



January '20 Poll of South Dakota | Human Rights Campaign

Using its Dynamic Online Sampling Engine to attain a sample reflective of the electorate, Change Research polled 720 likely voters in South Dakota, January 28-29, 2020. Post-stratification was performed on region, gender, age, ethnicity, educational attainment, and 2016 presidential vote.

South Dakota voters do not support HB1057

On behalf of the Human Rights Campaign, Change Research surveyed 720 likely voters in South Dakota from January 28-29 in order to understand their reaction to H.B. 1057, a bill which recently passed the State House, that would allow the state to arrest and imprison doctors providing best practice medical care to transgender minors seeking transition-related medical care in consultation with their parents. The message that South Dakota voters are sending to state senators and Governor Kristi Noem is clear: do not support this bill! **A majority of voters disapprove of this bill because it is unnecessary, divisive, puts politicians between doctors and youth and parents, and doesn't reflect their values.**

- **This bill is not supported by voters.** A large 57% majority of voters who hear about the medical care ban for transgender minors are opposed to it, and this includes voters of all ages. In an indication of the backlash that may come from signing this bill into law, stronger intensity exists among the bill's opponents: 45% strongly oppose it while just 30% strongly support it.
- **Voters, including Republicans, are not demanding laws like this, and say legislators are too focused on divisive issues instead of real problems.** Just 2% of all voters and 2% of Republicans say that "regulating transgender rights" is among the most important issues for the South Dakota state government to address. Instead, they prioritize healthcare costs (40%), education (35%) and the economy & jobs (30%). With the state legislature pushing anti-trans bills like HB1057, a forceful 69% majority of voters say that "*Legislators are too focused on divisive issues and should be focusing on pressing issues that will actually have an impact on South Dakotans, like growing the economy.*"
- **South Dakotans oppose this bill because they think this is a solution in search of a problem and an issue that parents and doctors, not politicians should decide.**
 - 62% of voters (56% with intensity), including 53% of Evangelicals and 64% of non-Evangelical Christians, agree that "*This is a solution in search of a problem. Fewer than 0.00002% of Sanford Health system patients in 2019 were minors seeking this type of treatment, and not all of them were from South Dakota. Let's focus on real issues facing kids instead.*"

- Six-in-ten voters agree that *“Parents and doctors, not politicians, need to be able to decide what’s in the best interest of a child based on medical best practices. Politicians should stop telling doctors how to do their jobs and focus on their own.”*

Voters were particularly likely to point to facts that reinforce the idea that this bill is unnecessary and is not supported by medical experts. Two points were especially relevant to Republicans: first, fewer than 0.00002% of Sanford Health system patients in 2019 were minors seeking this type of treatment, and second, the international standards of medical care for transgender children do not include surgical or hormonal treatment.

- **Voters want the state to go in a different, more inclusive direction that better reflects the majority view about gender identity and how to treat transgender people.** Nearly two-thirds of South Dakota voters say *“We need to stop stigmatizing transgender people as a society.”* It is no wonder that a majority of voters say Governor Noem and state legislators do not *“share my values”* (53%) and are *“out of touch”* (58%).