



**HB224 HD2**  
**RELATING TO THE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM**  
House Committee on Finance

February 25, 2013

1:30 p.m.

Room 308

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) strongly **SUPPORTS WITH AMENDMENTS** HB224 HD2, which is a bill in OHA's 2013 Legislative Package. There have been numerous problems—cultural and translation biases, translation inaccuracies, and terminology inconsistencies—reportedly found in the translated Hawai'i State Assessment for Hawaiian language immersion students. This bill would address these issues by requiring the Department of Education (DOE) to partner with the Hawaiian language community to develop an assessment originally in the Hawaiian language to be administered to Hawaiian Language Immersion Program (HLIP) students in the third through sixth grades.

**Amendment**

We request that the committee amend HB224 HD2 to delete the references to Common Core Standards (Common Core) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) on page 5, lines 6-8. Statutorily requiring the alignment of the Hawaiian language assessment – or ancillary assessment materials – with a specific content standard or a specific assessment, such as Common Core or SBAC, will hinder the DOE's ability to successfully develop, administer and maintain the assessment. For example, if in the future, the DOE abandons Common Core or SBAC for another statewide content standard or assessment, this bill's specific reference to Common Core and SBAC would make it difficult to transition the Hawaiian language assessment to the new content standard or assessment. Removing these references will provide the DOE with the administrative flexibility to determine the most appropriate standards and assessment for the Hawaiian Language Immersion Program.

**Background**

HB224 would assist the State in furthering its **commitment to revitalize 'Ōlelo Hawai'i, the language of the first people of Hawai'i**. 'Ōlelo Hawai'i was once a thriving language used by Native Hawaiians and foreigners alike. However, by the late twentieth century, it was pushed to the brink of extinction. Fortunately, several historic initiatives, including the DOE's HLIP, have ensured that the Hawaiian language is not only preserved but also thrives. Today, the HLIP is offered at 21 public schools and educates more than 2,000 students in kindergarten through the twelfth grade.

Under the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, states must implement statewide assessments to measure the ability of the states and their schools to enable students to meet academic achievement standards. Currently, immersion school students in Hawai'i are offered a direct English-to-Hawaiian translated version of the test, as they are not formally introduced to the English language until the 5th grade. However, the translated tests have raised serious concerns in the immersion school and Hawaiian language community. Notable concerns include the following:

- Translated assessments are replete with technical translation errors, including grammatical errors, vocabulary errors, and inconsistent terminology;
- Translated assessments fail to consider cultural frames of reference and popular understandings, resulting in confusion and nonsensical problem statements.

These issues place immersion school students at a severe disadvantage in the state assessment process and the results inaccurately portray poor student performance. This negatively penalizes schools and their students, and substantially inhibits their underlying efforts for cultural perpetuation.

There is, however, a solution to these problems. The development of an assessment originally in the Hawaiian language for third through sixth grade students would **prevent irreparable impacts on the DOE, immersion schools, the students, and ultimately, the revitalization of the Hawaiian language.**

Therefore, OHA urges the committee to amend HB224 HD2, taking our above concerns into consideration, and **PASS** the bill. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

# HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS CAUCUS

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII

1050 ALA MOANA BLVD D-2150, HONOLULU, HI 96814

## LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

HEARING: Rm. 308 2/25/2013 1:30 PM

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### **HB224 – RELATING TO HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM POSITION: SUPPORT**

The Hawaiian Affairs Caucus is submitting testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB224 that requires the Department of Education to partner with the Hawaiian language community to develop assessments in the Hawaiian language to be administered to Hawaiian Language Immersion Program students in the third through sixth grades.

Currently, Hawaiian immersion students are given an English-to-Hawaiian translated version of the test. This is problematic for a number of reasons. The translated tests contain grammatical and vocabulary errors, and use inconsistent terminology. Translated assessments also fail to consider cultural frames of understanding, resulting in confusion and nonsensical problem statements.

This bill would further the process to remedy the numerous flaws that are currently found in the administration and delivery of the assessment exams. For these reasons the Hawaiian Affairs Caucus strongly urges this committee **PASS** this measure.

‘O ia ihola nō me ke aloha.



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

House of Representatives  
Twenty-Seventh Legislature, 2013  
State of Hawai'i

February 25, 2013

TO: Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Honorable Scott Nishimoto, Vice Chair  
Honorable Aaron Johnanson, Vic Chair  
Members of the Committee

DATE: Monday, February 25, 2013

TIME: 1:30 p.m.

PLACE: Conference Room 308  
Hawai'i State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

FROM: Kamehameha Schools

**RE: HOUSE BILL 224, HD2 RELATING TO THE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM**

Chair Luke, Vice Chairs Nishimoto and Johanson and members of the Committee,

Kamehameha Schools is in support of a strong and vibrant Hawaiian language, including support for Hawaiian language immersion programs and fair, equitable and appropriate testing for students. We support the intent of this measure.

Founded in 1887, Kamehameha Schools is a statewide educational system supported by a trust endowed by Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop, whose mission is to improve the capability and well-being of Native Hawaiian children through education. We serve K-12 students through campus programs on O'ahu, Hawai'i and Maui, and three-and-four-year-olds at preschool sites statewide.

We look forward to continuing to work closely with the Legislature, the Department of Education and other public and private stakeholders in the community for the benefit of Hawai'i's educational system.

## **FINTestimony**

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**From:** Alexis\_Kane/PUOHALA/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 24, 2013 11:59 AM  
**To:** FINTestimony  
**Subject:** HB224 HD2

Honorable Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair,

As a Principal of a dual English and Hawaiian Immersion school I have watched the effect that the present State HSA testing has had upon my school.

The vast inequity of the past translations of the English test for the Hawaiian Immersion students has proven to be disastrous. This is so academically unacceptable for so many reasons. The translated test was riddled with so many grammatical and vocabulary errors that completely confused the students. Moreover, the test was hurriedly prepared and did not go through the same regimen of validity that is required of the English tests. Students struggled to complete the test, trying to labor through the document and feeling completely inadequate. When the test results arrived the overall effect upon the self-confidence of the students was obvious.

The other issue is that a test should reflect the priorities and the purpose of the program. The emphasis upon cultural understandings as learned through language was completely absent in the creation of the translated test. And that is the problem of translated tests. It cannot validly evaluate those essential aspects of the HLIP program. The language is more than just a means of communicating. It is steeped with tradition and cultural appreciations as expressed in the language. It takes a skilled and knowledgeable speaker to include these understandings in the creation of a valid assessment. The HLIP community is not attempting to escape the test. They are simply requesting a valid test.

The other aspect is the result it has upon the rest of the school. Grade 3 and 4 HLIP parents are writing opt-out letters because their children are not being allowed to take the test 3 different times as are the English students. The excuse that there are not enough items to allow for three different tests is unacceptable. Offering the poorly translated test from last year OR the English test as an option is insulting. Because there are many parents that have already written opt-out letters, the school will not have sufficient numbers of students testing to meet that criterion. Needless to say, the teachers in the Gr. 3-6 English programs are disappointed. The school will not be able to make AYP despite their best efforts.

Until these beliefs are fully comprehended by the persons mandating the tests, the HLIP student population will continue to face these inequitable situations. The Hawaiian Language Immersion Program is a thing of beauty. It is uplifting to hear our keiki speak and write a native language that once faced extinction. Language embodies the knowledge of a culture. The Hawaiian culture and its language are one. Please support HB 224 HD2.

**HB224**

Submitted on: 2/22/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 25, 2013 13:30PM in Conference Room 308

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Benjamin Shafer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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## FINTestimony

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 23, 2013 1:37 PM  
**To:** FINTestimony  
**Cc:** tina.aiu@gmail.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB224 on Feb 25, 2013 13:30PM\*

### **HB224**

Submitted on: 2/23/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 25, 2013 13:30PM in Conference Room 308

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Christina Aiu	Individual	Support	No

#### Comments:

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## **FINTestimony**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 23, 2013 11:21 PM  
**To:** FINTestimony  
**Cc:** skmfreitas@gmail.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB224 on Feb 25, 2013 13:30PM\*

### **HB224**

Submitted on: 2/23/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 25, 2013 13:30PM in Conference Room 308

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sharde Mersberg Freitas	Individual	Support	No

#### Comments:

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## FINTestimony

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 23, 2013 11:10 AM  
**To:** FINTestimony  
**Cc:** enosahulani@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB224 on Feb 25, 2013 13:30PM

### **HB224**

Submitted on: 2/23/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 25, 2013 13:30PM in Conference Room 308

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ahulani Wright	Individual	Support	No

Comments: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE TO: HONORABLE REP. SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR FROM: AHULANI WRIGHT RE: HB 224 HD2 HEARING: 2/25/2013, 1:30 PM, 308 POSITION: SUPPORT I am submitting testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB224 HD2 that requires the Department of Education to partner with the Hawaiian language community to develop assessments originally in the Hawaiian language to be administered to Hawaiian Language Immersion Program students in the third through sixth grades. Currently, Hawaiian immersion students are given an English-to-Hawaiian translated version of the test. This is problematic for a number of reasons. The translated tests contain many translation errors including grammatical and vocabulary errors as well as inconsistent terminology. Translated assessments also fail to consider cultural frames of reference, resulting in confusing test questions. The development of an assessment originally in the Hawaiian language for third through sixth grade students would prevent irreparable impacts on the DOE, immersion schools, the students, and ultimately, the revitalization of the Hawaiian language. This bill would further the process to remedy the numerous flaws that are currently found in the administration and delivery of the assessment exams. For these reasons I strongly urge this committee PASS this measure. I am a parent of four students in the Hawaiian language immersion program at Hau'ula Elementary, and I urge you to make the right decision for my keiki.

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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
TO: HONORABLE REP. SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR  
FROM: D. KALĀ LINDSEY  
RE: HB 224 HD2  
HEARING: 2/25/2013, 1:30 PM, 308  
POSITION: SUPPORT

I am submitting testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB224 HD2 that requires the Department of Education to partner with the Hawaiian language community to develop assessments originally in the Hawaiian language to be administered to Hawaiian Language Immersion Program students in the third through sixth grades.

Currently, Hawaiian immersion students are given an English-to-Hawaiian translated version of the test. This is problematic for a number of reasons. The translated tests contain many translation errors including grammatical and vocabulary errors as well as inconsistent terminology. Translated assessments also fail to consider cultural frames of reference, resulting in confusing test questions.

The development of an assessment originally in the Hawaiian language for third through sixth grade students would prevent irreparable impacts on the DOE, immersion schools, the students, and ultimately, the revitalization of the Hawaiian language.

This bill would further the process to remedy the numerous flaws that are currently found in the administration and delivery of the assessment exams. For these reasons I strongly urge this committee **PASS** this measure.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
TO: HONORABLE REP. SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR  
FROM: CHRISTOPHER R. HAMPE  
RE: HB 224 HD2  
HEARING: 2/25/2013, 1:30 PM, 308  
POSITION: SUPPORT

I am submitting testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB224 HD2 that requires the Department of Education to partner with the Hawaiian language community to develop assessments originally in the Hawaiian language to be administered to Hawaiian Language Immersion Program students in the third through sixth grades.

Currently, Hawaiian immersion students are given an English-to-Hawaiian translated version of the test. This is problematic for a number of reasons. The translated tests contain many translation errors including grammatical and vocabulary errors as well as inconsistent terminology. Translated assessments also fail to consider cultural frames of reference, resulting in confusing test questions.

The development of an assessment originally in the Hawaiian language for third through sixth grade students would prevent irreparable impacts on the DOE, immersion schools, the students, and ultimately, the revitalization of the Hawaiian language.

This bill would further the process to remedy the numerous flaws that are currently found in the administration and delivery of the assessment exams. For these reasons I strongly urge this committee **PASS** this measure.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
TO: HONORABLE REP. SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR  
FROM: D. KAUNAOA ILANI SANG  
RE: HB 224 HD2  
HEARING: 2/25/2013, 1:30 PM, 308  
POSITION: SUPPORT

I am submitting testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB224 HD2 that requires the Department of Education to partner with the Hawaiian language community to develop assessments originally in the Hawaiian language to be administered to Hawaiian Language Immersion Program students in the third through sixth grades.

The current translated test is problematic because a misalignment of the content being measured using an English based test. HLIP curriculum supports student learning of various content areas using Hawaiian language and Hawaiian frames of reference. These considerations must be prioritized at the origin of the test development in order to fully understand the HLIP student educational achievement.

The development of an assessment originally in the Hawaiian language for third through sixth grade students would prevent irreparable impacts on the DOE, immersion schools, the students, and ultimately, the revitalization of the Hawaiian language.

This bill would further the process to remedy the numerous flaws that are currently found in the administration and delivery of the assessment exams. For these reasons I strongly urge this committee **PASS** this measure.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TO: HONORABLE REP. SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR

FROM: Joseph "Keola" Donaghy

RE: HB 224 HD2

HEARING: 2/25/2013, 1:30 PM, 308

POSITION: SUPPORT

I am submitting testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB224 HD2 that requires the Department of Education to partner with the Hawaiian language community to develop assessments originally in the Hawaiian language to be administered to Hawaiian Language Immersion Program students in the third through sixth grades.

Currently, Hawaiian immersion students are given an English-to-Hawaiian translated version of the test. This is problematic for a number of reasons. The translated tests contain many translation errors including grammatical and vocabulary errors as well as inconsistent terminology. Translated assessments also fail to consider cultural frames of reference, resulting in confusing test questions.

The development of an assessment originally in the Hawaiian language for third through sixth grade students would prevent irreparable impacts on the DOE, immersion schools, the students, and ultimately, the revitalization of the Hawaiian language.

As a former Hawaiian immersion parent, I witnessed firsthand the issues and limitations of proving English language or improperly translated assessments to our children. This bill would further the process to remedy the numerous flaws that are currently found in the administration and delivery of the assessment exams. For these reasons I strongly urge this committee PASS this measure.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TO: HONORABLE REP. SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR

FROM: Lehua Brown, Vice Principal of Ke Kula Kaiapuni ʻo Ānuenue

RE: HB 224 HD2

HEARING: 2/25/2013, 1:30 PM, 308

POSITION: SUPPORT

Aloha kākou,

I am submitting testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB224 HD2 that requires the Department of Education to partner with the Hawaiian language community to develop assessments originally in the Hawaiian language to be administered to Hawaiian Language Immersion Program students in the third through sixth grades.

Currently, Hawaiian immersion students are given an English-to-Hawaiian translated version of the test. This is problematic for a number of reasons. The translated tests contain many translation errors including grammatical and vocabulary errors as well as inconsistent terminology. Translated assessments also fail to consider cultural frames of reference, resulting in confusing test questions.

The development of an assessment originally in the Hawaiian language for third through sixth grade students would prevent irreparable impacts on the DOE, immersion schools, the students, and ultimately, the revitalization of the Hawaiian language.

This bill would further the process to remedy the numerous flaws that are currently found in the administration and delivery of the assessment exams. For these reasons I strongly urge this committee **PASS** this measure.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to present testimony in support of HB224 HD2.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
TO: HONORABLE REP. SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR  
FROM: LYNETTE K. PEREIRA  
RE: HB 224 HD2  
HEARING: 2/25/2013, 1:30 PM, 308  
POSITION: SUPPORT

I am submitting testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB224 HD2 that requires the Department of Education to partner with the Hawaiian language community to develop assessments originally in the Hawaiian language to be administered to Hawaiian Language Immersion Program students in the third through sixth grades.

Currently, Hawaiian immersion students are given an English-to-Hawaiian translated version of the test. This is problematic for a number of reasons. The translated tests contain many translation errors including grammatical and vocabulary errors as well as inconsistent terminology. Translated assessments also fail to consider cultural frames of reference, resulting in confusing test questions.

The development of an assessment originally in the Hawaiian language for third through sixth grade students would prevent irreparable impacts on the DOE, immersion schools, the students, and ultimately, the revitalization of the Hawaiian language.

This bill would further the process to remedy the numerous flaws that are currently found in the administration and delivery of the assessment exams. For these reasons I strongly urge this committee **PASS** this measure.

## **FINTestimony**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 23, 2013 1:28 PM  
**To:** FINTestimony  
**Cc:** wctanaka@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB224 on Feb 25, 2013 13:30PM

### **HB224**

Submitted on: 2/23/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 25, 2013 13:30PM in Conference Room 308

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Wayne Tanaka	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Please support this important measure. Our keiki and our immersion schools deserve a fair shake at this assessment process imposed upon them. For the sake of our own future, we must invest in and nurture those with a true connection to the culture, values, and environment of Hawai'i nei-- not punish them with faulty translations of standardized tests that have already been criticized as counterproductive for public schools throughout the country. Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to support this measure. Wayne Tanaka Pauoa, Hawai'i 96813

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## FINTestimony

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 23, 2013 9:22 PM  
**To:** FINTestimony  
**Cc:** ronsan2224@aol.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB224 on Feb 25, 2013 13:30PM

### **HB224**

Submitted on: 2/23/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 25, 2013 13:30PM in Conference Room 308

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ronald Fujiyoshi	Individual	Support	No

Comments: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE TO: HONORABLE REP. SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR FROM: RONALD FUJIYOSHI RE: HB 224 HD2 HEARING: 2/25/2013, 1:30 PM, 308 POSITION: SUPPORT I am not a Kanaka Maoli. However, I am a member of the Hawaiian Affairs Caucus of the Hawaii Democrat Party. I am submitting testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB224 that requires the Department of Education to partner with the Hawaiian language community to develop assessments originally in the Hawaiian language to be administered to Hawaiian Language Immersion Program students in the third through sixth grades. Currently, the students are given an English-to-Hawaiian translated version of the test. This is problematic for a number of reasons. The translated assessments are replete with technical translation errors that include grammatical errors, vocabulary errors, and inconsistent terminology. Additionally, the translated assessments also fail to consider cultural frames of reference and popular understandings that result in students' confusion. The only way to remedy this problem is to develop the assessment exams in Hawaiian language rather than continuing to use translated exams. This bill would further the process to remedy the numerous flaws that are currently found in the administration and delivery of the assessment exams. For these reasons I strongly urge this committee PASS this measure. Mahalo for allowing me to testify!

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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TO: HONORABLE REP. SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR

FROM: Mālia Melemai, Kaiapuni Teacher

RE: HB 224 HD2

HEARING: 2/25/2013, 1:30 PM, 308

POSITION: SUPPORT

I am submitting testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB224 HD2 that requires the Department of Education to partner with the Hawaiian language community to develop assessments originally in the Hawaiian language to be administered to Hawaiian Language Immersion Program students in the third through sixth grades.

Currently, Hawaiian immersion students are given an English-to-Hawaiian translated version of the test. This is problematic for a number of reasons. The translated tests contain many translation errors including grammatical and vocabulary errors as well as inconsistent terminology. Translated assessments also fail to consider cultural frames of reference, resulting in confusing test questions.

The development of an assessment originally in the Hawaiian language for third through sixth grade students would prevent irreparable impacts on the DOE, immersion schools, the students, and ultimately, the revitalization of the Hawaiian language.

This bill would further the process to remedy the numerous flaws that are currently found in the administration and delivery of the assessment exams. For these reasons I strongly urge this committee **PASS** this measure.

## FINTestimony

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 24, 2013 2:54 PM  
**To:** FINTestimony  
**Cc:** amy.sojot@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB224 on Feb 25, 2013 13:30PM

### **HB224**

Submitted on: 2/24/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 25, 2013 13:30PM in Conference Room 308

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Amy Sojot	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Please support HB224 and help our Hawaiian immersion students have a fair chance with NCLB mandated tests.

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