



MEMORANDUM

TO: INTERESTED PARTIES
 FROM: ROBERT BLIZZARD/GLEN BOLGER – PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES
 DATE: JULY 20, 2016
 RE: SOUTH DAKOTA STATEWIDE POLLING RESULTS

Public Opinion Strategies conducted a statewide survey of 500 registered voters (margin of error \pm 4.4%) in South Dakota, July 16-19, 2016. Fully 40% of the interviews were conducted via cell phone. The purpose of this memo is to review the key findings from the survey.

KEY FINDINGS

- ***There’s overwhelming support for Constitutional Amendment S.***
 By an overwhelming 70%-18% margin, South Dakota voters support Constitutional Amendment S, the amendment to expand rights for crime victims. Support for this Amendment extends across every key South Dakota demographic and geographic group:

Demographic	Vote YES	Vote NO
Overall	70%	18%
Republicans	69%	18%
Independents	67%	21%
Democrats	74%	17%
Men	71%	19%
Women	70%	17%
Sioux Falls Media Market	69%	19%
Rapid City Media Market	76%	14%

- ***Once South Dakotans learn more information about this Amendment, often called Marsy’s Law, support climbs even higher.***

After voters get the following information about Marsy’s Law, support for Constitutional Amendment S increases to 84%-12%:

“This Amendment, often called Marsy’s Law, is named after a 21-year-old college senior who was murdered in 1983 and was written as a result of the experiences her brother and parents faced after her murder when they were often treated as though they had no rights.

Under current South Dakota law, those accused and convicted of a crime are granted specific rights and protections, while victims of a crime ARE NOT given these equal rights. This proposed Amendment would guarantee that victims of a crime are notified, heard and granted standing to ask that those rights be protected.

In addition, this measure would ensure that victims of crime are notified of bail hearings, as well as any parole, release or escape of a criminal. And, it would create equal rights and standing for crime victims and finally grant victims and their families the voice they deserve.”

- ***Finally, even after testing statements AGAINST Constitutional Amendment S, support remains well above 70%.***

After voters hear the likely back-and-forth messaging points on either side of this Amendment, nearly three-quarters of South Dakota voters say they’d vote YES (74%-18%). This demonstrates the significant positive feelings toward this Amendment, and the difficulty any NO campaign would have in defeating it on the ballot this Fall.

BOTTOM LINE

Constitutional Amendment S looks headed toward a resounding victory this Fall, as voters are strongly inclined to support it initially, and after hearing about its connection to Marsy’s Law, the YES side climbs even higher. And, even after voters are presented with some messaging points against the Amendment, support for this ballot issue remains well above 70%.