



## **My Drift**

**Title: Kristi Noem**

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**Date: 1 Feb 2024**

**Article Number: (447-2024-6)**



**Governor Kristi Noem – South Dakota**

Well, here we are in 2024, another election year. And I'm sorry to say it looks like the same two old fogies are going to be running for president again. Joe Biden is old (age 81) and appears to be going senile. Donald Trump is old (he will be 78 in June 2024) and arrogant. I don't like the way Biden has handled the border disaster and I didn't like the way President Trump handled the January 6, 2021, Capitol Building riot.

Maybe it is time for the United States to elect a women president. Maybe an attractive, young, and smart women like Kristi Noem.

### **BIO**

**Kristi Lynn Noem** was born on November 30, 1971 (age 52) and became the 33rd governor of South Dakota in 2019. A member of the Republican Party, she was the U.S. representative for South Dakota's at-large congressional district from 2011 to 2019, and a member of the South Dakota House of Representatives for the 6th district from 2007 to 2011.

Noem is South Dakota's first female governor. During the 2018 election, she was endorsed by President Donald Trump. As governor, Noem rose to national prominence during the COVID-19 pandemic over her refusal to issue a statewide mandate to wear face masks.

### **Early life and education**

**Kristi Noem** was born to Ron and Corinne Arnold in Watertown, South Dakota, and was raised with her siblings on their family ranch and farm in rural Hamlin County. She has Norwegian ancestry. Noem graduated from Hamlin High School in 1990 and was crowned South Dakota Snow Queen that year.

Noem's father was killed in a farm machinery accident in 1994. Noem attended Northern State University from 1990 to 1994 but did not graduate. Her daughter, Kassidy, was born on April 21, 1994. Noem left college early to run the family farm. She added a hunting lodge and restaurant to the family property.



**South Dakota Snow Queen**



**Her siblings also moved back to help expand the businesses. Noem subsequently took classes at the Watertown campus of Mount Marty College and at South Dakota State University, and online classes from the University of South Dakota. She completed her degree in political science at SDSU in 2012 while serving in Congress.**

### **Personal life**

**She married Bryon Noem in 1992, in Watertown, South Dakota. They have three children. In 2011, when Noem moved to Washington to take her congressional office, her family continued to live on a ranch near Castlewood, South Dakota.**

**Noem is a Protestant, and her family attended a Foursquare Church in Watertown, South Dakota.**



### **Family**



## Hobbies



**Fishing**



**Hunting**



**Horseback Riding**





### **Motorcycle Riding**

#### **South Dakota House of Representatives**

**In 2006, Noem won a seat as a Republican in the South Dakota House of Representatives, representing the 6th district (comprising parts of Beadle, Clark, Codington, Hamlin, and Kingsbury counties). In 2006, she won with 39% of the vote. In 2008, she was reelected with 41%.**

**Noem served for four years, from 2007 to 2010; she was an assistant majority leader during her second term. During her tenure, Noem was the prime sponsor of 11 bills that became law, including several property tax reforms and two bills to increase gun rights in South Dakota. In 2009, she served as vice chair of the Agriculture Land Assessment Advisory Task Force. Senator Larry Rhoden chaired the task force and later served as her lieutenant governor.**

**In 2010, Noem ran for South Dakota's at-large seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. She won the Republican primary with a plurality of 42 percent of the vote against South Dakota Secretary of State Chris Nelson and State Representative Blake Curd. Her primary opponents endorsed her in the general election.**

**Noem's opponent, incumbent Democratic U.S. Congresswoman Stephanie Herseth Sandlin, emphasized her own record of independence from the Democratic caucus, including her votes against health care reform, the Wall Street bailouts, and the cap-and-trade energy bill. In response, Noem repeatedly highlighted Herseth Sandlin's vote for Nancy Pelosi as Speaker of**

the House. During the 2010 election cycle, Noem outraised Herseth Sandlin, \$2.3 million to \$2.1 million. Noem defeated Herseth Sandlin, 48 to 46 percent.

She won re-election to the United States House of Representatives in 2012, 2014, and 2016.

### **Governor**

**Kristi Noem has been Governor of South Dakota since 2019.**



**Governor Kristi Noem**

## **Kristi Noem's Views on the Issues**

### **Energy and environment**

Noem has said that the U.S. needs an "all-of-the-above energy approach" that includes renewables like wind and ethanol while still realizing the need for a "balanced energy mix" that ends American dependence on foreign oil.

Noem supported the Keystone XL Pipeline and supports offshore oil drilling. She co-sponsored three bills that she argued would reduce American dependence on foreign oil by ending the 2010 United States deepwater drilling moratorium in the Gulf of Mexico and reopening sales on oil leases in the Gulf and off the coast of Virginia.

Noem opposed a bill introduced by South Dakota Senator Tim Johnson that would designate over 48,000 acres of the Buffalo Gap National Grassland as protected wilderness. She supports the current designation of the land as a national grassland. She pointed out that the land is already managed as roadless areas similar to wilderness and argued that changing the land's designation to wilderness would further limit leaseholder access to the land and imperil grazing rights.

### **Foreign affairs**

From 2013 to 2015, Noem served on the House Armed Services Committee, where she worked on the 2014 National Defense Authorization Act. Her appointment to the committee was seen as a benefit to South Dakota's Ellsworth Air Force Base. In March 2011, Noem was critical of President Barack Obama's approach to the NATO-led military intervention in the 2011 Libyan civil war, calling on him to provide more information about the U.S.'s role in the conflict and characterizing his statements as vague and ambiguous.

### **Health care**

Noem opposes the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) and has voted to repeal it. Having unsuccessfully sought to repeal it, she sought to defund it while retaining measures such as the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, the provision allowing parents to keep their children on their health insurance plan into their 20s, and the high-risk pools. Noem wanted to add such provisions to federal law as limits on medical malpractice lawsuits and allowing patients to buy health insurance plans from other states.

## **Immigrants and refugees**



**South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem got a firsthand view of the border disaster on a Texas State Patrol boat near the U.S. border with Mexico on Friday, Jan. 26, 2024. Noem casted the Texas border as a war zone when describing the migrant crisis problem.**

**In June 2021, Noem announced that she was sending members of the South Dakota National Guard to Texas's border with Mexico. Tennessee billionaire Willis Johnson and his wife Reba said they would donate the money necessary for the deployment. On September 22, 2021, the Center for Public Integrity sued the South Dakota National Guard and the U.S. Department of Defense in the federal district court in the District of Columbia to obtain documents about the deployment and the donation. The 2022 National Defense Authorization Act banned National Guard members from crossing state borders to perform duties paid for by private donors.**

**Noem supported President Donald Trump's 2017 Executive Order 13769 that suspended the U.S. refugee program for 120 days and banned all travel to the U.S. by nationals of seven Muslim-majority countries for 90 days. She said she supported a temporary ban on accepting refugees from "terrorist-held" areas, but "did not address whether she supports other aspects of the order, which led to the detention of legal U.S. residents such as green-card holders and people with dual citizenship as they reentered the country" in the aftermath of the order's issuance.**



## **Taxes**

In 2017, Noem was on the conference committee that negotiated the passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which she touted as giving the average South Dakota family a \$1,200 tax cut.

In 2018, Noem was reported to have "pitched the idea to members of the conservative House Freedom Caucus" to attach her online sales tax bill to the government funding package as part of an omnibus. A court case under consideration in the South Dakota Supreme Court involved requiring "certain out-of-state retailers to collect its sales taxes." Noem said that South Dakota businesses (and by extension businesses nationwide) "could be forced to comply with 1,000 different tax structures nationwide without the tools necessary to do so", adding that her legislation "provides a necessary fix."

Noem has called the budget deficit one of the most important issues facing Congress. She cosponsored H. J. Res. 2, which would require that total spending for any fiscal year not exceed total receipts. She cited the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Veterans Affairs, Medicaid, high-speed rail projects, cap-and-trade technical assistance, and subsidies for the Washington Metro rapid transit system as examples of federal programs where she would like to see cuts.

In 2011, Noem indicated that she would vote to raise the federal debt ceiling, but only if "tied to budget reforms that change the way we spend our dollars and how Washington, D.C., does business. It won't just be a one-time spending cut." She ultimately voted for S. 365, The Budget Control Act of 2011, which allowed Obama to raise the debt ceiling in exchange for spending cuts to be decided by a bipartisan committee. She also said she wanted to eliminate the estate tax, lower the corporate tax rate, and simplify the tax code. She said she would not raise taxes to balance the budget.

## **Abortion**

Noem is anti-abortion. She has the support of the anti-abortion group Susan B. Anthony List and has said she intends to maintain her 100% anti-abortion voting record.

Noem has signed several bills restricting abortion, saying that the bills would "crack down on abortion providers in South Dakota". She also said, "A strong and growing body of medical research provides evidence that unborn babies

**can feel, think, and recognize sounds in the womb. These are people, they must be given the same basic dignities as anyone else."**

**Following the overturning of Roe v. Wade, South Dakota became one of the first states to enact trigger laws banning abortions. In an interview on CNN's State of the Union, Noem defended South Dakota's abortion ban, which only allows exceptions in cases in which the mother's life is in danger. When asked about the case of the 10-year-old child abuse victim who traveled from Ohio to Indiana in order to receive an abortion, Noem said that she would not support changing the law to allow exceptions for victims of rape, explaining that she does not "believe a tragic situation should be perpetuated by another tragedy."**

### **Anti-protest legislation**

**In response to protests against the Keystone Pipeline, Noem's office collaborated with the energy company TransCanada Corporation to develop anti-protest legislation, which Noem signed into law in March 2019. The law created a fund to cover the costs of policing pipeline protests. Another law was passed to raise revenue for the fund by creating civil penalties for advising, directing, or encouraging participation in rioting. The Pine Ridge Indian Reservation banned Noem from their grounds as a result. The Indigenous Environmental Network, Sierra Club, and other groups challenged the laws in suits, arguing that the laws violated First Amendment rights by incentivizing the state to sue protesters. In 2020, after a federal court struck down sections of the legislation as unconstitutional, Noem brought additional legislation to repeal sections of the previous bill and clarify the definition of "incitement to riot".**

### **COVID-19 pandemic**

**During the COVID-19 pandemic in South Dakota, Noem at first was responsive to containment strategies. As President Donald Trump began to actively resist governmental interventions, she segued to a hands-off approach. She used pandemic relief funds in November 2020 to promote tourism during a surge in cases in the state. She did not implement face mask mandates, raised doubts about the efficacy of mask-wearing, encouraged large gatherings without social distancing or mask-wearing, and questioned the advice of public health experts. As of December 2020, she was one of few governors who had not maintained statewide stay-at-home orders or face-mask mandates. Her response mirrored Trump's rhetoric and handling of COVID-19. She was rewarded for her COVID-19 response with a speech at the August 2020 Republican National**

Convention, which elevated her national profile. The Argus Leader described the RNC speech as a "defining moment in her political career."

Sixteen weeks after Trump's executive order that provided enhanced weekly unemployment benefits of \$300 as part of the U.S. federal government response to the pandemic, Noem opted out of the program, citing a low state unemployment rate. South Dakota was the only state to refuse the assistance. Its jobless rate in June was 7.2 percent, up from 3.1 percent in March, though down from 10.9 percent in April. Acceptance of the funding required the state to augment the benefit by \$100 unless other jobless assistance allowed the match to be waived.

Noem supported the annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally in August 2020, despite warnings from experts that it could spread COVID-19. Nearly 500,000 bikers attended the event.[5] Public health notices were issued for saloons and other businesses in the Sturgis area. By the end of August, dozens of cases linked to attendance at the event were reported in several states.

In July 2021, Noem criticized other Republican governors for enacting mandatory measures against COVID-19 and trying to "rewrite history" about it. She argued that South Dakota had effectively combated the pandemic by instead testing and isolating cases; in fact, South Dakota had the 10th-highest death rate and third-highest case rate at that time.

### **Guns**

In 2019, Noem signed a bill into law abolishing South Dakota's permit requirement to carry a concealed handgun. In 2022, Noem sought to build a gun range in Meade County with government funds, but the legislature rejected it.

### **LGBTQ rights**

Noem opposes same-sex marriage. In 2015 she said she disagreed with Obergefell v. Hodges, the Supreme Court's ruling that same-sex marriage bans are unconstitutional.

On March 8, 2021, Noem announced on Twitter that she would sign into law H.B. 1217, the Women's Fairness in Sports Bill, which bans transgender athletes from playing on or against women's school and college sports teams.



**In December 2021, Noem and her office signaled their support for an anti-trans bill called "An Act to protect fairness in women's sports." The bill would require young athletes to join teams that aligned with their biological sex at birth.**

### **Opposition to cannabis legalization**

**In 2020, Noem opposed two ballot measures to legalize cannabis for medical use and recreational use in South Dakota, saying, "The fact is, I've never met someone who got smarter from smoking pot. It's not good for our kids. And it's not going to improve our communities." After both measures passed, she and two police officers filed a lawsuit seeking a court decision against the measure legalizing recreational use, Amendment A. On February 8, 2021, circuit court judge Christina Klinger struck down the amendment as unconstitutional. After the ruling, she also sought to delay the implementation of the medical marijuana initiative for a year. Ultimately, her efforts failed and medical marijuana became legal on July 1, 2021.**

**Noem has also opposed the cultivation of industrial hemp, vetoing a bill that passed the South Dakota House and Senate in 2019 to legalize hemp cultivation. She said, "There is no question in my mind that normalizing hemp, like legalizing medical marijuana, is part of a larger strategy to undermine enforcement of the drug laws and make legalized marijuana inevitable."**

### **2020 presidential election**

**Noem claimed that the 2020 presidential election, in which Joe Biden defeated Donald Trump, was marred by widespread voter fraud. However, on December 8, 2020, Noem tacitly acknowledged the outcome of the election when she referred to a "Biden administration" during her annual state budget address, but even after Biden was inaugurated in January, she still refused to accept that the election was "free and fair." The Trump-Pence ticket carried South Dakota, receiving 261,043 votes to 150,471 for the Biden-Harris ticket.**

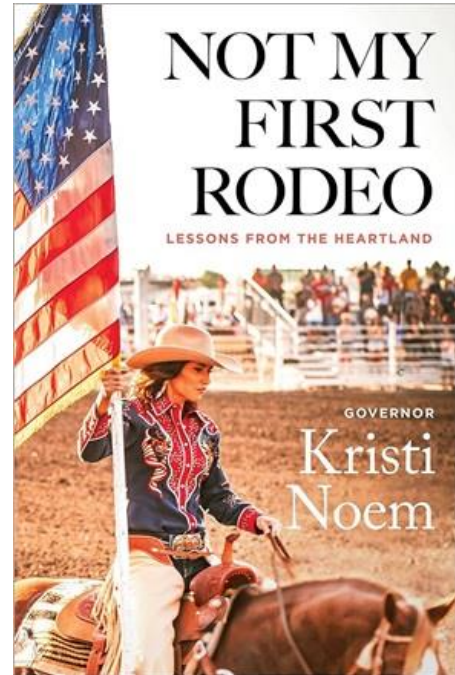
**After the U.S. Capitol was attacked by a pro-Trump mob on January 6, 2021, disrupting the counting of the electoral votes formalizing Biden's victory, Noem spoke out against the violence, saying, "We are all entitled to peacefully protest. Violence is not a part of that."**

### **School prayer bill**

In 2022, Noem sought to have prayer put back in school after mentioning it in a speech in Iowa. On January 21, 2022, the "prayer bill", HB 1015, was defeated in the House Education Committee by a vote of 9–6.

### **Noem's Book**

Noem published her autobiography, *Not My First Rodeo: Lessons from the Heartland* on June 28, 2022.



### **Some final comments**

Anybody that likes to ride horses and go fishing is alright in my book!

I agree with her on most issues, especially our southern border disaster. I think she would do something about it.

Yes, I know calling Biden and Trump “old fogies” is a little hypocritical since I’m also one. However, I’m not trying to run our government.

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