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Anti-Abortion Legislation Sweeping Across America Is Unhealthy for Women and Families

“Arkansas and Oklahoma bills passed yesterday signal a coming public health crisis,” says Julie A. Burkhart, founder & CEO of Trust Women

WICHITA, KS— Yesterday in Oklahoma and Arkansas, multiple measures passed that would all but ban abortion outright. In Arkansas, Governor Asa Hutchinson signed a blanket prohibition on abortion including in instances resulting from rape or incest. In Oklahoma, the House legislature passed a so-called “fetal heartbeat” bill, restricting abortions to a window of time so short, most women would not even realize they are pregnant.

Trust Women, a health and reproductive rights organization that opens clinics in underserved areas, including Oklahoma and Kansas, warns of the looming public health crisis for women in those areas.

“Abortion care in states like Arkansas and Oklahoma is quickly becoming essentially non-existent, despite still being legal in all 50 states. The damage this policy of targeted regulations and litigation has had on women’s health so far has been devastating,” said Julie Burkhart, founder and CEO of Trust Women and former advisor to Dr. George Tiller. **“For years, anti-abortion legislators have pushed the limits of Roe by keeping abortion technically legal, while at the same time reducing access to critical health care for their constituents.”**

[According to a 2020 report from the CDC](#), the United States’ maternal mortality rate lags far behind other countries, ranking 55th—just behind Russia. This is especially distressing when placed in context of [a study from the Center for Reproductive Rights](#) finding “that the more abortion restrictions a state has, the worse women and children’s health outcomes in the state are.”

“If legislators across the country were truly concerned with improving the lives of their constituents, they would not be removing access to essential health care,” Ms. Burkhart continued. **“The clearest path toward healthy communities is through anti-poverty programs, Medicaid expansion, and access to safe, legal and affordable abortion care. Spending untold millions of dollars on legislating and litigating laws that are designed to fail is an irresponsible and reprehensible waste of taxpayers’ resources, costing lives in the long run.”**

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Trust Women is a health and reproductive rights organization that opens clinics in underserved areas to provide access to reproductive health care for all women. Founded in the wake of the assassination of Dr.

George Tiller, Trust Women educates, engages and mobilizes constituents in states hostile to abortion rights.

Ms. Burkhart, founder and CEO of Trust Women, is a former advisor to Dr. Tiller and has led the fight for choice in legislatures, courtrooms and at the frontlines of reproductive justice for three decades.

In 2013 Trust Women opened its flagship clinic in Wichita, returning abortion services to the people of South Central Kansas and beyond, and in 2016 opened the second Trust Women clinic in Oklahoma City, expanding abortion access in the country's largest metropolitan area without an abortion provider. For more information, visit: TrustWomen.org.