

# OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT PROCEEDINGS BEFORE

THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

**DKT/CASE NO.** 81-2101

**TITLE** PENNHURST STATE SCHOOL AND HOSPITAL, ET AL.,  
PETITIONERS V. TERRI LEE HALDERMAN, ET AL.

**PLACE** Washington, D. C.

**DATE** October 3, 1983

**PAGES** 1 thru 56



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1                   IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

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3 PENNHURST STATE SCHOOL AND :

4     HOSPITAL, ET AL., :

5                             Petitioners :

6                   v. :     No. 81-2101

7 TERRI LEE HALDERMAN, ET AL. :

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9                             Washington, D.C.

10                            Monday, October 3, 1983

11                   The above-entitled matter came on for oral  
12 argument before the Supreme Court of the United States  
13 at 1:00 p.m.

14 APPEARANCES:

15 H. BARTOW FARR, III, ESQ., Washington, D.C.; on behalf  
16 of the Petitioners.

17 ALLEN C. WARSHAW, ESQ., Harrisburg, Pa.; on behalf of  
18 Petitioners.

19 THOMAS K. GILHOOL, ESQ., Philadelphia, Pa.; on behalf of  
20 Respondents.

21 DAVID FERLEGER, ESQ., Philadelphia, Pa.; on behalf of  
22 Respondents.

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C O N T E N T S

<u>ORAL ARGUMENT OF</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
H. BARTOW FARR, III, ESQ.,	
on behalf of the Petitioners	3
ALLEN C. WARSHAW, ESQ.,	
on behalf of the Petitioners	
THOMAS K. GILHOOL, ESQ.,	
on behalf of the Respondents	
DAVID FERLEGER, ESQ.,	
on behalf of the Respondents	

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P R O C E E D I N G S

CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER: Mr. Farrow, you may proceed whenever you are ready.

ORAL ARGUMENT OF H. BARTOW FARR, III, ESQ.,  
ON BEHALF OF PETITIONERS

MR. FARR: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it please the Court:

This case as it now stands before this Court is essentially a dispute between citizens of the State of Pennsylvania and the state itself over how to run a state mental retardation program pursuant to state law. The federal court saw fit to decide this dispute imposing upon the state a mandatory presumption in favor of certain types of programs and requiring the state to create and pay for new facilities in accordance with its preference.

In our view this federal interference in purely state matters is barred by the Eleventh Amendment and by principles of comity. Now this afternoon I will discuss the Eleventh Amendment and Allen Warshaw will discuss the issue of comity.

Before getting into the details of our Eleventh Amendment argument I think it might be useful to the Court if we state as straightforwardly as possible just what our overall position is. In short,



1 we believe first that this claim is in fact a claim  
2 against the state and not just against state officials;  
3 second, that the state is not prevented from claiming  
4 its Eleventh Amendment immunity by the doctrine of Ex  
5 Parte Young which by its terms and logic applies only to  
6 federal claims; and third, that the state may invoke its  
7 immunity against a pendent claim like the one here just  
8 as it may invoke its immunity against primary claims.

9           Now as the statement of this position makes  
10 clear proper Eleventh Amendment analysis requires the  
11 asking of several separate though related questions. Is  
12 it a claim against the state? Is it within the doctrine  
13 of Ex Parte Young? Is the Eleventh Amendment somehow  
14 inapplicable to pendent claims?

15           In addressing the first of these questions,  
16 whether the claim is in fact one against the state, it  
17 is not dispositive that the complaint only names state  
18 officials as defendants. This Court has said on  
19 numerous occasions that the courts must look to the  
20 nature of the claim and the nature of the relief sought  
21 to determine whether it is in effect one against the  
22 state.

23           There is no bright line to define this  
24 inquiry, but the basic test derived from Larson in 1949,  
25 a federal case but followed in subsequent cases, is

1 whether the state officials can make a nonfrivolous  
2 claim that they are acting even if mistakenly within the  
3 general ambit of their colorable authority under state  
4 law.

5           QUESTION: Mr. Farr, you refer to Larson as  
6 being a federal case, but the plurality there in  
7 Treasure Salvors pretty much adopted that as an Eleventh  
8 Amendment rule, too.

9           MR. FARR: That is correct, yes, sir.

10           Now in this case despite all of Respondents'  
11 allegations about lawless behavior, we think it control  
12 that defendants or the persons charged by state law with  
13 making the numerous almost day-to-day discretionary  
14 decisions about operation of the state mental  
15 retardation program including the very decisions that  
16 are at issue in this case, what kind of facilities to  
17 create, what kinds of persons to put in those kinds of  
18 facilities, what kinds of services and programs to  
19 provide.

20           Furthermore, it is clear that these defendants  
21 must make those decisions within the limits of the  
22 funding provided by the state legislature. Respondents  
23 simply wanted to make different decisions and to exact  
24 from the State Treasury the money to pay for those  
25 decisions.

1           But under the tests set down by this Court  
2 that is the very essence of a suit against the state  
3 itself. Now the second question is whether even though  
4 the claim is functionally one against the state itself  
5 it is within the venerable doctrine of Ex Parte Young  
6 for if the claim were that the state officials were  
7 violating the federal constitution or federal law then  
8 Ex Parte Young says that the state cannot give them its  
9 immunity from the Eleventh Amendment.

10           They are required to be obedient to the  
11 superior authority of federal law, but Young has never  
12 been thought to apply to state law claims like the ones  
13 here not should it be. The practical need for the  
14 so-called fiction of Ex Parte Young that the state  
15 officials are stripped of their representative character  
16 is necessary to be able to enforce the Fourteenth  
17 Amendment and other federal laws.

18           The language of this Court in Edelman to turn  
19 the Civil Rights Amendments from a shield into a sword  
20 but that need is not present when you are dealing with  
21 only a state law claim. In fact, the proper balance  
22 between the local and the national government is much  
23 better preserved with important state issues by having  
24 those questions decided by a state court.

25           QUESTION: Mr. Farr, let me just be sure I

1 understand one point. You do agree if it were a federal  
2 statutory claim then you would say that would be covered  
3 by Ex Parte Young?

4 MR. FARR: I do. Yes, I do.

5 The third inquiry and one by its terms which  
6 is an odd one to be asking at all is whether the  
7 Eleventh Amendment is somehow inapplicable to pendent  
8 claims. Although some earlier cases concedingly seem to  
9 incline in that direction without we think very much  
10 consideration of the issue, we think that the decision  
11 in Edelman v. Jordan settled and settled correctly that  
12 issue for once and for all.

13 In Edelman --

14 QUESTION: Let me see if I understand your  
15 response to Justice Stevens. Suppose the complaint  
16 asserts a federal question. Does that end the matter?

17 MR. FARR: As far as that particular claim  
18 goes the Court would have to, of course, see whether it  
19 had Article III jurisdiction over it. But if it seeks  
20 injunctive relief under a federal claim that is  
21 permitted by Ex Parte Young.

22 QUESTION: You mean a statutory claim that  
23 would preclude the official doing what he is doing.

24 MR. FARR: That is correct.

25 For example, in --



1 QUESTION: That was preemption, for example.

2 MR. FARR: Ray v. Atlantic Richfield is the  
3 example I was going to give where the Court said that  
4 the state officials by carrying out the state law in  
5 that case were preempted by federal law and were willing  
6 to give an injunction against the carrying out of state  
7 law. That does not extend to retroactive relief but  
8 other than that the federal claims are within Ex Parte  
9 Young.

10 Turning back to Edelman and the question of  
11 pendent claims, in Edelman the situation was that there  
12 was a primary claim which was an equal protection claim  
13 under the Fourteenth Amendment, a claim which in and of  
14 itself would be permitted by Ex Parte Young. There were  
15 in effect two pendent claims under federal law.

16 The Court examined each of these claims,  
17 determined that one claim was permitted because it was  
18 under federal law and it sought injunctive relief as I  
19 was saying to the Chief Justice and decided that the  
20 other claim was barred by the Eleventh Amendment because  
21 it was a federal claim but sought retroactive relief.  
22 The same analysis applies here.

23 This pendent claim is barred by the Eleventh  
24 Amendment not because it seeks retroactive relief but  
25 because it is a state claim to which Ex Parte Young does

1 not apply at all.

2 QUESTION: It would help if you let us know  
3 what you are calling a state claim. The kind of a state  
4 claim you are talking about I take it is a claim that  
5 the official is acting outside the scope of his  
6 authority.

7 MR. FARR: That is correct. The state --

8 QUESTION: Just in terms of state law he  
9 should not be doing what he is doing.

10 MR. FARR: That is correct.

11 QUESTION: You concede that if there was an  
12 allegation, would you or would you not, that he is  
13 acting completely outside the -- He has even no  
14 colorable authority under state law. Would the Eleventh  
15 Amendment still --

16 MR. FARR: In that situation if the allegation  
17 was that he was so outside of his authority that he  
18 effectively was acting without any authority at all then  
19 I think it would not be a claim against the state.

20 QUESTION: I guess we do not have to decide  
21 that. In this case nobody is claiming -- They are just  
22 claiming that state officials were misapplying state  
23 law.

24 MR. FARR: I think if they get up on their  
25 feet they will claim that it is lawless and horrible and

1 all of that, but I think basically the claim is that  
2 they are simply not making the right decision under  
3 state law.

4 QUESTION: Misconstruing state law.

5 MR. FARR: That is correct.

6 QUESTION: What you are saying is you cannot  
7 convert a dispute over the applicability of the state  
8 law into a claim of "lawlessness" or totally without  
9 authority.

10 MR. FARR: Absolutely. I think what you have  
11 to look at is whether the defendants can make a  
12 nonfrivolous defense that they are acting within state  
13 law. I think once you have got that then the inquiry  
14 stops. Otherwise you are going to have a situation  
15 where the Eleventh Amendment means something only if you  
16 actually go through and decide the merits of the state  
17 law which is not much help.

18 QUESTION: Rationally should you be able for  
19 Eleventh Amendment purposes to distinguish between some  
20 official who is acting totally outside of his authority  
21 and some official who is just misconstruing state law?

22 MR. FARR: I think --

23 QUESTION: Maybe Larson did, but does it make  
24 a whole lot of sense?

25 MR. FARR: I think there are two points about

1 that, Mr. Justice White. One is that I think that it  
2 makes sense only at the very outer boundary which is the  
3 mere fact that somebody happens to be employed by the  
4 state, of course, does not mean that he can go around  
5 and do whatever he wants and claim an Eleventh Amendment  
6 immunity in a federal court.

7 QUESTION: Why should that not --

8 QUESTION: If you are only making a state law  
9 claim why should -- As you say the rationale of Ex Parte  
10 Young should not reach that either, should not reach any  
11 state claim.

12 MR. FARR: Well, I think you do not need the  
13 -- What I am saying is that there are points at which  
14 the behavior is so far outside the boundary that it  
15 really is just personal behavior that someone is  
16 committing an assault on his own time.

17 QUESTION: Why do you conclude from that that  
18 the Eleventh Amendment does not bar the suit?

19 MR. FARR: Because then I would say that there  
20 is really no statement involvement at all and it is  
21 somebody who is just acting on his individual -- If  
22 somebody is driving his car for pleasure or something  
23 and he is sued in a diversity suit, that might be a  
24 situation where he just cannot say because I  
25 incidentally happen to have a job some of the rest of



1 the time with the state I am covered by the Eleventh  
2 Amendment.

3 But I think it is a very, very narrow  
4 limitation and particularly because Larson, of course,  
5 is a federal case. In Larson the situation is if you do  
6 not give some leeway for allowing those kinds of suits  
7 they are effectively barred completely by sovereign  
8 immunity.

9 But in the context of a claim against a state  
10 official the only question we are addressing here is  
11 whether these claims can be brought in federal court.  
12 They can still be brought in state court and, therefore,  
13 there is an alternative way to get those cases  
14 resolved.

15 QUESTION: Mr. Farr, supposing a Pennsylvania  
16 statute said in so many words none of these people shall  
17 be institutionalized in Pennhurst. Would the Eleventh  
18 Amendment be a claim against someone who says I am being  
19 wrongfully institutionalized at Pennhurst?

20 MR. FARR: I think there is a level at which  
21 the statutes or the state law might be so absolutely  
22 clear that all the state officials had where they  
23 effectively had no discretion it was simply a  
24 ministerial carrying out. I think under the cases of  
25 this Court that sort of case might be allowed in.

1 QUESTION: What is your answer to my specific  
2 case?

3 MR. FARR: Whether that case is clear enough?  
4 If they say absolutely --

5 QUESTION: The statute says no one shall be  
6 placed in Pennhurst.

7 MR. FARR: And the state appropriates no money  
8 to support Pennhurst and they just do it on their own.

9 QUESTION: No, they still pay the bills at  
10 Pennhurst. They do exactly what they are doing now, but  
11 the statute says no one shall be institutionalized at  
12 Pennhurst during 1983.

13 MR. FARR: Well, the reason that I raised the  
14 funding is if you are saying that nobody shall be  
15 admitted to Pennhurst and there is a flat prohibition I  
16 would think under the cases of this Court that  
17 nondiscretionary matter might be within the Treasury  
18 Salvors notion that somebody is proceeding outside the  
19 scope.

20 QUESTION: So then the question I gather the  
21 way you present the argument is whether the holding in  
22 the Pennsylvania case on which the Third Circuit relied  
23 is that clear or not that clear.

24 MR. FARR: Well, I certainly think it is not  
25 that clear.

1 QUESTION: So then the question, I gather, as  
2 the way you present the argument is whether the holding  
3 in the Pennsylvania case on which the Third Circuit  
4 relied is that clear or not that clear.

5 MR. FARR: Well, I certainly think it's not  
6 that clear.

7 QUESTION: But if it were that clear, then  
8 you'd say well, then the Eleventh Amendment would be no  
9 defense.

10 MR. FARR: It is possible to me that a  
11 judicial decision could be as clear as a statute. I  
12 certainly would concede that. But I would in no way  
13 concede that Joseph Schmidt is that clear. He went to  
14 an institution.

15 QUESTION: Mr. Farr?

16 MR. FARR: Yes, sir.

17 QUESTION: Did the court of appeals make any  
18 finding that these officials had acted beyond the scope  
19 of their authority?

20 MR. FARR: They did not address the question  
21 at all in those terms, Justice Powell. They simply took  
22 --

23 QUESTION: Did the district court make any  
24 finding in that respect?

25 MR. FARR: No, they did not. The district

1 court, in fact, to the extent they made any finding at  
2 all, indicated, although they found a violation of state  
3 law as such, indicated that the officials were acting in  
4 good faith and within the scope of their authority for  
5 purposes of giving them a qualified immunity on the  
6 damage claim.

7 QUESTION: Is the Department of Public Welfare  
8 a party to this case? I've understood it was.

9 MR. FARR: Yes. I guess I believe it is.

10 QUESTION: It's a state agency.

11 MR. FARR: It is a state agency.

12 QUESTION: And it's the agency that oversees  
13 the operation of Pennhurst and other mental hospitals.

14 MR. FARR: That's correct. Now, the claim is  
15 certainly barred, I believe, against any state agency in  
16 fact. Of course, what we're saying is that even though  
17 there are individual state officials named as well, the  
18 claim is barred with respect to them, too, because it is  
19 still --

20 QUESTION: Well, the agency can operate only  
21 through officials and its other personnel.

22 MR. FARR: That's correct.

23 QUESTION: Mr. Farr, what about actions of  
24 city or county officials under your theory?

25 MR. FARR: The actions of the city and county



1 officials are typically not subject to the same Eleventh  
2 Amendment analysis, but the situation you have here is  
3 that their activities essentially are to carry out the  
4 state law. The state provides all of the funding, and  
5 therefore, if the presumption is in effect and the new  
6 community facilities must be created, and people must be  
7 moved into those facilities, the state bears 100 percent  
8 of the cost of that. And we think, therefore, in these  
9 circumstances you can't get around that by simply naming  
10 the counties who have no fiscal responsibility separate  
11 from that of the state.

12           Mr. Chief Justice, I'd like to save the  
13 remainder of my time for rebuttal, if I may.

14           CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER: Very well.

15           Mr. Warshaw.

16           ORAL ARGUMENT OF ALLEN C. WARSHAW, ESQ.,

17           ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONERS

18           MR. WARSHAW: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it  
19 please the Court:

20           Even if the Eleventh Amendment prohibits a  
21 federal court decision on the state law issues in this  
22 case, principles of comity do not. Rather, those  
23 principles prohibit federal courts as a matter of  
24 self-restraint from interfering with the operation of  
25 complex state programs except when it's absolutely

1 necessary to protect federal rights.

2           Indeed, this Court has applied this rule to  
3 prevent the exercise of federal jurisdiction over  
4 federal claims when state forums were available to  
5 consider those claims. The rule is based in large on  
6 principles of federalism which require federal courts to  
7 respect the independence of local governments, state and  
8 county, in matters of local concern, especially when  
9 those matters involve the expenditure, as in this case,  
10 or the collection of monies.

11           However, it is a rule which is also based on  
12 the very practical consideration that even the most  
13 simple and obvious principle of state law will involve  
14 incalculable legal and nonlegal complexities in its  
15 application to ongoing state programs.

16           QUESTION: Mr. Warshaw, would you tell me when  
17 this issue was first brought into this case?

18           MR. WARSHAW: It has been raised in various  
19 ways at various times in the litigation. It was raised  
20 in this form for the first time in the Third Circuit on  
21 the remand when it was first suggested that the lower  
22 court order could be justified solely on state law.  
23 That was the first time when the respondents argued that  
24 the court should ignore the federal court issues and go  
25 directly to the state law issues.

1           It was argued in the district court when the  
2 remedy was based on four federal theories and one state  
3 theory and then only in part on the state theory as a  
4 limitation on this bill for relief, and again in the  
5 Third Circuit on appeal from those four federal theories  
6 and one state finding as a limitation on relief. But it  
7 was raised -- and let me add to that that we think it is  
8 the kind of issue that has to evolve during the course  
9 of the litigation depending upon the state of the  
10 litigation. And in this case it is one that was raised  
11 in the form appropriate at every stage of the litigation.

12           In this regard as to the practical  
13 considerations, this Court has recognized the federal  
14 courts are limited in their competence to decide the  
15 nonlegal issues involved in operating state programs.  
16 Instead it has required that federal courts give  
17 substantial deference to the professional judgments of  
18 state officials involved in operating those programs,  
19 even in cases involving constitutional issues where the  
20 federal courts can give a definitive and authoritative  
21 answer to the legal issues.

22           When only state law is involved, federal  
23 courts are unable to even give that kind of a resolution  
24 of legal issues, and there is, frankly, just no  
25 justification for their involvement in the state

1 decisionmaking process. For example, in this case the  
2 lower courts have taken a vague right to treatment from  
3 a case, In re: Schmidt, in which the Pennsylvania  
4 Supreme Court approved placement in an institution, and  
5 the lower courts created a presumption from that case in  
6 favor of placement in the community. As importantly,  
7 they took that right from a case involving one person  
8 where funding was no issue whatsoever and have created a  
9 presumption which applies regardless of cost and  
10 available funding to thousands of people.

11           To say that that rule is less than definitive  
12 and less than authoritative is at the least a severe  
13 understatement. Nonetheless, in this case, acting to  
14 avoid rather than to vindicate federal claims, the Third  
15 Circuit sanctioned a massive and ongoing intrusion into  
16 Pennsylvania's program for the mentally retarded. In so  
17 doing the Third Circuit, we believe, was deluded by the  
18 apparent simplicity of the right to treatment in the  
19 least restrictive environment which it believed it had  
20 found in state law, and ignored the complexities of its  
21 application to even a single person, let alone the  
22 thousands of class members in this case.

23           The extent of the resulting intrusion is fully  
24 reflected in the district court orders in this case.  
25 For example, under those orders state and county



1 officials are required to prepare and subsequently  
2 implement habilitation plans for every one of the class  
3 members. The manner in which those plans and programs  
4 are to be implemented, prepared and monitored is  
5 strictly governed by the district court's latest  
6 100-page order which dictates the precise form such a  
7 plan shall take, the procedure by which it shall be  
8 prepared, who shall participate in its preparation and  
9 how long it shall take to prepare it and subsequently to  
10 implement it.

11 CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER: Was this order based on  
12 expert testimony of record?

13 MR. WARSHAW: It was developed after the  
14 original trial based on testimony at record of the  
15 trial, I assume. It's never been exactly clear what  
16 it's basis was at any given point.

17 CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER: Well, are you  
18 suggesting the district judge just thought these things  
19 up on his own?

20 MR. WARSHAW: There was various -- various  
21 testimony at trial and in subsequent hearings as to how  
22 best to prepare habilitation programs and how best to  
23 implement them. I don't want to say he acted without a  
24 record, no. That's -- certainly there was a record  
25 created. I will say that he has taken it upon himself

1 to control the manner in which state officials exercise  
2 their, might exercise their discretion in this record  
3 -- in this way.

4 QUESTION: Does the record show the number of  
5 people in the class?

6 MR. WARSHAW: There -- at the time of trial  
7 there were -- at the time of decision there were over  
8 1100 people at Pennhurst and I believe several thousand  
9 more on the waiting list at Pennhurst, which was how the  
10 class was defined. By waiting list at Pennhurst that  
11 means people who had applied for admission to Pennhurst  
12 and therefore had become eligible for other services in  
13 the community. They were all part of the class, and the  
14 class exceeded at least several thousand.

15 But once again, I should note, and this is the  
16 next point I would make and perhaps best illustrates the  
17 intrusive nature of the lower court's order and the  
18 broad gap between it and the judgment of state  
19 officials, and that is that it necessarily imposes upon  
20 thousands of other people who might otherwise be  
21 eligible for services in Pennsylvania, because the court  
22 has given absolute priority to its order over all other  
23 competing needs. It has on at least one occasion  
24 condemned state officials for moving residents out of  
25 another facility in Pennsylvania where conditions were

1 clearly deteriorating badly -- and this was a matter of  
2 record -- where it was about to lose substantial  
3 funding, and said that that was unacceptable in light of  
4 his orders in Pennhurst, notwithstanding the fact that  
5 at that point Pennhurst, and today, was fully certified  
6 by the federal government as meeting minimum standards  
7 and was receiving substantial federal funding.

8           The intrusive nature of the lower court's  
9 orders it seems to me is fairly obvious. State  
10 officials must conform their conduct to those orders  
11 regardless of their own professional judgments and  
12 regardless of the legitimacy of competing demands for  
13 limited state resources. If they do not, they risk  
14 contempt, and in this case that has been a very real  
15 risk.

16           Less obvious are the invidious effects of the  
17 court proceedings themselves regardless of the orders  
18 which are issued. Since the entry of judgment in 1978  
19 there have been over 50 days of hearings held in the  
20 district court. There have been hundreds more before a  
21 hearing master appointed by the court to decide  
22 individual placement, make individual placement  
23 decisions.

24           Each of these hearings must be attended by a  
25 state or county official, professional who must spend

1 time educating the judge so that the judge can make  
2 professional judgments, or at least explaining and  
3 justifying their own judgments to the court or the  
4 hearing master. In either case the effect is that  
5 limited and precious professional resources are wasted  
6 for the sole purpose of allowing a court and its master  
7 to substitute their own professional judgments for those  
8 of qualified state officials.

9           This Court has found this kind of judicial  
10 interference with professional decisionmakers to be  
11 unacceptable even in cases involving constitutional  
12 rights. When that interference involves the operation  
13 of a wholly state program solely for the purpose of  
14 enforcing state law is a totally unacceptable exercise  
15 of the federal judicial power, and we suggest this Court  
16 should stop it.

17           Thank you. And if I may, I'd like to reserve  
18 the remainder of my time.

19           CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER: Mr. Gilhool.

20           ORAL ARGUMENT OF THOMAS K. GILHOOL, ESQ.,

21           ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENTS

22           MR. GILHOOL: Chief Justice Burger, and may it  
23 please the Court:

24           I will address jurisdiction; my colleague,  
25 comity.



1           First, let me try briefly to put the case in  
2 perspective. This case went back to the circuit two and  
3 a half years ago in its eighth year carrying the express  
4 instruction of this court to consider the state law  
5 issue in light of the recent state supreme court  
6 decision in Schmidt.

7           The circuit en banc did so. In light of the  
8 state supreme court decision, all eight circuit justices  
9 unanimously ruled that state law is clear, and that it  
10 was clearly violated, including Judge Eldersell who  
11 didn't like the state law, who would not have chosen it,  
12 who thought it unwise, but nonetheless clearly the state  
13 law.

14           The state legislature sets state policy. The  
15 state legislative policy here, the preference for  
16 community facilities and the obligation to create them  
17 if they do not exist arises from the state legislature  
18 and the state law.

19           The circuit below, all eight justices followed  
20 settled pendant jurisdiction principles, settled since  
21 Siler and Green. That the Fourteenth Amendment claims  
22 in this case are substantial is undisputed here, and in  
23 light of this Court's unanimous decision in Romeo, are  
24 indisputable. The same conditions, the same  
25 institution. Nicholas Romeo indeed a member of the

1 class in this case.

2           So far there is nothing extraordinary about  
3 this case. What is extraordinary is petitioners' claim  
4 that principles of federalism as they understand them  
5 require a new Eleventh Amendment jurisprudence and a new  
6 pendant jurisdiction jurisprudence.

7           But on the facts of this case, the result  
8 below serves both interests. The settled pendant  
9 jurisdiction doctrine is preserved, and federalism is  
10 served since the state remains free to change its policy.

11           QUESTION: Mr. Gilhool, is it your position  
12 that the state officers here were acting without any  
13 authority whatever in the Larson and Treasure Salvors  
14 sense?

15           MR. GILHOOL: Your Honor, I believe that is  
16 the necessary consequence of the circuit court's  
17 unanimous holding as to the clarity of state law. We  
18 argued the ultra veries argument last time, and I would  
19 rest upon that and upon this Court's decision earlier in  
20 colloquy with petitioners.

21           Parsing that Younglike fiction as to when it's  
22 the state officers and when its negligence and when it's  
23 outrageous is something of a judicial optical illusion.  
24 We would prefer, Your Honor, and it is the argument I  
25 will seek to make in a moment, to rest upon the real

1 ground of Young, which is the Fourteenth Amendment  
2 pendant jurisdiction. Fourteenth Amendment presence  
3 overcomes the Eleventh Amendment.

4 QUESTION: Well, then, is it your position  
5 that you don't have to show here that the state officers  
6 were acting without any authority whatever?

7 MR. GILHOOL: Yes, Your Honor, we don't have  
8 to show that.

9 QUESTION: How do you reconcile it with  
10 Treasure Salvors?

11 MR. GILHOOL: Well, Treasure Salvors, Your  
12 Honor, was not a Fourteenth Amendment case.

13 QUESTION: Why is this a Fourteenth Amendment  
14 case? I thought it turned on state law.

15 MR. GILHOOL: No, Your Honor. It does not  
16 turn on state law, and -- and -- and that precisely the  
17 nub of the case.

18 Here the substantial Fourteenth Amendment  
19 claim -- Your Honor, if I may, may I step back from it  
20 just a moment, and I will return directly to your  
21 question.

22 The settled principle of pendant jurisdiction  
23 is that once a federal court has jurisdiction by virtue  
24 of a federal question, it has it to decide the whole  
25 case, including the state issue, of which, if it stood

1 alone, the state issue, it would not have jurisdiction.

2 Now, it was Siler which first applied this  
3 doctrine 70 years ago precisely in the context of  
4 defendant state officials.

5 QUESTION: Did it consider the Eleventh  
6 Amendment issue?

7 MR. GILHOOL: Well, Your Honor, Siler was  
8 decided a year and a week after Young. It was decided  
9 in the midst of a storm of controversy which --

10 QUESTION: Is that a yes or a no answer?

11 MR. GILHOOL: The answer is yes, Your Honor.

12 QUESTION: It did consider the Eleventh --

13 MR. GILHOOL: Yes, Your Honor. Ex parte Young  
14 was argued to the Siler court. That court, with the  
15 opinion written by Justice Peckham in Siler, as in  
16 Young, could not have forgotten the Eleventh Amendment.  
17 To the contrary --

18 QUESTION: Did Siler consider the Eleventh  
19 Amendment argumet in so many words?

20 MR. GILHOOL: No, sir, it did not in so many  
21 words.

22 QUESTION: Well, I thought just a minute ago  
23 you answered me yes, that it did.

24 MR. GILHOOL: No, Your Honor. I answered yes,  
25 it did consider the Eleventh Amendment, Your Honor, and



1 I say that because --

2 QUESTION: Was it argued?

3 MR. GILHOOL: Ex parte Young was argued, Your  
4 Honor.

5 QUESTION: Well, how can you --

6 QUESTION: Was the Eleventh Amendment  
7 mentioned by counsel in argument?

8 MR. GILHOOL: Your Honor, I have not had  
9 access to the transcript of the argument.

10 QUESTION: But the United States reports at  
11 that date summarize the arguments.

12 MR. GILHOOL: Yes, Your Honor. And the  
13 summary shows no mention of the Eleventh Amendment.

14 QUESTION: Is there a word in those summaries  
15 about the Eleventh Amendment?

16 MR. GILHOOL: No, Your Honor, not the Eleventh  
17 Amendment.

18 QUESTION: When was the last time Siler was  
19 cited in an Eleventh Amendment case? I'll make it  
20 easier --

21 MR. GILHOOL: My recollection, Your Honor --

22 QUESTION: I'll make it easier for you. Has  
23 it been cited since Larson?

24 MR. GILHOOL: Oh, yes, Your Honor.

25 QUESTION: In what case?

1 MR. GILHOOL: My recollection, Your Honor --

2 QUESTION: Was actually cited as an Eleventh  
3 Amendment case.

4 MR. GILHOOL: Your Honor, my recollection is,  
5 and it may be in error, that it was cited in Edelman.  
6 In any event, it was cited that day in Hagans.

7 QUESTION: Not for your proposition. It was  
8 cited for the opposite.

9 MR. GILHOOL: I think not, Your Honor, if I  
10 may spell out what it is my proposition is that I think  
11 Siler stands for.

12 It is agreed, surely, that there was a  
13 substantial Fourteenth Amendment question in Siler.

14 QUESTION: May I ask you another question?  
15 What is the origin, the constitutional origin of the  
16 doctrine of pendant jurisdiction?

17 MR. GILHOOL: Well, Your Honor, it is Osborn.

18 QUESTION: It's -- it's what?

19 MR. GILHOOL: It is Osborn.

20 QUESTION: It's argument?

21 MR. GILHOOL: Osborn, Your Honor. John  
22 Marshall's opinion for the Court in Osborn.

23 QUESTION: What is the constitutional  
24 provision on which it relies?

25 MR. GILHOOL: Your Honor, it is derivative, is

1 it not, of Article III?

2 QUESTION: Exactly.

3 MR. GILHOOL: Exactly.

4 QUESTION: And was the Eleventh Amendment  
5 adopted after Article III?

6 MR. GILHOOL: Yes, Your Honor. And it is  
7 Article III which it amends.

8 QUESTION: And the Eleventh Amendment is quite  
9 -- quite specific, isn't it?

10 MR. GILHOOL: Yes, sir. There's no question  
11 that the Eleventh Amendment is a jurisdictional --

12 QUESTION: And isn't that a general principle  
13 that a specific constitutional or statutory provision is  
14 to be favored over some general language that didn't  
15 mention a particular point at all? That's a -- you  
16 would agree with that as a principle, wouldn't you?

17 MR. GILHOOL: Yes, sir. I think that is so,  
18 though the decisions of this Court, I believe,  
19 demonstrate the jurisdictional limitations of Article  
20 III to be even more sacrosanct than the jurisdictional  
21 limitations of the Eleventh Amendment.

22 QUESTION: Which -- which cases?

23 MR. GILHOOL: Well, Your Honor, Siler itself,  
24 and Young.

25 QUESTION: Siler? Siler didn't mention the

1 Eleventh Amendment.

2 MR. GILHOOL: Well, my point, Your Honor, is,  
3 as this Court has held in many cases, that the Congress  
4 may overcome the jurisdictional limitations of the  
5 Eleventh Amendment as they may not those of Article III.

6 My point is that in many cases this Court has  
7 held the jurisdictional limitations of the Eleventh  
8 Amendment may be waived. That is not so with respect to  
9 those of Article III. And, of course, there is the  
10 Young fiction with respect to the Eleventh Amendment,  
11 and there is no such with respect to Article III.

12 Siler articulated and it itself is one of the  
13 significant early articulations of pendant  
14 jurisdiction. That -- that such existed not only for  
15 the reasons articulated in Gibbs and its predecessors,  
16 namely the Article III jurisdiction over whole cases,  
17 the convenience-judicial economy-fairness to the parties  
18 considerations, but also to avoid premature and  
19 unnecessarily binding constitutional decisions and  
20 orders.

21 Three years ago in Mayer and Gagne you  
22 unanimously held that a Fourteenth -- a substantial  
23 Fourteenth Amendment question once in a case remains in  
24 the case until the entire dispute is settled. There  
25 there was a substantial Fourteenth Amendment claim, and



1 the case had settled with injunctive relief on the  
2 pendant Social Security Act ground. The question was  
3 whether attorneys' fees against state officials violated  
4 the Eleventh Amendment.

5           In what the opinion of the Court and the  
6 concurring opinion alike called the narrow ground, you  
7 held unanimously that respondent alleged substantial  
8 Fourteenth Amendment claims resolves the Eleventh  
9 Amendment question.

10           The same result, as I suggested at argument  
11 last time, obtains in Edelman. There the Court improved  
12 an injunction on pendant grounds, requiring state  
13 officials to timely decide public assistance claims. In  
14 Edelman there was a Fourteenth Amendment claim and  
15 pendant jurisdiction. The injunction rested upon the  
16 pendant federal statute under Hagans.

17           The pendant injunction here is and can be on  
18 no different jurisdictional basis from the pendant  
19 injunction in Edelman, for this Court has never held  
20 that a spending power statute such as the Social  
21 Security Act in Edelman itself overrides the Eleventh  
22 Amendment.

23           QUESTION: But you know, of course, that  
24 Edelman was a federal case, not a state law case.

25           MR. GILHOOL: Your Honor, the pendant statute

1 was a federal statute. The pendant statute here is a  
2 state statute. I think that makes no difference. I  
3 think the controlling matter is the presence of the  
4 Fourteenth Amendment. Indeed, when petitioners argue,  
5 as they did again here, that the Eleventh Amendment  
6 would not bar relief if it had rested in a pendant  
7 federal statute, they are curiously incorrect. That is  
8 not so. Any old federal interest, no matter how  
9 significant, bar one, in any old federal statute does  
10 not defeat the Eleventh Amendment and has never been  
11 held by this Court to do so. Only Section 5 Fourteenth  
12 Amendment statutes do so.

13 QUESTION: Are you saying the Fourteenth  
14 Amendment issue remains in this case --

15 MR. GILHOOL: Yes, sir.

16 QUESTION: -- As it comes to us?

17 MR. GILHOOL: And that was the unanimous  
18 holding of this Court in Gagne v. Mayer. It remains in  
19 the case to the end, and confers the jurisdiction, and  
20 in light of Young and all that has followed, provides  
21 the basis for affirmance below.

22 What petitioners' arguments --

23 QUESTION: So it's irrelevant, as you said  
24 earlier, I think, whether and to what extent these state  
25 officers are acting within their authority.

1           MR. GILHOOL: You could reach the same result  
2 on that ground, Your Honor.

3           QUESTION: But you -- you -- you say that as  
4 long as it's a pendant to a federal constitutional claim  
5 --

6           MR. GILHOOL: Yes.

7           QUESTION: -- That gets rid of the Eleventh  
8 Amendment --

9           MR. GILHOOL: Yes, Your Honor.

10          QUESTION: -- Right at the outset of the case.

11          MR. GILHOOL: Yes, Your Honor. As I believe  
12 Edelman holds, as Gagne holds, and the same situation  
13 was presented in Hagans, though again the Eleventh  
14 Amendment was not raised. But there again, this Court,  
15 based on a substantial -- the presence of a substantial  
16 Fourteenth Amendment question upheld injunctions based  
17 in pendant federal statutes which of themselves, a  
18 spending power statute, did not pierce the Fourteenth  
19 Amendment.

20          Any contrary holding in this case, I suggest,  
21 brings down all of pendant jurisdiction.

22          As I urged earlier, Mr. Justice Powell, the  
23 jurisdictional limits of Article III are even more  
24 sacrosanct than those of the Eleventh Amendment. The  
25 source of the law arguments presented by petitioners

1 here are precisely those made for 150 years against  
2 pendant jurisdiction in any federal question case.

3 Those arguments --

4 QUESTION: But Article III did not use the  
5 word "pendant jurisdiction."

6 MR. GILHOOL: Forgive me, Your Honor. What  
7 did not use the word "pendant jurisdiction?"

8 QUESTION: Article III, or no article's got --

9 MR. GILHOOL: Quite right. Quite right.

10 QUESTION: It's judge-made law, isn't it?

11 MR. GILHOOL: It is judge-made --

12 QUESTION: Well, why don't you face up to  
13 that? You keep running back --

14 MR. GILHOOL: Oh, I face it, Your Honor. I  
15 face it. I suppose it comes from the case provision,  
16 the case word of Article III. My point is that pendant  
17 jurisdiction is settled doctrine since Marshall, and  
18 indeed, its continuing vitality and importance has been  
19 recognized and urged by this court in Aldinger, in  
20 Hagans and in Edelman itself. And indeed --

21 QUESTION: Well, why do you say that one of  
22 the petitioners argues, as I understand it, that if you  
23 have a case with federal Constitution and the state  
24 constitution involved, and the federal constitutional  
25 point is dropped, you can't have pendant jurisdiction



1 for the state --

2 MR. GILHOOL: That may be the case, Your Honor.

3 QUESTION: Is that what the argument is?

4 MR. GILHOOL: That may be the case, and Gibbs  
5 seems to suggest --

6 QUESTION: Well, would you answer that for me?

7 MR. GILHOOL: -- That if the federal ground is  
8 dropped or is found insubstantial, it may be that the  
9 jurisdiction over the state ground disappears. That is  
10 not this case. Here the Fourteenth Amendment claim is  
11 clearly substantial. There is no contest of that here.  
12 It has not been withdrawn. It remains in the case.  
13 And, therefore, the power of the Court to rest its  
14 injunction in that sense on the Fourteenth Amendment  
15 pending state statute.

16 QUESTION: But did -- did -- did the court  
17 rest its injunction on the Fourteenth Amendment in the  
18 case before us?

19 MR. GILHOOL: No, sir. It rested its  
20 injunction --

21 QUESTION: Solely on state law.

22 MR. GILHOOL: Absolutely, Your Honor.  
23 Absolutely.

24 QUESTION: Well, may I ask you this question?  
25 Can you cite some examples of when the Eleventh

1 Amendment would ever apply on your formulation if  
2 counsel simply --

3 MR. GILHOOL: Certainly, Your Honor.

4 QUESTION: -- Alleges a Fourteenth Amendment  
5 claim?

6 MR. GILHOOL: When the Fourteenth Amendment  
7 claim is not substantial, Your Honor, the Eleventh  
8 Amendment --

9 QUESTION: So you have to have a trial to  
10 decide that.

11 MR. GILHOOL: Absolutely.

12 QUESTION: You do.

13 MR. GILHOOL: When the state claim is  
14 presented purely and barely by itself, clearly the  
15 Eleventh Amendment would bar it. If the state statutory  
16 claim were pendant to diversity jurisdiction, for  
17 example, we admit it would be barred by the Eleventh  
18 Amendment.

19 QUESTION: Well, under Young -- under Young,  
20 all counsel has to do is to allege a federal  
21 constitutional violation. You don't have to go to trial.

22 MR. GILHOOL: But, Your Honor, under accepted  
23 substantiality doctrine, that Fourteenth Amendment claim  
24 must be substantiated.

25 QUESTION: So you have to -- you have to try

1 that issue first, and if you lose on that, then you go  
2 to state -- go back to state court.

3 MR. GILHOOL: Oh, no, Your Honor. To do that  
4 would be to turn Ashwander as well as Siler upside  
5 down. The decision of substantiality is, of course, a  
6 continuing one, but under accepted substantiality  
7 doctrine it is made initially --

8 QUESTION: Even if the court finds it's not  
9 substantial.

10 MR. GILHOOL: Yes, Your Honor. Though in this  
11 case, the substantiality of the Fourteenth Amendment  
12 question I think cannot be gainsaid.

13 CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER: Mr. Ferleger.

14 ORAL ARGUMENT OF DAVID FERLEGER, ESQ.,

15 ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENTS

16 MR. FERLEGER: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it  
17 please the Court:

18 In this tenth year since the complaint was  
19 filed I will discuss the comity issue raised by  
20 petitioners for the first time on appeal after the 1981  
21 remand.

22 Before I do that, I'd like to answer Justice  
23 Powell's earlier question regarding the number of  
24 plaintiff class members. There were 1,230 Pennhurst  
25 residents as of the time of trial, and the evidence at

1 trial showed 2,200 persons on the waiting list.

2 And, Justice O'Connor, the counties do have an  
3 independent obligation to provide community services.

4 At page 28 of my brief there is a typo where I have the  
5 word "no independent" rather than "an independent," and  
6 I wanted to take that opportunity to correct that.

7 Respectful and deferential relations between  
8 federal courts and state governments are embodied, of  
9 course, in the principle of comity. Where federal  
10 action would leave state interests free of undue  
11 interference, that action serves comity, and on the  
12 other hand, where a federal court needlessly intrudes on  
13 state prerogatives, nonaction or abstention serves the  
14 interest of comity.

15 And Judge Elbersell below still adhered in his  
16 words to the view that the least restrictive obligation  
17 should not be imposed on the hospital authorities, and  
18 then concluded that he and the court is bound by  
19 Pennsylvania courts' interpretation of state law issues,  
20 even if they adopt what to him was the disagreeable  
21 least restrictive test.

22 While they are sometimes in tension, the two  
23 principal themes of comity we believe are in harmony in  
24 this case. The first theme is federal judicial  
25 nonintervention with state determinations, and the



1 second is sensitivity to the consequences of abstention.

2           The state policy is one which has been adopted  
3 fully and the practices adopted fully by the federal  
4 court below. The development of individual habilitation  
5 plans was not made up by the lower court, nor was the  
6 process of assessment of people and placement in  
7 accordance with a state's preference for community  
8 services. All those rules, all those procedures were in  
9 existence before the trial of this case began.

10           And, Justice Stevens, your hypothetical is no  
11 hypothetical. The state legislature in 1970 did decree  
12 and appropriate money to remove 900 people from  
13 Pennhurst, and that money, unspent, most of it, at the  
14 time of the trial, was specifically for the dispersal,  
15 in the words of the statute, of Pennhurst residents to  
16 the community. The --

17           QUESTION: Are you saying that these officials  
18 then had a duty to find the least restrictive  
19 alternative --

20           MR. FERLEGER: Absolutely.

21           QUESTION: -- For each class member.

22           MR. FERLEGER: Absolutely. For the seven  
23 years before the trial of this case the state had  
24 concluded that, in the words of the secretarial  
25 memorandum of 1972, Pennhurst was a total loss as a

1 mental retardation service facility, and in the words of  
2 the defendant executive officials themselves, "To fix up  
3 Pennhurst would be prohibitively expensive in comparison  
4 with logical dispersal into the community."

5           QUESTION: Well, if that's correct, would it  
6 not follow that the state agents were acting outside  
7 their state authority, and you don't need to rely on  
8 pendant jurisdiction?

9           MR. FERLEGER: Well, definitely. And we -- I  
10 argued that point at the last argument.

11           The state hired experts to prepare for this  
12 trial, as the plaintiffs did. The experts testified  
13 called by the plaintiffs, and their conclusion was,  
14 their advice to the state was confirming what the state  
15 itself had decided earlier. The experts testified: "We  
16 came to the conclusion there is no way Pennhurst could  
17 be made into an adequate facility. The whole way of  
18 operating out there is simply too far gone." And, in  
19 fact, at the trial the opening words of the  
20 Commonwealth's attorney as, "We are not here to defend  
21 Pennhurst."

22           This Court accepts state appellate decisions  
23 about what state law is. Petitioners don't ask for an  
24 end to that practice. And where state law is settled,  
25 as we believe it is here, this Court does not require

1 abstention.

2           This is not a Younger case, a Huffman case  
3 where there are pending proceedings in the state court,  
4 nor is this a case where some federal interest is  
5 plucked from the air to interfere with what the state  
6 interests and policies are. Here the federal courts  
7 have adopted state interests and followed them to the T.

8           QUESTION: Had there been any decision by the  
9 Supreme Court of Pennsylvania prior to Schmidt that  
10 settled state law?

11           MR. FERLEGER: We believe that the statute was  
12 clear before Schmidt, and there --

13           QUESTION: But my question was had there been  
14 a decision by your supreme court?

15           MR. FERLEGER: There had been lower court  
16 decisions but not one by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

17           QUESTION: Not by the supreme court. And your  
18 supreme court decided Schmidt in 1981, as I recall.

19           MR. FERLEGER: That's correct. There had been  
20 decisions by lower appellate courts in Pennsylvania, but  
21 Schmidt was the first analysis of that issue by the  
22 Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

23           QUESTION: Did Schmidt hold that the State  
24 Department of Public Welfare had been acting beyond its  
25 authority in all of these prior years that Pennhurst had

1 been operated?

2 MR. FERLEGER: No. That issue was not raised  
3 or decided in Schmidt. It was not addressed at all.

4 QUESTION: Has that ever been decided by the  
5 Supreme Court of Pennsylvania?

6 MR. FERLEGER: No. No, it hasn't. The  
7 Supreme Court of Pennsylvania -- excuse me -- the  
8 Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania, a court of statewide  
9 jurisdiction, has held that funding is not an issue when  
10 it comes to community services. In the In re: Sauers  
11 case decided after Schmidt, the Commonwealth Court held  
12 that the state must pay for community services and that  
13 the statute contemplates unanticipated, even unbudgeted  
14 for demands on the state treasury.

15 Now, you don't have to reach that issue here,  
16 of course, because as the court of appeals held -- the  
17 footnote is a page and a half long -- the judgment below  
18 does not involve funding, does not raise any issue of  
19 funding because the state funding adjustment mechanisms  
20 remain in effect, and there has been no problem in all  
21 these years that we've had with funding questions.

22 We believe that the deference that a federal  
23 court must pay to state law makes sense in light of the  
24 requirement that federal courts avoid adjudication of  
25 constitutional questions whenever possible, even when



1 they are difficult state law questions.

2           What are the consequences of this approach?

3 Well, in this case as this Court recalls very well, I'm  
4 sure, the federal court was faced with serious,  
5 irreparable injury to many hundreds of people:  
6 psychological harm, physical harm, regression,  
7 abominable conditions, so abominable that even at this  
8 point and in the court of appeals the petitioners don't  
9 ask this Court to leave them free to run Pennhurst and  
10 to injure people as they were doing previously.

11           In the court of appeals they told the court of  
12 appeals we're not talking at all about the part of the  
13 order that relates to the operation of Pennhurst.

14           Even *Younger v. Harris*, which enunciated the  
15 principles embodied in our federalism, made it clear  
16 that irreparable injury is a reason for a federal court  
17 not to stay its equitable hand.

18           The seven-year delay in raising the comity .  
19 issue points to the second consequence that's considered  
20 by federal courts in evaluating abstention comity  
21 application, and that is, the delay and expense that  
22 would be caused. If this Court determines that the  
23 court of appeals was wrong in following state law after  
24 the remand, we will be back in the court of appeals for  
25 a constitutional decision. If this Court determines

1 that somehow Judge Broderick was wrong in deciding the  
2 constitutional issues or any issue back in the early  
3 1970s and late 1970s, we will be in state court for many  
4 more years of litigation, and people will remain at  
5 Pennhurst and continue to have their state and federal  
6 rights violated.

7 QUESTION: You could have started out in state  
8 court and obtained an adjudication of all the rights of  
9 which you seek to adjudicate here.

10 MR. FERLEGER: We could have, Your Honor, and  
11 the federal law does not require people raising federal  
12 claims to start out in state court.

13 QUESTION: I realize that, but you were  
14 complaining about the delay. Perhaps you would have had  
15 less delay if you'd have gone into state court.

16 MR. FERLEGER: Well, in Davis v. Gray in 1872,  
17 the Court pointed to the local influences which  
18 sometimes disturb the even flow of justice as one reason  
19 for people having the option of going to federal court.

20 QUESTION: Haven't we made a little progress --

21 MR. FERLEGER: Excuse me?

22 QUESTION: Haven't we made a tiny bit of  
23 progress since 1872?

24 MR. FERLEGER: Not -- not -- well, we've made  
25 some progress, and, in fact, we've made progress

1 regarding the Pennhurst institution itself. According  
2 to plans filed by the state just this past Friday,  
3 within a year and a half there will only be about 200  
4 people left at Pennhurst, and it's no secret that like  
5 King Nebuchadnezzar I think we see the handwriting on  
6 the wall. And Pennhurst, as the lower court was told at  
7 trial, will be closed. There is no dispute that the  
8 relief chosen and selected by the state for the problems  
9 at Pennhurst is the replacement of Pennhurst with  
10 community services.

11           The delay and expense at this point, having  
12 been sent back to the court of appeals for the state law  
13 decision by this Court, means that there will be more  
14 difficulties for the plaintiff class members and a waste  
15 of federal and state court energy if the state courts  
16 must become involved.

17           Comity considerations apply in civil rights  
18 cases, of course, but they counsel against abstention.  
19 As the Court in Fair Assessment noted and in Mayer v.  
20 Educational Equality League said, "There is substantial  
21 authority for the proposition that abstention is not  
22 favored in an equal protection civil rights case brought  
23 under 1983 and 28 U.S.C. 1343."

24           We believe that it makes sense that federal  
25 courts in civil rights cases should use state law

1 remedies. Nothing could interfere with state  
2 determinations less, and nothing could serve both  
3 Pennhurst residents and our federalism more.

4           It is no blow to comity or federalism where  
5 the result in the federal court is the same as that  
6 decreed by the legislature, by the state courts and by  
7 the state executive.

8           The rule is not a new one. In fact, in  
9 preparing I noticed the case Clark v. Smith, 38 United  
10 States Courts 195, where the court said, and it is the  
11 rule today, that if the remedy in state court is  
12 substantially consistent with the chancery side of the  
13 federal court, with those remedies, no reason exists why  
14 it shouldn't be pursued in the same form as it is in the  
15 state courts.

16           Justice Brandeis in Dawson, other courts since  
17 then, 1968, Stern v. Chester Tube, have reiterated that  
18 --

19           QUESTION: Wasn't that a Fourteenth Amendment  
20 case?

21           MR. FERLEGER: Excuse me? The Clark v. Smith  
22 involved relief under state law, and it wasn't a  
23 Fourteenth Amendment case. It involved rights to land  
24 in Kentucky in Clark v. Smith.

25           QUESTION: I have a hard -- I have a hard time



1 understanding how that applies to this case.

2 MR. FERLEGER: Well, it applies because in  
3 this case the Court doesn't need to decide the  
4 Fourteenth Amendment question, the Fourteenth Amendment  
5 question being substantial. Having defined and  
6 recognized the state law right, the Court has to decide  
7 what remedy should be applied. And the remedy here is a  
8 remedy that is accepted in state law. It is the typical  
9 remedy in state law. At the time of the last argument  
10 here, 20 courts of common pleas in Pennsylvania had  
11 ordered community services created for individuals.

12 It is no news to Pennsylvania officials that  
13 courts can require the development of services for  
14 people. What Schmidt decided, although the Supreme  
15 Court of Pennsylvania had not said it before, was  
16 perfectly consistent with everything that had happened  
17 in the lower courts.

18 Comity, in fact, would be repudiated if a  
19 federal court was required to follow state law for the  
20 basis of its decision but then was forbidden to use  
21 state law remedies in order to execute that decision.

22 In conclusion, may it please the Court,  
23 community services for people with retardation are older  
24 than institutions. The district court noted in its  
25 opinion that specialized services for the retarded began

1 not as institutions but as small, short-term community  
2 facilities. Pennhurst grew from the corruption of that  
3 origin.

4           Pennsylvania no doubt will close Pennhurst  
5 like it's already closed, the record shows,  
6 post-judgment, three other institutions for the retarded  
7 in Pennsylvania no matter what this Court decides. But  
8 that is as it should be, because a federal court's  
9 preferences for a particular result should bow and have  
10 to bow, as in this case to the social judgment and  
11 decisions and determinations of the state courts and the  
12 state legislatures. Such deference is the demand both  
13 of federalism and the right of my clients, the few  
14 people remaining at Pennhurst, and those who have left  
15 Pennhurst and are blossoming in the community.

16           Thank you.

17           CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER: Do you have anything  
18 further, Mr. Farr? You have about three minutes  
19 remaining.

20           ORAL ARGUMENT OF H. BARTON FARR, III, ESQ.,

21           ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONERS -- REBUTTAL

22           MR. FERLEGER: Thank you, Mr. Chief Justice.

23           I would just like to address briefly the  
24 pendant jurisdiction argument that Mr. Gilhool was  
25 making.

1           As I understand his argument, all that a  
2 plaintiff needs to do in order to bring the state into  
3 federal court under state law and obtain whatever  
4 injunctive relief it wants is to plead a not wholly  
5 insubstantial Fourteenth Amendment claim.

6           Now, this Court recently in Aldinger and Owen  
7 Equipment has made clear --

8           QUESTION: A Fourteenth Amendment claim  
9 against state officers.

10          MR. FARR: Against state officers. They have  
11 to characterize it as against state officers.

12          The Court in Aldinger and Owen Equipment has  
13 made clear, however, that the Article III inquiry is not  
14 the full extent of an inquiry into federal  
15 jurisdiction. And the Court in Owen Equipment said  
16 quite plainly the limits upon federal jurisdiction,  
17 whether imposed by the Constitution or by Congress, must  
18 be neither disregarded nor evaded.

19          Now, in Edelman that is exactly what the Court  
20 did. In Edelman there was a not wholly insubstantial  
21 Fourteenth Amendment claim, just as Mr. Gilhool says  
22 there is here. However, the Court did not then say that  
23 the Eleventh Amendment was overridden. It went on to  
24 look at pendant claims and in fact determined that a  
25 pendant claim was barred by the Eleventh Amendment. And

1 that's precisely the correct level of analysis to apply  
2 in this case.

3           This claim is a claim against the state. It  
4 is not a federal claim within the doctrine of Ex parte  
5 Young, and it is barred by the Eleventh Amendment,  
6 whether as a pendant claim or not.

7           The other point --

8           CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER: Excuse me. I  
9 misinformed you. You have seven minutes, not three  
10 minutes remaining.

11           MR. FARR: Well, I will use the three  
12 nonetheless.

13           Thank you, Mr. Chief Justice.

14           Furthermore, in the same argument about the  
15 Eleventh Amendment counsel suggested that the Court has  
16 never held that a federal statute can override the  
17 Eleventh Amendment as applied by Ex parte Young. But I  
18 think if the Court will look at Ray v. Atlantic  
19 Richfield, that's exactly as I was discussing earlier  
20 what the Court did. That was not a Fourteenth Amendment  
21 claim. It was an issue whether certain federal statutes  
22 could be enforced against state officials under the  
23 supremacy clause. That is permitted by Ex parte Young.  
24           QUESTION: Would you -- would you expand on  
25 that for just a moment, because the theory of Ex parte



1 Young, I understand, is when there's unconstitutional  
2 conduct that's sort of ultra vires. They cannot act  
3 that way.

4           You say the same thing about a federal statute  
5 when there's an allegation of a violation of a federal  
6 statute, that that's like an allegation that the  
7 official act is beyond his state authority?

8           MR. FARR: Well, what I understand Ex parte  
9 Young to say -- and, of course, exactly what the fiction  
10 is has been a subject of some substantial debate -- but  
11 what I understand it to say is that where a state  
12 official comes in conflict with the superior authority  
13 of federal law, then the Eleventh Amendment cannot  
14 confer on him an immunity from obedience to that supreme  
15 law. And that would be true under the supremacy clause,  
16 or it would be true under the Fourteenth Amendment.

17           QUESTION: Well, but if you're applying a  
18 federal statutory claim, that would mean that to  
19 determine whether or not the Eleventh Amendment defense  
20 is a good defense, you'd have to decide the merits of  
21 the federal statutory claim, is that right?

22           MR. FARR: In a situation of Ex parte Young,  
23 of course, that's the situation you have on a federal  
24 constitutional claim as well. If you have a Fourteenth  
25 Amendment claim against a state official, the court has

1 to look at the claim itself to determine whether he is  
2 stripped of his conduct. So that's an inevitable result  
3 if you were going to have federal law be supreme in  
4 federal courts against state officials, if you want to  
5 enforce the federal law. But when you have a situation  
6 where you're dealing solely with state law, that is not  
7 necessary. The state courts are fully available to  
8 provide the relief there.

9           QUESTION: But then the question, as I  
10 understand you here, the question for the federal court  
11 is whether there was any authority whatsoever for what  
12 the state official was --

13           MR. FARR: That -- that is the question. As I  
14 indicated earlier, I think that is the question that  
15 comes out of cases such as Treasure Salvors. And as I  
16 said to Justice White, I think that is an inquiry,  
17 though, that has to be very carefully limited, because  
18 you're really trying to --

19           QUESTION: But it's an inquiry that requires  
20 some examination of state law to decide whether there is  
21 any state law authority --

22           MR. FARR: That's right. I believe a very  
23 threshold --

24           QUESTION: So you don't deny the duty of the  
25 federal court to at least take a peek at state law.

1           MR. FARR: I think the federal court has to  
2 look at state law to see if in fact the state official  
3 is really just acting as an individual or is at least  
4 doing something more than that by saying that he works  
5 for the state when he's doing what he's doing.

6           QUESTION: See if it's a case such as my  
7 hypothetical: nobody can be put in Pennhurst. If it's  
8 in that category --

9           MR. FARR: If it's that clear, that  
10 ministerial so that it's -- that he is acting completely  
11 outside, I would think perhaps under the Treasure  
12 Salvors notion that that would be permissible. But I  
13 think that kind of inquiry is very different from what  
14 we have here.

15          QUESTION: Well, that's how you distinguish  
16 Siler, in fact, as I understand you.

17          MR. FARR: Well --

18          QUESTION: In Siler the people didn't have any  
19 authority to make rates.

20          MR. FARR: Siler never addressed the Eleventh  
21 Amendment question. But, however --

22          QUESTION: No, but Green did.

23          MR. FARR: Pardon me?

24          QUESTION: But Green did, which is very  
25 similar.

1           MR. FARR: Well, I think what happens in Green  
2 is that you have a statement of two principles: the  
3 basic principle of Ex parte Young and the basic  
4 principle of pendant jurisdiction. I think in  
5 themselves they're innocent. I think they're only  
6 combustible when you mix them. And I think that's what  
7 the Court in Edelman has finally gotten around to.  
8 After Larson and looking at this again they've said just  
9 because you have a pendant claim doesn't mean we're not  
10 going to look at the Eleventh Amendment. We're still  
11 going to do that and apply traditional Eleventh  
12 Amendment principles.

13           QUESTION: But the converse of that is that  
14 even though there were no pendant claim, and if there is  
15 a state law claim, you still have to make some analysis  
16 of state law to decide whether an Eleventh Amendment  
17 plea is good.

18           MR. FARR: If it's an original claim against  
19 the state, yes. I'm not --

20           QUESTION: The Treasure Salvors situation, for  
21 example.

22           MR. FARR: The Treasure Salvors.

23           QUESTION: That didn't rely on pendant  
24 jurisdiction at all.

25           MR. FARR: That's right. You have to make



1 some inquiry. But as I say, I think because of the  
2 federalism concerns, it has to be a very limited inquiry  
3 so that you don't suck in the cases that in fact are  
4 better in state court.

5 Thank you very much.

6 CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER: The case is submitted.

7 We'll hear arguments next in Norfolk  
8 Redevelopment against Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone  
9 Company.

10 (Whereupon, at 2:00 p.m., the case in the  
11 above-entitled matter was submitted.)

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# CERTIFICATION

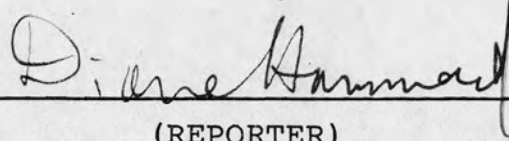
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PENNHURST STATE SCHOOL AND HOSPITAL, ET AL., Petitioners v.  
TERRI LEE HALDERMAN, ET AL. # 81-2101

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