



2022 South Dakota Legislature

House Bill 1176

Introduced by: **Representative** Derby

1 **An Act to grant immunity from certain liabilities for camping activities.**

2 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA:

3 **Section 1. That chapter 34-18 be amended with a NEW SECTION:**

4 Terms used in this Act mean:

5 (1) "Camping," visiting, staying at, using, and leaving a private campground, including
6 lodging of all types;

7 (2) "Inherent risks of camping," dangers and hazards from:

8 (a) Features of the natural world, such as trees, tree stumps, naturally
9 occurring infectious agents, roots, brush, rocks, mud, sand, standing and
10 moving water, and soil;

11 (b) Uneven and unpredictable terrain;

12 (c) Natural bodies of water and accessories permitting the use of natural bodies
13 of water, including piers, docks, swimming and aquatic sports, or recreation
14 facilities or areas;

15 (d) A lack of lighting;

16 (e) Campfires contained in or outside a fire pit or an enclosure provided by the
17 private campground, bonfires, grass or brush fires, wildfires, and forest
18 fires;

19 (f) Weather;

20 (g) Insects, birds, and other wildlife;

21 (h) Animals of other campers or visitors that cause injury, unless the private
22 campground owner or an employee or officer of the private campground
23 owner has accepted responsibility for care of the animal;

24 (i) A violation of safety rules or a disregard for signs or other methods of
25 communicating warnings;

- 1 (j) Another camper or visitor at the private campground acting in a negligent
2 manner, if the private campground owner or an employee or officer of the
3 private campground owner is not involved;
- 4 (k) Actions by a camper or visitor that exceed his or her physical limitations or
5 abilities;
- 6 (l) Actions by a camper or visitor involving climbing, rappelling, caving,
7 mountaineering;
- 8 (m) Fireworks of a camper, visitor, or offsite entity not authorized by the private
9 campground owner or employee or officer of a private campground owner;
10 and
- 11 (n) Any person coming onto the campsite not reported to the private
12 campground owner or an employee or officer of the private campground
13 owner; and
- 14 (3) "Private campground," any parcel or tract of land, including buildings and other
15 structures, that is owned or operated by a private property owner where five or
16 more campsites are made available for use as temporary living quarters for
17 recreational, camping, travel, or seasonal use. The term also includes recreational
18 vehicle parks.

19 **Section 2. That chapter 34-18 be amended with a NEW SECTION:**

20 Except as provided under section 3 of this Act, a private campground owner, or an
21 employee or officer of a private campground owner, is not liable if a person is injured or
22 killed or property is damaged as a result of an inherent risk of camping.

23 **Section 3. That chapter 34-18 be amended with a NEW SECTION:**

24 The provisions of section 2 of this Act do not limit the liability of a private
25 campground owner or an employee or officer of a private campground owner who:

26 (1) Intentionally causes the injury, death, or property damage;

27 (2) Acts with a willful or wanton disregard for the safety of the person or property
28 damaged. This includes conduct committed with an intentional or reckless
29 disregard for the safety of others;

30 (3) Fails to use that degree of care that an ordinarily careful and prudent person would
31 use under the same or similar circumstances; or

32 (4) Fails to conspicuously post warning signs of a dangerous, inconspicuous condition
33 known to the owner of the private campground, or his or her employees or officers,

1 on the property that the owner owns, leases, rents, or is otherwise in lawful control
2 of or in possession of, if the owner, employee, or officer is aware of the condition
3 by reason of a prior injury involving the same location or the same mechanism of
4 injury. Such warning signs must appear in black letters on a white background with
5 each letter a minimum of one inch in height.

6 **Section 4. That chapter 34-18 be amended with a NEW SECTION:**

7 Every written contract entered into by a private campground owner or an employee
8 or officer of a private campground owner must contain, in clearly readable print, the
9 warning notice specified in this section. The signs described in section 3, subdivision (4)
10 of this Act and contracts described in this section must contain the following warning:

11 **WARNING**

12 Under South Dakota law, a private campground owner or an employee or officer of
13 a private campground owner is not liable for an injury to or the death of a person or any
14 property damage resulting from the inherent risks of camping.