

Satanist Provides Stiffest Challenge for Texas Heartbeat Bill

The Satanic Temple isn't going to let the new Texas heartbeat bill stand without a fight.

Several media outlets are reporting that TST is challenging the recently enacted abortion restrictions in Texas, and it is citing religious freedoms as the foundation of its arguments.

TST has lobbied the state for an exemption to the law under its own religious freedom law—the Texas Religious Freedom Restoration Act—and said it on its website that it is prepared to assist any of its members who want to fight the law, reports

The Texas heartbeat bill, one of the most restrictive abortion bills ever put into law, took effect at midnight on Sept. 1 after the U.S. Supreme Court took no action to stop it following an emergency appeal by Texas abortion providers. The law prohibits abortions after 6 weeks, which is usually around the time an ultrasound can detect what lawmakers defined as a fetal “heartbeat.”

The law also allows private citizens to sue those who perform or aid in an abortion in violation of the law and offers \$10,000 for successful cases, reports.

TST says if the state declines to provide the religious exemption it is asking for, it will then seek “judicial relief.” TST may be the last hope for opponents to take down the heartbeat bill.

reports that TST, based in Salem, Massachusetts, “filed a letter with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, arguing

that their members should be allowed to access abortion pills without regulatory action. It is attempting to use its status as a religious organization to claim its right to abortion as a faith-based right.”

“I am sure Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton—who famously spends a good deal of his time composing press releases about Religious Liberty issues in other states—will be proud to see that Texas’s robust Religious Liberty laws, which he so vociferously champions, will prevent future Abortion Rituals from being interrupted by superfluous government restrictions meant only to shame and harass those seeking an abortion,” wrote TST spokesperson, Lucien Greaves in a statement.

Greaves also said that “abortion rituals” are an important facet of the TST’s beliefs. {eo}

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