

Planned Parenthood Forges Deadly Satanic Alliance

Planned Parenthood in Missouri has a new ally in its battle for increased abortion access: the Satanic Temple.

The religious and politically active national Satanist organization is backing the powerful abortion provider with state and federal lawsuits designed to challenge Missouri's informed consent and 72-hour-waiting period laws.

Planned Parenthood has been fighting in court this year in the state to keep abortion clinics from having to follow outpatient surgical center standards, and the Satanists are fighting to increase abortion access on another front.

The Satanic Temple says a pregnant woman in Missouri, "Mary Doe," wasn't able to carry out a "religiously motivated" abortion because of these laws.

The group argues in court that the state laws violate her right to religious practice under the state's Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

Missouri state laws require abortion providers to give patients the opportunity to view an ultrasound image of their unborn child and offer them a booklet that describes the development of children in the womb. They also require a 72-hour wait before an abortion.

Doe told the court that she adheres to Satanist beliefs which include: a person's body is inviolable and subject to her will alone, a person must make decisions regarding their health based on their best scientific understanding of the world and unborn babies ("non-viable fetus") are not separate human beings but a part of their mother's body.

A Cole County circuit court judge threw out the case in December, noting that patients are not forced to have an ultrasound or read the booklet.

But the Satanic Temple is back in court again this month.

The *Kansas City Star* reports that the state Court of Appeals began hearing arguments by the Satanists against the state laws on Monday. Next week, the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals will hear the Satanists' argument in court on Wednesday.

Susan Klein, executive director of Missouri Right to Life, told CBN News that she's confident overall that Missouri will continue to advance pro-life issues.

She said her organization is focused on passing right-to-life laws and enjoys the support of a "super-majority" of pro-life lawmakers in the state as well as a pro-life governor and attorney general. {eo}

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