

To The Respected Members of this Committee,

I am writing to strongly urge you to oppose HB 7005.

It is an infringement on our rights as Americans to practice our religion freely. Personally, my religious beliefs are held very deeply; it is ludicrous that I would need to justify my practices to a clergy in order for them to acknowledge a religious exemption.

It is prejudiced and discriminative against any denomination that is not traditional or practiced outside an organized congregation. There are as many individual spiritual paths as there are people in this world. Paganism, Goddess worship, Nature based religion- they are all growing rapidly and most do not acknowledge any kind of leader or guide, and many do not gather together to worship. Solo prayers and blessings are typically the standard practice for many of these faiths and by enforcing these new guidelines, it would seem that the committee is trying to unlawfully convert them to a more "acceptable" religion. Requiring solo practitioners to seek audience with a leader who is not their own is both ignominious and unconstitutional.

Furthermore, the new proposal is wholly unnecessary. Connecticut already has a very high vaccination rate, it seems superfluous to introduce additional laws limiting access to exemptions. It is persecution of the few because they don't follow the majority's religions, escape from such is what drove all our ancestors to America in the first place.

In conclusion I would like to reiterate that this measure can't be voted for in good conscience. It is a breach of rights of your fellow Americans and such a transgression will surely be seen as a betrayal of the people who trust this committee to protect our families and children.

We're putting our confidence in you to do what's right.

Thank you for your consideration,
Shanae Pellin

CT Resident