The Satanic Temple Announces its Abortions are Exempt from Many State Laws

*Hobby Lobby ruling means Satanists’ abortion rituals are not subject to unnecessary regulations*

SALEM, MA -- The Satanic Temple (TST) has announced that its religious abortions during the first trimester are exempt from state regulations that hinder access to pregnancy termination services and serve no medical purpose. TST has expressed concerns about the opportunity for its members to perform certain voluntary religious practices, specifically its abortion ritual. Currently, those seeking to terminate a pregnancy around the country may be required to endure unnecessary waiting periods, mandatory counseling, unwanted sonograms, and may be given unscientific reading materials that are designed to elicit shame and sway their decision.

TST argues that these requirements, as well as other legal obligations, are not medically necessary, and insists that Satanists are exempt from these regulations if they undergo first-trimester abortions in accordance with TST’s religious ritual. The satanic abortion ritual involves the recitation of TST’s Third and Fifth Tenets, which celebrate bodily autonomy and the adherence to best scientific practices, along with a personal affirmation that is ceremoniously intertwined with the abortion.

TST bases its assertions of abortion mandate exemptions on the protections provided by State Religious Freedom Restoration Acts (RFRA), which generally prohibits the government from substantially interfering with a person’s free exercise of religion. This law was famously affirmed in the 2014 Hobby Lobby case, Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores, 573 U.S. 682 (2014). Hobby Lobby successfully argued that it did not have to cover the costs of certain contraceptives for their female employees despite being mandated to do so under the Affordable Care Act because its owners held a religious belief that the contraceptives were abortifacients.

TST’s reproductive rights spokesperson, Jane Essex, notes, “Many states have laws that interfere with our members’ ability to practice their religious beliefs. No Christian would accept a mandatory waiting period before they can partake in Communion. No Christian would tolerate a law that insists state counseling is necessary before someone can be baptized. Our members are justly entitled to religious liberty in order to practice our rituals as well.”

Essex adds, “The law is clearly on our side. If RFRA states do not want to recognize our rights, they will ultimately have to claim that our abortions are not satanic. Given that many people fanatically insist that all abortions are satanic, the states’ argument will be very unpopular. Not only will those who deny Satanists their religious freedom be denounced by defenders of liberty, but they will also be detested by those who demonize abortion. Hopefully, states will do the right thing and respect our legal rights.”

**About The Satanic Temple**

The mission of The Satanic Temple is to encourage benevolence and empathy among all people, reject tyrannical authority, advocate for practical common sense and justice, and be directed by the human conscience to undertake noble pursuits guided by the individual will. For more information on The Satanic Temple, visit https://thesatanictemple.com/.