

# [***Kristi Noem: I Didn t Break The Law When I Killed Our Dog***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BX6-MCK1-DXVP-50M3-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Byline:** Zachary Folk, Forbes Staff

**Highlight:** Noem is reportedly on the shortlist to serve as Donald Trump s vice presidential nominee.

**Body**

**Topline**

South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem, responding to public backlash for the second time in three days, claimed on Sunday she did not break the law by killing her unruly 14-month-old hunting dog, a story from herupcoming bookthat has drawn widespread outrage from both parties and the public.

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Noem is reportedly on the shortlist to serve as Donald Trump s vice presidential nominee.

Anadolu via Getty Images

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**Key Facts**

Noem said she can understand why some people are upset about a 20-year-old story of Cricket, but insists she did not break the law.

South Dakota law states that dogs who attack and kill livestock can be put down, Noem wrote in a post onFacebookandXon Sunday, and added the dog had shown aggressive behavior toward people by biting them.

South Dakota sanimal cruelty lawstill animal owners from subjecting an animal to cruelty, which it defines as intentionally, willfully, and maliciously inflict[ing] gross physical abuse on an animal that causes prolonged pain, that causes serious physical injury, or that results in the death of the animal.

South Dakota s law does have an exception that lets owners kill an animal known to be dangerous, a threat, or injurious to life, limb, or property (Forbes has reached out to Noem s office for a citation).

In any event, it seems unlikely Noem could face any legal repercussions the statute of limitations for Class 6 felonies like animal cruelty only lasts seven years, and Noem said the incident took place when her adult daughter was a child.

The Animal Legal Defense Fund ranksSouth Dakota40th in the nation for its laws protecting animals, in what the animal rights group calls the bottom tier of states.

**Chief Critics**

Noem s story has drawn criticism from Democrats and Republicans alike and grim jokes at the White House Correspondents Dinner on Saturday night. Ana Navarro, a former Republican political strategist, said Noem was auditioning for Cruella De Vil in a panel on CNN s State of the Union on Sunday morning. S.E. Cupp, another Republican pundit who also hunts with dogs, pointed out that there are 592 other things you can do with a dog that won't hunt besides kill it in front of your kid and construction workers. Conservative commentator Meghan McCain also criticized Noem, writing in apost on X you can recover from a lot of things in ***politics***, change the narrative etc. - but not from killing a dog. All I will distinctly think about Kristi Noem now is that she murdered a puppy who was acting up -which is obviously cruel and insane. The night before, comedian Matt Friend mocked Noem in Trump s voice at theWhite House Correspondents Dinner, saying he was killing this dinner harder than Kristi Noem kills the puppies drawing gasps from the crowd in Washington. Ryan Busse, a Democratic gubernatorial candidate in Montana, criticized Noem as a hunting dog owner onsocial media, writing anyone who has ever owned a birddog knows how disgusting, lazy and evil this is. The Democratic National Committee also denounced Noem s actions, writing in a statement in the voice their dogs our message is plain and simple: If you want elected officials who don t brag about brutally killing their pets as part of their self-promotional book tour, then listen to our owners and vote Democrat.

**Key Background**

Noem recalled the story of killing her 14-month-old hunting dog Cricket in an excerpt of her upcoming memoir obtained byThe Guardianon Friday. In the excerpt, she called her dog untrainable after she ruined a pheasant hunt and broke into a neighbor s chicken coop. In response, Noem said she shot and killed Cricket in a gravel pit in front of a group of construction workers. Her daughter tragically asked the South Dakota governor Hey, where s Cricket? after returning home from school that day. Noem defended her actions in apost on X, claiming we love animals, but tough decisions like this happen all the time on a farm. Sadly, we just had to put down 3 horses a few weeks ago that had been in our family for 25 years. Noem is reportedly on the shortlist to be Trump s vice presidential nominee, but has been embroiled in several scandals over the last year, including asocial media postthat appears to be an infomercial for a cosmetic dentistry business in Texas.

**Further Reading**

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