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2014 - On January 26, a brain dead, pregnant Texas woman was pulled off life support after a court order was issued in favor of her family's wishes. The woman was 14 weeks pregnant when her husband found her unconscious on the kitchen floor in November. Doctors pronounced her brain dead but the hospital determined that state law required them to keep her on life support since she was pregnant, even though the fetus was not viable and her family wished to pull her off support. The case was closely watched by people on both sides of the debate.

2013 - On August 28, a man in southeastern Kentucky is charged with killing his wife after turning himself in to police. Ernest Chumbley tells reporters that he shot his wife of 20 years after she asked him to end her suffering from late-stage breast cancer.

2011 - Dr. Jack Kevorkian dies at the age of 83 at a hospital near Detroit, Michigan. After being hospitalized in May due to kidney and respiratory problems, his condition continued to decline until his death on June 3. **2011** - In May, Swiss voters defeat a measure that would have restricted foreigners' access to assisted suicide, thereby continuing the availability of suicide tourism in that country.

2009 - Washington becomes the second state to legalize physician-assisted suicides of terminally ill patients. Under the law, doctors may prescribe lethal drugs to patients who are over the age of 18 and declared mentally competent.

2008 - According to a report by the *British Medical Journal*, an increasing number of terminally ill patients in the Netherlands are given drugs to render them unconscious before dying in a practice known as terminal sedation. The study links this practice to a decline in euthanasia, as terminal sedation was used in 5.6% of all deaths in the Netherlands in 2001 and 8.2% in 2005.

2007 - On June 1, Jack Kevorkian is released from prison after serving eight years of a 10- to 25-year sentence. Kevorkian, who was convicted of murdering a man suffering from Lou Gehrig's disease, claims to have participated in at least 130 cases of assisted suicide throughout the 1990s.

2006 - On January 17, the U.S. Supreme Court upholds the Oregon Death with Dignity Act allowing physicians to assist in the death of terminally ill patients with less than six months to live.

2005 - Terri Schiavo dies of dehydration on March 31, fourteen days after her feeding tube is removed per order of a Circuit Court judge at the wishes of her husband.

1998 - On November 22, the CBS program *60 Minutes* triggers widespread debate when it broadcasts a video of Jack Kevorkian giving a lethal injection to a patient with Lou Gehrig's disease.

1998 - The group Dignitas is founded in Switzerland, where assisted suicide is legal under certain circumstances,

and the group quickly becomes associated with "suicide tourism."

1998 - Michigan voters reject a measure to legalize physician-assisted suicide.

1997 - On November 5, Oregon residents in a referendum on the Death with Dignity Act overwhelmingly vote in favor of the act.

1997 - On June 26, in a case involving laws in New York and Washington, the Supreme Court unanimously rules that states have the right to ban doctor-assisted suicide.

1996 - The Ninth Circuit Court rules that mentally competent, terminally ill adults have a right to the assistance of medical professionals in committing suicide.

1995 - Jack Kevorkian opens a "suicide clinic" in Springfield Township, Michigan, on June 26. The clinic is kicked out by the building's owner a few days later.

1991 - The Death With Dignity Initiative in Washington State fails due to opposition from the Catholic Church and the American Medical Association.

1990 - The organizations Society for the Right to Die and Concern for Dying report a combined membership of 143,750 members.

1986 - Americans for Death with Dignity is founded in California by Robert Risely seeking to sponsor ballot initiatives in favor of legalizing euthanasia.

1983 - Nancy Cruzan goes into a vegetative state after a car accident. Her parents seek to end her life through euthanasia, restarting interest nationwide in the subject.

1980 - Pope John Paul II in the *Papal Encyclical* condemns euthanasia in any form, arguing for the spiritual value of suffering and the value of human life.

1979 - Derek Humphrey, Ann Wickett, and Gerald Larue found the Hemlock Society, an organization dedicated to encouraging public acceptance of euthanasia.

1976 - Karen Ann Quinlan, an image of the euthanasia movement, has her respirator removed due to her continued comatose state. She continues living.

1969 - Daniel Callahan founds the Hastings Center to address the changing ethical questions occurring in the biomedical sciences.

1969 - Elizabeth Kübler-Ross publishes *On Death and Dying*, examining the emotions of death and bereavement.

1938 - The Euthanasia Society of America is established in New York by a Unitarian minister, Charles Potter, to promote passive forms of euthanasia.

1929 - With the crash of the stock market, insurance companies begin requiring waiting periods for death claims based upon suicide.

1906 - A bill in the Ohio state legislature is introduced to allow euthanasia. It is defeated by a strong majority.

1846 - The American Medical Association is founded to promote medicine and advance public health.

1516 - Sir Thomas More publishes *Utopia*, in which society accepts voluntary euthanasia.

300 BCE - The Greeks coin the word *euthanatos*, which means "good death."

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