



U.S. Representative **Randy Neugebauer** 19th District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, March 21, 2005

Contact: Josh Noland
Phone: (202) 225-4005
Josh.Noland@mail.house.gov

Terri Schiavo's Life Prolonged By House Legislation

Washington, DC— Shortly after midnight on Monday morning, the House passed legislation that allows Terri Schiavo's feeding tube to be reinserted temporarily and for federal courts to have jurisdiction over her case. Congressman Randy Neugebauer strongly supported this bill, S. 686, which passed the House by a vote of 203-58.

The latest House bill to protect Terri's life gives her parents the eligibility to bring a suit in federal district court to determine if any of her federal constitutional rights have been violated by the decision to remove her feeding tube. The bill calls for the feeding tube to be reinserted until such a hearing can take place.

Neugebauer provided the following remarks in support of the bill during a 3 hour debate late Sunday evening:

“As many before me and many still to come have indicated, this is not an easy situation. If it were, we would not be here at this late hour, on this day. What makes this situation difficult is that there are so many unresolved questions. What are Terri's wishes? Terri Schiavo never prepared a living will to express definitively what her wishes would be. So we are left with conflicting accounts of what course of action Terri would want her doctors to take. What has the family decided? Opponents of this legislation say this should be a family issue. I agree. However, we have a family that disagrees on the fate of Terri's life. While her husband wants to end her life, we have a set of parents who are willing to do everything it takes medically, emotionally, and financially to save the life of their child. We have some doctors saying that Terri will not recover. Yet we also have other neurologists saying that with the proper medical care, there is a chance that she could improve considerably. **And let us be clear: Terri is not on life support, she is not brain-dead, and no heroic measures are needed to keep her alive, she simply needs the assistance of a feeding tube for food and water. If we knew beyond a shadow of a doubt the answers to these questions, we would likely not need to be here tonight. However, because these questions remain disputed, the responsible course of action is to err on the side of life.**

“Some may ask why Congress is getting involved. The answer to that is simple. One of the primary duties of the federal government and members of Congress is to uphold and defend the Constitution and the individual rights it sets forth. So we are acting to allow that every possible legal process has been exhausted to ensure that Terri's federal rights have been properly defended. One of those federal rights is the right to life. The Fourteenth Amendment establishes that no ‘State shall deprive any person of life, liberty, and property, without due process of law.’ Everyday, in cases where the action of the state will result in the death of an individual, that individual is provided the opportunity to have her case heard in both the state and federal court systems. That is all we are asking to be done today.

“My thoughts and prayers, as well as those of my constituents in the 19th district of Texas, are with Terri and her family during these difficult times.”

###