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DUKE ENERGY®

January 15, 2016

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Gail L. Mount
Chief Clerk
North Carolina Utilities Commission
4325 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4300

RE: Duke Energy Progress, LLC Application for Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity and Motion for Partial Waiver of Commission Rule R8-61
Docket No. E-2, Sub 1089

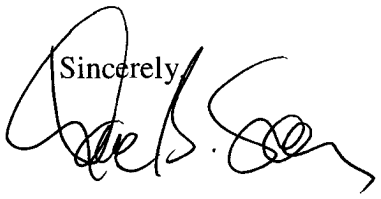
Dear Ms. Mount:

Pursuant to N.C. Session Law 2015-110, N.C. Gen. Stat. § 62-110.1 and Commission Rule R8-61(b), I enclose Duke Energy Progress, LLC's ("DEP") Application for Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity and Motion for Partial Waiver of Commission Rule R8-61 to construct and operate the Western Carolinas Modernization Project at the existing Asheville Steam Electric Plant in Buncombe County, along with the exhibits (collectively the "Application"), for filing in connection with the referenced matter. Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 62-300(a)(5), DEP has submitted to the Clerk's Office a check for $250 to process this application.

Portions of the Application are being filed under seal, and DEP respectfully requests that they be treated confidentially pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 132-1.2. Attachment A to Exhibit 1B contains critical energy infrastructure information which should not be disclosed pursuant to regulations of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Exhibit 3 contains projected capital costs and operating expenses for the project, and Exhibit 4 contains information about major equipment suppliers and Engineering, Procurement and Construction vendors who submitted bids that are currently under negotiation or being evaluated. Public disclosure of this confidential information would harm DEP's ability to negotiate favorable contracts at the lowest reasonable cost for the benefit of its customers. DEP will make the confidential information available to parties upon the execution of an appropriate confidentiality agreement.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,



Lawrence B. Somers

Enclosures

cc: Parties of Record

BEFORE THE NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION

DOCKET NO. E-2, SUB 1089

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
Application of Duke Energy Progress, LLC for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity To Construct a 752-MW Natural Gas-Fueled Electric Generation Facility in Buncombe County Near the City of Asheville	)	Duke Energy Progress' Application for Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity and Motion for Partial Waiver of Commission Rule R8-61

Pursuant to Session Law 2015-110 (the "Mountain Energy Act"), N.C. Gen. Stat. § 62-110.1 and Commission Rule R8-61(b), Duke Energy Progress, LLC ("Duke Energy Progress," "DEP," or the "Company") submits this Application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity ("CPCN") to construct and operate a generating plant for the production of electric power and energy at its existing Asheville Steam Electric Generating Plant, located in Buncombe County near Asheville, North Carolina, along with the associated transmission facilities to be located on site. For the purposes of this document, the project will be referred to as the "Western Carolinas Modernization Project."

The Mountain Energy Act provides, *inter alia*, that the Commission shall render a decision on a CPCN application within 45 days of the date the application is filed if all of the following apply:

1. The application for a certificate is for a generating facility to be constructed at the site of the Asheville Steam Electric Generating Plant located in Buncombe County.

2. The public utility will permanently cease operations of all coal-fired generating units at the site on or before the commercial operation date of the generating unit that is the subject of the certificate application.

3. The new natural gas-fired generating facility has no more than twice the generation capacity as the coal-fired generating units to be retired.

Exhibit 1A contains the public version of the 2015 Duke Energy Progress Integrated Resource Plan, and Confidential Exhibit 1B contains the additional resource planning information required by Commission Rule R8-61(b)(1), and is made part of the Application. Exhibit 2 (Plant Description, Siting and Permitting Information), Confidential Exhibit 3 (Cost Information), and Confidential Exhibit 4 (Construction Information) contain the detailed information required by Commission Rule R8-61(b) and are also incorporated as part of this Application. In further support of the Application, the Company respectfully submits the following:

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Duke Energy Progress is a public utility engaged in the generation, transmission, distribution, and sale of electric energy in the eastern and western portions of North Carolina and the eastern portion of South Carolina.

2. Correspondence and communications with respect to this Application should be directed to the following:

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3. The Western Carolinas Modernization Project will consist of two new 280 megawatt ("MW") (expected winter rating) combined cycle natural gas-fueled electric generating units, with fuel oil backup; a contingent natural gas-fueled 186 MW (expected winter rating) simple cycle combustion turbine unit, with fuel oil back up, whose need may be avoided or delayed due to the utilization of other technologies and programs to meet the future peak demand requirements of DEP customers in the region; related on-site transmission facilities; and future new solar generation at the Asheville plant site. DEP is currently in the early stages of formalizing a partnership with communities in Buncombe County, including the City of Asheville, and surrounding communities to explore ways to maximize deployment and effectiveness of programs and innovative energy solutions to reduce energy use in the fast-growing, nine county DEP-Western Region. DEP serves 160,000 households and business in its DEP-Western Region, which means more than 350,000 people rely upon DEP to reliably and cost-effectively serve their energy needs. The Western Carolinas Modernization Project will enable the early retirement of the 379 MW (winter rating) Asheville 1 and 2 coal units on or before the commercial operation of the new combined cycle units, thereby permanently ceasing

operations of all coal-fired units at the site. DEP also has two existing 185 MW (winter rating) combustion turbine units at the Asheville plant site that will continue operation.

4. The Asheville Combined Cycle units will provide base load generation for DEP's customers in North Carolina and South Carolina, and are planned for commercial operation in the Fall of 2019. The contingent Asheville Combustion Turbine unit would potentially begin commercial operation in 2023 if the current peak demand growth is not sufficiently reduced by the alternative approach discussed herein.

5. The new solar generation facility will be subject to a future CPCN application once the coal unit demolition plans have been sufficiently completed to determine the site configuration that will enable the optimum amount of new solar generation at the Asheville site for the benefit of the Company's customers.

TECHNOLOGY

6. The Asheville Combined Cycle project design consists of two power blocks, each with one (1) combustion turbine ("CT"), one (1) heat recovery steam generator ("HRSG"), and one (1) steam turbine ("ST"). The design incorporates a bypass stack damper to allow for simple cycle operation if the steam cycle is not available. The power blocks for the Asheville Combined Cycle units will be sited in the former "1982 Ash Pond" area, which is currently being excavated.

7. The contingent Asheville CT unit would use one F-frame CT generator to produce electricity. The future CT would be sited near the existing CTs at the Asheville facility.

8. Natural gas for the Western Carolinas Modernization Project will be provided by a new pipeline and associated facilities being constructed by Public Service

Company of North Carolina, Inc. ("PSNC"). PSNC will provide firm transportation service for the Asheville Combined Cycle units. DEP's partnership with PSNC on the Western Carolinas Modernization Project will bring important additional natural gas supply to Western North Carolina.

9. The Asheville Combined Cycle units and the contingent CT will be designed with fuel oil backup capability in order to maintain system reliability in the event of an interruption in natural gas supply to the units. Without fuel oil backup capability, the loss of gas supply would result in the loss of both CC units totaling 560 MW. In many instances, the loss of multiple units could be mitigated with increased power imports; however the DEP-Western Region has limited transmission import capabilities requiring additional redundancies to protect against import limitations. Finally, without increased transmission import capabilities, the other existing generating options in the region (i.e., hydro facilities, existing CTs) would not be sufficient to provide reliable service and maintain compliance with applicable North American Electric Reliability Corporation ("NERC") reliability standards in the event the future units are unavailable during periods of peak demand, as explained in detail in Exhibit 1B. Given these constraints, fuel oil back up for the future units will be required to maintain system reliability standards in the event of an interruption in natural gas supply.

TRANSMISSION

10. As part of the Western Carolinas Modernization Project, one power block of the new Asheville Combined Cycle project will be connected to the existing 230 kilovolt ("kV") switchyard with a single 230kV line. This 230kV line will be connected from the high side of both the steam turbine generator step-up transformer and the gas

turbine generator step-up transformer. The other power block will be connected to the existing 115 kV switchyard with two 115kV lines. One of the two 115kV lines will be connected from the high side of the steam turbine generator step-up transformer and the other 115kV line will be connected from the high side of the gas turbine generator step-up transformer. All of the additional transmission facilities required for interconnection of the new units will be located on existing Duke Energy Progress property at the Asheville Plant site.

ENVIRONMENTAL

11. The Western Carolinas Modernization Project will feature highly efficient generation and environmental control technologies. With the associated early retirement of the Asheville coal units, DEP expects to reduce annual emissions of NO_x by 35 percent, reduce annual emissions of SO_2 by 90-95 percent, reduce emissions of CO_2 of 60 percent per megawatt hour, and eliminate mercury emissions. Operation of the proposed facility will result in the emission of certain pollutants that are regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the State of North Carolina. Operating impacts from these pollutants will be addressed through the Western North Carolina Regional Air Quality Agency ("WNCRAQA") air quality permit application process. Duke Energy Progress plans to submit a permit application to WNCRAQA on or about January 20, 2016 requesting a permit to authorize construction and operation of the Project and associated ancillary systems. The application will include all required modeling and analysis to demonstrate compliance with regulatory requirements and air quality standards. Based upon the expected low emissions from the proposed units and the emission controls to be installed, the application will not trigger New Source Review

under the Prevention of Significant Deterioration requirements. Based upon historical experience for similar permit applications, Duke Energy Progress anticipates that a final air permit should be issued within six months of submitting the application. The project will use combustion turbines with dry low NOx combustors to meet environmental regulations and permitting requirements. A selective catalytic reduction ("SCR") system and oxidation catalyst will be installed in each of the HRSGs and will be operated as necessary to comply with the air permit. Continuous emission monitoring systems ("CEMS") will be installed on each turbine's bypass stack and each combined cycle exhaust stack.

12. The Asheville Combined Cycle Project will employ cooling towers, which will significantly reduce water withdrawal and remove all thermal impacts to Lake Julian. In contrast, the older Asheville coal units use once-through cooling water systems. When compared to the 2014 water withdrawal of the existing coal units, the new Asheville Combined Cycle Project is estimated to reduce water withdrawal from Lake Julian by 97%. The total annual withdrawal from the French Broad River may increase depending on plant capacity factor.

13. The site has a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System ("NPDES") permit. Preliminary operating plans include installation of an oil/water separator for treatment of all potential oily waste streams and discharge to the French Broad River along with cooling tower blowdown water, which will be included in the modification of the existing NPDES permit. Other liquid waste streams such as gas turbine wash wastewater will be pumped to tank trucks and hauled off site for treatment. The following permits may be required in addition to those described above: North

Carolina Division of Energy, Mineral, and Land Resources ("DEMLR") and Buncombe County Storm Water permit, Buncombe Building permits, and DEMLR Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan.

NEED

14. The need for new generation in the DEP-Western Region is demonstrated in the Duke Energy Progress 2015 Integrated Resource Plan Update Report ("IRP") filed with the Commission on September 1, 2015, in Docket No. E-100, Sub 141. The 2015 IRP incorporates a 15-year load forecast, purchase power contracts, existing generation, energy efficiency and demand-side management, new resource additions, and a minimum target planning reserve margin of 17.0%. The comprehensive planning process for the 2015 IRP demonstrates that a combination of renewable resources, energy efficiency and demand-side management ("DSM/EE") programs, and additional base load, intermediate, and peaking generation are required over the next fifteen years to reliably meet customer demand. After accounting for increased energy efficiency impacts, Duke Energy Progress' 2015 IRP forecast shows system average annual growth in summer peak demand of 1.3 percent, winter peak demand growth of 1.2 percent, and the average territorial energy growth rate of 1.2 percent.

15. The DEP-Western Region is an attractive place for people to live, work and visit and has seen tremendous growth in population and energy needs. Since 1970, peak power demand has more than tripled in the DEP-Western Region. Since the year 2000, the annual winter peak loads in the DEP-Western Region have increased at an average rate of 2.5%. Additionally, the winter peak demand in the DEP-Western Region outpaces that of the rest of the DEP system in North Carolina and South Carolina, and

DEP-Western Region peak demand is expected to grow at an annual rate of 1.6%, with a total growth of approximately 17% over the next decade.

16. From a total system perspective, the Duke Energy Progress 2015 IRP identifies the need for an additional 1,152 MW of new resources to meet customers' energy needs by 2020 and 5,099 MW by 2030. The Company's IRP planning process includes both quantitative analysis and qualitative considerations. Company management uses all of the perspectives and analysis from the IRP process to ensure that Duke Energy Progress will meet short-term and long-term customer needs, while maintaining prudent flexibility.

17. The Duke Energy Progress 2015 IRP Short Term Action Plan includes a single 733 MW (winter rating) Asheville combined cycle unit that would serve as a generation system resource as well as the retirement replacement for the existing 379 MW (winter rating) Asheville 1 and 2 coal units and replacement for the previously planned 147 MW (winter rating) Fast Start CTs located in the DEP-Western Region that were identified in the 2014 IRP.

18. Subsequent to DEP's filing of its 2015 IRP, the Company made the decision to cancel the proposed Foothills Transmission Line project on November 4, 2015. This decision was made in response to extensive community concerns expressed in both South Carolina and North Carolina,[1] and required the development of an alternative configuration that could meet NERC reliability standards, as explained in Exhibit 1B, while continuing to satisfy future load growth in the DEP-Western region and also

[1] In addition to the more than 9,000 comments DEP received regarding the proposed Foothills Transmission Line project, hundreds of statements of consumer position were filed with the Commission in Docket No. E-2, Sub 1083.

contributing to DEP's total system reserve requirements. As previously noted, the proposed configuration includes new CCs totaling 560 MW that replace the existing 379 MW coal units and eliminate the need for previously-planned 147 MW fast start CTs. It is important to note that the addition of these new resources along with all other existing hydro and CT assets in the region are collectively insufficient to meet the area's peak demand. As a result, the region will continue to require the utilization of imports via the limited transmission options into the DEP-Western Region in order to meet its peak demand requirements. As load continues to grow in the region, the need for more generation, in lieu of new transmission imports, may be required to maintain system reliability. At projected load growth rates without increased participation in DSM/EE programs, the proposed contingent 186 MW Asheville CT Project will also be required to maintain reliability and meet NERC standards in the region as discussed in further detail in Exhibit 1B.

19. The time and resources necessary to develop and reconfigure the Western Carolinas Modernization Project since the November 4, 2015 decision to cancel the Foothills Transmission Line, combined with the extensive engineering, contracting and construction work necessary to meet the 2019 commercial operation date required for the new CC units, dictate the need to receive CPCN approval from this Commission on or before March 1, 2016.

20. The North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation ("NCEMC") has an option to purchase and own 100 MW of the Asheville Combined Cycle facility. The Company will be working with NCEMC to determine if NCEMC will exercise its ownership option, and if so, how the contract between the parties will be structured.

However, the load required to be served by the Company in the DEP-Western region will be the same regardless of the NCEMC ownership decision. Thus, DEP's need for the combined cycle units is justified by the public convenience and necessity whether DEP owns 560 MW or 460 MW of the generation facility.

21. The retirement of the Asheville coal units as part of the addition of the Western Carolinas Modernization Project represents an acceleration of approximately 10 years from previous planning assumptions. The Mountain Energy Act provides DEP with the opportunity to avoid significant investment, and corresponding rate recovery from customers, in additional environmental controls at the coal units that would be required by 2020 if the coal units are not retired as part of the Western Carolinas Modernization Project. Additionally, the natural gas pipeline project being pursued by PSNC presents a unique opportunity to participate in an intrastate gas pipeline project at incremental project cost, rather than full project cost, as would be reasonably expected at the time of the originally planned coal unit retirement date in 2031.

22. As noted above, the need for the 186 MW contingent Asheville CT in 2023 resulted from DEP's decision to cancel the Foothills Transmission Line. Although the 2015 IRP and Exhibit 1B to this Application demonstrate the need for this CT unit in 2023 to provide both needed system capacity reserves and satisfy applicable NERC Reliability Standards, beyond the scope of this filing, DEP will work aggressively to transition to a cleaner and smarter energy future through active community engagement, deliberate investment in distributed energy resources ("DER"), and greater promotion of and access to DSM/EE programs in the DEP-Western Region which may delay or eliminate the need for the contingent Asheville CT unit.

TRANSITION TO A CLEANER AND SMARTER ENERGY FUTURE

23. With a keen focus toward maintaining the lowest reasonable electricity rates for its customers, DEP will engage with stakeholders to provide cost-effective services, programs and new products the community values and expects through investment in clean and innovative ways to power Western North Carolina, including:

a. **Energy Efficiency and Demand Side Management Programs** – Duke Energy has already begun working with community leaders to establish a framework for a collaborative effort to maximize participation and effectiveness of existing programs, products and services. This partnership will be leveraged to support the development and implementation of new opportunities to engage customers in mitigating peak-demand growth. Funding mechanisms are in place for existing offerings and appropriate regulatory approval will be pursued for any new offerings that are developed. While focused on the needs specific to the DEP-Western Region, the new solutions that are developed will provide benefit to all DEP customers.

b. **Renewables** – Duke Energy is a national leader in deploying renewable energy technologies. DEP will continue to pursue clean and efficient renewable energy technologies to address growing electric usage and demand in the DEP-Western Region. Specifically, DEP will seek a CPCN to invest in a minimum of 15 MW of new solar generation over the next seven (7) years. A portion of this new solar generation will be sited at the existing Asheville Plant once the coal unit demolition plans have been sufficiently completed to determine the site configuration that will enable the optimum amount of new solar generation. The

remainder of the 15 MW new solar generation commitment will be realized through utility scale, community, rooftop or a combination thereof. In keeping with Duke Energy's overarching corporate strategy, DEP will continuously evaluate other investments in renewables that cost-effectively meet the needs of our customers.

c. **Other Technologies** – The landscape of the electric utility business is rapidly changing thanks to the emergence of new technologies that are quickly enabling alternatives to traditional generation resources. One of those technologies is storage. Subject to appropriate Commission approval, DEP is committed to investing in a minimum of 5 MW utility-scale storage pilot in the DEP-Western Region within the next 7 years consistent with the goal of delaying or eliminating the need for the contingent Asheville CT unit in 2023. Similar to our strategy for renewables, DEP is committed to investing in new technologies to enable a cleaner and cost-effective energy future for our customers. We will continue to evaluate and implement technologies beyond the 5 MW storage commitment that provide cost-effective solutions for our customers.

24. In support of its commitment to a cleaner, smarter energy future, DEP proposes to file annual updates on the progress of the community efforts to reduce their peak load growth, and if these efforts are successful, DEP will delay the commercial operation date for the Asheville CT or ask the Commission to cancel its CPCN.

COST

25. The technology selected for the Western Carolinas Modernization Project will provide enhanced reliability and efficient generation dispatch for the DEP-Western

Region and the Duke Energy Progress system. Given the transmission constraints in the DEP-Western Region, the Western Carolinas Modernization Project will be the most efficient combination of combined cycle and combustion turbine capacity that reliably and economically meets future demand growth in the region.

26. The critical function, nature and location requirements of the Western Carolinas Modernization Project require that Duke Energy Progress operate, maintain and control these resources, and therefore the Company did not evaluate the wholesale market for alternatives to meet these resource needs. The Company has employed a competitive bid process for the major project equipment and for the engineering, procurement and construction ("EPC") contractor services.

27. The projected cost of the Western Carolinas Modernization Project is approximately $1.1 billion. Detailed, confidential cost information is being filed under seal in Confidential Exhibit 3. Duke Energy Progress requests that this cost information be considered confidential information pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. §132-1.2, and that the Commission prohibit the public disclosure of this information. Duke Energy Progress will make the information available to intervener parties upon the execution of an appropriate confidentiality agreement.

28. The proposed Western Carolinas Modernization Project generation additions are necessary in order for Duke Energy Progress to reliably meet its electric service obligations and are the most cost-effective resources available to serve the Company's North Carolina and South Carolina customers. Therefore, Duke Energy Progress requests that the Commission grant it a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity authorizing the Company to construct and operate two 280 MW (total 560

MW, winter rating) combined cycle units and a contingent 186 MW combustion turbine unit at its existing Asheville Plant site, as set forth herein.

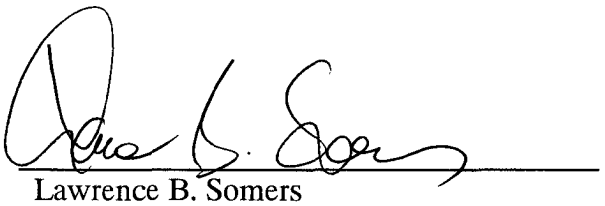
REQUEST FOR PARTIAL WAIVER OF COMMISSION RULE R8-61

29. Commission Rule R8-61(a) ostensibly applies to this Application because the Western Carolinas Modernization Project has a nameplate capacity of 300 MW or more. However, DEP respectfully submits that the 120-day prefiling requirement of Commission Rule R8-61(a) would defeat the expedited CPCN purpose of the Mountain Energy Act. Likewise, the Commission Rule R8-61(b) requirement of testimony supporting the detailed exhibits required by the rule is inconsistent with the 45-day CPCN decision process provided for in the Mountain Energy Act. Attached hereto are the detailed CPCN exhibits otherwise required by Commission Rule R8-61(b). Furthermore, consistent with the Mountain Energy Act's CPCN decision-making deadline, the Commission's December 18, 2015 *Order Scheduling Public Hearing and Requesting Investigation and Report by the Public Staff*, appropriately provides for a Commission decision process that does not include an evidentiary hearing, thereby obviating the need for pre-filed testimony contemplated by Commission Rule R8-61(b). Accordingly, DEP respectfully requests a waiver of Commission Rule R8-61(b) and the testimony requirement of Commission Rule R8-61(b).

WHEREFORE, Duke Energy Progress respectfully requests that the Commission issue a Certificate pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 62-110.1 that the public convenience and necessity require construction of the Western Carolinas Modernization Project: two new 280 MW (expected winter rating) combined cycle natural gas-fueled electric generating units, with fuel oil backup; a contingent natural gas-fueled 186 MW (expected winter

rating) simple cycle combustion turbine unit, with fuel oil back up, whose need may be avoided or delayed due to the utilization of other technologies and programs to meet the future peak demand requirements of DEP customers in the region; and related on-site transmission facilities; and requests such further relief as the Commission deems just and proper.

Respectfully submitted, this the 15th day of January 2016.



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ATTORNEYS FOR DUKE ENERGY PROGRESS, LLC

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA)
)
COUNTY OF MECKLENBURG)

VERIFICATION

Mark E. Landseidel, being first duly sworn, deposes and says:

That he is Director of Project Development and Initiation in the Project Management and Construction Department of Duke Energy Corporation; that he has read the foregoing Application and Exhibits and knows the contents thereof; that the same is true except as to the matters stated therein on information and belief; and as to those matters, he believes them to be true.

Mark E. Landseidel

Sworn to and subscribed before me
this 14 day of January, 2016.

Notary Public

THOMAS J. REED-HALL NOTARY PUBLIC GASTON COUNTY, NC

My Commission expires: 7-30-17

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that a copy of Duke Energy Progress, LLC's Application for Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity, in Docket No. E-2, Sub 1089, has been served by electronic mail, hand delivery or by depositing a copy in the United States mail, postage prepaid to the following parties:

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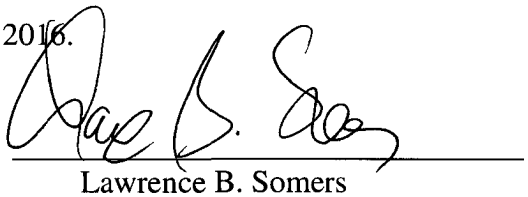
This is the 15th day of January, 2016.

By: 

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