



STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

KRISTI NOEM | GOVERNOR

June 15, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Mr. President,

Earlier today, I learned that your White House and the National Park Service (NPS) announced a plan for a celebration of Independence Day with pomp, circumstance, and fireworks on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. Imagine my surprise, since that same NPS recently denied South Dakota's application for a permit to host an Independence Day celebration with fireworks on July 3<sup>rd</sup> at Mount Rushmore. As you know, that denial is now tied up in court, meaning our celebration cannot go forward.

Your White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs also welcomed the nation "to join us by hosting your own events to honor our freedom, salute those who have been serving on the frontlines, and celebrate our progress in fighting this pandemic." They then asked us to share any events and celebrations that we have planned.

South Dakota had such a celebration planned for July 3<sup>rd</sup> at Mount Rushmore. But our South Dakota celebration cannot go forward unless you intervene. And that is exactly what I ask you to do now. Mr. President, I ask you to give the go-ahead to our own plans for an Independence Day celebration at Mount Rushmore on July 3, 2021. Allow South Dakotans the same freedom to celebrate that will be afforded to you and to your guests on the White House lawn.

South Dakota citizens would all be grateful for your leadership in response to this request by letting the fireworks mark our nation's "summer of freedom" at Mount Rushmore. I now ask you to act – in that same spirit of American freedom – to reverse your NPS's unlawful decision to deny our July 3 fireworks celebration of our nation's founding.

If you do not grant the request for this year, then I ask you to give your blessing now to an Independence Day celebration next year at Mount Rushmore. I invite you to follow in the footsteps of the many presidents who have visited the beautiful Black Hills of South Dakota and join us for this event. I recognize these are remarkable requests. But we are living in remarkable times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kristi Noem", written over a blue ink scribble.

Kristi Noem  
Governor