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Chadrad Communications, Inc.
226 Bordeaux St - Chadron, NE 69337
308-432-5545 fax 308-432-5601
E-mail: kcsr@chadrad.com

(SD)-Permitless Carry Bill Headed To Governor Noem

By: John Axtell Posted at: 01/30/2019 08:09 PM

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) -The South Dakota House has voted 47-23 to pass a bill allowing people to carry concealed handguns without a permit in South Dakota, sending it on to Gov. Kristi Noem for her signature.

Noem, in office for less than a month, tweeted later in the day that she plans to sign the bill on Thursday.

Passage is a win for conservatives who have long supported the plan, which languished under former Republican Gov. Dennis Daugaard.

Noem says ending the permit requirement will further protect the "Second Amendment rights of law-abiding South Dakotans," pointing out that the Founding Fathers believed in the right to be bear arms so firmly that they enshrined it in the Constitution.

It's currently a misdemeanor for someone to carry a concealed pistol or to have one concealed in a vehicle without a permit. House Majority Leader Lee Qualm emphasizes that while the bill repeals the permit requirement, it doesn't alter who can carry a concealed pistol.

The South Dakota Sheriffs' Association opposed the bill, arguing current limitations under the permit process are reasonable.

Those pushing for easing the rules on concealed weapons weren't totally successful on Wednesday as the State Senate voted 22-10 Wednesday against a bill to let permit holders carry guns in the Capitol and supplementary buildings.

GOP Sen. Stace Nelson, the sponsor, says the Capitol isn't a secure facility and lawmakers and state employees are at risk, but fellow Republican opposed the bill because he doesn't think an officer arriving at a shooting could discern the "bad guy from the good guy."

A separate measure to let people with an enhanced permit bring concealed handguns into the Capitol if they notify security beforehand hasn't yet had a hearing.