

# March

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A piece of chalk art outside the library quoted Ruth Bader Ginsburg: "Women belong in all places where decisions are being made."

The Saturday march was bookended by speeches from DFL-endorsed candidates and local St. Cloud candidates.

Before the march, event organizer Mary Smith introduced St. Cloud school board candidates Andrea Preppernau and Omar Abdullahi Podi, St. Cloud City Council candidate Hassan Yussuf and St. Cloud mayoral candidate Steven Schiller.

At the end of the march at the Stearns County courthouse, Minnesota House District 14A Candidate Tami Calhoun, Minnesota Senate District 14A Candidate Eric Putnam and Dan Wolgamott, D-St. Cloud, spoke to the crowd. "We want to live in a Minnesota where women are free to make their own health care decisions," Wolgamott said.

He touted his work in co-authoring bills to clarify laws against sexual assault and his support for an equal rights amendment to the Minnesota constitution, which drew cheers from the marchers.

Putnam said the coming election is "existential in nature."

"Every part of St. Cloud must thrive for any of us to thrive," he said.

From the courthouse steps, Calhoun said "I don't understand why there was ever a question about women voting. ... I don't understand why we still don't get equal pay for equal work."

Calhoun characterized her race against incumbent Tama Theis as a fight to remove supporters of President Donald Trump from office. "We can't just vote for a woman just because she's a woman," Calhoun said. "My opponent supports Donald Trump ... and she doesn't stand up for women's rights."

"We need to stand up to men who degrade women to keep us down," Calhoun said.

She closed her speech with a jab at one such degrading phrase. "In 17 days, we're going to grab you by the ballot," she said.

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Marchers make their way toward the Stearns County Courthouse during the St. Cloud Women's March on Saturday in downtown St. Cloud. PHOTOS BY DAVE SCHWARZ/ST. CLOUD TIMES



People hold signs and a flag during the march, which was bookended by speeches from candidates.



A chalk drawing of Ruth Bader Ginsburg adorns a section of sidewalk as people gather for the St. Cloud Women's March in downtown St. Cloud.

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