

[date]

[addressee]

Re: Demand for religious exemption to abortion restrictions

To whom it may concern,

I am a pregnant person and a Satanist beginning the process of an abortion ritual. I am aware that State law implements generally-applicable restrictions on abortions. However, State law also provides for religious exemptions to generally-applicable rules which impose a substantial burden on religious beliefs or practices. This letter lays out my claim for a religious exemption to generally-applicable restrictions on abortions.

As an adherent to the principles of The Satanic Temple (“**TST**”), my sincerely-held religious beliefs include:

- My body is inviolable and subject to my will alone.
- I may make decisions regarding my health based on the best scientific understanding of the world, even if the religious or political beliefs of others fail to account for the science.
- My inviolable right to bodily autonomy includes the right to make decisions about fetal or embryonic tissue I carry, provided that the tissue is unable to survive outside my body as an independent human being.
- I, alone, decide whether to remain pregnant and, in my sole discretion, may disregard the current or future condition of any fetal or embryonic tissue I carry.

These beliefs are put to practice in TST’s abortion ritual. The purpose of the ritual is to free me from the cultural stigma surrounding this medical procedure by providing me spiritual sustenance, affirming my self-worth, and asserting my bodily and spiritual autonomy from pseudoscientific ideas propagated by others.

The abortion procedure is central to the ritual. Throughout the process, I will place myself in a meditative and contemplative state and will focus my mind on diminishing my doubts and

reinforcing my confidence in my ability to make decisions that affect my body. During the abortion, I will ceremoniously recite the Third and Fifth Tenet^{1,2}.

The culmination of this ceremonial rite is the abortive act. Upon completion, I will solemnly recite the affirmation, “By my body, my blood; By my will, it is done.”

Because the abortive act is inextricably linked to the religious rite, a burden on the act is a burden on the rite. State law implements some or all of the following generally-applicable burdens on the abortive act, each of which substantially interfere with my religious beliefs and practices:

- Mandatory waiting periods.
- Requirements that practitioners withhold certain medical information.
- Compulsory counseling prior to an abortion.
- Required reading materials.
- Medically unnecessary sonograms.
- Mandatory listening to the fetal heartbeat.
- Burial or cremation of fetal remains.

Based on the foregoing, I demand a religious exemption to these generally-applicable restrictions.

Sincerely,

[1] Tenet III provides: “One’s body is inviolable, subject to one’s own will alone.”

[2] Tenet V provides: “Beliefs should conform to one’s best scientific understanding of the world. One should take care never to distort scientific facts to fit one’s beliefs.”