### 111TH CONGRESS 1ST SESSION

# H. R. 265

To target cocaine kingpins and address sentencing disparity between crack and powder cocaine.

# IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

January 7, 2009

Ms. Jackson-Lee of Texas introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

# A BILL

To target cocaine kingpins and address sentencing disparity between crack and powder cocaine.

- 1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
- 2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,
- 3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.
- 4 This Act may be cited as the "Drug Sentencing Re-
- 5 form and Cocaine Kingpin Trafficking Act of 2009".
- 6 SEC. 2. FINDINGS.
- 7 Congress finds the following:
- 8 (1) Cocaine base (commonly known as "crack
- 9 cocaine") is made by dissolving cocaine hydro-

- chloride (commonly known as "powder cocaine") in a solution of sodium bicarbonate (or a similar agent) and water. Therefore, crack and powder cocaine are simply different forms of the same substance and all crack cocaine originates as powder cocaine.
  - (2) The physiological and psychotropic effects of cocaine are similar regardless of whether it is in the form of cocaine base (crack) or cocaine hydrochloride (powder).
  - (3) One of the principal objectives of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986, which established different mandatory minimum penalties for different drugs, was to target Federal law enforcement and prosecutorial resources on serious and major drug traffickers.
  - (4) In 1986, Congress linked mandatory minimum penalties to different drug quantities, which were intended to serve as proxies for identifying offenders who were "serious" traffickers (managers of retail drug trafficking) and "major" traffickers (manufacturers or the kingpins who headed drug organizations).
  - (5) Although drug purity and individual tolerance vary, making it difficult to state with specificity the individual dose of each form of cocaine, 5 grams

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- of powder cocaine generally equals 25 to 50 individual doses and 500 grams of powder cocaine generally equals 2,500 to 5,000 individual doses, while 5 grams of crack cocaine generally equals 10 to 50 individual doses (or enough for a heavy user to consume in one weekend) and 500 grams of crack cocaine generally equals 100 to 500 individual doses.
  - (6) In part because Congress believed that crack cocaine had unique properties that made it instantly addictive, the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986 established an enormous disparity (a 100 to 1 powder-to-crack ratio) in the quantities of powder and crack cocaine that trigger 5- and 10-year mandatory minimum sentences. This disparity permeates the Sentencing Guidelines.
  - (7) Congress also based its decision to establish the 100 to 1 quantity ratio on the beliefs that—
    - (A) crack cocaine distribution and use was associated with violent crime to a much greater extent than was powder cocaine;
    - (B) prenatal exposure to crack cocaine was particularly devastating for children of crack users;
- 24 (C) crack cocaine use was particularly 25 prevalent among young people; and

- 1 (D) crack cocaine's potency, low cost, and 2 ease of distribution and use were fueling its 3 widespread use.
  - (8) As a result, it takes 100 times more powder cocaine than crack cocaine to trigger the 5- and 10-year mandatory minimum sentences. While it takes 500 grams of powder cocaine to trigger the 5-year mandatory minimum sentence, it takes just 5 grams of crack cocaine to trigger that sentence. Similarly, while it takes 5 kilograms of powder cocaine to trigger the 10-year mandatory minimum sentence, 50 grams of crack cocaine will trigger the same sentence.
  - (9) Most of the assumptions on which the current penalty structure was based have turned out to be unfounded.
  - (10) Studies comparing usage of powder and crack cocaine have shown that there is little difference between the two forms of the drug and fundamentally undermine the current quantity-based sentencing disparity. More specifically, the studies have shown the following:
  - (A) Both forms of cocaine cause identical effects, although crack is smoked, while powder cocaine is typically snorted. Epidemiological

data show that smoking a drug delivers it to the brain more rapidly, which increases likelihood of addiction. Therefore, differences in the typical method of administration of the two forms of the drug, and not differences in the inherent properties of the two forms of the drug, make crack cocaine potentially more addictive to typical users than powder cocaine. Both forms of the drug are addictive, however, and the treatment protocol for the drug is the same regardless of the form of the drug the patient has used.

- (B) Violence committed by crack users is relatively rare, and overall violence has decreased for both powder and crack cocaine offenses. Almost all crack-related violence is systemic violence that occurs within the drug distribution process. Sentencing enhancements are better suited to punish associated violence, which are separate, pre-existing crimes in and of themselves.
- (C) The negative effects of prenatal exposure to crack cocaine were vastly overstated. They are identical to the effects of prenatal exposure to powder cocaine and do not serve as

a justification for the sentencing disparity between crack and powder.

- (D) Although Congress in the mid-1980s was understandably concerned that the low-cost and potency of crack cocaine would fuel an epidemic of use by minors, the epidemic of crack cocaine use by young people never materialized to the extent feared. In fact, in 2005, the rate of powder cocaine use among young adults was almost 7 times as high as the rate of crack cocaine use. Furthermore, sentencing data suggest that young people do not play a major role in crack cocaine trafficking at the Federal level.
- (E) The current 100 to 1 penalty structure undermines various congressional objectives set forth in the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986. Data collected by the United States Sentencing Commission show that Federal resources have been targeted at offenders who are subject to the mandatory minimum sentences, which sweep in low-level crack cocaine users and dealers.
- (11) In 1988, Congress set a mandatory minimum sentence for mere possession of crack cocaine, the only controlled substance for which there is a

- mandatory minimum sentence for simple possession
  for a first-time offender.
  - (12) Major drug traffickers and kingpins traffic in powder, not crack.
  - (13) Contrary to Congress's objective of focusing Federal resources on drug kingpins, the majority of Federal powder and crack cocaine offenders are those who perform low level functions in the supply chain.
  - (14) As a result of the low-level drug quantities that trigger lengthy mandatory minimum penalties for crack cocaine, the concentration of lower level Federal offenders is particularly pronounced among crack cocaine offenders, more than half of whom were street level dealers in 2005.
  - (15) The Departments of Justice, Treasury, and Homeland Security are the agencies with the greatest capacity to investigate, prosecute, and dismantle the highest level of drug trafficking organizations, but investigations and prosecutions of low-level offenders divert Federal personnel and resources from the prosecution of the highest-level traffickers, for which such agencies are best suited.
  - (16) The unwarranted sentencing disparity not only overstates the relative harmfulness of the two

- forms of the drug and diverts Federal resources from high-level drug traffickers, but it also dis-
- 3 proportionately affects the African-American com-
- 4 munity. According to the United States Sentencing
- 5 Commission's May 2007 Report, 82 percent of Fed-
- 6 eral crack cocaine offenders sentenced in 2006 were
- 7 African-American, while 8 percent were Hispanic
- 8 and 8 percent were White.
- 9 (17) Only 13 States have sentencing laws that
- distinguish between powder and crack cocaine.

#### 11 SEC. 3. COCAINE SENTENCING DISPARITY ELIMINATION.

- 12 (a) CSA.—Section 401(b)(1) of the Controlled Sub-
- 13 stances Act (21 U.S.C. 841(b)(1)) is amended—
- 14 (1) in subparagraph (A)(iii), by striking "50
- grams" and inserting "5 kilograms"; and
- 16 (2) in subparagraph (B)(iii), by striking "5
- 17 grams" and inserting "500 grams."
- 18 (b) Import and Export Act.—Section 1010(b) of
- 19 the Controlled Substances Import and Export Act (21
- 20 U.S.C. 960(b)) is amended—
- 21 (1) in paragraph (1)(C), by striking "50"
- grams" and inserting "5 kilograms"; and
- 23 (2) in paragraph (2)(C), by striking "5 grams"
- and inserting "500 grams".

1	SEC. 4. ELIMINATION OF MANDATORY MINIMUM FOR SIM-
2	PLE POSSESSION.
3	Section 404(a) of the Controlled Substances Act (21
4	U.S.C. 844(a)) is amended by striking the sentence begin-
5	ning "Notwithstanding the preceding sentence,".
6	SEC. 5. INCREASED EMPHASIS ON CERTAIN AGGRAVATING
7	AND MITIGATING FACTORS.
8	Pursuant to its authority under section 994 of title
9	28, United States Code, the United States Sentencing
10	Commission shall review and, if appropriate, amend the
11	sentencing guidelines to ensure that the penalties for an
12	offense involving trafficking of a controlled substance—
13	(1) provide tiered enhancements for the involve-
14	ment of a dangerous weapon or violence, including,
15	if appropriate—
16	(A) an enhancement for the use or
17	brandishment of a dangerous weapon;
18	(B) an enhancement for the use, or threat-
19	ened use, of violence; and
20	(C) any other enhancement the Commis-
21	sion considers necessary;
22	(2) adequately take into account the culpability
23	of the defendant and the role of the defendant in the
24	offense, including consideration of whether enhance-
25	ments should be added, either to the existing en-
26	hancements for aggravating role or otherwise, that

1	take into account aggravating factors associated
2	with the offense, including—
3	(A) whether the defendant committed the
4	offense as part of a pattern of criminal conduct
5	engaged in as a livelihood;
6	(B) whether the defendant is an organizer
7	or leader of drug trafficking activities involving
8	five or more persons;
9	(C) whether the defendant maintained an
10	establishment for the manufacture or distribu-
11	tion of the controlled substance;
12	(D) whether the defendant distributed a
13	controlled substance to an individual under the
14	age of 21 years of age or to a pregnant woman
15	(E) whether the defendant involved an in-
16	dividual under the age of 18 years or a preg-
17	nant woman in the offense;
18	(F) whether the defendant manufactured
19	or distributed the controlled substance in a lo-
20	cation described in section 409(a) or section
21	419(a) of the Controlled Substances Act (21
22	U.S.C. 849(a) or 860(a));
23	(G) whether the defendant bribed, or at-
24	tempted to bribe a Federal State or local law

1	enforcement officer in connection with the of-
2	fense;
3	(H) whether the defendant was involved in
4	importation into the United States of a con-
5	trolled substance;
6	(I) whether bodily injury or death occurred
7	in connection with the offense;
8	(J) whether the defendant committed the
9	offense after previously being convicted of a fel-
10	ony controlled substances offense; and
11	(K) any other factor the Commission con-
12	siders necessary; and
13	(3) adequately take into account mitigating fac-
14	tors associated with the offense, including—
15	(A) whether the defendant had minimum
16	knowledge of the illegal enterprise;
17	(B) whether the defendant received little or
18	no compensation in connection with the offense;
19	(C) whether the defendant acted on im-
20	pulse, fear, friendship, or affection when the de-
21	fendant was otherwise unlikely to commit such
22	an offense; and
23	(D) whether any maximum base offense
24	level should be established for a defendant who
25	qualifies for a mitigating role adjustment.

#### 1 SEC. 6. OFFENDER DRUG TREATMENT INCENTIVE GRANTS.

- 2 (a) Grant Program Authorized.—The Attorney
- 3 General shall carry out a grant program under which the
- 4 Attorney General may make grants to States, units of
- 5 local government, territories, and Indian tribes in an
- 6 amount described in subsection (c) to improve the provi-
- 7 sion of drug treatment to offenders in prisons, jails, and
- 8 juvenile facilities.

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# (b) REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICATION.—

(1) In General.—To be eligible to receive a grant under subsection (a) for a fiscal year, an entity described in such subsection shall, in addition to any other requirements specified by the Attorney General, submit to the Attorney General an application that demonstrates that, with respect to offenders in prisons, jails, and juvenile facilities who require drug treatment and who are in the custody of the jurisdiction involved, during the previous fiscal year that entity provided drug treatment meeting the standards established by the Single State Authority for Substance Abuse (as that term is defined in section 7(e)) for the relevant State to a number of such offenders that is two times the number of such offenders to whom that entity provided drug treatment during the fiscal year that is 2 years be-

- fore the fiscal year for which that entity seeks a grant.
- 3 (2) OTHER REQUIREMENTS.—An application 4 under this section shall be submitted in such form
- 5 and manner and at such time as specified by the At-
- 6 torney General.
- 7 (c) Allocation of Grant Amounts Based on
- 8 Drug Treatment Percent Demonstrated.—The At-
- 9 torney General shall allocate amounts under this section
- 10 for a fiscal year based on the percent of offenders de-
- 11 scribed in subsection (b)(1) to whom an entity provided
- 12 drug treatment in the previous fiscal year, as dem-
- 13 onstrated by that entity in its application under that sub-
- 14 section.
- 15 (d) Uses of Grants.—A grant awarded to an entity
- 16 under subsection (a) shall be used—
- 17 (1) for continuing and improving drug treat-
- ment programs provided at prisons, jails, and juve-
- nile facilities of that entity; and
- 20 (2) to strengthen rehabilitation efforts for of-
- 21 fenders by providing addiction recovery support serv-
- ices, such as job training and placement, education,
- peer support, mentoring, and other similar services.
- 24 (e) Reports.—An entity that receives a grant under
- 25 subsection (a) during a fiscal year shall, not later than

- 1 the last day of the following fiscal year, submit to the At-
- 2 torney General a report that describes and assesses the
- 3 uses of such grant.
- 4 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
- 5 are authorized to be appropriated \$10,000,000 to carry
- 6 out this section for each of fiscal years 2009 and 2010.

#### 7 SEC. 7. GRANTS FOR DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS TO RE-

- 8 DUCE DRUG USE SUBSTANCE ABUSERS.
- 9 (a) AWARDS REQUIRED.—The Attorney General may
- 10 make competitive grants to eligible partnerships, in ac-
- 11 cordance with this section, for the purpose of establishing
- 12 demonstration programs to reduce the use of alcohol and
- 13 other drugs by supervised substance abusers during the
- 14 period in which each such substance abuser is in prison,
- 15 jail, or a juvenile facility, and until the completion of pa-
- 16 role or court supervision of such abuser.
- 17 (b) USE OF GRANT FUNDS.—A grant made under
- 18 subsection (a) to an eligible partnership for a demonstra-
- 19 tion program, shall be used—
- 20 (1) to support the efforts of the agencies, orga-
- 21 nizations, and researchers included in the eligible
- partnership, with respect to the program for which
- a grant is awarded under this section;

1	(2) to develop and implement a program for su-
2	pervised substance abusers during the period de-
3	scribed in subsection (a), which shall include—
4	(A) alcohol and drug abuse assessments
5	that—
6	(i) are provided by a State-approved
7	program; and
8	(ii) provide adequate incentives for
9	completion of a comprehensive alcohol or
10	drug abuse treatment program, including
11	through the use of graduated sanctions;
12	and
13	(B) coordinated and continuous delivery of
14	drug treatment and case management services
15	during such period; and
16	(3) to provide addiction recovery support serv-
17	ices (such as job training and placement, peer sup-
18	port, mentoring, education, and other related serv-
19	ices) to strengthen rehabilitation efforts for sub-
20	stance abusers.
21	(c) APPLICATION.—To be eligible for a grant under
22	subsection (a) for a demonstration program, an eligible
23	partnership shall submit to the Attorney General an appli-
24	cation that—

1	(1) identifies the role, and certifies the involve-
2	ment, of each agency, organization, or researcher in-
3	volved in such partnership, with respect to the pro-
4	gram;
5	(2) includes a plan for using judicial or other
6	criminal or juvenile justice authority to supervise the
7	substance abusers who would participate in a dem-
8	onstration program under this section, including
9	for—
10	(A) administering drug tests for such
11	abusers on a regular basis; and
12	(B) swiftly and certainly imposing an es-
13	tablished set of graduated sanctions for non-
14	compliance with conditions for reentry into the
15	community relating to drug abstinence (whether
16	imposed as a pre-trial, probation, or parole con-
17	dition, or otherwise);
18	(3) includes a plan to provide supervised sub-
19	stance abusers with coordinated and continuous
20	services that are based on evidence-based strategies
21	and that assist such abusers by providing such abus-
22	ers with—
23	(A) drug treatment while in prison, jail, or
24	a juvenile facility;

1	(B) continued treatment during the period
2	in which each such substance abuser is in pris-
3	on, jail, or a juvenile facility, and until the com-
4	pletion of parole or court supervision of such
5	abuser;
6	(C) addiction recovery support services;
7	(D) employment training and placement;
8	(E) family-based therapies;
9	(F) structured post-release housing and
10	transitional housing, including housing for re-
11	covering substance abusers; and
12	(G) other services coordinated by appro-
13	priate case management services;
14	(4) includes a plan for coordinating the data in-
15	frastructures among the entities included in the eli-
16	gible partnership and between such entities and the
17	providers of services under the demonstration pro-
18	gram involved (including providers of technical as-
19	sistance) to assist in monitoring and measuring the
20	effectiveness of demonstration programs under this
21	section; and
22	(5) includes a plan to monitor and measure the
23	number of substance abusers—
24	(A) located in each community involved;
25	and

1	(B) who improve the status of their em-
2	ployment, housing, health, and family life.
3	(d) Reports to Congress.—
4	(1) Interim report.—Not later than Sep-
5	tember 30, 2009, the Attorney General shall submit
6	to Congress a report that identifies the best prac-
7	tices relating to the comprehensive and coordinated
8	treatment of substance abusers, including the best
9	practices identified through the activities funded
10	under this section.
11	(2) Final Report.—Not later than September
12	30, 2010, the Attorney General shall submit to Con-
13	gress a report on the demonstration programs fund-
14	ed under this section, including on the matters spec-
15	ified in paragraph (1).
16	(e) Definitions.—In this section:
17	(1) Eligible partnership.—The term "eligi-
18	ble partnership" means a partnership that in-
19	cludes—
20	(A) the applicable Single State Authority
21	for Substance Abuse;
22	(B) the State, local, territorial, or tribal
23	criminal or juvenile justice authority involved;
24	(C) a researcher who has experience in evi-
25	dence-based studies that measure the effective-

1	ness of treating long-term substance abusers
2	during the period in which such abusers are
3	under the supervision of the criminal or juvenile
4	justice system involved;
5	(D) community-based organizations that
6	provide drug treatment, related recovery serv-
7	ices, job training and placement, educational
8	services, housing assistance, mentoring, or med-
9	ical services; and
10	(E) Federal agencies (such as the Drug
11	Enforcement Agency, the Bureau of Alcohol,
12	Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, and the of-
13	fice of a United States attorney).
14	(2) Substance abuser.—The term "sub-
15	stance abuser" means an individual who—
16	(A) is in a prison, jail, or juvenile facility;
17	(B) has abused illegal drugs or alcohol for
18	a number of years; and
19	(C) is scheduled to be released from pris-
20	on, jail, or a juvenile facility during the 24-
21	month period beginning on the date the rel-
22	evant application is submitted under subsection
23	(e).
24	(3) Single state authority for substance
25	ARUSE —The term "Single State Authority for Sub-

1	stance Abuse" means an entity designated by the
2	Governor or chief executive officer of a State as the
3	single State administrative authority responsible for
4	the planning, development, implementation, moni-
5	toring, regulation, and evaluation of substance abuse
6	services in that State.
7	(f) Authorization of Appropriations.—There
8	are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
9	\$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2009 and 2010.
10	SEC. 8. EMERGENCY AUTHORITY FOR UNITED STATES SEN-
11	TENCING COMMISSION.
12	(a) In General.—The United States Sentencing
13	Commission, in its discretion, may—
14	(1) promulgate amendments pursuant to the di-
15	rectives in this Act in accordance with the procedure
16	set forth in section 21(a) of the Sentencing Act of
17	1987 (Public Law 100–182), as though the author-
18	ity under that Act had not expired; and
19	(2) pursuant to the emergency authority pro-
20	vided in paragraph (1), make such conforming
21	amendments to the Sentencing Guidelines as the
22	Commission determines necessary to achieve consist-
23	ency with other guideline provisions and applicable

law.

- 1 (b) Promulgation.—The Commission shall promul-
- 2 gate any amendments under subsection (a) promptly so
- 3 that the amendments take effect on the same date as the
- 4 amendments made by this Act.
- 5 SEC. 9. INCREASED PENALTIES FOR MAJOR DRUG TRAF-
- 6 FICKERS.
- 7 (a) Increased Penalties for Manufacture,
- 8 Distribution, Dispensation, or Possession With In-
- 9 TENT TO MANUFACTURE, DISTRIBUTE, OR DISPENSE.—
- 10 Section 401(b)(1) of the Controlled Substances Act (21
- 11 U.S.C. 841(b)) is amended—
- 12 (1) in subparagraph (A), by striking
- 13 "\$4,000,000", "\$10,000,000", "\$8,000,000", and
- 14 "\$20,000,000" and inserting "\$10,000,000",
- 15 "\$50,000,000", "\$20,000,000", and "\$75,000,000",
- 16 respectively; and
- 17 (2) in subparagraph (B), by striking
- 18 "\$2,000,000", "\$5,000,000", "\$4,000,000", and
- 19 "\$10,000,000" and inserting "\$5,000,000",
- 20 "\$25,000,000", "\$8,000,000", and "\$50,000,000",
- 21 respectively.
- (b) Increased Penalties for Importation and
- 23 Exportation.—Section 1010(b) of the Controlled Sub-
- 24 stances Import and Export Act (21 U.S.C. 960(b)) is
- 25 amended—

1	(1) in paragraph (1), by striking "\$4,000,000",
2	" $\$10,000,000$ ", " $\$8,000,000$ ", and " $\$20,000,000$ "
3	and inserting "\$10,000,000", "\$50,000,000",
4	"\$20,000,000", and "\$75,000,000", respectively,
5	and
6	(2) in paragraph (2), by striking "\$2,000,000",
7	"\$5,000,000", "\$4,000,000", and "\$10,000,000"
8	and inserting "\$5,000,000", "\$25,000,000",
9	" $\$8,000,000$ ", and " $\$50,000,000$ ", respectively.
10	SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS AND RE-
11	QUIRED REPORT.
12	(a) Authorization of Appropriations for De-
13	PARTMENT OF JUSTICE.—There is authorized to be ap-
14	propriated to the Department of Justice not more than
15	\$36,000,000 for each of the fiscal years $2009$ and $2010$
16	for the prosecution of high-level drug offenses, of which—
17	(1) \$15,000,000 is for salaries and expenses of
18	the Drug Enforcement Administration;
19	(2) \$15,000,000 is for salaries and expenses for
20	the Offices of United States Attorneys;
21	(3) \$4,000,000 each year is for salaries and ex-
22	penses for the Criminal Division; and
23	(4) \$2,000,000 is for salaries and expenses for
24	the Office of the Attorney General for the manage-
25	ment of such prosecutions.

- 1 (b) Authorization of Appropriations for De-
- 2 Partment of Treasury.—There is authorized to be ap-
- 3 propriated to the Department of the Treasury for salaries
- 4 and expenses of the Financial Crime Enforcement Net-
- 5 work (FINCEN) not more than \$10,000,000 for each of
- 6 fiscal years 2009 and 2010 in support of the prosecution
- 7 of high-level drug offenses.
- 8 (c) Authorization of Appropriations for De-
- 9 PARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.—There is author-
- 10 ized to be appropriated for the Department of Homeland
- 11 Security not more than \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal
- 12 years 2009 and 2010 for salaries and expenses in support
- 13 of the prosecution of high-level drug offenses.
- 14 (d) Additional Funds.—Amounts authorized to be
- 15 appropriated under this section shall be in addition to
- 16 amounts otherwise available for, or in support of, the pros-
- 17 ecution of high-level drug offenses.
- 18 (e) Report of Comptroller General.—Not later
- 19 than 180 days after the end of each of fiscal years 2009
- 20 and 2010, the Comptroller General shall submit to the
- 21 Committees on the Judiciary and the Committees on Ap-
- 22 propriations of the Senate and House of Representatives
- 23 a report containing information on the actual uses made
- 24 of the funds appropriated pursuant to the authorization
- 25 of this section.

## 1 SEC. 11. EFFECTIVE DATE.

- 2 The amendments made by this Act shall apply to any
- 3 offense committed on or after 180 days after the date of
- 4 enactment of this Act. There shall be no retroactive appli-

5 cation of any portion of this Act.

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