

News From The States

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS TODAY

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By [Sofia Resnick](#) and [Elisha Brown](#)



*Partners in Abortion Care in Maryland has seen patients from Idaho, California and Texas — the clinic is among the few in the nation that provides late-term abortions.
(Otto Kitsinger/States Newsroom)*

Morgan Nuzzo, an advanced practice clinician nurse-midwife, started Partners in Abortion Care in Maryland about a year ago with Dr. Diane Horvath, an OB-GYN who specializes in complex family planning. The clinic is among the few in the U.S. that provides abortions in the third trimester of pregnancy.

Nuzzo's patients are typically between 20 and 34 weeks' gestation. Abortions that late in pregnancy are rare and often sought because of health risks to the pregnant person or because of a fatal fetal diagnosis.

In June, Nuzzo and other experts [said](#) they had begun to see a rise in later abortions because of diminished access, increased wait times and costs.

But Nuzzo recently told [States Newsroom](#) that her clinic has seen a drop-off in patients seeking later abortions and talked about the possible reasons for the change. This interview has been edited and condensed.

States Newsroom: Why do you think you're seeing fewer later abortion patients?

Morgan Nuzzo: I think there are more patients, and they're not able to get where they need to go. I think hospitals are potentially seeing people, which we've always asked them to do. I think that people are trying, are certainly navigating to safe clinics, and maybe have that on their mind that if they are pregnant, and they need an abortion, that they should not delay for any reason and are trying, you know, realizing that they might have to travel and willing to do that maybe more than they were before.

I wonder, too, it almost feels like there's a wall in the middle of the United States now that kind of runs from one end to the other of places you can't get an abortion. And I wonder if people aren't finding us because they're not going to places that refer to us. People don't expect to need a later abortion, or an abortion after 28 weeks. And so I think sometimes when people are told that they're further along in pregnancy, it's just like, well, that's the end. And maybe those referral lists aren't getting into the hands of people. We're doing our best to make sure that people know that people can still access later abortion care. It might not be legal in their state, but it's certainly legal here in Maryland.

SN: How often are you turning people away, because they are too far along or for other reasons?

Nuzzo: Once a week. The very worst thing to do is turn somebody away who wants an abortion. It's a terrible feeling to take someone's choice from them. I'm not saying abortion is for everyone. Some people get here and they choose not to continue, and that's wonderful. But to say, someone who wants to not be pregnant anymore, and to say, "You have no other options," is a terrible thing to have to do to somebody.

SN: Where are your patients coming from?

Nuzzo: Very few are local. I mean, today we have somebody from California. People come from all over. People are still traveling very far to get to us. But it's just fewer of them.

Things are changing constantly. We're just waiting for this Florida ban to come. [Florida's [six-week abortion ban](#), signed earlier this year, has been blocked until the Florida Supreme Court rules on the constitutionality of the state's current 15-week restriction.] We know when that happens that we're going to get an influx of people from Florida. We already see a good number of people from Florida.

SN: Is there anything else you want to share with our readers?

Nuzzo: Make sure that you have a plan if you or someone you love were to find out that they were pregnant and they didn't want to be or couldn't be.

And then, you know, we are always wanting to bust later abortion stigma and let people know that these are patients that never expect to be seen by us. And something has changed in their life. And now they need a later abortion. And they're incredibly brave and strong and resilient for being able to get from wherever they are to us. It's incredible the things that people have to do just to get to us. And when they come here, they're often frustrated, but not because they need a later abortion, but because of how frustrating and how many barriers it took them to get here.

THE BEAT *States Newsroom coverage*

Texas mounts aggressive defense of abortion restrictions in historic case



*The Texas Supreme Court reversed a lower court decision that granted a woman abortion care for a nonviable pregnancy.
(Getty Images)*

Texas had the nation's most restrictive abortion law when the state enforced a six-week abortion ban empowering private citizens to sue people who get abortions or those who help them in September 2021, nine months before the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*. Since then, pregnancy terminations in the state are only allowed in a few circumstances.

The state's refusal to allow Kate Cox, a 31-year-old mother of two whose fetus received a fatal diagnosis last month, to have an abortion shows that Texas officials will go to extraordinary lengths to defend its laws, [Texas Tribune](#) reports. Cox ultimately got an abortion out-of-state as her condition declined.

In last week's ruling, the Texas Supreme Court sided with Republican Attorney General Ken Paxton, overturning a lower court's decision granting Cox's request for an abortion. **All nine justices are Republican, and one has a history of anti-abortion advocacy**, according to the Tribune. The court urged the state Medical Board to specify medical complications where an abortion would be allowed. The justices concluded the provider did not assert that her patient was facing a life-threatening physical condition.

The justices [determined](#) doctors don't need to wait until a patient is "within an inch of death or her bodily impairment is fully manifest or practically irreversible" to provide an abortion.

Aside from a new [law](#) that took effect this September allowing doctors to provide abortions for ectopic pregnancies and premature rupture of the membranes, it's still unclear what type of conditions pass the legal threshold for termination. The state high court's decision in *Zurawski v. Texas* could provide answers.

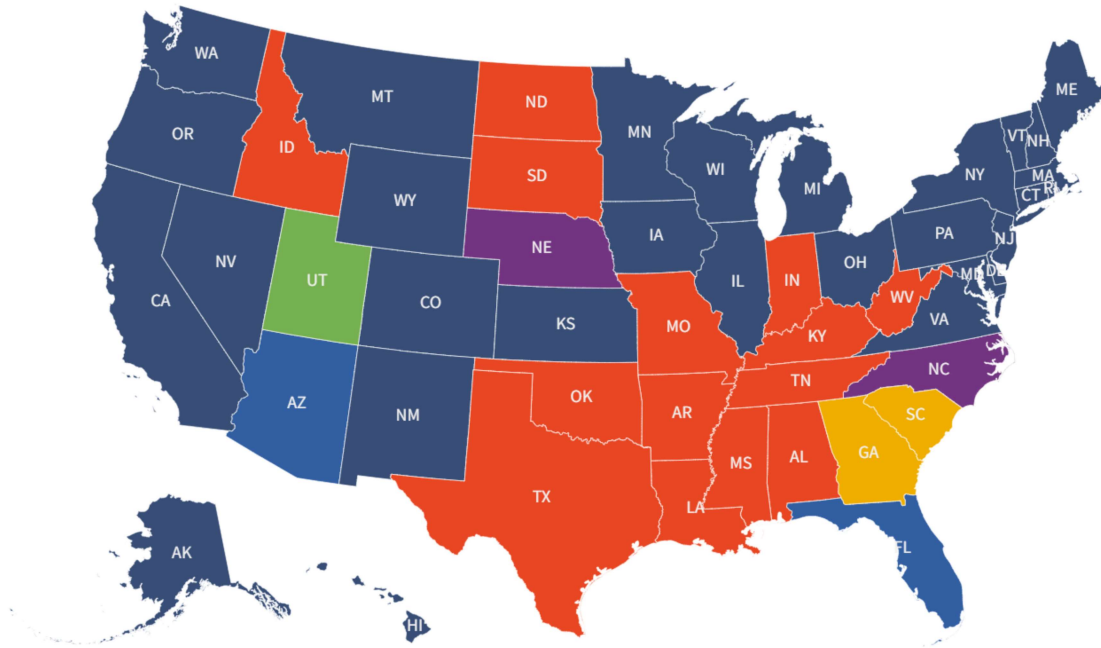
THE PULL *Commentary from North Carolina*

"The bottom line, thankfully, the woman [Kate Cox] escaped to another state. But if the zealots behind such laws had their way, she'd be in jail. And the notion that prominent office holders and candidates in our state agree ought to outrage all caring and thinking North Carolinians." — **Rob Schofield**, editor, [NC Newsline](#)

THE PULSE *Reproductive rights news across the country*

- The U.S. Senate approved the remainder of the military nominations that Alabama Sen. Tommy Tuberville had continued to block in protest of a Pentagon abortion policy. ([States Newsroom](#))
- Sponsors of Florida's abortion rights petition have soared past a million signatures, but now they're focused on meeting geographic diversity requirements. ([Florida Phoenix](#))
- California doulas are critical of the state Medicaid's business license requirements and reimbursement rates. ([KFF Health News](#))
- A rural Wyoming hospital's maternity ward closure exacerbated the OB-GYN shortage and led expectant mothers to travel elsewhere for pregnancy care. ([WyoFile](#))
- Family doctors in rural areas of the U.S. are teaming up to provide maternal care as obstetrics units close. ([NPR](#))
- Vice President Kamala Harris announced a nationwide tour focused on abortion in 2024. ([Associated Press](#))

STATE BY STATE *Abortion access in the U.S.*



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