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House of Representatives

FOR THE RELIEF OF THE PARENTS OF THERESA MARIE SCHIAVO

(Continuation of Proceedings of
Sunday, March 20, 2005)

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, we come here with a heavy heart. I urge the Members of this House to do our duty to pass the Schiavo Act. Its purpose is simple—to allow the Federal courts to review this matter in the light of Terri's constitutional rights. That's not a lot to ask.

Over the last few days, Members of both parties and chambers have worked tirelessly to reach this agreement. We hope that these efforts will help give Terri Schiavo new hope and a new chance at life.

We have heard very moving accounts of people close to Terri that she is indeed, very much alive. She laughs, she cries and she smiles with those around her. She is aware of her surroundings and is responsive to them. This is a woman who deserves a chance at life and not a death sentence of starvation and dehydration.

It is our hope that this bill will give Terri a new hope of life. It takes her case out of the Florida court system and puts it in the hands of the Federal court. There, her case will be tried anew where the judge can reevaluate and reassess Terri's medical condition.

Oddly enough, on this very day last year, the Pope addressed a group of participants in an international Congress on life-sustaining treatments. The Pope said a human being's value and personal dignity do not change no matter what his or her circumstances.

And I quote:

A man, even if seriously ill or disabled in the exercise of his highest functions, is and always will be a man, and he will never become a "vegetable" or an "animal."

I urge every Member of this people's House to carry these words in their hearts as we vote.

Today, we have the opportunity to give a woman another chance to live. It is our turn to fulfill the promises etched in the Declaration of Independence to make life more perfect for the pursuit of life.

I want to thank my colleagues Leader DELAY, Majority Whip BLUNT, Representative OBERSTAR, Chairman SENSENBRENNER and Dr. WELDON for helping us to get this life saving bill together.

I want the Schindler family to know that no matter what happens, our hearts and prayers will continue to be with you.

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, as one of 203 Democrat and Republican Members of Congress who voted in favor of S. 686, a private bill for the Relief of the Parents of Theresa Marie Schiavo, I am pleased that President Bush signed this important piece of legislation that may result in the reinsertion of Ms. Schiavo's feeding tube. The bill empowers a Federal court to examine the Terri Schiavo case.

As I listened to my colleagues debating this issue on the House floor last night, I heard many emotional statements from Members on both sides of the aisle in support of and opposed to what this bill stands for. This is not about Democrats or Republicans, it is simply about protecting the rights of disabled individuals.

Unfortunately, after many years of dispute between Ms. Schiavo's husband and parents, a Florida State court ordered the removal of her feeding tubes and subsequent fate of death by starvation and dehydration. Due to the urgency of Ms. Schiavo's case, this bill was limited in considering just her life. However, there are many more people out there who also need help like this and I firmly believe that before we extinguish any life, we should allow that individual all legal and constitutional protections, so they can leave this world with dignity.

I feel so strongly about this that I was an original cosponsor of Congressman DAVE WELDON's recently introduced bill, H.R. 1151, that would have given legal representation to all incapacitated persons who are without written documentation as to their wishes and whose family is involved in a dispute as to the person's wishes.

S. 686, which we passed early this morning, allows Ms. Schiavo's parents to bring the case before the Federal court in Florida and they would be able to hear all evidence without

being prejudiced by any of the information from the Florida State case that led to the feeding tubes being removed. The bill also directs the Federal courts to rule on whether removing Ms. Schiavo's feeding tubes is a violation of her civil rights granted to her both by the Constitution and Federal laws.

I believe this bill is the right thing to do and I believe we should protect human life from its inception to a person's last breath.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address S. 686 for the Relief of the Parents of Theresa Marie Schiavo. Numerous courts have reviewed the tragic case of Terri Schiavo, and all have agreed that the right to make decisions about her care rests solely with her legal guardian: her husband, Michael Schiavo.

Even in cases where the patient has made it clear that she did not wish to persist in a catatonic state, families face excruciating decisions about how to proceed. Disagreement about the medical facts or the express wishes of the patient only add to the agony, and often lead to painful disputes within families.

We are a nation of laws, and as such we have a proper and unbiased way of resolving these difficult situations. The Schiavo case involves a family dispute over who has final decisionmaking regarding Terri Schiavo's medical care, and as such falls exclusively under jurisdiction of the State courts. Federal courts do not have any jurisdiction in this case; the U.S. Congress does not have any jurisdiction in this case; only the courts of the State of Florida have jurisdiction here.

But Republican leaders in Congress have decided they must get involved in this tragic story. Perhaps BILL FRIST sees a chance to score political points in advance of his 2008 presidential bid; perhaps TOM DELAY sees a way to distract from his ongoing ethics problems; perhaps they are motivated by more noble standards.

Regardless of their motivation, the GOP congressional leadership has pushed S. 686, legislation pushing an after-the-fact remedy by pre-empting State court jurisdiction. Foregoing even the pretense of federalism, and the notion of America as a nation of laws, S. 686 reflects the Republicans' belief that they may

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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pick and choose the jurisdiction of their choice, depending on the day and the case.

This bill places politics before the judgment of State judges, imposing Federal adjudication on a case that has been comprehensively reviewed and decided. S. 686 represents a gross abuse of legislative authority and a violation of the U.S. Constitution.

Michael Schiavo has wrestled with the agonizing decision of what to do for his wife. He has followed Terri's instructions in accordance with the laws of his State and this country. Congress has no business in this matter, which involves a family decision based on mutual agreement between a husband and wife.

Mr. EVERETT. Mr. Speaker, the Congress has been called upon to take emergency action to protect the rights and life of Terri Schiavo.

While I normally do not favor Federal government involvement in personal decisions, there are a number of aspects to the Schiavo case which disturb me and call for further investigation.

I am concerned about the lack of written evidence that Terri Schiavo did not want her life preserved, the fact that her husband waited years before telling anyone that his wife supposedly did not want to live, and also the fact that her husband is pushing for her feeding tube removal after he has become involved with another woman and had children.

Terri Schiavo is a living human being and every reasonable effort should be made to ensure that her constitutional rights have not been denied.

I encourage all Members to support this legislation.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 686, to provide for the relief of Terri Schiavo's family. In 1990, Terri Schiavo suffered a heart attack and subsequent brain damage due to lack of oxygen. She is not in a coma, and with the exception of the feeding tube, requires no artificial life support to keep her alive. Removal of the feeding tube, as was done this past Friday, will result in Terri's death by starvation and dehydration. By some estimates, she could be left to suffer for up to a month. This is a drawn out and painful process and Terri can feel pain.

In a case like this one, where there is a clear dispute between Terri's parents and husband as to her wishes, the presumption should always be on the side of life. Every effort should be made to ensure that no mistakes have been made in this case. I urge support of this important legislation.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I support this legislation, S. 686, for the relief of the parents of Terri Schiavo. This deeply personal family matter has come to our attention and been acted upon by Congress when the State courts have already made their decisions and rightfully so as this matter is in their jurisdiction.

Now we find ourselves in the middle of a deeply personal battle between Terri's husband and her family. While we all understand the pain and tragedy of this family's struggle, we cannot overstep our boundaries in this heart-wrenching situation that many families have made and will have to make in the future. No one wants to witness the death of a family member; however, if that person stated their wish was not to be kept alive artificially, those wishes must be upheld.

In this case, the State courts of Florida have ruled that Terri's wishes were indeed to not be kept alive artificially if she were to ever fall into a persistent vegetative state. The idea that Congress would intervene in this case is indeed unsettling and does bring some disturbing questions of constitutionality to the table.

We are justified in sending this highly emotional case to the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida even though Terri remains in this persistent, seemingly unrecoverable, state. The Federal courts should review Terri's case to determine if her constitutional rights have been violated because it is not the role of Congress to make such decisions regarding these issues.

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Speaker, I support S. 686, for the Relief of the Parents of Theresa Marie Schiavo.

While I continue to support the right of individuals (through living wills) and families (when no living will exists) to make such difficult decisions, this case is unusual in two ways. First, while most families are united in these judgments, this family is clearly divided. Second, Terri Schiavo is not unresponsive to those around her, as is typically the case when these decisions are made. According to her mother, Terri smiles, laughs, cries, and otherwise responds to the presence of her family and others.

S. 686 does not make medical decisions. It merely allows Terri Schiavo's family the right to have their case heard in Federal court—a right routinely accorded to death row inmates. That right certainly should be accorded to a disabled person.

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, passage of S. 686 today reaffirms that our Nation is built on a foundation of reverence for life and a commitment to protect life.

Protection of life is at the core of our constitutional republic. Beyond issues of separation of powers and court jurisdiction, is the fundamental notion that our government—both State and Federal—was established to protect the lives of all citizens.

Extraordinary circumstances require us to defend the life of Theresa Marie Schiavo and her right to due process. Absent congressional action, those rights, and in fact, her life, will be forever extinguished.

I join the overwhelming bipartisan support for ensuring that Theresa Marie Schiavo has full due process and that we uphold our reverence for human life.

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Speaker, thank you for giving me an opportunity to voice my thoughts on this significant issue.

This Nation was founded to preserve the sacred rights of mankind: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Alexander Hamilton correctly noted that these rights were intrinsic and could "never be erased or obscured by mortal power."

Our Nation was premised on this notion, and our government built upon its foundation. Yet, more than 200 years after our founding, we are still fighting to realize this sacred vision. The fight to save the life of Terri Schiavo, a disabled Florida woman, is evidence of our struggle.

In cases like Terri's, when there is no living will and exact wishes are impossible to determine, we must err on the side of protecting innocent life. Without such guiding principles, how can we be sure that we have not for-

saken her rights and replaced them with a court-ordered death sentence based solely on hearsay?

It is not only mortal power that seeks to take the life of Terri Schiavo, but moral power overseen and blessed by government. If we allow this course to continue, and if we stand idly by as this human life expires as a result of government-ordered starvation, we will have lost the moral compass passed down to us by our forefathers.

If we cannot protect innocent life in these circumstances where there is no written evidence of the individual's wishes, the family is deeply divided, and death is neither imminent nor certain in the near future, we have failed to do our jobs of protecting her constitutional rights.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I am outraged that the Republicans continue to lead the charge in legislating their personal beliefs on the American people.

There is no legal or moral justification for Congress to be meddling in the personal lives of any American. Further, it sets a terrible precedent. The Florida courts have repeatedly ruled that any action on the part of the legislature or governor is a violation of the separation of powers enshrined in the Constitution. Yet under the cover of darkness, the majority has made a national example out of a local, individual, and very personal issue.

It is my hope that, when the time arrives, these same "civil rights" advocates will fight with the same zeal for the rights to equality, education, health care and housing that all Americans deserve.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, there is no more difficult decision for a family than to remove a loved one from life support. My heart goes out to the Schiavo family in this very personal and difficult time. However, I believe this to be a private family matter to be decided based on their own faith and values, without the government's intervention.

The Schiavo case has been a long and difficult one for Ms. Schiavo's family and friends. Mr. Speaker, I trust that the multiple court decisions and the multiple court reviews were properly evaluated. Each time the evidence pointed to the same unbiased conclusion: Terri Schiavo's wishes were clear and convincing. Doctors who have examined Ms. Schiavo have consistently said that she is in a persistent vegetative state. The only ones who disagree are those who are deciding based on videotapes. In fact, the Florida State legislature has not overridden the decisions of their State courts.

There is no doubt that this is a family tragedy. But, there is no room for the Federal Government in this case or in any similar case. It is unfair that this family during their time of grief has become a political pawn in an ideological war the conservative leadership is inappropriately propelling.

Mr. Speaker, Congress intervening in this matter sets a bad precedent for our entire legal system. The Republican leadership has repeatedly made a point of calling for the removal of Federal court jurisdiction over issues, such as gay marriage or displaying the Ten Commandments in public buildings, when the Federal courts render a decision that does not meet with their political ideology. In fact, they have gone so far as to introduce several legislative initiatives to strip controversial religious and social issues from the jurisdiction of Federal courts. Now, ironically, when a State has

rendered a final decision that the Republican leadership disagrees with, they support reinstating the power of "activist judges" on the Federal level. The Republican leadership cannot have it both ways and should not interfere with the judicial process that has worked for over 200 years.

Instead we should be fighting to cover the 45 million Americans who are currently without health insurance and unable to get the services they need to live. We should be increasing scientific research funding to improve our medical procedures and help more people overcome the impossible.

Mr. Speaker, I am not here today to judge what is right or wrong in Ms. Schiavo's particular case. Only her loved ones can truly know in their hearts what is right for her, even if they cannot agree. But, what I do know is that whether someone has the right to live or die is not a decision that the Federal Government, and Members of Congress should not make.

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply saddened over the pain and suffering of Ms. Schiavo and her family. This is a tragedy of great depth.

I cannot imagine the pain that Ms. Schiavo has endured. As a husband, I certainly can empathize with Mr. Schiavo. As a father, I can empathize with the feelings of Ms. Schiavo's mother and father.

My feelings for the pain of this family are precisely the reason for my position on this bill. In the first instance, tragic choices such as those confronting this family should be made by the family itself. In a case such as this, in which the family cannot come to a consensus, the courts are the proper place for decisions to be made.

The Florida courts have examined this matter in great detail for a very long time. For any legislative body—least of all the Federal legislature—to impose its will is an abuse of its power.

Excruciating decisions such as this belong first to families, and only if there cannot be agreement within a family—in the courts. The political process is the least appropriate place for such a decision to be made.

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, since February 1990, Terri Schiavo and her family have been coping with a tragic situation involving the most sensitive and difficult question imaginable. Congress and the American people should respect any person and their family dealing with an end of life decision. Over the past 15 years, 19 judges sitting on six different courts have ultimately determined that Terri Schiavo did not wish to be kept alive in a persistent vegetative state. Congress should respect her wish and stay out of the personal lives of families in tragic situations such as this. These heart-rending decisions are best made by the individual and family after discussions with treating physicians and clergy—not by Washington politicians.

At the time I received notice there would be a vote on the bill regarding Terri Schiavo, I went immediately to the airport but was not able to get a flight to Washington in time. Had I been present, I would have voted to respect the wishes of Terri Schiavo.

I hope every American will consider writing or revising a living will to clearly state their wishes regarding end of life decisions and keep a similar tragedy from happening in their family.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, as the elected representatives of the American people, we have no greater responsibility than defending the lives and liberties of the most vulnerable among us. Today, both the legislative and executive branches of the United States government are acting in concert to defend the life of one such human being, Terri Schiavo.

While the legal issues related to this case remain uncertain, the moral issues could not be more clear. Terri Schiavo is very much alive today. By all appearances, she is responsive to her family and still has the capacity to feel joy and pain, like the rest of us.

Terri Schiavo has a right to live, and we have a responsibility to help her. With such complex ethical questions that fall between interpreting the law and saving an innocent human life, we must always err on the side of life.

President Abraham Lincoln said, "I have been driven many times upon my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go." This week, millions of Americans, many of my colleagues, and I found ourselves in a similar position.

Through this action, Congress is not only saving the life of Terri Schiavo, we are making a statement about the country we live in and the culture of life which we seek.

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my support of House leadership for working on our behalf to give Terri Schiavo her day in Federal court.

From our founding days, the Federal system we enjoy has reserved significant authority to the States to settle disputes. However, Federal courts have always been able to review possible violations of a citizen's constitutional rights. The narrowly drawn language of S. 686 merely gives a Federal court the chance to review the unique circumstances of the Schiavo case in accordance with her Fourteenth Amendment guarantee: That no State shall deprive her of life without due process of law. In seeking this Federal review, Congress ensures that the basic protections available to all citizens are available to Terri Schiavo as well.

No federally guaranteed right is more sacred than this right to life. I applaud the authors of this legislation for crafting language allowing for a more thorough examination of Terri Schiavo's rights under the Constitution of the United States.

Mr. FERGUSON. Mr. Speaker, it was with heavy hearts and steady resolve that we came to the House chamber on Palm Sunday to pass S. 686, a carefully crafted bill with a singular purpose: To ensure that Terri Schiavo enjoys the same due process under the Constitution as any other citizen, and to guarantee that her right to life is fully protected.

This is an extraordinary situation, one that requires an extraordinary response. This is a life or death situation for this young woman. Terri's parents should have the chance to have her case heard by a Federal judge, and now they will. If we make an error, we should err on the side of life.

Mrs. CUBIN. Mr. Speaker, as someone who respects human life in all its stages, I wholeheartedly support S. 686 and efforts to save Terri Schiavo.

Terri is not in a coma, nor are extraordinary measures being taken to keep her alive. Terri may need feeding tubes to help her eat, but that doesn't mean she doesn't deserve the

constitutional protections afforded by our judicial system. That Terri's life could be taken without such consideration is shocking to the conscience and contrary to notions of the rule of law and due process.

It is imperative that Congress act swiftly to enact this bipartisan legislation, without which Terri Schiavo would most certainly die without the legal redress she so rightfully deserves.

With that, I urge my colleagues to pass S. 686 and give Terri Schiavo and her family their day in Federal court.

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to S. 686, Relief for the Parents of Theresa Marie Schiavo.

I am very disturbed that this tragedy is being used for what seem to be political purposes.

I am concerned because this bill would set a dangerous precedent in dealing with a very serious and personal issue. This bill is an intrusion into a family's medical decision and Congress should not play a role in a private family matter when it is being dealt with in the State courts.

As Congress, we should respect the sanctity of the judiciary and not use legislative powers to overturn court decisions when we disagree with such decisions.

I wish for Terri, her husband and family peace.

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, my remarks today are to commend the United States House of Representatives for taking such swift and just action during the early hours of Monday, March 21st when this body passed S. 626 for the relief of the parents of Terri Schiavo. This bill will transfer the case regarding Terri Schiavo's life to the review of a Federal court. Doing so staved off efforts to permanently remove Terri's feeding tube, which would have slowly killed her by means of starvation and dehydration. Ms. Schiavo is neither brain-dead nor dependent on artificial life support; she simply needs a feeding tube to eat as do many incapacitated people.

As a cosponsor of the original House bill to save Ms. Schiavo's life and a strong supporter of the Senate measure, I regret that I, along with numerous other members of Congress, was unable to return to Washington, D.C. in time to participate, due to the sudden and unexpected nature of the debate and vote. I am, however, committed to continuing my support of efforts aimed at saving Ms. Schiavo's life.

While the case regarding Terri Schiavo is unique and tragic in many ways, it would be a much greater tragedy for those in power to do nothing to save an innocent woman from a slow, agonizing death. I am grateful that our efforts in Congress have assisted in staving off injustice and I am hopeful that new techniques and therapies may be applied to Terri for her benefit so that she may live out her life in the most productive and peaceful manner possible.

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, Congress typically writes laws with a broad application, but sometimes a special situation, such as this one, requires unusual legislative action. Life is sacred. Many across America have voiced support in an effort to keep Terri Schiavo alive. Nothing can diminish the importance of life.

Terri Schiavo suffered a heart attack 15 years ago and experienced brain damage. While in the hospital, tubes were inserted in her digestive system to provide nutrition and

hydration. Three years later, Terri was still talking when speech therapy was discontinued. Terri Schiavo is currently not terminally ill or in the process of dying. She is brain damaged, but she is otherwise healthy. Terri Schiavo is not on artificial life support. No extraordinary measures are being taken to keep her alive.

Ms. Schiavo is a living person. She is awake and aware of her surroundings. Many are galvanized by her cause because like me, they recognize that the right to life is one of our core fundamental human values.

The 14th Amendment states, "No State shall deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law." In this special circumstance, we were left with a last legal recourse to help save her life by providing her with the opportunity to have her case heard before a Federal court. There is clear precedent for Federal review of life and death cases.

I strongly value the importance of States' rights. This case does not weaken my resolve to fight for States' rights. The State and Federal government should not take life, but by giving the Federal court an opportunity to hear the case, this allows one more opportunity for Terri Schiavo to live.

Judge Greer of the Pinellas-Pasco Circuit Court stated, "I see no cogent reason why the committee should be able to intervene into a case involving the decision of whether or not to remain on life support." He added, "I don't think that legislative agencies or bodies have business in court proceedings."

I respectfully disagree. The Constitution not only outlines a separation of powers but also a system of checks and balances. It is Congress's duty to hold the judicial branch accountable or to act itself within its powers when it believes it is necessary.

The driving force behind many people's efforts on behalf of Ms. Schiavo was plainly to save her life. Yet there have emerged a number of difficult and complicated issues. I applaud the efforts of those who fight for Ms. Schiavo to live. These issues resonate with many as some of us contemplate how we would like to die. I, however, focus on how Congress can protect Ms. Schiavo's life because that is of paramount importance.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, this legislation provides a clear lesson for the American public about how Congress and American politics operate today.

Make no mistake, this is not about what Terri Schiavo wants. It is clear from testimony of the family members who are fighting against Terri's husband that they would want the feeding tube reinserted no matter what Terri wants. TOM DELAY says he doesn't care what her husband wants. This is all about people who have chosen to use this poor woman as a political football. This legislative spectacle was an artful attempt to divert the public's attention.

But in your mind's eye, the face in the picture that you should be thinking about is not Terri Schiavo's: You should be worried about the face of you or your loved one in the middle of a media circus, or worse, denied the right to control your own fate.

This is not a narrow, specific bill about a single case. Their true intentions were revealed by H.R. 1332, the bill that TOM DELAY had the House pass last Wednesday. I led the debate against H.R. 1332 because it would

have effectively overruled Oregon's Death with Dignity Act with language so broad and sweeping that it would call into question every living will and end of life directive. Anybody who wanted to force the issue, whether business partner, estranged family member, or friend could drag your loved ones into Federal court.

Make no mistake, the goal is to take away your choice in making end of life decisions, just as their agenda is to control your choices at the beginning of life, whether regarding contraception or a woman's right to choose.

The Schiavo case has received unbelievable attention and scrutiny by politicians and judges at every level in the State of Florida. For years, the battle has raged in a State that is controlled by Republicans and is governed by the President's brother. This is not about due process and letting the system work. Rather it is about some zealots who do not agree with the verdicts of the courts and the professional opinions of medical experts.

The hypocrisy of TOM DELAY and the Republican leadership in Congress is breathtaking. The only time they trust the Federal courts is when they are using them as a political tactic. This fall they passed in the House of Representatives, bills that declared the Federal courts incompetent to rule on cases involving the pledge of allegiance and same-sex marriage.

In a statement released early this morning, President Bush said he will "continue to stand on the side of those defending life for all Americans." But the facts make it hard to believe that the President is standing on principle. In 1999, then Governor Bush signed a law that "allows hospitals to discontinue life sustaining care, even if patient family members disagree." Just days ago the law permitted Texas Children's Hospital to remove the breathing tube from a 6-month-old boy named Sun Hudson. The law may soon be used to remove life support from Spiro Nikolouzos, a 68-year-old man. The President has not commented on either case.

Because of this media circus, attention is being diverted away from the seniors that will suffer and die in this country as a result of the Republican leadership's budget proposal to shortchange Medicaid. The very financial sources that have kept Terri alive for 15 years, Medicaid and her malpractice settlement, are under attack by the President and TOM DELAY. For the time being, Republican leaders are succeeding in their effort to change the subject, and obscure this fact.

While Congress's involvement is another sad chapter in the fight against Terri's wishes, I'm glad that we forced them to narrow the reach of this bill, at least for the time being. It is still an unfortunate precedent of inappropriate Congressional intervention into a personal family matter.

In the final analysis, I'm pleased that the public was able to see what the stakes are and what some politicians and zealots are willing to do. Ultimately, it is this public awareness that will defeat efforts to take away the choice for each of us and of our families to control our own destinies.

Mr. FEENEY. Mr. Speaker, as members of Congress, we have a moral obligation to protect innocent life and not stand idly by while an activist judge seeks to use extreme measures to destroy the life of an innocent woman. By transferring this matter to a Federal court

we will ensure Terri is given every possible protection by allowing a Federal judge to see whether her constitutional rights have been violated.

Life is precious and I will always work to see that it is protected. With so much controversy surrounding Terri's final wishes and current physical condition, I believe it is imperative that a Federal court take a fresh look at this case.

I commend my colleagues from both the House and Senate for working around the clock to determine a legislative solution to ensure that Terri's life and her constitutional rights are protected.

Thomas Jefferson once wrote that, "[t]he care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only legitimate object of good government. I think Jefferson was right. I welcome this opportunity to join my colleagues in this effort to help defend and protect innocent human life.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, we have just set a frightening precedent in the halls of Congress by interfering in the life of an individual. Yet we show little compassion for the scores of families who do not have the financial means or insurance to cover the expenses of individuals on life support or individuals who are sick in general.

There are 10,000 individuals on life-support throughout the country. The White House and Congress should find better ways to take care of all of these individuals and individuals who are in dire need of proper healthcare.

If we continue on this path, the President of the United States should be made guardian of all people on life support. Then perhaps we can find an amicable solution to the sadness that is the state of healthcare for Americans.

What are our priorities? If we care about saving lives, we should address the problem of 40 million Americans who do not have health care insurance. Eleven million children do not have basic health insurance. New York State ranked 33rd out of 50 states in quality of hospital care. And, 57,000 Americans die needlessly each year because the health care system failed to provide adequate care.

Congress must stand up and do what the voters elected them to do—focus on the critical issues facing everyone in this country.

Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I regret that Congress is being called in to this special session while official business requires me to be elsewhere at this time. However, I wish to insert these remarks for the RECORD in order to make public my views and position on the legislation before this body tonight, S. 686, that will provide for the Relief of the Parents of Theresa Marie Schiavo.

We are playing a dangerous game here as we try to act as Solomons when the nine Solomons of the U.S. Supreme Court have refused to review the case involving Ms. Schiavo. The arguments we have heard tonight both "pro" and "con" give testimony to the difficulty of the decision before us this evening, but it is a decision we should not be making. Issues of life and death should be determined personally, medically, legally, spiritually, morally—but not politically. Congress, the political body that it is, should not be involved in this sad debate tonight, and I strongly believe we will ultimately regret the precedent we are setting by our intrusion into this affair.

My heart goes out to the Schindlers this evening, and I share with them their concern

and love for their daughter. Nonetheless, I do not think we have all the information we need to act wisely in this matter.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the Leadership in the House and Senate for working together for a rapid compromise on legislation to allow for the relief of the parents of Terri Schiavo, and I rise today to support the bill.

Terri Schiavo's struggle to live has been emotionally trying for anyone who has followed the case, let alone the incomprehensible emotions being faced by her family and caretakers who are directly involved. I, presumably like most Members of Congress, hoped to see the issue of Terri Schiavo resolved without Congressional intervention. While I do not feel it is the role of Congress to make medical decisions in the case of Terri Schiavo, I do feel it is our role to ensure her parents' opportunity to fight for their own daughter's life before a Federal court. Moreover, I feel whenever there is doubt and question and disagreement as to what a person in Terri's condition would want for herself, government must always protect one's right to live.

I continue to pray for Ms. Schiavo and her family, and for the strength they need to endure this emotional trauma. Every life is worthy of protection, and given the circumstances surrounding this case, I support the efforts being taken to save her life.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

1311. A letter from the Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Food Stamp Program: High Performance Bonuses (RIN: 0584-AD29) received February 28, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1312. A letter from the Acting Administrator, AMS, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Sweet Cherries Grown in Designated Counties in Washington; Establishment of Minimum Size and Maturity Requirements for Lightly Colored Sweet Cherries Varieties [Docket No. FV04-923-1 FR] received March 4, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1313. A letter from the Acting Administrator, AMS, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Marketing Order Regulating the Handling of Spearmint Oil Produced in the Far West; Revision of the Salable Quantity and Allotment Percentage for Class 3 (Native) Spearmint Oil for the 2004-2005 Marketing Year [Docket No. FV04-985-2 IFR-A] received March 4,

2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1314. A letter from the Acting Administrator, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Addition of Slovakia to the List of Countries Eligible To Export Meat Products to the United States [Docket No. 99-018F] received March 11, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1315. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, APHIS, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy; Minimal-Risk Regions and Importation of Commodities; Partial Delay of Applicability [Docket No. 03-080-6] (RIN: 0579-AB73) received March 14, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1316. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule—Special Local Regulations for Marine Events; Morehead City Harbor Channel, Morehead City, NC [CGD05-04-180] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received February 10, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1317. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule—Special Local Regulations for Marine Events; Martin Lagoon, Middle River, MD [CGD05-04-183] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received February 10, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1318. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule—Regulated Navigation Areas, Security Zones, and Temporary Anchorage Areas; St. Johns River, Jacksonville, FL [CGD07-04-090] (RIN: 1625-AA11) received January 31, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1319. A letter from the Attorney, RSPA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Hazardous Materials: Availability of Information for Hazardous Materials Transported by Aircraft. [Docket No. RSPA-00-7762 (HM-206C)] (RIN: 2137-AD29) received March 8, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1320. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Chief Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Standards for Development and Use of Processor-Based Signal and Train Control Systems [Docket No. FRA-2001-10160] (RIN: 2130-AA94) received March 8, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk

for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

[Filed on Mar. 21 (Legislative day of Mar. 20), 2005]

Mr. GINGREY: Committee on Rules. H. Res. 181. A resolution waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules (Rept. 109-27). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. GINGREY: Committee on Rules. H. Res. 182. A resolution providing for consideration of the bill (S. 686) for the relief of the parents of Theresa Marie Schiavo (Rept. 109-28). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 1452. A bill for the relief of the parents of Theresa Marie Schiavo; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LANTOS:

H.R. 1453. A bill to strengthen United States relations with Libya, to facilitate the integration of Libya into the international community, and to encourage positive change in Libyan society, and for other purposes; referred to the Committee on International Relations, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, Ways and Means, and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 1454. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make the credit for increasing research activities permanent; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS TO PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 8: Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. KLINE, Mr. JENKINS, Mr. TIBERI, Ms. ROSLEHTINEN, Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin, Mr. SAXTON, Mr. HENSARLING, and Mr. ROHR-ABACHER.

H.R. 21: Mr. FILNER and Mr. WALSH.

H.R. 567: Mr. BERMAN.

H.R. 1001: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas and Mr. ORTIZ.

H.R. 1417: Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. PORTMAN, and Mrs. JONES of Ohio.

H.R. 1424: Mr. LANTOS.

H. Res. 108: Mr. COX.