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## IN MY OPINION

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# Ghouls on the loose in Florida

If we really want a scary Halloween, all we have to do is think about the ghoulish behavior of the Florida state legislature and Governor Jeb Bush who have ordered the re-insertion of a feeding tube into Terri Schiavo, a woman whom doctors believe, if it were not for artificial nourishment, would have died 13 years ago. Florida politicians have ignored laws of both man and nature and trounced on the individual rights of Mrs. Schiavo and her husband. It is beyond understanding why the parents and siblings of Mrs. Schiavo, who have decided her body should stay in this condition of limbo, would want to put themselves, their daughter and son-in-law through such hell for so many years.

Surely, they are not thinking about their daughter. First, individuals and families make these kinds of life and death decisions every day. Second, if Terri Schiavo's movements and reactions are simply uncontrolled reflexes, as her doctors assert, why would they want her to continue such an existence? If Terri Schiavo has the slightest inkling of her condition, it's not hard to conclude that she would not want to continue such an existence by artificial means.

How about putting ourselves in Terri's position? Would I want to be kept in that condition by artificial means? Would I want my own child to exist in such a way? What would be the wishes of my child? No one in his right mind would answer in the affirmative.

People should not have to have a living will and 15 videos stating that they don't want to live by artificial means if their condition is terminal and they are in a vegetative state.



Frankly, if a patient is in that condition, the medical profession shouldn't insert a feeding tube in the first place.

The worst part of this scenario is Terri's family trying to cast her husband as an ogre who wants to get rid of his wife. He lost his wife years ago, and as her husband, he has the right to make decisions regarding the feeding tube and to see that his wife's body and spirit get some kind of peace. He's the compassionate one of this bunch. If he weren't, he could have divorced his wife and moved on, instead of spending vast amounts of time and money and thirteen years of grief fighting for her rights and his.

It's always amazing to me how the actions of right-wingers are totally inconsistent with their claim to stand for individual rights and the non-interference of government in our lives. What they really believe in is their own agenda and have no regard for the rights of those with whom they disagree. While they are pretending to be religious and God-fearing, they cheerfully play God, as has the Florida legislature and Governor Bush, Yep, these lawmakers and our current administration in Washington D.C. are all wearing masks. If we aren't scared, we ought to be.