

French magistrate urges ending life support for vegetative patient

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The public rapporteur of France's top court has recommended ending the life support of a 39-year-old in a vegetative state for the last six years, overriding the wishes of some close relatives.

The State Council is to rule on Tuesday in the case of Vincent Lambert, who has been in a [vegetative state](#) since a [car crash](#) in 2008.

The question of whether he should be kept alive artificially has split his family and sparked a huge debate in France.

But ahead of the court's decision its public rapporteur Remi Keller, a state magistrate charged with laying out the case, said there was no hope of recovery.

"The food and hydration being provided to Vincent Lambert are having no other effect than to keep him artificially in his current state," Keller said.

Doctors treating Lambert, as well as his wife, want to cut off intravenous food and water supplies but his deeply religious Catholic parents and other family members oppose the decision and took the matter to court.

A court in Chalons-en-Champagne near Reims ruled against ending his life earlier this year and the case was brought to the State Council on appeal.

A 2005 law in France legalised passive euthanasia, where a person causes death by withholding or withdrawing treatment that is necessary to maintain life.

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