

RSC Members' Efforts on Behalf of Terri Schiavo

Reps. Joe Pitts (R-PA), Dave Weldon (R-FL), and Tom Feeney (R-FL) each made statements on the House floor, as follows. Also, Rep. Rick Renzi (R-AZ) sent an email to Governor Bush and then followed up with a call. See below.

STARVATION IS AN INHUMANE WAY TO DIE -- (House of Representatives - October 21, 2003)

[Page: H9741] [GPO's PDF](#)

(Mr. *PITTS* asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. *PITTS*. Mr. Speaker, death by dehydration is a painful, agonizing, and arduous process that takes 10 to 14 days. In addition to feeling the pangs of hunger and thirst, the skin, lips, and tongue crack, the nose bleeds because of the drying of the mucus membranes, heaving and vomiting may ensue because of the drying out of the stomach lining, and the victim may experience seizures.

Compared to starvation and dehydration, death by hanging, firing squad, or even the electric chair seems humane. But right now that death sentence is being carried out not against murderers, rapists, and child molesters, but on one of the most disabled in our midst.

Terri Schiavo is not on a respirator or any artificial life-support equipment. Any reasonable person who sees this woman reacting to her parents will realize she is not in a coma or, as is sometimes called, a persistent vegetative state.

Have we, as a Nation, become so callous that we have bought into the "quality of life" argument that some people simply are not worth the effort to protect and rehabilitate? I hope not.

MORATORIUM ON DEHYDRATION CASES IN FLORIDA -- (House of Representatives - October 21, 2003)

[Page: H9743] [GPO's PDF](#)

(Mr. *WELDON* of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. *WELDON* of Florida. Mr. Speaker, Terry Schiavo had her feeding tubes removed last Wednesday, and she may needlessly die. Last night, I spoke with Governor Jeb Bush about Terry, and he assured me that he and the Florida legislature are moving expeditiously to give him the powers to intervene to save her life and fulfill the wishes of Terry's parents. Terry's parents are in a last-minute battle to save her.

Governor Bush and the Florida legislature are taking the necessary steps. Three years ago, the circuit court ordered Terry's feeding tubes to be withdrawn; and despite the objections of Terry's parents and request to take custody and care for her, all court cases have failed. Terry is not unconscious. Terry is not on life support. She is not dying of an underlying disease, and she is responsive to human interaction.

This is a grave injustice. Yesterday, Governor Bush called for a special session to pass a moratorium on all dehydration cases in Florida. The Florida House passed this bill with Governor Bush's support, and the Florida senate will take it up today. Support the legislature and support Governor Bush in this effort to save this young lady's life.

TRIBUTE TO TERRI SCHINDLER-SCHIAVO -- (House of Representatives - October 21, 2003)

[Page: H9788] [GPO's PDF](#)

Mr. FEENEY. Mr. Speaker, tonight I rise to speak for the life of a fellow citizen, Ms. Terri Schindler-Schiavo. Her story has been heard worldwide and I join millions across the world, including our Governor, Jeb Bush, to urge that her feeding tube be replaced and her life spared.

According to the web site established on her behalf, Terri was 26 years old when she suffered brain damage from a sudden collapse. She receives her food and water by means of a feeding tube. Terri's other bodily functions are physically stable. Terri smiles, laughs and cries. Terri recognizes voices and responds. At times, she vocalizes sounds, trying in her best way to speak.

While these situations are heart-breaking for all of those involved, we need to remember that all life is precious. It is not for us to measure what constitutes "valuable life v. invaluable." We never know how one's life may impact others. While Terri's life seems "a waste" or "over" to others, she obviously brings delight and happiness to her family and those around her. Her parents and siblings have fought in court to keep Terri alive.

Members, the prospect of a society that places price-tags on human life, is terrifying. We must uphold the American precedent that "..... All men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life" I stand in support of Terri's family, as well as our Governor and State leaders who are trying to preserve this precious life.

Dear Governor Bush,

As I know you are very concerned over the life of Terri Schindler-Schiavo, please understand that as a father of twelve children this issue has touched me.

In my understanding of this highly emotional issue, you are taking a position to try and save the life of another human being. I commend you on this endeavor and wish to lend my support in anyway I can. I also urge you to assist in allowing the family of Terri to have the opportunity to be with their daughter during these trying days.

As you already know, Terri begins what may be the last days of her life. As a father, husband, and a stead-fast protector of innocent life, I support every effort to enable Terri's life to continue.

Time is short and every human life is sacred. Again, know that saving her life is a top priority in our quest to save and protect the innocent.

My prayers are with you and the family of Terri.

Sincerely,

/S/

Rick Renzi
U.S. House of Representative
Arizona Congressional District 1