



November 12, 2020
 DEPED DIVISION OF TANGUB CITY

DIVISION MEMORANDUM
 No. 262, s. 2020

To : **All Elementary and Secondary School Heads
 In this Division**

CITY OF TANGUB
RELEASED

DATE: 11/12/20

LETTER WRITING FOR TOBACCO CONTROL

1. The Bureau of Learner Support Services – School Health Division (BLLS-SHD) in support of DepEd online campaign dubbed as **BIBO: Batang Informed Tungkol sa Bisyo, Batang Iwas Bisyo**, re announced the Contest on Letter Writing for Tobacco Control, setting the new deadline for **submission of entries to November 30, 2020**.

2. All schools are encouraged to submit, at least, one entry on or before the set deadline, copy furnished this office c/o roxclmd@deped.gov.ph. There will be 17 winners to receive P 2,000.00 each and Certificate of Recognition. Winners will be announced through a memorandum from the Office of the Undersecretary of Administration and on Facebook.

3. The contest is open to all learners enrolled in public elementary and high schools nationwide. The Division Journalism Coordinator in English (Mr. Danilo U. Omega- EPS1, English) are advised to closely monitor and provide assistance to divisional entries content following this criteria:

Organization / Format / Structure	30%
Content (Adherence to the theme, creativity/ personal expression, accuracy of data and information, persuasion)	40%
Language (Clarity of explanation, grammar, spelling)	30%
TOTAL	100%

4. All aspiring participants are invited to re watch the recording of the supplementary webinar- workshop on the following links:

Link to the Video Recording	Topic
http://bit.ly/depedbibo21	Current legislative efforts pm tobacco control and e-cigarettes
http://bit.ly/depedbibo22	The legislative process and access points for advocacy
http://bit.ly/depedbibo23	Effective letter writing

- Guidelines and mechanics of the contest are attached in this memorandum.
- Immediate and wide dissemination of this Memorandum is desired.

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AEC/wtm/11-012-20

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Attachment 1

UPDATED MECHANICS FOR THE LETTER WRITING CONTEST

1. Content

- 1.1 The letter must amplify the theme of the World No Tobacco Day 2020—**protecting the youth from industry manipulation and preventing them from tobacco and nicotine use**—and reinforce its call to action, policy options, key messages, and Frequently Asked Questions. (Attachment 2)
- 1.2 The letter may be **any or all** of the following:
 - 1.2.1 Express support to at least one existing legislation on tobacco control and/or e-cigarettes
 - 1.2.2 Express opposition against at least one existing legislation on tobacco control and/or e-cigarettes
 - 1.2.3 Propose one or more legislations on tobacco control
- 1.3 The letter must support, oppose, or propose legislation **either**:
 - 1.3.1 At the local level (municipality or city); or
 - 1.3.2 At the national level (either the Senate or the House of Representatives)
- 1.4 If the letter is written to support, oppose, or propose legislation **at the local level**, it must be in multiple copies, separately addressed and sent to **all** of the following:
 - 1.4.1 The local chief executive (Mayor);
 - 1.4.2 The presiding officer of the *Sangguniang Bayan* or *Sangguniang Panlungsod* (usually the vice mayor) of the municipality or the city where the learner currently resides; **and**
 - 1.4.3 The chair(s) of the committee concerned (e.g., Committee on Health, Committee on Education).
- 1.5 If the letter is written to support, oppose, or propose legislative measures at **the House of Representatives**, it must be in multiple copies, separately addressed and sent to both the following:
 - 1.5.1 The Speaker of the House; **and**
 - 1.5.2 The incumbent representative of the legislative district where the learner currently resides.
- 1.6 If the letter is written to support, oppose, or propose counterpart measures in the Senate, it must be in multiple copies, separately addressed and sent to **all** the following:
 - 1.6.1. The Senate President; **and**



1.6.2. The chair(s) of the committee concerned (e.g., Committee on Health and Demography; Committee on Basic Education, Arts and Culture; and Committee on Finance).

1.7 The letter must be the original composition of the participating learner.

1.8 The letter may use either English or Filipino or both, if applicable.

2. Participants

2.1 The contest is open to all learners enrolled in public elementary and high schools nationwide.

2.2 Participants must join individually and compose the letter on their own.

2.3 The adviser and the school head may assist the participant in the submission of entries to intended recipients, as laid out in this mechanics.

3. Submission

3.1 The letter must be directly sent to **the official email addresses of the offices of intended recipients specified in Sections 1.4, 1.5, and 1.6 of this updated mechanics.**

3.2 The letter may be sent either by the participating learner (if he/she has a registered email address), or by the school head and/or adviser on behalf of the participant.

3.3 To submit the letter as an entry to the contest, the email address tobaccocontrol@deped.gov.ph must be carbon-copied (CC) in the emails directly sent to the email addresses of the intended recipients.

3.4 If the email is sent by the participating learner, the official DepEd email address of the learner's school head and/or class adviser must also be **included in the CC.**

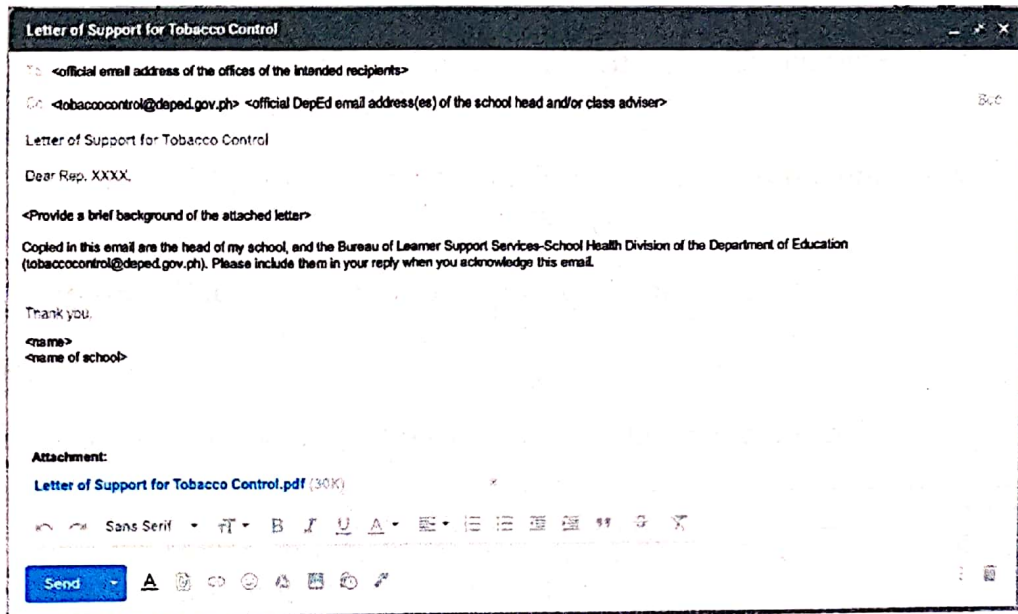
3.5 The email must have the subject **Letter of Support for Tobacco Control.**

3.6 The letter saved in **PDF format** must be attached to the email.

3.7 The body of the email must have a brief background of the attached letter, and must include the following: *"Copied in this email are the head of my school, and the Bureau of Learner Support Services-School Health Division of the Department of Education (tobaccocontrol@deped.gov.ph). Please include them in your reply when you acknowledge this email."*



- 3.8 It is not necessary to mention in the email that the sending of the letter is part of a contest.



Screenshot of How the Email Would Look Like

- 3.9 The Bureau of Learner Support Services-School Health Division (BLSS-SHD) shall consider as an entry to the contest **every letter** that it will receive through email that is sent to the intended addressee where tobaccocontrol@deped.gov.ph is CC'ed. **The letter must not be sent separately or forwarded to BLSS-SHD.**
- 3.10 The **new deadline** for the submission of entries is **30 November 2020**. All prior submissions which followed the mechanics are still part of the contest.
- 3.11 Participants are encouraged to post a copy/copies of their letter(s) on social media, either on their own social media accounts (if they are allowed to have one given their age; i.e., 13 years old) or on the accounts or pages of their parents/guardians/school heads/advisers/schools, tagging or mentioning the Department of Education in the caption (DepEd Philippines [[@DepartmentOfEducation.PH](https://www.facebook.com/DepartmentOfEducation.PH)] and EskweLABAN sa Sigarilyo [[@tobaccofreedeped](https://www.facebook.com/tobaccofreedeped)]), and the social media accounts/pages of their intended recipients (legislators), and using the hashtag #DepEdBIBO.
- 3.12 Participating learners may have multiple entries (i.e., different letters sent to different intended recipients), but can only win once.

4. Validation of Entries and Selection and Announcement of Winners

- 4.1 Once the BLSS-SHD receives the email from the participating learner, the office shall reply to the sender, including his/her intended recipients (legislators). The BLSS-SHD shall also re-attach the participating learner's letter in the reply, and CC some of its partners. The entry will only be included in the judging when the intended recipients' email addresses are confirmed to be valid (i.e., as published



on their website/email does not bounce back/at least one of the intended recipients replies).

- 4.2 Before recognizing any participating learner as a winner, BLSS-SHD shall reach out to the learner through a video conference for a standard on-the-spot validation exercise.
- 4.3 Winners will be announced through a memorandum from the Office of the Undersecretary for Administration.
- 4.4 Winners will also be announced on Facebook.

5. Judging

5.1 The entries will be judged based on the following criteria:

Organization/Format/Structure	30%
Content (Adherence to the theme, creativity/personal expression, accuracy of data and information, persuasion)	40%
Language (Clarity of explanation, grammar, spelling)	30%
TOTAL	100%

5.2 The decision of the judges will be final and irrevocable.

6. Prizes

- 6.1 There will be 17 winners of P2,000.00 each. Cash prizes shall be for direct payment, subject to the usual accounting rules and regulations of DepEd.
- 6.2 All the winners will receive Certificates of Recognition.

7. Usage of Submitted and Winning Entries

- 7.1 By submitting an entry, participants agree to grant DepEd the right without obligation, to use the submitted letter for any purpose determined, such as, but not limited to, uploading it on DepEd's social media platforms, featuring it in DepEd's programs and activities both online and offline, including it in DepEd's presentations, and sharing it with partners.
- 7.2 DepEd shall have the the right to make necessary edits to the letters, as needed.
- 7.3 DepEd shall have the right of ownership of the winning entries, which may be improved for official use and distribution.



Attachment 2

ABOUT THE 2020 WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY

(Source: WHO)

For decades, the tobacco industry has deliberately employed strategic, aggressive and well-resourced tactics to attract the youth to use tobacco and nicotine products. Internal industry documents reveal in-depth research and calculated approaches designed to attract a new generation of tobacco users, from product design to marketing campaigns aimed at replacing the millions of people who die each year from tobacco-attributable diseases with new consumers – youth.

In response to the tobacco and related industries' systematic, aggressive and sustained tactics to attract a new generation of tobacco users, World No Tobacco Day 2020 will provide a counter-marketing campaign and empower young people to engage in the fight against Big Tobacco.

The World No Tobacco Day 2020 global campaign will serve to:

- Debunk myths and expose manipulation tactics employed by the tobacco and related industries, particularly marketing tactics targeted at youth, including through the introduction of new and novel products, flavors and other attractive features;
- Equip young people with knowledge about the tobacco and related industries' intentions and tactics to hook current and future generations on tobacco and nicotine products; and
- Empower influencers (in pop culture, on social media, in the home, or in the classroom) to protect and defend the youth and catalyze change by engaging them in the fight against Big Tobacco.

How are tobacco and related industries manipulating the youth?

- **Use of flavors that are attractive to the youth** in tobacco and nicotine products, like cherry, bubble gum and cotton candy, which encourages young people to underestimate the related health risks and to start using them,
- **Sleek designs and attractive products**, which can also be easy to carry and are deceptive (e.g. products shaped like a USB stick or candy),
- **Promotion of products as “reduced harm” or “cleaner” alternatives** to conventional cigarettes in the absence of objective science substantiating these claims,
- **Celebrity/influencer sponsorships and brand sponsored contests** to promote tobacco and nicotine products (e.g. Instagram influencers),



- **Point-of-sale marketing at vendor outlets frequented by children**, including positioning near sweets, snacks or soda and providing premiums for vendors to ensure their products are displayed near venues frequented by young people (includes providing marketing materials and display cases to retailers),
- **Sale of single stick cigarettes and other tobacco and nicotine products near schools**, which makes it cheap and easy for school children to access tobacco and nicotine products,
- **Indirect marketing of tobacco products** in movies, TV shows and online streaming shows,
- **Tobacco vending machines** at venues frequented by young people, covered in attractive advertising and pack displays, and undermining regulations on sales to minors, and
- **Litigation to weaken all kinds of tobacco control regulations** including warning labels, display at point of sale, and regulations that limit access and marketing to children (specifically provisions to ban the sale and advertising of tobacco products near schools).

How can you join the fight against the tobacco epidemic?

- **Celebrities and social influencers** – Reject offers of “brand ambassadorship” and refuse any form of sponsorship by nicotine and tobacco industries.
- **Social media companies** – Ban advertising, promotion and sponsorship by the nicotine and tobacco industries and prohibit influencer marketing of tobacco or nicotine products.
- **Film, television or drama production companies** – Pledge not to depict tobacco use or e-cigarette use.
- **Parents and relatives** – Educate children and adolescents on the harms of nicotine and tobacco product use and empower them to reject industry manipulation.
- **Nurses and health practitioners** – Provide children, adolescents, young adults and their parents with updated information about the risks associated with use of these products and empower users to quit through the offer of brief cessation advice.
- **Schools** – Raise awareness of the dangers of initiating nicotine and tobacco product use, adopt tobacco and e-cigarette free campuses, refuse any form of sponsorship by the nicotine and tobacco industries, and prohibit representatives from nicotine and tobacco companies from speaking at school events, school camps, etc.



- **Youth groups** – Organize local events to engage and educate peers and build a movement for a tobacco-free generation. Advocate the adoption of effective tobacco control policies in the community to curb and prevent the manipulation of nicotine and tobacco industries.
- **National and local governments** – Support the implementation of comprehensive tobacco control policies, as outlined in the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. This can help prevent industry evasion of tobacco control legislation and exploitation of regulatory loopholes, protect children and adolescents from industry manipulation and prevent younger generations from initiating nicotine and tobacco product use.

Some key policy options include:

- If not banned, regulate ENDS and ENNDS;
- Ban the use of flavorings attractive to the youth in nicotine and tobacco products;
- Enact comprehensive bans on advertising, promotion and sponsorship of nicotine and tobacco products, including cross-border advertising;
- Adopt large, graphic labels that warn about the health risks of nicotine and tobacco products;
- Offer tried and tested cessation interventions, such as brief advice from health professionals, national toll-free quit lines, cessation interventions delivered via mobile text messaging, and where economically feasible, promote nicotine replacement therapies and non-nicotine pharmacotherapies for cessation;
- Implement and enforce policies to prevent tobacco industry lobbying and interference in tobacco control policy;
- Regularly increase tax to reduce affordability by young people¹; and
- Increase the minimum legal sale age for tobacco products to 25 years old.²

Key messages

- Tobacco products kill more than 8 million people every year. To maintain revenue, tobacco and related industries are continuously eyeing for new consumers for their products.
- Tobacco companies spent over 8 billion in marketing and advertising and the world lost 8 million lives from causes related to tobacco use and exposure to second-hand smoke.

¹ Not from the WHO website but a relevant policy option for the Philippines

² Not from the WHO website but a relevant policy option for the Philippines



- Tobacco and related industries' marketing strategies to children and adolescents include:
 - Over 15,000 flavors, most of which attract children and adolescents
 - Social media influencers and marketing
 - Sponsored events and parties
 - School scholarships
 - Sleek, sexy designs
 - Product placement in entertainment media
 - Free product samples
 - Single stick cigarettes make addiction more affordable
 - Selling products at eye level for children
 - Product placement and advertising near schools
- We want to create a generation that is free from tobacco and second-hand smoke and to reduce if not to eliminate death and diseases brought about by the use of such product.
- Break free from the manipulation of tobacco and related industries by raising awareness on how to deal with their ploy and to be informed of the harm caused by consuming their products.
- Tobacco use is responsible for 25% of all cancer deaths globally. The use of nicotine and tobacco products increases the risk of cancer, cardiovascular and pulmonary disease.
- Over 1 million people die from second-hand smoke exposure every year.
- Children and adolescents who use e-cigarettes at least double their chance of smoking cigarettes later in life.
- E-cigarette use increases risk of heart disease and lung disorders.
- Nicotine in e-cigarettes is a highly addictive substance and can damage children's developing brains.
- Smoking shisha is just as harmful as other forms of tobacco use. Its smoke is toxic and contains substances that can cause cancer.
- Smokeless doesn't mean that it's harmless.
- Smoking is expensive, and people pay for it with their looks and health. It causes bad breath, yellow teeth, wrinkly skin, unhealthy lungs and a poor immune system.
- Chewing tobacco can cause mouth cancer, tooth loss, brown teeth, white patches and gum disease.
- We encourage everyone to become educated, spread awareness and create a tobacco-free generation.



Tobacco and related industry tactics to attract younger generations

There are 1.3 billion tobacco users worldwide. That number would be even larger if tobacco didn't kill half of its users. Every four seconds, tobacco takes a life. Decades of the tobacco industry's deception and devious tactics have hooked generations of users to nicotine and tobacco, driving this global epidemic.

The multi-billion-dollar industry recruits new tobacco and nicotine users to reward investors with as much profit as possible and keep its business alive. Tobacco and related industries have increasingly preyed on children and adolescents, employing advertising tactics and targeting them directly with a new portfolio of products that threaten their health. These industries are moving at a rapid speed to launch existing and new products and use every means to expand their market share before regulations can catch up with them. Tobacco and related industries continue to oppose evidence-based measures, such as increases in excise taxes and comprehensive bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship, and have threatened legal actions against governments that try to protect the health of their citizens.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

- **How has the tobacco industry previously manipulated people and attracted new users?**

As awareness of the harms of tobacco use grew and global tobacco control efforts intensified over the last decade, social acceptability of tobacco use declined. This catalyzed the tobacco industry to revisit old tactics to restore its tarnished reputation and secure a new generation of users.

The tobacco industry has made well-researched, calculated attempts to redesign and rebrand its products to sustain profitability. It introduced cigarette filters and the so-called "light" and "mild" tobacco products as an alternative to quitting, reducing tobacco users' perceptions of risk and harm, and undermining effective tobacco control policies. Such misleading marketing continues today, with the industry advocating for the harm reduction approach through new products such as electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) and electronic non-nicotine delivery systems (ENNDS), commonly referred to as 'e-cigarettes,' and heated tobacco products (HTPs).

- **How are tobacco and related industries marketing new and emerging products?**

E-cigarettes are often promoted as "reduced risk," "smoke-free," "socially acceptable" consumer products. These promotional strategies have the potential to renormalize smoking and drive long-term use of addictive nicotine products which, like tobacco, are undoubtedly harmful to the consumer, under the guise of being a healthier alternative. Tobacco and related industries exploit the fact that the long-term health effects of



e-cigarettes have not been established and they are not yet regulated in most countries, enabling them to work around tobacco advertising bans and promote use of their products in smoke-free environments.

Some manufacturers also tend to talk about e-cigarettes with HTPs together, thereby confusing potential consumers, and making it difficult to tell the difference between a tobacco and a non-tobacco product. These social-positioning techniques, coupled with strategic marketing tactics, are particularly effective in targeting children and adolescents and have the potential to sustain nicotine addiction in youth globally.

- **What sponsorship schemes are used to manipulate children and adolescents?**

- **Celebrity and influencer endorsements.** Advertising is increasingly shifting to social media platforms, and the nicotine and tobacco industries are no different. “Influencers” on social media who reach and engage children and adolescents are invited by these industries to serve as “brand ambassadors” or offered financial incentives to promote their products. Social influencers have the potential to give their audiences the impression of more authentic promotion of the products, particularly when posts do not disclose the sponsorship details.
- **Scholarships.** Tobacco and ENDS-related entities have offered scholarships to high school, college and graduate students, some requiring applicants to submit essays on the dangers of tobacco and the potential benefits of ENDS use.
- **School programs and youth camps.** Tobacco and ENDS-related entities have paid schools for the opportunity to speak in classrooms or after school. They have also sponsored summer camps to spread misconceptions about the risks of ENDS use and market their products under the guise of promoting “safer alternatives” to conventional tobacco products.

- **What advertising tactics are used to target new, young consumers?**

- **Digital and social media advertising.** With the pervasiveness of smartphones and constant Internet access, nicotine and tobacco companies have strategically used digital and social media platforms to reach younger generations, including through their favorite apps and video games. Social media platforms allow users to interact with the marketing features, which increases exposure and influence among children and adolescents. They also allow marketers to access profile details of users and their friends and effectively target potential customers. Countries that have adopted advertising, promotion and sponsorship bans, but have not explicitly banned cross-border advertising, are susceptible to exposing their youth to digital and social media advertising originating from other countries. Just over 100 hashtags



associated with tobacco companies have been viewed more than 25 billion times around the world between 2007-2016.

- **Attractive displays in retail shops.** Vendors near schools are frequently paid to display nicotine and tobacco products in their retail shops, along with sleek point-of-sale display boards, attractive marketing materials and bright, colorful cases to attract young customers. Modern, attractive retail spaces with a wide variety of products that appeal to youth are also now commonly used to market new and novel products.
- **Advertising materials and products at eye-level of children.** In many countries, nicotine and tobacco products can be found at children's eye levels and near shops selling toys, electronic gadgets, sweets, snacks or soda.
- **What marketing ploys are used to attract children and adolescents to nicotine and tobacco products?**
 - **Flavors that appeal to youth.** Tobacco products, such as smokeless and water pipe tobacco, are sold in sweet and fruity flavors, which may increase appeal to non-smokers and mask the harsh tobacco taste. To date, researchers have identified over 15,000 e-cigarette flavors available, including flavors proven to appeal to youth, such as cotton candy and gummy bear. Advertisements of flavored products may enhance appeal and encourage children and adolescents to buy and try nicotine products. The flavors may lower perception of the harmfulness and addictiveness of nicotine products.
 - **Sleek, pocket-sized designs.** ENDS and HTPs are extensively promoted as modern, high-tech and high-end lifestyle products, with minimalist designs, and high-profile product launches that portray them as attractive and harmless products. The sleek designs can be deceptive, available in shapes resembling a USB flash drive, and can be easily concealed in a young person's hand.
 - **Cartoon characters.** Some ENDS-related entities use cartoons and child-friendly imagery, such as unicorns, to brand their products and market sweet flavors.
- **What promotional tactics are used to tempt children and adolescents?**
 - **Product placement in entertainment media, such as television and cinema.** Children and adolescents who watch movies and television shows containing depictions of smoking are at an increased risk of initiating smoking. Exposure to tobacco products or e-cigarette marketing in entertainment media influences children and adolescents' intention to use these products.



- **Free product samples.** Nicotine and tobacco product samples are distributed in high traffic areas, and particularly venues frequented by youth, such as street corners, shopping malls, festivals and concerts, to attract new consumers. In over 50 countries, at least 10% of students aged 13-15 reported ever being offered a free cigarette by a tobacco company representative.
- **Merchandise with company logos.** In over 120 countries, at least 1 in 10 students aged 13-15 reported having an object with a tobacco company logo on it.
- **What distribution mechanisms are used to facilitate access to these products?**
 - **Single stick cigarettes.** The sale of cigarettes individually or in small packets increases the affordability and accessibility of tobacco products for school children. Young people that start experimenting with single stick cigarettes do not benefit from exposure to health warnings on cigarette packs. A recent investigation in 45 countries found that students aged 13-15 reported recently purchasing single cigarettes, and in some countries, as many as 80% of students reported purchasing single cigarettes.
 - **Disposable e-cigarettes.** The option to test and toss different flavors of e-liquids, particularly for a low initial cost, has driven use of disposable e-cigarettes among children and adolescents. In some countries, where flavors are banned in refillable cartridge-based e-cigarettes, children and adolescents have turned to disposable e-cigarettes to continue using flavored products.
 - **Vending machines.** Tobacco vending machines provide young people with easy access to tobacco products without needing to provide a form of identification to verify age. In some countries, tobacco vending machines are placed in areas frequented by youth, such as near schools, with attractive advertising and pack displays.
 - **Internet sales.** Nicotine and tobacco products sold online facilitate sale to minors, particularly where age verification mechanisms are not in place. Online sales also allow children and adolescents to purchase products being sold in other countries where regulations may differ.



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