

RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR STATES

We looked at the 12 most religious states and compared them to the 12 least religious states on several variables.

The difference between the two state groupings was negligible with regard to drug overdose rates and suicide rates.

However, 8 of 12 of the most religious states have a religious-liberty law, while only 1 of 12 of the least religious states do.

The average percentage of pregnancies aborted per 100,000 in the most religious states was 11.23 percent; it was 17.66 in the least religious states.

12 of 12 of the most religious states have restrictive abortion laws, but only 1 of 12 of the least religious states do.

11 of 12 of the most religious states has some sort of program that allows for private school choice, but only 3 of 12 of the least religious states do.

What does this tell us?

There is little that lawmakers can do to affect people from overdosing on drugs or killing themselves. Similarly, whether a state is religious or not does not seem to matter.

By contrast, lawmakers play a key role in affecting abortion rates. The more restrictive the laws are, the less the abortion rate.

When it comes to school-choice programs that include private schools, lawmakers tend to follow the culture: the most religious states are the ones that enjoy the widest array of school-choice programs.

While these conclusions do not settle the issue altogether, it does indicate that those who support traditional moral values are better off living in the most religious states.