

Trump Picks Kristi Noem to Be Homeland Security Secretary

Noem is South Dakota's governor and a former congresswoman.

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Former President Donald Trump listens as South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem speaks during a rally in Vandalia, Ohio, on March 16, 2024. Kamil Krzaczynski/AFP via Getty Images



By Zachary Stieber

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President-elect Donald Trump has picked South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem to lead the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

“Kristi has been very strong on Border Security. She was the first Governor to send National Guard Soldiers to help Texas fight the Biden Border Crisis, and they were sent a total of eight times,” Trump [said](#) in a Nov. 12 statement.

“She will work closely with “Border Czar” Tom Homan to secure the Border, and will guarantee that our American Homeland is secure from our adversaries.”



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Homan is the former acting director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Trump [tapped](#) to serve in his second administration.



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Noem, 52, thanked Trump in the statement for the selection, saying “With Donald Trump, we will secure the Border, and restore safety to American communities so that families will again have the opportunity to pursue The American Dream.”

Trump has been filling out top positions in his second administration. He announced earlier Tuesday the former Director of National Intelligence [John Ratcliffe](#) would be the director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Fox host [Pete Hegseth](#) would be secretary of defense, and Rep. [Mike Waltz](#) (R-Fla.) would be national security adviser.

The DHS, which includes Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the Transportation Security Administration, is tasked with protecting America from threats. It has more than 260,000 employees.

Homan, who led ICE during part of Trump’s first term, [said](#) he would focus on enforcing laws involving illegal immigration, including the deportation of illegal immigrants who have been ordered to leave after their asylum claims were rejected.



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Noem has said that people who cross into the United States illegally must be deported and that the spike in illegal immigration at the U.S.-Mexico border is a problem.

“The border is a warzone, so we’re sending soldiers,” she said earlier this year, as she [deployed](#) National Guard troops to Texas to help officials there handle the surge in illegal immigrants crossing the border.

Noem was floated as a vice presidential candidate before Trump chose Sen. JD Vance (R-Ohio). She drew criticism earlier this year when she wrote about putting down her family’s dog. Noem was a U.S. representative from 2007 to 2019. Noem became South Dakota’s governor on Jan. 5, 2019. She easily won reelection in 2022 in the red state.

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