

## *How states 'trap' abortion clinics to shut them down*

**Julie Burkhart**

*CEO, Trust Women Foundation*

*President, Wellspring Health Access*



### *This time on Code WACK!*

The Wyoming legislature effectively shut down the only surgical abortion clinic in the state. ***How did it use "TRAP" (Targeted Regulations Against Abortion Providers) as its legislative strategy? And how does this make getting an abortion even more challenging for residents in Wyoming and nearby states that have abortion bans?***

We recently spoke to **Julie Burkhart**, longtime reproductive rights advocate, founder and CEO of [Trust Women Foundation](#), which works to expand access to abortion care in underserved communities. Julie is president of [Wellspring Health Access](#), in Caspar, Wyoming and a protégé of [Dr. George Tiller](#), who was murdered for providing abortion care in 2009. This is the second episode in a two-part series.

*We interviewed Julie just before the Wyoming legislature passed a bill that effectively shut down her women's health clinic in Casper, Wyoming. Since this interview, the clinic has put a pause on performing abortions and is awaiting further guidance from a regulatory body.*

# SHOW NOTES

## WE DISCUSS

*Tell us about a state bill that could shut down Wellspring Health Access, the sole surgical abortion clinic in Wyoming.*

"We call it **TRAP** -- *Targeted Regulations against Abortion Providers*.

"It would require us to become an ambulatory surgery center, which in the state of Wyoming is not a requirement, nor is it medically necessary <laugh> to have an [Ambulatory Service Center] to provide abortion care.

"So our clinic is structured as a doctor's office, so we would not meet the ambulatory surgery center code. We would have to make tons of changes to the clinic. It would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. And then also it has a hospital privileges provision that says doctors have to have hospital privileges, which is also medically unnecessary, nor is it common for doctors to have hospital privileges.

"We have one hospital in Casper. They're the ones who would hold all the cards and not necessarily grant us privileges and so that would also shut down our clinical practice." – **Julie Burkhart**

*What would that mean for your operations, and how would it impact your patients?*

"We would have some decisions to make. Do we comply with the law and just make the changes and cross our fingers that we would get a license, that our doctors would get privileges? Or do we file a lawsuit? Or I guess the third option would be we don't do anything and just shut it all down.

“... [For our patients] it would be devastating. We see people from all over the state of Wyoming. We also provide telehealth services to people and that would have a grave impact on their healthcare.” – **Julie Burkhart**

***What are the biggest barriers for patients in Wyoming seeking abortion care, and how does your clinic help them overcome these challenges?***

“I think the biggest challenges for people are the travel distance and then the overall cost. 80% to 90% of our patients receive some level of assistance for their appointments.

“It could be for the medical care they're getting. It could be transportation, lodging, food. So that's a really big obstacle for people. And then transportation and just the distance.

“We have a great partnership with a nonprofit that will fly our patients. So we've worked with them a lot. Especially say you're coming from Utah, you know it's going to be faster and easier to hop on a flight. So we have funds we work with to do not only funding for the medical care, but also all this wraparound logistical care as well ...” – **Julie Burkhart**

## Helpful Links

[Trust Women Foundation](#)

[Wellspring Health Access](#)

[Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers](#), *The Guttmacher Institute*

[Latest Wyoming abortion law challenge gets a hearing — and a new judge](#), *CAP City News*

[New Wyoming abortion law forces more patients to travel to neighboring states](#), *Wyoming Public Radio*

## Episode Transcript

Read the [episode transcript](#)

## Guest Biography - Julie Burkhart

Julie A. Burkhart is the founder and CEO of **Trust Women Foundation**, which works to expand access to abortion care in underserved communities. She is also the President of **Wellspring Health Access**, a women's health clinic in Wyoming.

With over 20 years of experience in management, policy development, and operations, Julie has built a career dedicated to advancing reproductive rights and healthcare access. She is a strategic leader known for her integrity, ability to build strong networks, and commitment to regulatory excellence.

Her expertise spans public policy, business development, and high-level advocacy, making her a key figure in the fight for reproductive freedom. Through her work, she continues to empower individuals and communities by ensuring they have the healthcare choices they deserve.

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