



Policy Update

June 14, 2024

South Dakota Primary Election Results

The South Dakota Primary Election was held on June 4, 2024. The results of the Republican primary displayed a shift to the right and the removal of several incumbents. Analysis of the races shows two major reasons why incumbents lost and a shift to the right occurred. First, the primary election had very low voter turnout. Statewide, the turnout was just above 17% and, in some counties, it was only 10% or 11%. When low voter turnout occurs, motivated voters can change the direction of the Legislature with relative ease. Second, two issues were elevated as a priority by motivated voters: Property taxes and pipelines. Frustration with high property taxes, specifically in the Black Hills region, proved to play an important role in the election. On the eastern side of South Dakota, the proposed carbon dioxide pipeline was divisive to Republican voters and those opposed to the project showed higher turnout than those in support.

Incumbents who will not be returning to Pierre are:

- Sen. Erin Tobin, R-Winner
- Sen. Jean Hunhoff, R-Yankton
- Rep. Byron Callies, R-Watertown
- Rep. Tyler Tordsen, R-Sioux Falls
- Rep. Tamara St. John, R-Sisseton
- Rep. James Wangsness, R-Miller
- Rep. Fred Deutsch, R-Florence
- Sen. Ryan Maher, R-Isabel
- Rep. Becky Drury, R-Rapid City
- Sen. Mike Walsh, R-Rapid City
- Sen. David Johnson, R-Rapid City
- Rep. Gary Cammack, R-Union Center
- Rep. Kirk Chaffee, R-Whitewood
- Sen. Julie Frye-Mueller, R-Rapid City

For more election results, please click [here](#).

Recreational Marijuana Ballot Measure Validated

South Dakotans will again be asked in November to vote on the legalization of recreational marijuana. Initiated Measure 29 will be the third time proponents of recreational marijuana have tried to pass such a measure at the ballot box. South Dakota Farm Bureau, in accordance with grassroots policy, will be opposing the initiated measure.

Specifically, the initiated measure allows individuals 21 years of age or older to possess, grow, ingest, and distribute marijuana or marijuana paraphernalia. Individuals may possess up to two ounces of marijuana in a form other than marijuana concentrate or other marijuana products. Individuals may possess up to six marijuana plants with no more than 12 plants per household. The measure also places limits on the possession of other forms of marijuana and marijuana products.

Click [here](#) for more information on IM 29.

Game, Fish, and Parks Commission Finalizes Landowner on Own Land Elk Licenses

During the 2024 South Dakota Legislative session, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 173, an act to provide a landowner own land elk license for antlerless elk in the prairie elk season.

The Commission now created such a license within the Prairie Elk Season with the following qualifications:

- An applicant must own/lease a minimum of 240 acres for agricultural purposes within a prairie elk unit.
- Members of the qualifying landowner-operator's family including grandparents, parents, spouse, children, children's spouse, or grandchildren who live on the ranch or in the closest community and have an active role in the ranch operation also qualify.
- Only one qualifying applicant per ranch unit per year may purchase a landowner own land license.
- A qualifying applicant for a ranch unit may not purchase a landowner own land elk license if any qualifying member of the ranch unit holds an elk license in the prairie elk hunting season.
- A ranch unit is described as all private property owned and leased for agricultural purposes by written agreement by an individual qualifying landowner in the state; and,
- A ranch unit may not be subdivided for the purposes of qualifying for more than one landowner own land elk license.

Furthermore, the Commission amended the proposal to include Harding County Units PRE-35A and PRE-35B to the list of eligible areas for this license and finalized as amended.

Click [here](#) for more information on landowner on own land elk tags.

Contact for Questions

Krystil Smit

SDFB Executive Director

Email: k.smit@sdfbf.org

Cell: (605) 261-2960

Matthew Bogue

SDFB State Public Policy Director

Email: Matthew@sdfbf.org

Cell: (605) 377-8833