



## South Dakota Has “Flattened the Curve” Without Shutting Down

South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem got pushback for her decision to let the 880,000 citizens of her state decide on their own whether to follow her suggestions as to social-distancing and other behaviors to fight the coronavirus. On Wednesday [she told Breitbart in an exclusive interview](#) that despite her state remaining free of lockdown/shutdown/stay-at-home orders, the significant surge in virus cases projected by various predictive models failed to materialize.



She said:

I think we've got maybe 60 people in the hospital right now. We have 2,500 beds set aside for COVID-19 patients, but we only have 63 in [the hospital]....

We already have cut our peak projections by 75 percent just putting in place the recommendations I asked people to do, staying at home and [practicing] social distancing. They've washed their hands and they've stayed home if they weren't feeling well and called their doctors.

Just by doing that, we've cut the hospitalization rates by 75 percent. So, I've just been super proud of what the people in South Dakota have done — they recognized that I wasn't going to dictate to them, that I valued their freedoms and liberties and that I was going to let them take action on behalf of their families and communities.

When pressed to explain why she didn't do the popular thing and institute a state-wide shutdown like so many other governors have done, she said:

It was a decision that I made. The facts on the ground here did not support shelter-in-place. We just didn't have the spread.

For me personally, I took an oath to uphold our state Constitution. I took an oath when I was in Congress [she served in the House from 2011 to 2019] to uphold the United States Constitution. So I believe in people's freedoms and liberties and I always balance that with every decision that I make as governor.

I get overly concerned with leaders who take too much power in a time of crisis because I think that's how we directly lose our country someday by leaders overstepping their proper role.

So I was balancing all of that perspective and my value system and principles with what I was seeing here in South Dakota and never believed it was appropriate for us to take that kind of action.

I trust my people. I know that if business owners here are given an opportunity to be innovative, they will protect their customers. They will take actions and change business models to make sure their employees are safe and that they can practice social distancing while still serving their



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on April 24, 2020

customers. I knew I had to give them an opportunity to survive.

Her response echoed the official statement she made on April 17: “My role with respect to public safety is something I take very seriously. But the people themselves are primarily responsible for their [own] safety.... South Dakotans are stepping up and taking their personal responsibility seriously.... because of this our projections continue to improve.”

Noem is one of seven governors who have resisted the temptation to use the virus as a means to usurp powers that are limited by their state constitutions. They may enjoy having the last laugh when the so-called virus crisis has passed. As *The New American* reported on Thursday, a Kentucky State University professor has shown that “there is no evidence whatsoever” that such unconstitutional lockdowns save lives.

When viewed from the future, those unconstitutional decisions will be shown to have severely damaged the culture, not by limiting the impact of the virus, but by limiting the personal freedoms and responsibilities that Noem reveres. Having grasped those powers, many of those governors are unlikely to let them go once the “crisis” has passed.

A hat-tip goes to Governor Kristi Noem of South Dakota for honoring and respecting not only her oath of office but the precious rights and responsibilities that properly belong to her citizens for making personal decisions to keep themselves safe and healthy without her interference.

For example, the sponsors of two races have decided, on their own, to open this weekend: the Park Jefferson International Speedway and the New Raceway Park in Jefferson. On their own, the sponsors have decided to limit the number of tickets to be sold to each event.

Personally, the governor thinks holding those races isn’t a good idea, but she said she would not be taking any legal action to prevent them from going ahead.



image: Gwengoa/iStock/Getty Images Plus

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