truth is, rape has many victims. The mistake I made was in the words I said, not in the heart I hold. I ask for your forgiveness," he added. He went on to say that he understands the trauma of the victims and their families for he to is a father of two daughters. He said that he advocated severe punishments for rapists and expressed sympathy for victims. Whether the apology is enough, only time will tell, but it has reinserted the debate of abortions in the ongoing presidential campaign. Akin is the Republican challenger running against Democratic Senator Claire McCaskill in the Nov. 6 election. Tuesday is the last day for candidates to file in the Missouri race. If for some reasons Akin withdraws under pressure, the Republicans will be left with barely a day to announce a replacement. Moreover, his comments have become a dampener for the Republicans ahead of the Republican convention next week to nominate Mitt Romney for U.S. president. Romney's main focus is on economy and jobs and Obama's inability to deal with them. Akin's remarks and the controversy that it has raised has put the focus on social issues, diluting Romney's economic thrust considerably. However, a poll taken late on Monday night, predicted a neck-to-neck race between the two. Findings from Public Policy Polling showed that Akin was ahead of McCaskill by a very narrow margin and that, even though it was slender, the controversy had not affected it as adversely as one presumed. Romney on Monday condemned Akin's remarks and called them "insulting, inexcusable, and, frankly wrong." President Barack Obama and other Democrats also said that Akin's remarks were offensive. President Obama said, "Rape is rape...And the idea that we should be parsing and qualifying and slicing what types of rape we're talking about doesn't make sense to the American people and certainly doesn't make sense to me."