



A PUBLICATION OF  
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# THIS WEEK IN NEW YORK

COVERING NEW YORK & CITY GOVERNMENT

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*“Obstacles don’t define us. Rather, it is the unparalleled courage and character of us that defines us as a people. So my confidence in the future is steeped in our glorious past - in the face of adversity, we always persist. We persevere, we prevail.” Governor Kathy Hochul*

## *In The News-New York State*



### **Governor Hochul and Queens District Attorney Katz Announce Indictment Charges in \$2.2 Million Organized Retail Theft Bust**



Governor Kathy Hochul and Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz yesterday announced that 13 individuals have been charged in a 780-count indictment for operating a stolen goods and resale ring that targeted Home Depot locations in New York and eight other states.

The individuals are facing grand larceny, conspiracy, and criminal possession of stolen property charges, including those included in the FY25 Enacted Budget that strengthened larceny laws by combining the value of merchandise stolen in separate incidents.



“Thirteen defendants, over \$2.2 million in merchandise, 319 incidents of theft, nine states and 128 separate Home Depot stores are the facts alleged, resulting in a 780-count indictment,” Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz explained. “The defendants took breaks for lunch and dinner, sometimes hitting the same Home Depot up to four times in one day. The stolen items were then resold to consumers, through a Brooklyn storefront or on Facebook Marketplace. Working with our partners at the New York State Police, we brought this brazen operation to a halt. I thank Governor Hochul for signing laws that provide prosecutors’ offices with tools to more efficiently investigate, and more effectively charge, organized retail theft and fencing operations.”

The District Attorney’s Office investigation began in June 2024, when members of the District Attorney’s Detective Bureau observed stolen air conditioners from Home Depot while conducting surveillance in a separate matter. The District Attorney’s Crime Strategies and Intelligence Bureau built the case in-house and worked closely with the New York State Police’s Organized Retail Theft Task Force, part of the agency’s Special Investigations Unit.

According to the indictment and investigation, members of the theft and fencing ring are accused of stealing home construction tools, building supplies, power tools, smoke alarms, air conditioners, paper towels and other goods totaling more than \$2.2 million during a 13-month period from August 2024 to September 2025. The items — stolen during 319 different incidents — were then sold to black market resellers, known as fences, who allegedly ordered the specific items to be stolen and then resold those goods to consumers.

The investigation found that the theft crew met almost daily to determine the locations of Home Depots they would target based on a review of merchandise in each store. Among the most common items stolen were insulation kits, buckets of reflective roof coating, power tools, air conditioners and smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. The amount of merchandise stolen in a single day ranged from about \$1,800 to nearly \$35,000.



## Attorney General James Wins Lawsuit Defending Wind Energy

Judge Patti Saris of the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts this week declared President Trump's [executive order](#) to halt all new wind energy permits and leases on federal lands and waters unlawful. The judge [ruled](#) that federal agencies had acted in an "arbitrary and capricious" manner and failed to provide a reasoned explanation for the sudden policy change, a violation of the Administrative Procedure Act.

In May, Attorney General James led a coalition of 17 other attorneys general in suing to block a presidential directive suspending all federal approvals for wind energy projects. The U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts granted the coalition's motion for summary judgment, declaring the directive illegal and vacating the order.

"As New Yorkers face rising energy costs, we need more energy sources, not fewer," New York State Attorney General Letitia James said. "Wind energy is good for our environment, our economy, and our communities. I am grateful the court stepped in to block the administration's reckless and unlawful crusade against clean energy."



## Comptroller DiNapoli: Gen Z and Young Millennials in New York Struggle With Economic, Affordability Challenges

### *Student Loan Debt, Rising Housing Costs, & High Unemployment Undermine Financial Independence*

New York's young adults — some members of Generation Z (born 1997-2012) and Millennials (born 1981-1996) — are facing a complex economic landscape including higher unemployment rates, increasing costs, and larger debt burdens, that threatens their financial well-being, according to a new [report](#) released by State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli.

“Young adults are dealing with mounting obstacles to achieving financial stability and independence,” Comptroller DiNapoli said. “They face a shrinking pool of entry-level jobs and rising unemployment, driven in part by AI. Increasing housing costs along with growing debt are also making it increasingly difficult for them to live independently and build their future. Addressing affordability, expanding housing options, and improving access to education, job training and employment opportunities are essential to reversing these trends. Retaining the state’s young workforce is a critical component of New York’s prospects for its long-term economic growth and prosperity.”

The majority of young adults reside in the downstate regions (New York City, Long Island and the Hudson Valley), with one in four New York City residents falling into this age group. From 2013 to 2023, seven regions across the state experienced a decline in their young adult populations, with the largest decrease in the North Country (8.5%).

**The Young Adult Population in New York, by Region, 2023**

	Young Adults	Share of State's Young Adults	Share of Regional Population	2013 to 2023 Growth Rate
New York City	2,129.6	46.2%	25.0%	-7.6%
Long Island	599.5	13.0%	20.6%	3.6%
Hudson Valley	497.9	10.8%	20.8%	3.4%
Western New York	314.2	6.8%	22.2%	-2.5%
Finger Lakes	271.9	5.9%	22.4%	-4.1%
Capital Region	253.0	5.5%	22.8%	1.4%
Central New York	181.0	3.9%	23.2%	-3.1%
Southern Tier	154.1	3.3%	24.3%	-3.2%
Mohawk Valley	103.8	2.3%	21.5%	-4.6%
North Country	101.9	2.2%	24.3%	-8.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,606.8</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>23.2%</b>	<b>-1.9%</b>

Note: Population numbers are in thousands.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau 5-year American Community Survey, New York, 2023 and 1-year American Community Survey, New York, 2013.

For 18- to 25-year-olds, the labor force participation rate in 2023 was 47.6% with just under half (49.9%) attending school (high school and above). Young adults aged 26 to 34 have the highest participation rate at 84.7%. Just under 90% of those who are college educated (and not currently attending school) are employed compared to 68.1% of those without a college education.

The largest expenses for young adults were housing, food and transportation, which comprised over two-thirds of their total spending in 2023. Housing represented the largest expense, 35%, and food and transportation were a third of expenses.

Since 2013, median rental costs for housing across New York have increased by 33%, with the number of lower cost units declining. Due to these increased costs, 35.9% of young adult renters now face housing cost burdens with 22.4% spending 30-49% of their income on rent and utilities and 13.4% spending 50% or more. In addition, home ownership by young adults has become increasingly difficult. In 2004, 31.2% of 26- to 34-year-olds owned a home; in 2023, it was 23.4%.



## Chapters of the Laws of 2025

**Chapter 578 Sponsored by AM Steck/Senator Sanders** -- Requires the modification of restrictive covenants prior to the sale of real property when covenants and restrictions exist which discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, familial status, marital status, disability, national origin, source of income or ancestry.

**Chapter 579 Sponsored by AM Bores/Senator Hoylman-Sigal** -- Incorporates the 2022 Uniform Law Commission recommended amendments for emerging technologies including virtual currencies, distributed ledger technologies (including blockchain), artificial intelligence, and other technological developments.

**Chapter 593 Sponsored by Senator Jackson/AM Pheffer Amato** -- Authorizes the removal of police officer candidates from an eligible list when such candidate does not meet psychological fitness requirements or lacks good moral character standards.

**Chapter 595 Sponsored by Gonzalez/Senator McDonald** -- Requires public-facing websites operated by political committees to contain "paid for by" language and adds public-facing websites to the list of political communications that qualify as independent expenditures.

**Chapter 600 Sponsored by Senator Gounardes/AM Clark** -- Clarifies that the State's Human Rights law guarantees reasonable accommodations and protects individuals who request such accommodations from retaliation.

**Chapter 602 Sponsored by Senator Gounardes/AM Raga** -- Requires student financial aid award letters to contain information on net costs, defined as an estimate of the costs of attendance after financial aid which does not require repayment and options for loans which do require repayment.

**Chapter 614 Sponsored by Senator Liu/AM Rozic** -- Requires general hospitals to provide language assistance services.

**Chapter 615 Sponsored by Senator Fahy/AM Carroll R** -- Establishes a center for dyslexia and dysgraphia.

**Chapter 616 Sponsored by Senator Gianaris/AM Simone** -- Relates to the right of publicity.

**Chapter 617 Sponsored by Senator Gianaris/AM Rosenthal** -- Requires advertisements to disclose the use of a synthetic performer.



## **Bills Vetoed by the Governor**

**VETOED (MEMO 63) Sponsored by AM Simone/Senator Krueger** -- Eliminates the rule that provides that whenever a city charter commission puts a proposal on the local ballot, all other local referendum proposals are barred from the ballot.

**VETOED (MEMO 56) Sponsored by AM Magnarelli/Senator Cooney** -- Directs the commissioner of motor vehicles to conduct a study to examine and update the requirements of safety inspections conducted to ensure the operational safety of all motor vehicles.

**VETOED (MEMO 80) Sponsored by Senator Addabbo/AM Valdez** -- Requires gas and electric corporations to provide forty-five days' notice to customers whenever there is a service rate or charge increase.

**VETOED (MEMO 87) Sponsored by Senator Hoylman-Sigal/AM Lunsford** -- Provides for the types of damages that may be awarded to the persons for whose benefit an action for wrongful death is brought.

***VETOED (MEMO 89) Sponsored by Senator Ramos/AM Bronson*** -- Allows workers compensation claimants to fill their prescriptions at network pharmacies and at pharmacies that are registered as resident, in-state pharmacies with the New York State Department of Education.

***VETOED (MEMO 94) Sponsored by Senator Mayer/AM Paulin*** -- Relates to provisions governing contracting between state agencies and not-for-profit organizations including new, renewal, and extension contracts and advance payments and interest for such contracts. repeals provisions relating to interest payments.

***VETOED (MEMO 96) Sponsored by Senator Baily/AM Bronson*** -- Establishes a workers compensation fraud assessment commission.



## **Bills Delivered to the Governor**



***A3516 Sponsored by AM Reyes/Senator Gianaris*** -- Enacts the "keep police radio public act"; ensures that, except for sensitive information, all radio communications are accessible to emergency services organizations and professional journalists.

***A4727 Sponsored by AM Bronson/Senator Comrie*** -- Extends paid family leave benefits to employees who perform construction, demolition, reconstruction, excavation, rehabilitation, repairs, renovations, alterations, or improvements for multiple employers pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement who shall be eligible for family leave benefits if they were employed for at least twenty-six of the last thirty-nine weeks by any covered employer which is signatory to a collective bargaining agreement.

***A4873 Sponsored by AM Chandler-Waterman/Senator Parker*** -- Prohibits the operation of NYC transit authority subways or trains without at least one conductor on board; requires a conductor on any subway or train operated by such authority whenever the subway or train has more than two cars attached to the engine.

***A6942 Sponsored by AM Pheffer Amato/Senator Jackson*** -- Restores the 20 year service retirement for certain New York city corrections officers and sanitation workers.

***A8465 Sponsored by AM Otis/Senator Mayer*** -- Relates to prevailing wage for those involved in hauling of concrete and asphalt in the counties of Nassau, Putnam, Suffolk, and Westchester, and in the city of New York.

***A8678 Sponsored by AM Burke/Senator Sepulveda*** -- Extends the effectiveness of certain provisions relating to joint bidding on contracts for public work projects.

***A8679 Sponsored by AM Burke/Senator Sepulveda*** -- Extends the effectiveness of certain provisions of the coordinated construction act for lower Manhattan relating to joint bidding on contracts for public work projects.

***S364 Sponsored by Senator Gianaris/AM Rosenthal*** -- Prohibits restrictions on insurance policies based solely on the policyholder harboring or owning any dog of a specific breed or mixture of breeds.

***S1356A Sponsored by Senator Skoufis/AM Taylor*** -- Permits the state board of elections to join certain multistate voter list maintenance organizations and provide such organizations with certain voter information

***S4727 Sponsored by Senator Jackson/AM Pheffer Amato*** -- Provides that the normal service retirement benefit for police/fire members who are members of the New York city fire department pension fund

***S4824A Sponsored by Senator Jackson/AM Pheffer Amato*** -- Provides a performance and discharge of duty presumption for any condition of impairment of health caused by leptospirosis, resulting in total or partial disability or death to a paid member of the uniformed force of a paid sanitation department.

***S5379 Sponsored by Senator Harckham/AM Bronson*** -- Relates to prevailing wage requirements applicable to brownfield remediation work performed under private contract as it relates to certain remediation activities, for sites that are seeking or have received a determination that the site is eligible for the tangible property credit component of the brownfield redevelopment tax credit.

***S6437 Sponsored by Senator Jackson/AM Pheffer Amato*** -- Provides for the transfer of service credit by a member of the New York city police pension fund into the New York city police pension fund.

***S8207 Sponsored by Senator Jackson/AM Pheffer Amato*** -- Restores 55/30 for all members; reduces the retirement age from 63 to 62.

***S8415 Sponsored by Senator Salazar/AM Dilan*** -- Enacts into law components of legislation necessary to implement an omnibus bill related to correctional services in the state of New York

***S8432 Sponsored by Senator Hoylman-Sigal/AM Gallagher*** -- Amends the definitions of the terms "beneficial owner", "reporting company" and "exempt company" to set the scope of certain provisions relating to beneficial owners of limited liability companies.

## ***In The News-New York City***



### **Mayor Adams Announces \$1 Billion Investment in Redevelopment to Deliver a Better Coney Island**

New York City Mayor Eric Adams, New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks) Commissioner Iris Rodriguez-Rosa, and New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) President and CEO Andrew Kimble today announced that New York City has committed more than \$1 billion to a major reconstruction of the Coney Island shoreline. The project includes reconstruction of the historic Riegelmann Boardwalk; 1,500 new homes, including 25 percent of units allocated for affordable housing; and new investments in streets, sewers, and public realm improvements, including a \$42 million renovation of the Abe Stark Sports Center.

The boardwalk restoration project will upgrade all 2.7 miles of Riegelmann Boardwalk across several phases of work, maximizing access to this public amenity while making vital improvements. NYC Parks will partner with the New York City Economic Development Corporation to implement the project and will conduct extensive public outreach during the design and construction stages. NYC Parks conducted an extensive study to reconfiguring the boardwalk to address future climate change needs while preserving the landmark's character and maintaining direct access to the adjacent businesses and attractions. In addition to upgrading the resiliency and accessibility of the boardwalk itself, this project will include improvements to the boardwalk's public facilities, including restrooms, lifeguard stations, and shade pavilions.

The city is also reconstructing the Abe Stark Sports Center, a local hub for recreation with a beloved ice-skating rink that opened in 1970, through a separate \$42 million project. The renovation will upgrade the ice-skating facilities and create a new entrance and signage on the boardwalk, better linking the center with the community.

The Adams administration previously announced that RYBAK Development was selected to build housing in Coney Island West. This project will convert an 80,000-square-foot city-owned surface public parking lot into over 500 units of mixed-income housing, 25 percent of which will be affordable. Additionally, the development will provide ground-floor retail space and will replace existing public surface parking with new public structured parking. This project — in combination with other peninsula-wide flood resiliency measures — will help protect Coney Island from future flood risk.

The Adams administration also supports Intro. 1427 to establish a Business Improvement District (BID) in Coney Island and bring together businesses, community leaders, and other New Yorkers around a safer, cleaner, more vibrant neighborhood.



## **NYC Council's Economic Forecast Projects \$3.4 Billion More in Tax Revenue for Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027 Compared to Mayor's Office of Management and Budget**

The New York City Council released its December 2025 Economic and Tax Revenue Forecast, projecting that the City's economy will remain resilient and lead to a slightly improved tax revenue outlook, despite uncertainty and challenges stemming from federal economic and tariff policies.

It estimates \$3.4 billion in greater tax revenues for Fiscal Years (FY) 2026 and 2027 than the Mayor's Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) indicated in its November 2025 Financial Plan. The differences in projections are mainly driven by stronger than expected personal income, as well as a more comprehensive reforecast of taxes than OMB. The City's tax revenue growth rate is projected to remain moderate at an average of 3.4% annually from FY26 to FY29, compared to the 5.5% average annual tax revenue growth experienced over the decade of FY10 to FY19.

The full economic forecast report can be [found here](#).

"The Council's latest economic and tax revenue forecast projects continued positive growth despite Trump's reckless policies, with \$3.4 billion more in expected tax revenue than OMB's November Plan for the next two fiscal years," said Speaker Adrienne Adams and Finance Committee Chair Justin Brannan.

“The national and city economies remain resilient, which means our city will continue to have the necessary resources to invest in essential services to meet the needs of all New Yorkers. The next Mayor and Council will have what is needed for continued targeted investments to make our city more affordable while confronting the inequities facing our diverse communities. Protecting New Yorkers from threats that undermine our fiscal health and stability must also remain a top priority.”

According to the Council, year-over-year, the City experienced 1.9% total employment growth, with lower-wage job sectors like home health care and social services continuing to be the main driver of job growth in the city. At the same time, the financial sector saw a 1.1% decline in employment growth, and the construction trades experienced the highest decline of 5.4% since last August.

The city’s real estate landscape shows a resilient high-end commercial office market and a stable residential market, the report found, with recent sales momentum as mortgage rates gradually decline. [Manhattan’s Class A leasing](#) registered record year-to-date activity, while office vacancies continue to decrease slightly, from 22.7% to 22.1%, due to increasing office-to-residential conversions and a limited construction pipeline.

## *Briefs*

### **Governor Hochul Signs Film Industry AI Legislation**

Governor Kathy Hochul this week signed “first-in-the-nation” legislation to protect consumers and boost AI transparency in the film industry.

Chapter 617 (sponsored by Senator Michael Gianaris and AM Linda Rosenthal) requires persons who produce or create an advertisement to identify if it includes AI generated synthetic performers. The Governor also signed legislation Chapter 616 (sponsored by Senator Gianaris and AM Tony Simone) requires consent from heirs or executors if a person wishes to use the name, image, or likeness of an individual for commercial purposes after their death.

“By signing these bills today, we are enacting common sense laws that will ensure we are fully transparent when using images generated by artificial intelligence and also prevent the unauthorized commercial use of a deceased individual’s name or likeness,” Governor Hochul said. “In New York State, we are setting a clear standard that keeps pace with technology, while protecting artists and consumers long after the credits roll.”

According to the Governor, AI generated synthetic performers are digitally created media that appear as a real person. AI generated synthetic performers are sometimes used by advertisers to sell products, and with easy access to technology, there has been an increase in the use of AI generated performers across all forms of media, including on social media and in digital advertising. Without notice that the content the public is viewing is not real, AI generated synthetic performers and manipulated media can undermine one's ability to accurately tell fact from fiction.

## **Hochul Administration Changes**

Governor Kathy Hochul this week announced she is nominating Director of State Operations Kathryn Garcia as the next Executive Director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

“Governor Hochul’s nomination of Kathryn Garcia as the next Executive Director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey is a superb choice,” Outgoing Port Authority Executive Director Rick Cotton said. “I have worked closely with Kathryn for many years. She has deep knowledge of city and state government combined with extraordinary insight and judgment and a collaborative spirit. I could not imagine a government executive better suited to advance the Port Authority’s standards of world-class infrastructure and get things done.”

In addition, Governor Hochul announced that she will name Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Operations Commissioner Jackie Bray as the new Director of State Operations.

## **Mayor Adams Issues Directive to Improve Communications With Non-English Speaking New Yorkers**

New York City Mayor Eric Adams this week issued a directive to city agencies to evaluate how they can further incorporate language technologies into their day-to-day interactions with the public to improve communications with all New Yorkers, including non-English speaking communities.

According to the Mayor, the city is planning to install language apps on all city-owned smart devices — more than 100,000 in total — to make city services more accessible to New Yorkers. The New York City Office of Technology and Innovation (OTI) will provide support to city agencies to facilitate downloads and usage of tools like Google Translate and Apple’s built-in Translate app, while continuing to evaluate advances in technology.

Additionally, the New York City Police Department (NYPD) will immediately begin using language technology to communicate with New Yorkers they interact with on a day-to-day basis, while New York City Public Schools has begun development on Hello, a new app to help bridge language gaps that will be rolled out in the spring of 2026.

In addition to OTI downloading language technology on all city-owned smart devices, the NYPD’s patrol guidelines for interaction with “Limited English Proficient Persons” has been updated to include technology.

# Joint NYC Council, State Investigation into the Medical Spa Industry Finds Violations of State Law Threatening New Yorkers' Health and Safety

*Unlicensed medical procedures, lack of liability insurance, unhygienic conditions, and mislabeled products revealed at inspected locations*

The New York City Council this week released a report detailing the preliminary results of a joint city-state investigation into the operations and practices of 15 medical spas (medspas) operating in the five boroughs that found health and safety violations of state law.

Coordinated by the Council's Oversight and Investigations Division (OID) in partnership with New York State Department of Health Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement (BNE) and Bureau of Investigation (BI), Department of Education (NYSED), and Department of State (DOS), the investigation assessed a rapidly expanding industry in the city and nation with their compliance with regulations related to licensing, hygienic practices, proof of insurance, and use of controlled substances.

Violations were revealed and issued at every inspected business, posing dangers to the New Yorkers purchasing their services. These spanned from conducting medical procedures without appropriate licensing and oversight to missing liability insurance, maintaining unhygienic conditions and tools, using unlabeled products, and failing to display proper licenses. The full report, entitled *Moving the Needle*, can be found [here](#).



## Statewide Rally to Fix Tier 6

The New York state AFL-CIO is organizing a Statewide Rally to Fix Tier 6, on Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at the MVP Arena in Albany.

Free bus transportation is available to help you get to the rally and back! Buses will leave from Binghamton, Buffalo, the Hudson Valley, Nassau County, New York City, Plattsburgh, Rochester, Syracuse and Westchester.



**Statewide Rally to Fix Tier 6**  
**March 8, 2026 from 12pm-2pm**  
**MVP Arena, 51 Pearl Street, Albany, NY**

**RSVP**

# Coming Up

## *New York State*

### *Monday, December 15<sup>th</sup>*

*Board of Regents Meeting*, 89 Washington Ave – Room 217 – Medical Library, 9 a.m.

### *Tuesday, December 16<sup>th</sup>*

*Public Hearing*: Use of Artificial Intelligence Systems in the Underwriting and Pricing of Insurance Policies, Roosevelt Hearing Room C, Legislative Office Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Albany, 10 a.m.

*Workers Compensation Board Meeting*, 328 State Street – Room 324 – Schenectady, 10 a.m.

### *Wednesday, December 17<sup>th</sup>*

*Public Hearing*: Impact of Artificial Intelligence on New York’s Workforce, Hamilton Hearing Room B, Legislative Hearing Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, New York, 11:30 a.m.

### *Thursday, December 18<sup>th</sup>*

*Cannabis Control Board Meeting*, Empire State Plaza – Meetings Room 6 – Albany, 11 a.m.

## *New York City*

### *Tuesday, December 16<sup>th</sup>*

*Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation*, 250 Broadway – 8<sup>th</sup> Floor – Hearing Room 1, 12 p.m.

### *Wednesday, December 17<sup>th</sup>*

*Committee on Mental Health, Disabilities and Addiction*, 250 Broadway – 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, 1 p.m.

### *Thursday, December 18<sup>th</sup>*

*Subcommittee on Landmarks, Publics Sitings and Dispositions*, 250 Broadway – 8<sup>th</sup> Floor – Hearing Room 3, 10:30 p.m.

*Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises*, 250 Broadway – 8<sup>th</sup> Floor – Hearing Room 3, 10:45 a.m.

*Committee on Land Use*, 250 Broadway – 8<sup>th</sup> Floor – Hearing Room 3, 11 a.m.

*Committee on Finance*, 250 Finance – 8<sup>th</sup> Floor – Hearing Room 2, 11:30 a.m.

*City Council Stated Meeting*, Council Chambers – City Hall, 1:30 p.m.

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