

**For immediate release:**

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Survey: Nielson Brothers Polling (NBP) Statewide Survey, October 28 - 31, 2012

Subject: Major South Dakota General Election Races

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**McGovern Shows Strong Challenge to Fiegen in the PUC Race**

The most recent survey by Nielson Brothers Polling (NBP) shows Public Utilities Commission (PUC) candidate Matt McGovern as the strongest statewide Democratic candidate. In the NBP survey of likely South Dakota voters, conducted from October 28 to October 31, McGovern leads Republican Kristie Fiegen by 6 percent (45 to 39 percent). Libertarian Russell Clarke receives 5 percent of support, with 11 percent “undecided.” Republican candidates continue to lead in other major races.

Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney is ahead of Democrat Barack Obama by 8 percent (50 to 42 percent), with 8 percent still “undecided.” In the South Dakota US House race, Republican Representative Kristi Noem is in front of Democratic challenger Matt Varilek by 6 percent (50 to 44 percent) with 6 percent “undecided.” In the other race for PUC, incumbent Republican Chris Nelson is outdistancing Democrat Nick Nemec 58 percent to 28 percent, with 14 percent “undecided.”

NBP also asks whether voters support the Republican or the Democratic state senate candidate in their legislative district. The generic Republican senate candidates hold a 46 to 35 percent advantage, with 19 percent “undecided.”

In evaluating President Obama’s job performance, 47 percent of respondents say they approve. Among those who approve, 27 percent say they “strongly approve,” and 20 percent “somewhat approve.” Of the 53 percent who disapprove, 43 percent “strongly disapprove.” Representative Kristi Noem’s job approval is at 55 percent. Of those who approve, 27 percent “strongly approve,” and 28 percent “somewhat approve.” 45 percent disapprove of Noem’s job performance, with 27 percent saying they “strongly disapprove.”

“Most Republican candidates are maintaining advantages in statewide races,” says Paul Nielson, President of Nielson Brothers Polling. “The exception is the battle for the PUC seat held by Kristie Fiegen, as Matt McGovern seems to be overtaking Fiegen, but with eleven percent still undecided,” adds Nielson.

NBP surveyed a random selection of likely South Dakota voters from October 28 through October 31, 2012. The number of responses ranged from 671 for the presidential job approval question to 634 for the generic state senate races question. The margins of error ranged from

3.78 percent for the presidential job approval question to 3.89 percent for the generic state senate races question.

NBP will continue to poll and will release more findings from this survey, including questions on *Initiated Measure 15* (proposing a one percent sales tax increase) and *Referred Laws 14* and *16*. Interested parties may contact NBP with regard to questions and answers on past and future public surveys. For more information contact [nbpolling@gmail.com](mailto:nbpolling@gmail.com), or call 605 496-0911.