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**HOUSE WEEK IN REVIEW**

The House of Representatives amended, approved, and sent the Senate **H.4701**, the general appropriation bill and **H.4702**, the joint resolution making appropriations from the Capital Reserve Fund, which together comprise the proposed **FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015 STATE GOVERNMENT BUDGET**. The $7 billion budget includes $6.6 billion in recurring state general fund revenue, $117 million in Capital Reserve Funds, and $337 million in Education Lottery Funds.

The budget includes a total of $180 million in new funding for K-12 education. A total of $137.5 million is directed to the Education Finance Act, $54.3 million of which is new EFA money. $35 million is used to maintain the current base student cost of $2,097 and an additional $19 million is used to increase the base student cost to an estimated $2,120 per pupil. $83.2 million of these EFA funds represent a swap from the Education Improvement Act that is directed towards high-achieving students and students at risk of academic failure. The budget includes a revised rationale for allocating funds to the public schools that includes new weightings in the EFA distribution formula that are specifically geared towards such populations as students with limited English proficiency and pupils in poverty and places new emphasis on funding for personalized instruction in such areas as precareer and career technology, young adults pursuing adult education programs, gifted and talented education, and academic assistance for those failing to meet state standards for mathematics and English language arts.

$30 million is included to provide for reading coaches in the state's elementary schools who are to work directly with students to improve their reading skills and work with classroom teachers to provide professional development on best practices in reading instruction along with other support to enhance effectiveness. $4.5 million is devoted to expanding summer reading camps and programs.

$30 million is included for a K-12 technology initiative. $12 million is provided for digital instructional materials and $4 million is included to train teachers on how to use the new technology in the classroom.

In addition, $8.56 million is devoted to instructional materials in the schools.

$742,500 is provided for a virtual instruction program at the State Department of Education, including 11 full-time employee positions.

Charter schools are afforded $17.7 million in new funding, including $4 million for the charter school revolving loan program.

$12 million is provided for purchasing or leasing new school buses. $8.6 million in school transportation funds is included for bus maintenance and fuel.

A School Safety Task Force is established to examine how improved collaboration and organization could make the most of existing mental health resources and funding for school-based mental health services.

Full funding is provided for the LIFE, HOPE, and Palmetto Fellows higher education scholarship programs with $28 million in new funds. A provision is also included to allow students looking to graduate on an accelerated schedule to claim scholarship awards during the summer academic semester.

The budget provides $4 million for a consultant to conduct a Higher Education Efficiency and Accountability Review on improvements in operations at the campus level and statewide.

A local government Road Acceptance Program is established as a means of encouraging the state's counties and municipalities to assume control over some of the many thousands of miles of smaller, two-lane local roads that are currently part of the State Highway System. The current requirement that County Transportation Committees spend twenty-five percent of their "C" Fund gas tax revenue apportionment on the State Highway System is suspended, and this quarter of the total County Transportation Fund is instead devoted to the Road Acceptance Program which allows a local government to apply to the State Department of Transportation to accept into its road system a segment of the State Highway System in return for a recurring allocation from these sequestered "C" Funds that can be used to maintain the roads it acquires. The program is structured to emphasize local government acquisition of single purpose local roads and road segments that are one-half mile or less in length.

An $8.25 million increase in C-Funds is included for County Transportation Committees.

The budget provides for a 1.5% state employee pay increase, with an appropriation of $23 million. $57 million is included to cover the increased costs of operating the state's health insurance plan with no increases in the premiums paid by employees, no reductions in coverage, and relatively minor increases in coinsurance payments of no more than 9%.

$450 million fully funds the reserve accounts that the state uses to cope with revenue shortfalls.

The Local Government Fund is maintained at its current level of $212 million through the appropriation of $30 million, $5 million of which is recurring revenue.

$6.5 million from the Capital Reserve Fund is devoted to providing an additional year of identity and credit protection services for those citizens whose personal financial information was compromised as a result of the Department of Revenue computer security breach of 2012. $14.8 million is provided for implementing statewide information technology security upgrades recommended by the state's cyber security consultant.

The Department of Revenue is afforded $3.5 million for security costs and $14 million from the Capital Reserve Fund for an updated tax processing system.

$5.4 million is devoted to worker training through the Ready SC Program at the state’s technical colleges. $3.5 million is provided for the Critical Needs Workforce Development Initiative. $1.5 million creates an additional stipend for technical college students enrolled in programs answering a proven workforce shortage. $1.5 million is provided to the transitioning military support and training program at the Technical College of the Low Country. $1 million is appropriated to the Computer Numerical Control and Mechatronics Programs at Tri-County Tech. $5 million is provided for Trident Technical College's Aerospace initiative.

$37.4 million is provided for the Deal Closing Fund that the Department of Commerce uses to recruit new business to the state. The Department of Commerce is afforded appropriations of $6 million for the Locate SC Site Inventory, $1 million for the Office of Innovation, $4 million for research initiatives, $400,000 for the SC Council on Economic Competitiveness, $400,000 for the Existing Business Program, $250,000 for the SC Manufacturers Extension Program, and $250,000 for the Community Development Corporation Initiative.

The budget includes $130 million for Medicaid Maintenance of Effort. The budget legislation does not include an expansion in eligibility for the state's Medicaid Program as allowed by the federal "Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act" of 2010. Funding is continued for such programs as: the Healthy Outcomes Initiative for meeting the needs of chronically ill uninsured patients through home visits and care in other settings outside the emergency room; 100% cost reimbursement for rural hospitals; $8 million for Federally Qualified Health Centers; $2 million for free clinics; and $3 million for FQHC capital needs.

The Department of Health and Human Services is directed to study Medicaid eligibility policies and procedures in order to determine how a recipient's eligibility is monitored so as to ensure that recipients who are no longer eligible are not enrolled.

The budget requires coordination between the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs and the Department of Health and Human Services in utilizing a $13.3 million appropriation for incremental and community based waiver services so as to take at least 1,400 disabled individuals off of the waiting list for these programs.

The Department of Health and Environmental Control receives $1 million for the Best Chance Network breast cancer screenings, $500,00 to be used as matching funds for the ColonCancer Prevention Network, $100,000 for the J. R. Clark Sickle Cell Foundation, and $100,000 for the Bleeding Disorders Premium Assistance Program. $1,575,700 is allocated to DHEC for its water quality initiative and $2 million from the Capital Reserve Fund is directed to address a budget shortfall at the Pinewood Hazardous Waste Disposal Site.

$10.5 million is directed to the Department of Mental Health to address budget cuts sustained by the agency during the revenue shortfall of recent years, which includes provisions for 70 full-time employee positions. DMH receives $2.25 million from the Capital Reserve Fund to begin the process of converting health records to an electronic format that is necessary for meeting federal hospital certification requirements.

$1.6 million is appropriated for increasing monthly payments for foster care families.

The budget provides no additional funding for the ongoing project at the Department of Social Services to produce a computerized Child Support Enforcement System that meets federal certification requirements. A provision is included to abolish the project's executive committee and transfer sole authority over the project to the DSS Director. Quarterly progress reports on the project must be published on the department's website.

The Department of Social Services is directed to report to legislators on new accountability features for debit cards used in the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program that could reduce fraud and misuse of SNAP benefits.

The Attorney General's office is provided $74,750 for a full-time information technology data security specialist, $78,000 for a full-time appellate attorney, $78,000 for a full-time Habeas Corpus attorney, and $167,700 for Criminal Domestic Violence Unit of three full-time employees.

The Commission on Indigent Defense receives $136,578 for two new full-time appellate attorneys.

The Prosecution Coordination Commission is allocated $1.25 million for violent crime prosecution.

The State Law Enforcement Division receives $475,136 for 4 full-time personnel to staff a new child fatality unit, $697,316 for 10 full-time forensics personnel, and $2 million for 17 full-time alcohol enforcement personnel.

The Department of Public Safety is provided $447,300 for 10 new highway troopers and $2 million for law enforcement vehicle replacement.

The Department of Corrections is afforded $153,360 for an information security officer and IT auditor, $2.122 million in other funds for cell phone interdiction, $2.262 million for camera equipment and a surveillance network system at the Lee Correctional Institution, $450,000 for the construction of three perimeter towers at the Lieber Correctional Institution, and $40,00 for the third phase of its weapons replacement program.

The Department of Natural Resource is provided $711,632 for 8 new law enforcement officers and equipment, $108,074 for a new information technology security officer, and $500,00 for law enforcement vehicle replacement.

The Forestry Commission receives $252,000 for 6 additional full-time firefighters and $2 million from the Capital Reserve Fund for new firefighting equipment.

Funding for rural infrastructure grants is increased with $3 million.

$3.9 million is included for capital projects at State Parks. The Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism receives $1 million for the Undiscovered SC program to showcase the state's rural areas, $2 million for the Sports Development Fund, and $400,000 for international marketing.

$1 million is provided for the Patriots Point Authority Medal of Honor Museum.

The Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging receives $2 million for respite caregivers, and $3 million for its meal delivery and other home and community based services for the elderly.

$2.5 million from the Capital Reserve Fund is provided to the Election Commission for a new voting system.

In response to concerns about the governance of the John de la Howe School raised in a recent Inspector General's report, the budget includes a provision for the Department of Juvenile Justice to assume temporary administrative control over the institution and for the John de la Howe board of trustees to serve in an advisory capacity during this period as a plan is developed for implementing the sound oversight that will fulfill the needs of this school for at-risk youth.

The budget includes reductions for the University of Charleston and USC-Upstate in amounts set to be commensurate with the estimated costs of providing programs at these institutions which assigned literature and presentation materials to incoming freshmen that have elicited controversy. A requirement is included for each public institution of higher learning to submit a report denoting its mission, ethics, and values statements to the members of the General Assembly.

The legislation prohibits institutions of higher learning from imposing restrictions on the distribution of the United States Constitution or the South Carolina Constitution by their students.

The South Carolina State University Deficit Monitoring Team is created under the direction of the Budget and Control Board to work with SC State to produce a plan for placing the institution in a structurally sound financial position by the end of the fiscal year. The State Auditor is directed to conduct a review to assess the accounting controls at South Carolina State University.

A provision is included directing the State Ports Authority to arrange the sale of the former port property at Port Royal by June 29, 2015, after which time the property must be transferred from the authority to be sold at public auction.

The budget provides for a Constitutional Officers Salary Study with findings to be reported to the legislative budget-writing committees by October 1, 2014.

The legislation prohibits a political subdivision from charging a taxpayer a processing fee for the payment of taxes by credit or debit card in excess of the processing fee costs incurred by the political subdivision for the transaction.

The House approved and sent the Senate **H.4871**, a bill **CLARIFYING THAT CHARTER SCHOOL PROPERTY IS EXEMPT FROM STATE AND LOCAL TAXATION REGARDLESS OF WHETHER IT IS LEASED OR OWNED** to ensure that charter schools are afforded the same tax exemptions as other public schools.

The House approved and enrolled for ratification **S.1031**, a bill to provide the Department of Health and Environmental Control with authority to issue emergency orders for sand scraping and sandbagging as **PROTECTION FOR GOLF COURSES**. The legislation provides that golf courses seaward of the baseline that existed prior to the effective date of the regulations promulgated in 1991 pursuant to the Beachfront Management Act may be protected under emergency orders issued or approved by the department using the same methodology that is used to protect structures pursuant to emergency orders.

**BILLS INTRODUCED IN THE**

**HOUSE THIS WEEK**

AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

**S.986 *HUNTING, FISHING, OR TRAPPING WITHOUT CONSENT ON THE LAND OF OTHERS* Sen. Campsen**

Currently, if a person hunt, fish, trap or range on any lands without the consent of the owner or manager, such person shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. This bill increases the penalties for first and subsequent offenses for this provision.

**EDUCATION AND PUBLIC WORKS**

**H.4898 *TRAINING, LICENSURE AND EVALUATION OF PUBLIC EDUCATORS* Rep. Patrick**

Relating to training, licensure and evaluation of public educators, this legislation replaces references to the word "certificate" and its related forms with the word "license" and its corresponding related forms. The legislation provides that the revised characterization of a certificate as a license does not affect the validity of an otherwise valid teaching credential. The legislation also directs the Code Commissioner to make appropriate conforming changes and report those changes to the General Assembly.

**H.4900 *INTERSECTION OF THE SEPTIMA P. CLARK PARKWAY AND COMING STREET IN THE CITY OF CHARLESTON* Rep. Gilliard**

This legislation directs the Department of Transportation to perform a cost-benefit study to determine the feasibility of erecting a pedestrian overpass at the intersection of the Septima P. Clark Parkway and Coming Street in the City of Charleston. The legislation requires the Department of Transportation to provide the results of its study to the Governor and the General Assembly by January 1, 2015.

**H.4914 *ADMINISTRATION OF MIDAZOLAM INTRANASALLY TO STUDENTS WITH A SEIZURE CONDITION* Rep. Henderson**

'Midazolam' is a short-acting drug that is used for, among other purposes, treating acute seizures. This legislation authorizes school nurses and certain other school personnel to administer midazolam intranasally to students with a seizure condition; also, the legislation provides for immunity from liability with regard to administration of midazolam.

**H.4923** ***OPERATING A BICYCLE ALONG A HIGHWAY WHOSE MAXIMUM SPEED LIMIT IS AT LEAST THIRTY-FIVE MILES AN HOUR***

**Rep. Nanney**

This legislation provides that a person who is less than fifteen years old may not operate a bicycle along a highway whose maximum speed limit is at least thirty-five miles an hour. This legislation requires the owner of a bicycle who is at least fifteen years old to obtain a permit from the Department of Motor Vehicles and liability insurance as is required of motor vehicles before operating a bicycle along a highway whose maximum speed limit is at least thirty-five miles an hour. Among other things, the requirements for obtaining a permit from the department include passage of a bicycle safety written examination and a test of the applicant's eyesight. The legislation requires the permit to be in the applicant's immediate possession when the bicycle is operated along a highway whose maximum speed limit is at least thirty-five miles an hour. The legislation further provides that notwithstanding any other provision of law, for the purposes of registration and the required limits of liability insurance, a moped is a motor vehicle.

**JUDICIARY**

**S.560 *RAILROAD RELATED CRIMINAL OFFENSES* Sen. L. Martin**

Relating to the wilfull and malicious injury to a railroad or electric railway, this legislation provides a tier of penalties for violations. Under the tier of penalties for violations, a violation is a misdemeanor; however, a violation that results in endangerment of another person's life or great bodily injury is a felony punishable by imprisonment not more than twenty years. Likewise, a violation that results in death of another person is a felony punishable by imprisonment for not more than thirty years. Except in the case of an electric railway, this legislation requires a person to forfeit to the railroad company for each offense treble the damages proves to have been sustained to be recovered in a tort action in the railroad company's name. Relating to railroads, electric railroads, and the like, this legislation provides that it is unlawful to purchase, sell, or transport railroad track materials for the purpose of recycling. The legislation provides certain exceptions, and it provides a tier of penalties for violations. Under the tier of penalties for violations, first and second offenses are misdemeanors while third or subsequent offenses are felonies.

**H.4883 *ASSAULT AND BATTERY OFFENSES COMMITTED BY INMATES ON CORRECTIONAL FACILITY EMPLOYEES* Rep. Putnam**

Relating to the throwing of body fluids on correctional facility employees and certain others by inmates, detainees, persons taken into custody, and persons under arrest, this legislation includes assault and battery offenses committed by these designated persons in the purview of the statute. Violations of this statute are a felony punishable by imprisonment of not more than fifteen years.

**H.4884 *ELIGIBILITY FOR REPRESENTATION BY THE SOUTH CAROLINA ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR RADIO AND TELEVISION STATION EMPLOYEES UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES* Rep. Putnam**

If pursuant to federal law, regulation, or policy, observers from the Federal Communications Commission are required to be present in radio or television station studios during certain broadcasts to ensure accuracy, impartiality, decorum, or other stated goals of the federal law, regulation, or policy, then provisions of this legislation apply. This legislation provides that any station or reporter, director, producer, or other employee of the station who is the subject of any federal legal, criminal, or disciplinary action as a result of the observations may be represented by the South Carolina Attorney General as a matter of state public policy to ensure a citizen's constitutionally protected right of free speech. The legislation confers jurisdiction upon the Attorney General to provide such representation.

**H.4886 *"TEEN DATING VIOLENCE PREVENTION ACT"* Rep. Norrell**

This legislation enacts the "Teen Dating Violence Prevention Act." The legislation defines the term 'teen dating violence' as physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional violence between persons, whether heterosexual or same gender, eighteen years of age or younger within a dating relationship. Under the legislation, a person commits the offense of teen dating violence when the victim has reasonable cause to believe that the victim is in imminent danger of becoming the subject of an act of teen dating violence or when a victim presents sufficient evidence that the current or former partner of the dating relationship threatened to, attempted to, or actually physically abused the victim. The legislation provides penalties for violations. The legislation allows a victim, sixteen years of age or older, to seek an order of protection in the family court or a restraining order in magistrates court without parental or guardian consent; however, the parent or guardian of the victim must be notified by the appropriate court within twenty-four hours of the issuance of the order of protection or restraining order. Victims of violations under sixteen years of age must have parental or guardian consent to seek an order of protection or restraining order. Additionally, the legislation requires the inclusion of teen dating violence education in the comprehensive health education curriculum and makes conforming changes.

**H.4888** ***PROHIBITION ON THE DISTRIBUTION OF SENSITIVE CRIME SCENE IMAGES ON SOCIAL MEDIA OR THROUGH OTHER SIMILAR MEANS* Rep. Pitts**

This legislation provides that it is unlawful for a person, in connection with a social media service, or through other similar means, to utilize a social media service to knowingly post or otherwise publish a sensitive crime scene image. A person who violates these provisions is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than $500 or imprisoned for not more than thirty days.

**H.4912 *REVISION OF THE OFFENSE OF VOYEURISM TO CLARIFY THAT IT INCLUDES UPSKIRTING* Rep. Allison**

This legislation provides that the crime of voyeurism includes, but is not limited to, the practice of upskirting. 'Upskirting' means the practice of secretly photographing, video recording, producing, creating a digital electronic file, or otherwise filming underneath a person's dress or skirt.

**H.4913 *"TEEN DATING VIOLENCE PREVENTION ACT"* Rep. Long**

This legislation enacts the "Teen Dating Violence Prevention Act." The legislation defines the term 'teen dating violence' as physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional violence between persons, whether heterosexual or same gender, eighteen years of age or younger within a dating relationship. Under the legislation, a person commits the offense of teen dating violence when the victim has reasonable cause to believe that the victim is in imminent danger of becoming the subject of an act of teen dating violence or when a victim presents sufficient evidence that the current or former partner of the dating relationship threatened to, attempted to, or actually physically abused the victim. The legislation provides penalties for violations. The legislation allows a victim, sixteen years of age or older, to seek an order of protection in the family court or a restraining order in magistrates court without parental or guardian consent; however, the parent or guardian of the victim must be notified by the appropriate court within twenty-four hours of the issuance of the order of protection or restraining order. Victims of violations under sixteen years of age must have parental or guardian consent to seek an order of protection or restraining order. Additionally, the legislation requires the inclusion of teen dating violence education in the comprehensive health education curriculum and makes conforming changes.

**H.4924 *REPEAL OF THE PROTECTION OF PERSONS AND PROPERTY ACT ALSO KNOWN AS STAND YOUR GROUND* Rep. Neal**

This legislation repeals Article 6, Chapter 11, Title 16 of the 1976 Code, the Protection of Persons and Property Act also known as Stand Your Ground.

**LABOR, COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY**

**S.828 *CONVENTION AND TRADE SHOW CENTER BOND REIMBURSEMENT***

***REQUIREMENTS* Sen. Fair**

This bill provides an exemption from certain bond reimbursement requirements that apply when a convention and trade show center is sold and is to be replaced with a new convention and trade show center.

**H.4882 *AUTOMOBILE INSURERS PROHIBITED FROM USING CREDIT***

***SCORES TO MAKE POLICY DECISIONS* Rep. King**

This bill revises insurance law provisions so as to prohibit the use of a credit score as a factor in refusing to issue or renew a policy of automobile insurance and to prohibit the use of credit in determining automobile insurance policy premium rates.

**H.4901 *“SOUTH CAROLINA INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT TELEMEDICINE***

***ACT”* Rep. G. M. Smith**

This bill enacts the “South Carolina Insurance Reimbursement Telemedicine Act” to provide that an entity authorized to provide health insurance coverage in this state shall provide coverage for telemedicine services to the same extent as for in‑person consultation, subject to certain limitations. Under the legislation, telemedicine is the delivery of health care services, including diagnosis, treatment, or transfer of medical data by means audio telecommunications systems and video telecommunications systems that are bidirectional, real‑time, interactive, secured, and HIPAA compliant. Standard telephone, facsimile transmissions, unsecured electronic mail, or a combination of these means of communication do not constitute telemedicine services. The legislation provides for the establishment of a physician‑patient relationship through telemedicine services in certain circumstances.

**H.4911 *ELIMINATION OF THE SMALL EMPLOYER INSURER REINSURANCE***

***PROGRAM* Rep. Bedingfield**

This bill provides for the board of directors of the South Carolina Small Employer Insurer Reinsurance Program to develop a plan to phase out and terminate the program and the coverage it offers before January 1, 2015. The legislation revises provisions of the Small Employer Health Insurance Availability Act to reflect the elimination of the South Carolina Small Employer Insurer Reinsurance Program.

**H.4915 *CAPTIVE INSURANCE COMPANIES FORMED AS A RISK***

***RETENTION GROUPS* Rep. Anderson**

This bill revises capitalization requirements and other provisions governing the operation of captive insurance companies so as to include provisions for captive insurance companies and special purpose captive insurance companies formed as risk retention groups.

**H.4916 *NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR TERMINATION OF A***

***LONG‑TERM CARE INSURANCE POLICY* Rep. Long**

This bill established notification requirements for an insurer before it may consider a long‑term care insurance policy that it has written to be terminated at the request of the policyholder or certificate holder or lapsed or terminated for nonpayment of premium.

**H.4925 *STATE MINIMUM WAGE SET AT NINE DOLLARS AND***

***SEVENTY‑FIVE CENTS AN HOUR* Rep. Neal**

This bill provides that all employers in South Carolina must, at a minimum, pay employees a minimum wage at an hourly rate of nine dollars and seventy‑five cents for all hours worked in this State. The legislation provides that only those individuals entitled to receive the federal minimum wage under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act and its implementing regulations are eligible to receive this state minimum wage. The legislation establishes provisions for bringing civil actions against employers for violations.

**MEDICAL, MILITARY, PUBLIC AND MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS**

**H.4899 *Speech-language pathologist and audiologist* Rep. Burns**

In addition to updating definitions, the bill outlines that licensed speech-language pathologist and audiologist may provide services to clients located in this state by means of telepractice as specified by the board. "Telepractice" means the application of telecommunications technology to deliver professional services at the distance by linking licensee to patient/client or licensee to another licensee for assessment, intervention, or consultation or any combination.

**WAYS AND MEANS**

**S.1000 *AUTOMOBILE MANUFACTURER LICENSE PLATE FEES* Sen. Peeler**

This joint resolution provides that, in 2015 and 2016, the annual fee for the automobile manufacturer standard license plate for vehicles in the manufacturer’s employee benefit program and for the testing, distribution, evaluation, and promotion of its vehicles is seven hundred fifty‑four dollars. Twenty dollars of the fee is to be credited to the General Fund of the State and the amount required to be remitted to a local government is seven hundred thirty‑four dollars. In the case of employees participating in the benefit program who reside outside of this State, the entire fee must be credited to the General Fund of the State.

**H.4919 *REEVALUATION OF THE MARINE TERMINAL OPERATIONS PROPERTY AT PORT ROYAL* Rep. Hodges**

This concurrent resolution expresses the desire of the members of the South Carolina General Assembly to place in abeyance the provisions of Act 313 of 2004 requiring the State Ports Authority to sell the marine terminal operations property at Port Royal and further requesting that the State Budget and Control Board, in consultation with the State Ports Authority, reevaluate the property at Port Royal to determine the best use of the property for the benefit of the State.

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