

If This Bill Passes, It Could Save Charlie Gard's Life

If he were able to come to the U.S., two hospitals—New York Presbyterian Hospital and Columbia University Irving Medical Center—have each offered to admit Charlie Gard and provide him with an experimental treatment.

They have also offered to provide the experimental drug to the hospital which is currently providing his care, Great Ormond Street Hospital in London. In both cases, the 11-month-old Briton's life is dependent upon the bureaucratic red tape of two nations. But, a pair of House Republicans is offering a partial solution that could help expedite his care.

U.S. Reps. Brad Wenstrup, R-Ohio, and Trent Franks, R-Ariz., are introducing legislation this week to grant permanent resident status to Gard and his parents. They have released the following statement regarding their pending bill:

Despite Charlie's heartbreaking condition, his parents have refused to give up hope. They have advocated for him fiercely. They have raised over a million pounds to pay for their son to receive experimental treatment in the United States. They have kept fighting for his life.

Our bill will support Charlie's parents' right to choose what is best for their son, by making Charlie a lawful permanent resident in the U.S. in order for him to receive treatments that could save his life. Should this little boy be ordered to die—because a third party, overriding the wishes of his parents, believes it can conclusively determine that immediate death is what is best for him?

Every human life has dignity, including the lives of those who cannot speak up for themselves. When government is able to overrule a parent or guardian in determining a patient's

best interest, every vulnerable patient is put at risk. We offer Connie Yates and Chris Gard our heartfelt support as they seek to care for their son.

The bill has not yet been filed. However, Charlie's family received encouraging news Monday evening when a U.K. court ordered that new evidence must be allowed to be admitted in a new hearing to be held Thursday. If the court accepts the new evidence, it is likely he will be able to receive the new treatment.

Great Ormond Street Hospital has continued to fight the parents' efforts to keep him alive long enough to receive treatment. The ordeal has been a painful reminder of the dangers that lurk for the American health care system as Republicans in Congress struggle to put together a bill that will receive a majority vote in both the House of Representatives and the Senate. {eo}