In the Matter Of:

In Re: DEU - Third-Party Billing

HEARING PROCEEDINGS DOCKET NO. 17-057-T04

June 29, 2017

Job Number: 400132

1	BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF UTAH					
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3	In the Matter of the Application of Dominion Energy Utah for Approval Docket No. 17-057-T04					
4	of a Third	-Party Billing Rate				
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7		HEARING PROCEEDINGS				
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9	TAKEN AT:	Utah Public Service Commission Hearing Room, 4th Floor				
10		160 East 300 South Salt Lake City, Utah				
11		bare hake crey, ocan				
12	DATE:	Thursday, June 29, 2017				
13	TIME:	9:00 a.m.				
14	REPORTER:	Mary R. Honigman, R.P.R.				
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25		Job No. 400132				

1	APPEARANCES	Page 2
2	PRESIDING OFFICER:	
3	Michael Hammer	
4	FOR THE DIVISION OF PUBLIC UTILITIES:	
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6	Salt Lake City, Utah 84114	
7	FOR THE OFFICE OF CONSUMER SERVICES:	
8	Robert Moore	
9	160 East 300 South, Fifth Floor Salt Lake City, Utah 84114	
10	FOR DOMINION ENERGY UTAH:	
11	Jenniffer Nelson Clark 333 South State Street	
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1	Page 4 PROCEEDINGS
2	OFFICER HAMMER: Good morning,
3	everyone. This is the time and place noticed for
4	the hearing in the matter of the application of
5	Dominion Energy Utah for approval of a third-party
6	billing rate, Docket No. 17-057-T04. My name is
7	Michael Hammer, and I'm the Commission's designated
8	presiding officer for this docket. Let's please
9	have appearances, starting with Dominion Energy.
10	MS. CLARK: Thank you. I'm Jenniffer
11	Nelson Clark. I'm counsel for Dominion Energy Utah,
12	and I have with me the Company's witness, Judd Cook;
13	and Mr. Kelly Mendenhall is also here.
14	MR. JETTER: And I'm Justin Jetter
15	with the Utah Attorney General's Office, and I'm
16	here today representing the Utah Division of Public
17	Utilities. With me at counsel table is Eric Orton
18	with the Division of Public Utilities, and he will
19	be the Division's sole witness today.
20	MR. MOORE: Robert Moore with the
21	Attorney General's Office representing the Office of
22	Consumer Services. With me here today, also from
23	the Office, is Gavin Mangelson. He will be
24	providing testimony for the Office today.
25	OFFICER HAMMER: Thank you. Are
I	

1	Page 5 there any preliminary matters we need to discuss					
2	before Dominion calls its first witness?					
3	MS. CLARK: No, thank you.					
4	OFFICER HAMMER: Okay. And let me					
5	ask the court reporter are you comfortable with					
6	the witnesses staying where they are seated, or					
7	would you prefer they come to the witness stand?					
8	COURT REPORTER: I'm comfortable					
9	where they are. Thank you.					
10	OFFICER HAMMER: Does any attorney					
11	have any objection to witnesses staying seated?					
12	MS. CLARK: No.					
13	MR. JETTER: No.					
14	MR. MOORE: No.					
15	OFFICER HAMMER: Okay. Go ahead, Ms.					
16	Clark.					
17	MS. CLARK: The Company calls Judd					
18	Cook.					
19	JUDD ELLIS COOK,					
20	having been first duly sworn to tell the truth, was					
21	examined and testified as follows:					
22	BY MS. CLARK:					
23	Q. Mr. Cook, would you state your full name					
24	and business address for the record, please.					
25	A. Judd Ellis Cook. My business address is					

Page 6 333 South State Street, Salt Lake City, Utah. 1 2 Q. And can you describe your responsibilities with the Company? 3 Yes. I'm the Director of Business 4 5 Development, and in my role I'm responsible for strategic planning and new business initiatives. 6 Mr. Cook, were the Application, your 7 0. testimony and accompanying exhibits, and the reply 8 9 comments in this matter prepared by you or under your direction? 10 11 Yes, they were. Α. 12 Q. Do you adopt those as your testimony 13 today? I do. 14 Α. 15 MS. CLARK: The Company would move 16 for the admission of the Application, the testimony of Judd Cook -- the prefiled testimony -- along with 17 its exhibits and, then, also, the reply comments. 18 19 OFFICER HAMMER: They're admitted. 2.0 MS. CLARK: Thank you. 21 BY MS. CLARK: 22 Q. Mr. Cook, can you please summarize the 23 relief the Company seeks with this Application? 24 Yes, I will. Dominion Energy proposes and Α. respectfully requests that the Commission approve a 25

1	Page 7 tariff change allowing third-party billing services
2	to be offered on the Dominion Energy utility bill.
3	Any eligible third party would be allowed
4	to add charges for the services to the utility bill
5	for a fee paid to Dominion Energy. Dominion Energy
6	proposes a methodology for calculating the
7	third-party charge for those seeking to utilize the
8	bill.
9	First, it is proposed that the third party
10	pay all upfront costs incurred in preparing IT
11	systems and various processes to produce the bill.
12	These costs include IT programming, project
13	management, legal, as well as any ongoing costs
14	associated in offering such billing services.
15	Further, a per line charge has been
16	calculated based on all expenses associated with
17	generating the utility bill. Dominion Energy
18	proposes to charge third parties a minimum of 15.399
19	cents per bill per month for up to 11 lines and an
20	additional 1.4 cents per bill per month for each
21	line utilized above the first 11 lines. This charge
22	includes all expenses associated with producing a
23	bill including paper, ink, envelopes, postage,
24	depreciation, overhead, and a return on investment.
25	Dominion Energy believes that the

Page 8 calculation fairly captures all costs associated 1 2 with producing the bill and that the charge fairly 3 collects from any eligible third party a portion of 4 those costs plus a Commission-approved rate of return on the assets used in the bill generation 5 6 process. Dominion Energy believes that offering 7 such services will be beneficial to customers. 8 Third-party billing services allow Dominion Energy 9 10 to reduce costs to customers while holding those 11 same customers harmless. Dominion Energy is 12 constantly looking for ways to reduce costs while 13 maintaining or improving service levels. third-party billing services allow Dominion Energy 14 15 to do just that. As customers voluntarily elect to 16 have third-party charges added to their utility bill, proceeds received from the third-party biller 17 will be used to offset total billing expenses for 18 19 all customers. 2.0 The proposal has been carefully crafted to 21 include a number of customer protections beyond 2.2 financial protections. Both the Division and the Office of Consumer Services raised valid concerns 23 24 and sought to ensure that Dominion Energy's customers were protected from potential harm. 25 Their

Page 9 1 input was invaluable and Dominion Energy sought to 2 offer tariff language that is (1) fair to all 3 Dominion Energy customers, (2) protects the 4 customers and Dominion Energy from unscrupulous third-party billers, and (3) provides a mechanism 5 for all eligible third-party billers to be treated 6 fairly and equally by Dominion Energy. 7 The Division pointed out that it may be 8 9 unfair to charge a single third-party biller the full cost of a second page. Should the bill be 10 11 pushed onto a second page if there are multiple 12 third-party billers on the utility bill, Dominion 13 Energy agrees and intends to split any charges for additional pages between all third-party billers 14 with access to that customer's bill. 15 16 I would like to point out that the Office has raised some of the same issues that the Division 17 18 raised, and Dominion Energy's reply comments may not 19 have given proper emphasis to those objections. 20 appreciate the Office's input and hope to address 21 their concerns. 2.2 The Office and Division both raised 23 concerns that the Company's proposal involves an affiliate transaction that requires the affiliate to 24 pay the higher of cost or market. Though the 25

Page 10 Company disagrees, we have reached a compromise with 1 2 the Division. The Company is willing to charge any third-party biller all of the costs articulated in 3 4 DEU Exhibit 1.2 of my testimony. However, instead of including the Commission-approved utility pretax 5 rate of return, the parties have agreed that the 6 7 Company will assess the pre-2016 Wexpro pretax rate of return, which is 31.92 percent. I have prepared 8 9 an updated DEU Exhibit 1.2U showing the charge 10 calculation utilizing the higher rate of return. 11 This return, along with all other costs collected, 12 will be credited to customers and will result in a 13 larger credit to all Dominion Energy customers. 14 The Company also agrees that it will 15 revisit its market review each year when it seeks to 16 update the charges. If the Company and interested parties cannot determine a market rate, the Company 17 will continue to use the current methodology with 18 19 the Wexpro I rate of return. 2.0 Dominion Energy respectfully requests that 21 the Commission enter an order authorizing Dominion 2.2 Energy to implement the proposed tariff section 8.08, effective July 1st, 2017, in accordance with 23 24 its rules and procedures and the Company's tariffs and approve the rates proposed as fair and in the 25

Page 11 public interest. Thank you. 1 2 Mr. Cook, you indicated that you had Q. prepared DEU Exhibit 1.2U as an update given the 3 4 recent conversations with parties, correct? Yes, I did. 5 Α. 6 Q. Did the Company also prepare under your direction updated tariff sheets to reflect the 7 updated rates? 8 Yes, we did. And those are Exhibit 1.3U. 9 10 MS. CLARK: The Company would move 11 for the admission of DEU Exhibits 1.2U and 1.3U. 12 OFFICER HAMMER: They're admitted. 13 MS. CLARK: Thank you. Mr. Cook is available for cross-examination. 14 15 MR. JETTER: No questions from the Division. 16 17 MR. MOORE: No questions from the Office. 18 19 OFFICER HAMMER: Thank you. Just a 20 couple from me, then. Mr. Cook, is it the Company's 21 position then that the pre-2016 Wexpro rate of 22 return is the best available proxy for the market 23 price? 24 THE WITNESS: That is our position. 25 OFFICER HAMMER: And I'll open this

Page 12 up to your legal counsel as well because it's 1 2 probably an unfair question to ask you, but as we 3 were reviewing the comments and testimony -- I 4 should say comments -- we noticed that there is a statute in the Utah Code 54-4-37 that discusses this 5 I don't think any party actually referenced 6 that in the filed comments, but I just wondered 7 whether the Company had reviewed the statute and its 8 9 requirements and had an opinion as to whether they drafted the tariff to comply with it and intended to 10 11 comply with its requirements. 12 MS. CLARK: We have, and I'm glad you 13 raised that. We think the Legislature has contemplated that this is not a novel issue; the 14 15 Legislature has contemplated utilizing utility bills in this fashion. And the Company is committed to 16 complying with the provisions of that statute, and 17 you will see some of them reflected again in the 18 tariff. For those that are not reflected in the 19 20 tariff, it is the Company's intent to fully comply. 21 OFFICER HAMMER: Thank you. And I 2.2 should have asked you this earlier, but do you 23 prefer Ms. Nelson Clark or Ms. Clark? 24 MS. CLARK: Ms. Clark is probably 25 easier, but I'm indifferent.

Page 13 1 OFFICER HAMMER: Okay. Thank you. 2 Well, do you have any other witnesses? 3 MS. CLARK: Not at this time. Thank 4 you. 5 OFFICER HAMMER: Thank you. Mr. Jetter. 6 7 MR. JETTER: Thank you. Good morning. The Division would like to swear in Mr. 8 9 Eric Orton. 10 ERIC ORTON, 11 having been first duly sworn to tell the truth, was 12 examined and testified as follows: 13 BY MR. JETTER: Mr. Orton, would you please state your 14 0. name and occupation for the record? 15 16 My name is Eric Orton. I'm a Utility Α. Analyst for the Division of Public Utilities. 17 Thank you. And in the course of your 18 0. 19 employment, have you had the opportunity to review the Application filed by Dominion Energy in this 20 21 docket? 2.2 Α. I have. 23 0. And did you create and cause to be filed with the Commission comments from the Division of 24 Public Utilities dated June 16, 2017? 25

Page 14 1 Α. I did, yes. 2 Q. Do you have any corrections or changes you 3 would like to make to those? 4 Α. No, it's accurate. Thank you. And would you adopt that as 5 0. 6 your statement today? 7 Α. Yes, sir. MR. JETTER: The Division would move 8 9 to introduce the comments of the Division June 16, 10 2017. 11 OFFICER HAMMER: They're admitted. 12 MR. JETTER: Thank you. 13 BY MR. JETTER: 14 Q. And have you prepared a brief statement to read into the record this morning? 15 16 Α. I have. Thank you. 17 Please go ahead. Q. Good morning. In reply comments, the 18 Α. Company takes issue with two of the Division's 19 20 points and basically states that (1) it is not an 21 affiliate transaction, it is simply a tariff --22 which is applicable to everyone -- so therefore the 23 lower of cost or market threshold doesn't apply. (2) There is no "market price" to reference; 24 25 therefore, the utilities cost base analysis is

Page 15 1 appropriate. 2 The Division disagrees and points out that 3 (1) although this filing may not fit precisely into the utilities definition of "an affiliate 4 transaction, " the mere fact that the Company 5 included in its Application the entirety of Section 6 4 of its testimony and half of its exhibits 7 advocating the merits of this affiliate and the 8 9 validity of the service it offers suggests the 10 utility recognizes concern over whether its 11 affiliate is receiving a benefit from its 12 relationship with the utility. 13 The Company's proposed market definition is so narrow that it is doubtful that any 14 15 market could be identified without the Company developing it. The relevant question is the value 16 of the offered services that should be recognized 17 for the benefit of the utility and its ratepayers. 18 This can be answered with reference to a specific 19 20 market for the same product or by reference to any 21 number of proxies that could better reflect the 2.2 value of the offer. Rather than merely offsetting costs and ensuring no subsidization of the 23 24 third-party businesses, it is likely the service 25 could bring additional revenue credits for

Page 16 1 ratepayers. 2 Charging the higher of market value or 3 cost is appropriate to ensure that the full value of 4 the service is being captured for the benefit of ratepayers. It is possible that the value of this 5 billing service is significantly higher than the 6 incremental cost of providing the service. 7 Therefore, if the Company could receive more revenue 8 for this service, it should. The Company's 9 objective should not be to benefit the affiliate; 10 11 rather, it should be to maximize the profit for the 12 Company to the benefit of ratepayers. This is 13 particularly true in this venture. Additionally, the Office broached the 14 15 subject of this Application being filed as a tariff docket and the necessity of having the Commission 16 rule based on the public interest and not on any 17 other standard. The Division agrees. 18 unprecedented in this area to have non-utility 19 20 related service as a utility tariff. The Company 21 decided to apply for Commission permission under a 22 tariff filing rather than a normal proceeding -- I'm 23 sorry. The Company deciding to apply for Commission permission under a tariff filing rather than a 24 normal proceeding does not change the public 25

Page 17 Therefore, without the applicant 1 interest standard. 2 providing substantial evidence showing that this 3 tariff rate is the higher of cost or market, 4 approval is premature. The burden to supply the evidence to meet 5 6 the relevant standard rests with the applicant. However, the Division recognizes the difficulties in 7 evaluating the market value cited by the Company's 8 reply comments. Accordingly, the Division proposes 9 10 that the Commission replace the utility rate of 11 return applied to costs identified in the Company's 12 Application with the rate of return of Wexpro as 13 noted by Mr. Cook earlier. This will provide at least a rough approximation of what a market-based 14 15 business might charge for such a service. 16 Additionally, the Commission should order the Company to report at its annual tariff update 17 what the Company has done to identify similar 18 billing arrangements and their costs around the 19 2.0 nation and offer recommendations for a market rate 21 or reasonable proxies to use. 2.2 Approval of this application can now be in the public interest since it is now altered to 23 reflect at least an approximation of a market 24 25 value-based rate. The Division recommends that the

1	Page 18 Commission approve the revised tariff, which applies
2	a proxy rate until the first annual update where
3	parties may present evidence of applicable
4	market-based rates which may alter the proposed
5	tariff rates.
6	That's all I have. Thank you.
7	Q. Thank you. And a follow-up question.
8	Have you had the opportunity to review the Dominion
9	DEU Exhibit 1.2U that was entered into the record
10	earlier this morning?
11	A. I have reviewed it, and it seems to be
12	accurate.
13	MR. JETTER: Thank you. I have no
14	further questions. Mr. Orton is available for
15	questions from the Commission or the parties.
16	OFFICER HAMMER: Thank you.
17	Ms. Clark?
18	MS. CLARK: The Company has no
19	questions.
20	OFFICER HAMMER: Thank you. Mr.
21	Moore?
22	MR. MOORE: No questions. Thank you.
23	OFFICER HAMMER: Thank you. Forgive
24	me if this is already specified in the comments or
25	in the Application, but what is the date for the

Page 19 1 first annual update? Is it 12 months, essentially, 2 from the date of approval? 3 THE WITNESS: That's what we believe, 4 yes. 5 OFFICER HAMMER: At this time, 6 Mr. Orton, then, is it your testimony that you are 7 unaware of any better proxy for market price than what has been stipulated? 8 9 THE WITNESS: That would be accurate, 10 yes. 11 OFFICER HAMMER: And I'll open this 12 question to your counsel as well -- and I'll ask the 13 same thing I asked Ms. Clark -- whether the Division 14 has evaluated the pertinent provisions in 54-4-37 15 and cares to comment as to whether there are any 16 concerns about its applicability and whether or not the proposed tariff sheets comply with it. 17 18 MR. JETTER: Yes. I can say the Division started -- the initial review was with the 19 2.0 statute besides the tariff. I think there's 21 potentially some questions of interpretation of the 22 statute as far as the ability of a customer to 23 direct the payment to not go to the utility service 24 first, but we believe that the way that the tariff is crafted in that light is the interpretation we 25

would likely support. It's not totally clear in the -- at least to me, there's probably an alternate

- 3 reading of the statute, but the Division supports
- 4 the interpretation that the Company has made that
- 5 the payment should go to the utility service first.
- 6 Outside of that -- that minor issue -- the Division
- 7 believes that the tariff is not inconsistent with
- 8 the statute, and anywhere that the statute would be
- 9 inconsistent it would govern.
- 10 So I hope that answers your question.
- 11 We think it complies with the statute. To the
- 12 extent that it is silent to some issues that are in
- 13 the statute, the statute would govern.
- OFFICER HAMMER: It does answer my
- 15 question. Thank you, Mr. Jetter. Anything else?
- MR. JETTER: No.
- 17 OFFICER HAMMER: Does any other
- 18 counsel want to say anything relating to the
- 19 statute?

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- MS. CLARK: I don't, but I do have
- 21 one clarifying question for Mr. Orton when the time
- 22 is appropriate.
- OFFICER HAMMER: Sure.
- 24 MR. MOORE: The Office would concur
- 25 with the Division.

Page 21 1 OFFICER HAMMER: Okay. Go ahead, 2 Ms. Clark. 3 BY MS. CLARK: 4 Mr. Orton, do you have DEU Exhibit 1.3U, 0. the updated tariff? 5 I do. 6 Α. I'd like to draw your attention to the 7 Q. tariff language at the very bottom of the first 8 9 page. I think this goes to a question posed to you a little earlier about when the update would occur. 10 11 And I wonder if you would agree that the update 12 would be on or before March 1st of each year. 13 Thank you. That would be fine with the Α. 14 Division either way. 15 MS. CLARK: Thank you. I don't have 16 any further questions. OFFICER HAMMER: Thank you. 17 18 Mr. Moore, any cross? 19 MR. MOORE: No questions. 2.0 OFFICER HAMMER: And I apologize for 21 jumping my place in line. Mr. Jetter, there's 22 nothing else? 23 MR. JETTER: Nothing else from the Division. 24 25 OFFICER HAMMER: Mr. Moore, go ahead.

	Page 22					
1	Page 22 MR. MOORE: The Office calls Gavin					
2	Mangelson.					
3	GAVIN MANGELSON,					
4	having been first duly sworn to tell the truth, was					
5	examined and testified as follows:					
6	BY MR. MOORE:					
7	Q. Would you state your name, business					
8	address, and by whom you are employed for the					
9	record?					
10	A. My name is Gavin Mangelson. My business					
11	address is 160 East 300 South, Salt Lake City, Utah.					
12	I'm a utility analyst for the Office of Consumer					
13	Services.					
14	Q. Did you submit comments in this docket?					
15	A. Yes. I filed comments on June 19th.					
16	Q. Do you have any corrections to those					
17	comments?					
18	A. No.					
19	Q. Do you adopt those comments as your					
20	testimony today?					
21	A. Yes.					
22	Q. At this point, I'd move for the admission					
23	of the comments.					
24	OFFICER HAMMER: They are admitted.					
25	BY MR. MOORE:					
1						

Page 23 1 0. Have you prepared a statement of the 2 Office's position? 3 Α. Yes. 4 0. Please provide the statement. The Office evaluated this 5 Thank you. proposal focusing primarily on the protections the 6 proposed tariff affords to ratepayers, and the 7 Office believes the protections detailed in the 8 9 tariff provisions are adequate. These protections 10 include preventing unauthorized billings by 11 requiring third parties to attain certification as 12 service contract providers through the Utah 13 Department of Insurance, maintain verification. customers of Dominion Energy Utah have agreed to 14 third-party services and have agreed to being billed 15 through the utility and allow customers to cancel at 16 any time. 17 The Office agrees that the proposed rate 18 19 calculation reasonably allocates the identified 2.0 costs onto participating third parties, thereby 21 reducing the chance of shifting costs onto other 22 ratepayers. The Office also agrees with the Division that the services rendered to an affiliate 23 24 under this proposal should meet the requirements of 25 an affiliate transaction, and therefore be priced at

Page 24 1 the higher of cost or market. 2 While the Office opposes an overly narrow 3 definition of a market, the Office acknowledges that 4 there does not appear to be a market equivalent in this particular case. Therefore, the Office 5 believes that a cost-based calculation for the 6 charge in this docket would be just and reasonable. 7 This calculation includes the modified rate of 8 9 return contained in the updated exhibits and 10 credited to customers as described by Mr. Cook. 11 Finally, I'd like to emphasize that the 12 Office does not believe that this tariff should be 13 allowed to become effective without the Commission finding that it is in the public interest. 14 extent that such a finding is dependent on the 15 16 prevention of harm to ratepayers, it is the Office's view that this requirement has been met. Thank you. 17 18 MR. MOORE: Mr. Mangelson is available for cross. 19 2.0 OFFICER HAMMER: Thank you. Ms. 21 Clark? 2.2 MS. CLARK: The Company has no 23 questions. 24 OFFICER HAMMER: Mr. Jetter? 25 MR. JETTER: No questions from the

	Page 25
1	Division.
2	OFFICER HAMMER: Thank you. Let me
3	ask you, Ms. Clark, is there anything essential
4	about having this tariff go into effect in the next
5	day or two? Are we operating against a meaningful
6	logistical deadline?
7	MS. CLARK: If I may have a moment.
8	OFFICER HAMMER: Of course.
9	MS. CLARK: The Company had intended
10	to request a bench order, but there is nothing magic
11	about the date. There is some urgency with we
12	would like to proceed with whatever discussions need
13	to occur with any interested parties, but there's
14	nothing magic about the next day or two.
15	OFFICER HAMMER: Thank you. All
16	right. If there's nothing further from the
17	parties
18	MS. CLARK: There's not.
19	OFFICER HAMMER: we're adjourned.
20	Thank you.
21	The proceedings concluded at
22	9:25 a.m.
23	
24	
25	
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1	Page 26
2	REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE
3	STATE OF UTAH)
4	COUNTY OF SUMMIT)
5	
6	I, Mary R. Honigman, a Registered
7	Professional Reporter, hereby certify:
8	THAT the foregoing proceedings were taken
9	before me at the time and place set forth in the caption
10	hereof; that the witness was placed under oath to tell the
11	truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; that the
12	proceedings were taken down by me in shorthand and
13	thereafter my notes were transcribed through computer-aided
14	transcription; and the foregoing transcript constitutes a
15	full, true, and accurate record of such testimony adduced
16	and oral proceedings had, and of the whole thereof.
17	I have subscribed my name on this 30 day of
18	June, 2017.
19	Mary 1 1
20	Mary R. Honigman Registered Professional Reporter
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