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## Man Sues Pennsylvania for Rejecting Business Name

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A [Pennsylvania](#) filmmaker sued the state on Wednesday for turning down his business's name, **I Choose Hell Productions**, because state law prohibits names that "constitute blasphemy, profane cursing or swearing or that profane the Lord's name."

The filmmaker, George Kalman, contends his free speech rights were violated, as was his right to freedom against the establishment of religion.

"It struck me when I saw it that the statute seemed like it was from another era," said Thomas H. Lee II, an [American Civil Liberties Union](#) lawyer who is handling Mr. Kalman's lawsuit, which was filed in Federal District Court in Philadelphia. A spokeswoman for the Pennsylvania Department of State said it had not been served papers and had no comment.

According to the lawsuit, Mr. Kalman, who referred questions to Mr. Lee, picked the name "because of his personal philosophy, expressed in his films, that it is better to struggle through difficult times in life than to commit suicide." The lawsuit requests undetermined damages and use of the name he first submitted.

When the original name was turned down by the Corporation Bureau of the Department of State on Oct. 1, 2007, Mr. Kalman, eager to start his company, resubmitted the application with the name changed to ICH Productions, LLC, and it was quickly approved.

The suit contends that the statute is unconstitutional because the state relied on a religious standard to reject Mr. Kalman's business name and because an employee was allowed to refuse a business name that offended him or her.

Even if the state asserts that the name was rejected because it violated the prohibition of "profane cursing or swearing," Mr. Lee contends it would still be a constitutional violation. "As far as we're concerned, this goes beyond just using dirty words," he said.