



March 17, 2025

Representative Joe McDonald, Chairman
House Legacy Finance Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives
2nd Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: In Support of HF1740 appropriation for community cable television stations.

Dear Chairman McDonald and Members of the Minnesota House Legacy Finance Committee:

The National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA) is pleased to support the HF1740 appropriation for community cable television stations. The Legacy Fund appropriation will provide funding for Public, Educational, and Government (PEG) cable television stations across the great state of Minnesota to continue providing valuable community news and public information programming at the most local community level.

We urge the committee to support the HF1740 appropriation for the community cable television stations of Minnesota.

HF 1740 (SF2289 companion) will help fill the gap caused by declining cable television support via franchising as viewers move from traditional cable to streaming video services. Community Television stations across Minnesota rely on cable TV franchise fees and PEG fees to support coverage of government meetings, candidate and election programming, sports, news, business and chamber of commerce, education and health, community events and festivals, music, arts, nonprofits that allow residents to engage in our community. This appropriation will help to keep these stations vibrant and your constituents well-served and well-informed about the needs of their communities.

The National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors' (NATOA) is the local government association supporting our members by advocating for broadband deployment, digital equity, cable services, Public, Educational and Governmental Access (PEG) Television, public safety communications and the preservation of local authority in our public rights of way (PROW). NATOA is the national association that represents the broadband and telecommunications interests of cities, towns, counties and Joint Power Authorities (JPA's) and cable commissions. NATOA's membership includes local government officials, attorneys, advisors and staff members whose responsibility is to advise and implement telecommunications policy and the provision of such services for the nation's local governments. Our members offer a wealth of experience and expertise on public rights-of-way

The National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors

3213 Duke Street, #695 | Alexandria, VA 22314 | 703-519-8035 | www.natoa.org

The local government association advocating for broadband, digital equity and inclusion, and preservation of local authority in our rights of way.

management, telecom work and communications issues related to broadband, wireless, cable television, public, educational, and government (PEG) access, public safety communications, consumer protection and PROW management.

The Minnesota Association of Community Telecommunications Administrators (MACTA) -- the trade association representing cities, cable commissions and community television stations across your state -- is an active and valued chapter of NATOA focusing on broadband, local franchising and PEG programming issues.

Minnesotan communities have a strong and effective 40+ year history of franchising cable TV providers. Extensive local community programming by PEG programmers has become essential to the fiscal well-being of local communities with the loss of local newspapers and news coverage in many markets. Indeed, research has found that “when news organizations close, cities and residents pay—starting with increased borrowing costs.”

This legislation will afford Minnesota cities, counties, towns, cable commissions and joint power authorities (JPA’s) the opportunities to provide local community and civic news and information to ensure that their residents stay informed and engaged.

According to municipal finance expert and former Kansas City Mayor, Mark Funkhouser: “A robust local media benefits local government, and it's in the best interest of local officials to support their news organizations.”¹

“Research shows that when news organizations close, cities and residents pay—starting with increased borrowing costs. A first-of-its-kind study in 2018 from the University of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Notre Dame found that municipal borrowing costs increased by as much as 0.10% after the local paper closed, translating to costs in the millions for those communities.”²

“There’s also a correlation between higher taxes and higher government wages in areas that have lost a news organization.”

Today’s local PEG programmers and community media centers have the technology tools to distribute across both cable and many digital platforms, but the PEG fees supporting that

¹ See Route Fifty’s: “Local news is crucial to governance, and it’s hurting “ by Mark Funkhouser, president of Funkhouser & Associates, is a municipal finance expert who has spent decades in government service and is a former mayor of Kansas City.
<https://www.route-fifty.com/management/2024/03/local-news-crucial-governance-and-its-hurting/395025/>

² See Financing Dies in Darkness? The Impact of Newspaper Closures on Public Finance, Pengjie Gao, University of Notre Dame; Chang Lee and Dermot Murphy, University of Illinois at Chicago, July 11, 2018
<https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Murphy-et-al..pdf>

programming are only paid through traditional cable TV service subscribership. That is subscriber number which is shrinking swiftly as households are being forced to choose digital streaming over cable video viewing options.

Thank you for your consideration and support of the HF1740 appropriation for community cable television stations.

Best regards,



Mike Lynch, Legislative & Regulatory Affairs
National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA)
MLynch@NATOA.org
617-327-8066 (c)

cc: Committee Administrator Mike Molzahn, Mike.Molzahn@house.mn.gov
Committee Administrator Amy Zipko 651-296-4091, Amy.Zipko@house.mn.gov
Committee Legislative Assistant Karina Nelson 651-296-5998,
Karina.Nelson@house.mn.gov

The National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA)

3213 Duke Street, #695, Alexandria, VA 22314 | 703.519.8035 | www.natoa.org

NATOA is the local government association supporting our members by advocating for broadband deployment, digital equity, cable services, Public, Educational and Governmental Access (PEG) Television, public safety communications and the preservation of local authority in our public rights of way (PROW).



SUBURBAN COMMUNITY CHANNELS

March 17, 2025

Dear Members of the House Legacy Finance Committee:

Suburban Community Channels is writing on behalf of the Ramsey Washington Suburban Cable Commission's member cities: Birchwood Village, Dellwood, Grant, Lake Elmo, Mahtomedi, Oakdale, White Bear Lake, White Bear Township and Willernie, in support of HF1740 appropriation for community cable television stations.

Suburban Community Channels has been providing local content for more than 40 years. The Legacy Fund appropriation will provide funding for public, educational, and government cable television stations across the state to continue providing valuable community programming at a hyperlocal level.

In addition, HF 1740/SF2289 will help fill the gap caused by declining cable television subscribership moving to streaming video services. Community television stations across the state, like SCC-TV, rely on cable TV franchise fees and PEG fees to support coverage of government meetings, candidate and election programming, news, community events and concerts, sports, business and chamber of commerce events, education and health, music, arts, and nonprofits, allowing residents to engage in our community. This funding will help to keep these stations serving the needs of their community.

Thank you for your work on behalf of our residents and our community!

Regards,

Cindy Arko, SCC-TV Business Manager

Mary Kline, SCC-TV Production & Content Manager

March 17, 2025

Dear Members of the House Legacy Finance Committee:

As Station Manager of CTN Coon Rapids, the community media station serving Coon Rapids, Minnesota; I am writing in support of HF1740 appropriation for community cable television stations.

The Legacy Fund appropriation will provide funding for public, educational, and government cable television stations across the state to continue valuable community programming at the most local level.

In addition, HF 1740/SF2289 will help fill the gap caused by declining cable television subscribership moving to streaming video services. Community Television stations, like CTN, across the state rely on cable TV franchise fees and PEG fees to support coverage of government meetings, candidate and election programming, sports, news, business and chamber of commerce, education and health, community events and festivals, music, arts, nonprofits that allow residents to engage in our community. This funding will help to keep these stations serving the needs of their community.

Please let us know if you need further information. Thank you for your work on behalf of our residents and our community!

Sincerely,



Eric Strouse Station Manager
CTN Coon Rapids/City of Coon Rapids



March 17, 2025

Dear Members of the House Legacy Finance Committee:

On behalf of Hastings Community TV, I am writing to express strong support for HF 1740, which would appropriate crucial funding for community cable television stations across Minnesota.

This Legacy Fund appropriation is essential to sustaining public, educational, and government access television stations that provide hyper-local programming and vital community services. These stations ensure that residents stay informed and engaged by broadcasting government meetings, election coverage, local news, sports, educational programming, cultural events, and nonprofit initiatives.

As cable television subscriptions decline and more viewers shift to streaming services, stations like HCTV face increasing financial challenges. HF 1740/SF 2289 will help bridge this funding gap, ensuring that community television continues to serve as a reliable source of local information and civic engagement.

We appreciate your consideration of this important measure. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you need additional information. Thank you for your work on behalf of our residents and our community!

Sincerely,

Mike Bremer

Executive Director

Hastings Community TV



SOUTH WASHINGTON COUNTY TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
COTTAGE GROVE | GREY CLOUD | NEWPORT | SAINT PAUL PARK | WOODBURY

Dear Members of the House Legacy Finance Committee:

On behalf of the member cities of the South Washington County Telecommunications Commission (Woodbury, Cottage Grove, St. Paul Park, Newport, Grey Cloud Island) I am writing in **support of HF1740** appropriation for community cable television.

This request will assist community media facilities across the state of Minnesota, including greater Minnesota and metro communities.

After reading what the 11 principles are that help determine where the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund are distributed, we strongly feel that community media is an ideal candidate. Many of our stations have been creating local video coverage for over 40 years.

HF 1740/SF2289 will help fill the gap caused by declining cable television subscribership moving to streaming video services. Community Television stations, like SWCTC, across the state rely on cable TV franchise fees and PEG fees to support coverage of government meetings, candidate and election programming, sports, news, business and chamber of commerce, education and health, community events and festivals, music, arts, nonprofits that allow residents to engage in our community.

Thank you for your work on behalf of our residents and our community!

Regards,



Ann Schweisguth Executive Director
South Washington County Telecommunications Commission (SWCTC)



March 17, 2025

Dear Members of the House Legacy Finance Committee:

The City of Plymouth enthusiastically **supports HF 1740**, an appropriation for community television. The Legacy Fund would provide much needed funding for public, educational, and government cable television stations in Minnesota to continue valuable community programming at the most local level.

Our local station is Northwest Suburbs Cable Communications Commission/CCX Media, which provides coverage of government meetings, candidate statements, election programming, hyperlocal news, community events (festivals, cultural events, the arts and more), live high school sports, and other pertinent community programming.

As local print publications continue to shutter their doors, the ability for the public to stay informed and engaged in their communities is paramount. Community television coverage of hyperlocal news and information is vital to communities – it's a need that cannot be met by affiliates of major news networks, which generally cover regional, state and national news.

HF 1740/SF 2289 will help fill the funding gap caused by people cutting the cord on traditional cable television. Community television stations, like CCX Media, rely on cable TV franchise fees and PEG fees to provide the critical, hyperlocal coverage and programming on which our constituents rely in order to stay informed and civically engaged.

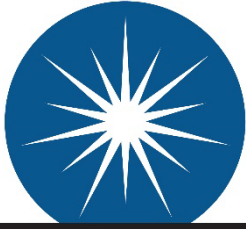
This funding will help keep CCX Media serving the needs of our community. On behalf of the City of Plymouth, thank you for your consideration of HF 1740.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeffrey Wosje', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Jeffrey Wosje
Mayor of Plymouth





CITY of CRYSTAL

4141 Douglas Drive North • Crystal, Minnesota 55422-1696

Tel: (763) 531-1000 • Fax: (763) 531-1188 • www.crystalmn.gov

March 17, 2025

House Legacy Finance Committee
c/o Committee Administrator: Mike Molzahn
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

RE: Support for HF 1740 – Appropriation for Community Cable Television Stations

Dear Members of the House Legacy Finance Committee,

On behalf of the City of Crystal, I am writing to express our strong support for HF 1740, which would appropriate Legacy Fund dollars to support community cable television stations across Minnesota. This funding is vital to ensuring that residents can continue to access high-quality, locally relevant programming that strengthens our communities.

For Crystal and our neighboring cities, Northwest Suburbs Cable Communication Commission/CCX Media plays a critical role in providing public, educational, and government programming. Their coverage of government meetings ensures transparency and accountability, allowing residents to stay informed about city decisions that affect them. Additionally, their work in broadcasting candidate forums, election programming, and local news contributes to an engaged and informed electorate.

As more people transition away from traditional cable television, the revenue sources that community media stations rely on—cable franchise and PEG fees—have declined. This has created a funding gap that threatens the continued operation of these essential services. HF 1740 will help address this challenge by providing necessary resources to sustain programming that highlights local government actions, community events, sports, the arts, and cultural activities—programming that would otherwise go uncovered by mainstream media.

Local government relies on effective communication with our residents, and CCX Media serves as a vital partner in this effort. By supporting HF 1740, you are helping to preserve a resource that strengthens our democracy, enhances civic engagement, and ensures access to trusted, local information.

The City of Crystal fully supports HF 1740, and we urge the committee to advance this important legislation. Please let us know if we can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

Adam R. Bell
City Manager
City of Crystal



NORTHERN DAKOTA COUNTY CABLE
COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
5845 Blaine Avenue
Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota 55076-1401
651/352-6101 Fax 651/450-9429 e-mail: NDC4@townsquare.tv

March 17, 2025

Dear Members of the House Legacy Finance Committee:

On behalf of the member cities of the Northern Dakota County Cable Communications Commission (NDC4) (Inver Grove Heights, West St. Paul, South St. Paul, Mendota Heights, Sunfish Lake, Lilydale, and Mendota) I am writing in support of HF1740/SF2289, an appropriation for community cable television stations. This Legacy Fund appropriation will provide funding for public, educational, and government cable television stations across the state, to continue valuable community programming at the most local level.

HF 1740/SF2289 will help fill the gap caused by declining cable television subscribership (“cord-cutting”) and the shift to streaming video services. Community Television stations, like ours, rely on cable TV franchise fees and PEG fees to support coverage of hyper-local programming, including government meetings, local election coverage, sports, news, education and schools, community festivals, music, arts, local history, and more that allow residents to engage in our communities. This funding will help stations like ours keep serving the needs of our communities.

Please let us know if you need further information. Thank you for your work on behalf of our residents!

Regards,

Carmen Hauck

NDC4 Government Producer



**Town Square
Television**

5845 Blaine Avenue, Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076
Phone: 651-352-6100 Web: www.townsquare.tv



March 17, 2025

Dear Members of the House Legacy Finance Committee:

On behalf of the member cities of Town Square Television (Inver Grove Heights, West St. Paul, South St. Paul, Mendota Heights, Sunfish Lake, Lilydale, and Mendota) I am writing in support of HF1740/SF2289, an appropriation for community cable television stations. This Legacy Fund appropriation will provide funding for public, educational, and government cable television stations across the state, to continue valuable community programming at the most local level.

HF 1740/SF2289 will help fill the gap caused by declining cable television subscribership (“cord-cutting”) and the shift to streaming video services. Community Television stations, like Town Square Television, rely on cable TV franchise fees and PEG fees to support coverage of hyper-local programming, including government meetings, local election coverage, sports, news, education and schools, community festivals, music, arts, local history, and more that allow residents to engage in our communities. This funding will help stations like ours keep serving the needs of our communities.

Please let us know if you need further information. Thank you for your work on behalf of our residents!

Regards,
Joe Conlon
Town Square Television Engineering Manager



**Town Square
Television**

5845 Blaine Avenue, Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076
Phone: 651-352-6100 Web: www.townsquare.tv



March 17, 2025

Dear Members of the House Legacy Finance Committee:

On behalf of the member cities of the Dakota County Cable Communications Commission (South St. Paul, West St. Paul, Inver Grove Heights, Mendota, Mendota Heights, Sunfish Lake, and Lilydale), and its community television non-profit Town Square Television, I am writing to express our strong support for HF 1740 and its appropriation for community cable television stations.

The Legacy Fund appropriation is crucial to sustaining public, educational, and government cable television stations across the state, ensuring that residents continue to receive vital community programming at the most local level. Local government programming, in particular, plays an essential role in keeping residents informed and engaged with their cities by providing coverage of council meetings, elections, and public policy discussions that directly impact their lives.

In addition, HF 1740/SF 2289 will help offset revenue losses caused by declining cable television subscriptions as more viewers shift to streaming services. Community television stations, like Town Square Television, depend on cable franchise and PEG fees to produce high-quality coverage of government meetings, candidate forums, public affairs, local sports, business and chamber updates, education and health programming, arts and cultural events, and nonprofit initiatives that foster civic participation. Without this funding, the ability to provide these critical government and community services would be at risk.

We urge your support for this essential funding to ensure that local government programming and broader community content remain accessible to all residents. Please let us know if you need further information. Thank you for your dedication to our communities!

Respectfully,
Andrew Hein
Chair, Board of Directors
Town Square Television



Memorandum

To: Members of the House Legacy Finance Committee
From: Daniel R. Buchholtz, MMC, Administrator, Clerk/Treasurer
Date: September 9, 2022
Subject: Support for HF 1740

On behalf of the City of Spring Lake Park, I am writing to express our strong support for HF 1740, which provides funding for community cable television stations. As a member of the North Metro Telecommunications Commission, Spring Lake Park benefits directly from the services of North Metro TV (NMTV), our community television production studio.

NMTV offers a wide range of valuable programming that keeps our residents informed and engaged. This includes:

- Local News Coverage – NMTV produces weekly news segments covering events and stories from across the northern metro area, ensuring our community stays updated on important local developments.
- High School Sports Broadcasts – The station covers high school sports events from Blaine, Centennial, and Spring Lake Park High Schools, bringing local athletic events into the homes of our residents.
- Public Access Programming – NMTV provides residents with access to television production training, equipment, and playback of community-produced programs, fostering local talent and community engagement.
- Government and Educational Content – The station broadcasts city meetings, government programs, and educational content, promoting transparency and keeping citizens informed about local governance and educational initiatives.

The Legacy Fund appropriation is essential to ensuring that stations like NMTV can continue delivering these valuable services. With the decline in traditional cable television subscriptions, community television stations face funding challenges that threaten their ability to provide such programming. HF 1740/SF 2289 will help address this funding gap, allowing stations to maintain coverage of government meetings, local sports, news, educational content, community events, and more.

We believe that all communities across the state should have the opportunity to sustain these

vital services, which is why this legislation is so critical. Public, educational, and government access television stations serve as a cornerstone of civic engagement, local transparency, and community connection. By supporting HF 1740, the Legislature can ensure that these essential services remain available to residents across Minnesota.

I urge your support for this important legislation. Please feel free to reach out if you need any additional information. Thank you for your work on behalf of our residents and communities.



Hibbing Public Access Television

PO Box 712 / 211 East Howard Street / Hibbing, MN 55746 / 218-263-7557

hpat@hpat.org / hpat.org / Facebook / YouTube / Vimeo / Roku / AppleTV / AmazonFire TV

Dear Members of the House Legacy Finance Committee:

On behalf of Hibbing Public Access Television, I am writing in support of HF740 & SF2289 appropriation for community cable television stations.

The Legacy Fund appropriation will provide funding for public, educational, and government cable television stations across the state to continue valuable community programming at the most local level.

In addition, HF 1740 / SF 2289 will help fill the gap caused by declining cable television subscribership moving to streaming video services here in Hibbing and throughout the state.

Community Television stations, like HPAT, across the state rely on cable TV franchise fees and PEG fees to support coverage of government meetings, candidate and election programming, sports, school concerts, business and chamber of commerce, education and health, community events and festivals, music, arts, nonprofits that allow residents to engage in our community.

This funding will help to keep these stations, along with Hibbing Public Access Television, serving the needs of our communities.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ronald A. Wirkkula', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ronald A. Wirkkula

President | Hibbing Public Access Television



March 17, 2025

Dear Members of the House Legacy Finance Committee:

On behalf of the member cities of the Quad Cities Cable Communications Commission (Andover, Anoka, Champlin, Ramsey) I am writing in support of HF1740 appropriation for community cable television stations.

The Legacy Fund appropriation will provide funding for public, educational, and government cable television stations across the state to continue valuable community programming at the most local level.

In addition, HF 1740/SF2289 will help fill the gap caused by declining cable television subscribership moving to streaming video services. Community Television stations, like QCTV, across the state rely on cable TV franchise fees and PEG fees to support coverage of government meetings, candidate and election programming, sports, news, business and chamber of commerce, education and health, community events and festivals, music, arts, nonprofits that allow residents to engage in our community. This funding will help to keep these stations serving the needs of their community.

Please let us know if you need further information. Thank you for your work on behalf of our residents and our community!

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen A. George'.

Karen A. George Executive Director
Quad Cities Cable Communications Commission (QCTV)



Serving Andover, Anoka, Champlin, Ramsey
12254 Ensign Ave. N., Champlin, MN 55316

Dear Members of the House Legacy Finance Committee:

On behalf of the member cities of the South Washington County Telecommunications Commission (Woodbury, Cottage Grove, St. Paul Park, Newport, Grey Cloud Island) I am writing in support of HF1740 for community television.

This request will assist community media facilities across the state of Minnesota, including greater Minnesota and metro communities.

After reading what the 11 principles are that help determine distribution of the Cultural Heritage Fund, we strongly feel that community media is an ideal candidate.

HF 1740/SF2289 will help fill the gap caused by declining cable television subscribership moving to streaming video services. Community Television stations, like SWCTC, across the state rely on cable TV franchise fees and PEG fees to support coverage of government meetings, candidate and election programming, sports, news, business and chamber of commerce, education and health, community events and festivals, music, arts, nonprofits that allow residents to engage in our community.

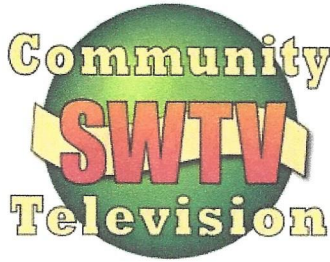
Thank you for your work on behalf of our residents and our community!

Regards,

Ann Schweisguth

Executive Director

South Washington County Telecommunications Commission



Sherburne Wright Cable Commission

Serving the cities of:

Big Lake : Buffalo : Cokato : Dassel : Delano : Elk River
Maple Lake : Monticello : Rockford : Watertown

212 Central Avenue, Buffalo MN 55313 ~ 763-682-1181

www.swtv.tv

March 17, 2025

Dear Members of the House Legacy Finance Committee:

On behalf of the Sherburne Wright Cable Commission I am writing in support of HF1740 appropriation for community television stations.

This commission has strongly supported our cities efforts to provide openness and transparency of local government meetings and coverage of community events. We have used our funds so that each community has the equal ability to televise and stream these meetings and events.

Our commission has relied on franchise fees and PEG fees from traditional cable television for funding. As people cut the cord on traditional cable TV, our funding has declined substantially.

HF/1740/SF2289 will help fill this gap in funding and keep stations serving the needs of communities.

Please let me know if you need further information. Thank you for your support of our cities and their residents.

Sincerely,

Bill Bruce

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of stylized initials "BB" followed by a long horizontal stroke.

Sherburne Wright Cable Commission



CONNECTED COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE

Phone [763.533.8196](tel:763.533.8196)
Email info@ccxmedia.org
Web ccxmedia.org

Northwest Community Television
6900 Winnetka Avenue North
Brooklyn Park, MN 55428

March 17, 2025

Dear Members of the House Legacy Finance Committee:

I am writing in support of HF1740 appropriation for community cable television stations like CCX Media, which provides essential local coverage and public information to the cities of Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, Crystal, Golden Valley, Maple Grove, New Hope, Plymouth, Osseo, and Robbinsdale.

CCX Media is projecting an ongoing substantial loss of franchise fee and PEG (Public, Educational, Governmental) fee revenues due to the marketplace trend of cord cutting, as traditional cable television subscribers migrate to streaming TV services that are not required to support local community PEG programming.

The Legacy Fund appropriation will provide funding for valuable community programming at the most local level. At CCX Media, that means support for recording and disseminating 400+ city meetings recorded annually, 20+ forums streamed annually during an election year, 1250+ news stories published each year, 120 live high school games, parades and events streamed each year. Staff also work with community nonprofits, veterans' groups, arts organizations, and historical societies to tell and share their stories.

HF 1740/SF2289 will help stations like CCX Media continue serving the needs of our community through promoting government transparency and hyperlocal news.

Please let us know if you need further information. Thank you for your work on behalf of our residents and our community.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mark Schulz
President, CCX Media Board of Directors

Shannon Slatton Schwartz
Executive Director

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[SPORTS](#)

[CITIES](#)

[CREATE](#)

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