# Irginia Association of Clinical Counselors

# H E A D L I N E S



Virginia Association of Clinical Counselors

**July 2007** 

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# **President's Message**

by: Lynessa Glass, LPC, LMFT

B eing elected to serve as President of the Virginia Association of Clinical Counselors is one of the greatest honors bestowed upon me during my career as a Licensed Professional Counselor and Marriage and Family Therapist. The organization represents the qualities and values of the profession in which so many of us believe and invest our time and energy on a daily basis, striving to help a diverse population find meaning, life satisfaction and overall good mental health.

I follow in the footsteps of many great past presidents who have contributed experience and wisdom to the organization, each leaving his or her mark and making VACC the excellent organization it is today. I am most honored to work with a dedicated board of strong leaders in our profession and I know that any and all accomplishments as an organization will result from a united team effort from the VACC board mem-

bers and all members of VACC.

As I begin my presidency, a main goal of mine is to encourage a continued increase in the membership of our organization and the involvement of VACC members. I am especially excited about an idea proposed by our immediate past president, Ed Navis, at our board retreat this year. Ed's idea to offer a Professional Development Conference during Winter 2008 was overwhelmingly accepted by all board members. This Professional Development Conference will serve as our organization's first call for presentation proposals from VACC members. What an incredible opportunity for members to share their expertise, energy and enthusiasm for our profession! After all, any organization is only as successful as its membership

In addition to our first Professional Development Conference with members' presentations, our board has several workshops planned for the upcoming year that will appeal to the

clinical counseling community and provide continuing education credits. Please log on to our website (www.vacc.org) on a regula basis to keep up with all that the organization has to offer.

As president, I am also excited about the opportunity to work closely with the American Mental Health Counseling Association. A close relationship with AM-HCA will serve to help both organizations to better mee the needs of members.

I ask each member of VACC to commit this year to becoming as involved as possible in the organization I also challenge each one of you to seek out at least one other possible member and encourage that person to join VACC. Just imagine if each current member recruits even one additional member, our membership can double during this year! I believe this year can be a powerful one for our organization if we each share the energy and dedication that led us to our profession in the first place. I look forward to serving as your president and, with your help, 2007-08 can be a prosperous and memorable year for VACC. VACC

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# Restricted Test List Repealed in Indiana



or more than a decade, the Indi- July 1, 2007, this new law removes everyone involved in this advocacy ana Board of Psychology has attempted to establish a restricted test list (RTL) of several hundred testing instruments that would only be available for use by clinical psychologists in the state. The Psychology Board's proposal would have prohibited other professionals who are trained in providing testing, include mental health counselors, clinical social workers, speech, language and hearing professionals, and physical therapists from utilizing those instruments on the proposed RTL.

State Board of Psychology authority guage originally included in the counselor licensure law that passed in 1997. While this language has been in statute for ten years, a RTL was never successfully adopted. Effective

the authority of the Indiana Board of Psychology to create an RTL.

Members of a coalition, including AM-HCA, the American Counseling Association (ACA), the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), and other multiple state and national organizations, organized by the Fair Access Coalition on Testing (FACT), worked successfully as a group to advocate against the formation of an RTL and the repeal of the RTL language. FACT is a multi-disciplinary, non-profit organization that advocates Legislation providing the Indiana for all health care and educational professionals to be able to administer to create a RTL was repealed by the and interpret tests for which they legislature. HB 1821 removes lan- have been appropriately trained. AM-HCA is a member of FACT, which is located in the headquarters of NBCC.

> AMHCA would like to join FACT in expressing its sincere appreciation to

effort. Efforts included contacting legislators at key times over the last 10 vears and research to aid in the efforts. The success of repealing the RTL happened because of the collective efforts of state and national organizations, their individual members, and others concerned about this legislation. By working together, we helped key decision makers understand the importance of appropriate professional accessibility to instruments that ultimately leads to the greatest accessibility of quality services for the citizens of Indiana.

For more information on this issue. please contact Beth Powell, AMHCA Director of Public Policy and Professional Issues, at 800-326-2642, ext. 105 or by e-mail at bpowell@amhca.org \_vacc

## **VACC Conferences**

The Virginia Association of Clinical Counselors presented one was on September 22, 2006 in Charlottesville. The topic of this con-Supervision" and featured Suzan Thompson, Ph.D, LPC as the speaker. The conference was well attended and received, and provided a thorough review of clinical supervision and the ethical issues involved.

Our second conference was pre-

sented in Williamsburg on January 19, 2007. The speaker was Ed Wieckthree conferences this year. The first owski, MSW on "Assessment & Treatment of Adolescent Sex Offenders." The conference had 24 participants ference was "The Essence of Clinical and was warmly received. Two hours weeks of June. of Ethics were presented by Tom Mullins from Radford. Several new memberships developed from the conference.

> Our third conference was the "Last Minute Ethics Conference" presented in Virginia Beach on June 15, 2007.

This conference featured an international expert on ethics, Dr. Ted Remley, Jr., whose impressive presentation and credentials made for a very informative workshop. We expect to present the "Last Minute Ethics Conference every year during the last two

VACC is planning a series of conferences for the following year in various sections of the state. If you have recommendations or ideas, please contact one of the Conference Committee co-chairs listed on the website (www.vacc.org) □ VACC

# **New Doctorate Counseling Program**

**Old Dominion University Announces** a new PhD Program in Counseling

For information, contact Dr. Ted Remley Counseling Graduate Program Director tremley@odu.edu

#### Featuring

- a traditional campus based program
- full-time or part-time study
- 10 nationally-known faculty members
- rolling admissions (applications are accepted at any time and considered when received)

- entry available in fall, spring, or summer

- assistantships for full-time students (including tuition waivers)



### **Membership Updates**

by: Anna Epperson, M.A., NCC

embers can now access and Lupdate their membership information on-line at the VACC website <a href="http://www.vacc.org/">http://www.vacc.org/</a>. They can also signup or renew on-line by using PayPal. Here is the URL to sign up for membership <a href="http://">http://</a>

www.vacc.org/amember/signup.php If you are currently a member and do not have your login name, you can request your membership login on-line by going to the VACC website and request that it be sent to you. If you have questions or need directions, please contact our membership chair, Anna Epperson (anna.epperson@yahoo.com) or webmaster (webmaster@vacc.org).

There are currently 199 members of VACC. Of those, 181 are clinical members, nine regular members,

eight students, and one is retired. The largest membership comes from Northern Virginia, Tidewater and Richmond. See the table for location of other members in Virginia (To the right).

There are many benefits to being a member of VACC. Conferences are offered which provide educational opportunities as well as opportunities to network. VACC provides advocacy by addressing issues important to licensed professional counselors especially when LPCs are discriminating against in hiring or reimbursement. Regional groups meet in Hampton Roads, Richmond, and Northern Virginia. VACC provides leadership opportunities to expand skills and enhance visibility.

Tell your colleagues about the importance of VACC and encourage them to join. VACC

Tidewater/Hampton Roads Area	58
Northern Virginia/DC Area/ Maryland	57
Richmond Area	28
Roanoke Area	13
Charlottesville Area	9
Lynchburg Area	8
Harrisonburg/Winchester Area	7
Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Radford Area	5
Lexington Area	5
Williamsburg	4
Bristol/Wytheville	2
Martinsville, Danville Area	2
Bluefield, Virginia	1





## Web Site Updates

by: Michael Nahl, Communications Committee

Have you looked at our website themselves on our site at no yourself and your practice for free on the Member's Spotlight,

(www.vacc.org) lately? We have some great links, to the Board of Counseling and the Department of Health Professions, to nearby state clinical counseling associations, to AM-HCA, to Virginia graduate counseling programs, insurance companies, and to all the state and federal legislators. Our website is a handy site for connecting to other places you might want to

For the students, we have a separate page that includes links to the state counseling programs, Board mentors, and a list of clinical supervisors. By the way, any VACC member who provides supervision can list

charge. You can also advertise which is easy to complete.

Updates on federal and state legislation affecting LPCs can be found on the home page and the You Can Help sections o the website. The You Can Help section also features the Hall of Shame, wherein we list examples of discriminatory hiring and reimbursement practices toward members of our profession. This section also contains links to federal and state legislators.

Looking for a job? Want to advertise a job position you have available? Need or want to rent office space? We can help. Look for the Job Opportunities section.

http://www.vacc.org

Want to renew your membership or become a member? You can do that online. You can also register for our annual conferences and pay for them over the website.

The history of our profession and VACC can also be found on the website, as can recent newsletters and our bylaws.

There's much more. And don't forget to tell a colleague about us! www.vacc.org VACC



# Contact Your Senators in Support of TRICARE Independent Practice Authority for Counselors

The American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA), the American Counseling Association (ACA) and the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) are working together to pass legislation allowing licensed professional counselors to practice independently in Department of Defense (DOD) programs, including TRICARE.

AMHCA, ACA and NBCC have been working with the office of Sen. Claire McCaskill (D-MO), who serves on the Senate Armed Services Committee and its Subcommittee on Personnel, to ensure Senate support of language granting independent practice authority for mental health counselors practicing in DOD programs and TRICARE. Sen. McCaskill has agreed to take the lead on this issue, in the form of a "Dear Colleague" letter to all Senators asking for support for removing the requirements.

It is **very** important that all Senators, particularly those who serve on the Armed Services Committee, hear from their constituents about the importance of granting independent practice authority to LPCs within TRICARE and the DOD. All Senators need to know that their constituents support ending the physician referral and supervision requirement for LPCs in TRICARE and DOD.

ACTION NEEDED: Please call your two Senators (Webb and Warner - <a href="http://webb.senate.gov">http://webb.senate.gov</a> and <a href="http://webb.senate.gov">http://webb.senate.gov</a> an

**SUGGESTED MESSAGE**: "As a constituent, I am calling to ask the Senator to co-sign the "Dear Colleague" letter being circulated by Sen. Claire McCaskill, in support of removing the physician referral and supervision requirements for mental health counselors practicing in DOD and TRICARE. Congress should allow direct access to mental health counselors instead of requiring TRICARE beneficiaries to see a doctor before they can see a counselor. This provision is included in the version of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (H.R.1585) that was passed by the House Armed Services Committee on May 9, 2007.

"Increasing access to services is especially important considering that as many as one in three soldiers will return from Iraq with symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Please contact Stephen Hedger in Sen. McCaskill's office at 224-6154 to sign on to the letter. Thank you for your consideration."

**Background:** Although counselors have been TRICARE providers for many years, they still lack independent reimbursement under the program. Instead, service members must see their doctor first, who then must refer them to an LPC, and must supervise their treatment. Requiring physician referral is not only discriminatory against licensed professional counselors, but it provides an additional obstacle to care for a beneficiary population that is frequently hesitant to seek out mental health services. Service members continue to fear for their career advancement if they seek mental health treatment. The physician referral requirement also means mental health services are often overseen by a physician who may have had little education, training, or experience in the use of therapy in treating mental and emotional disorders.

On May 9, 2007, the House Armed Services Committee considered a bill, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (2007 DAA), H.R. 1585 that includes a provision to allow licensed mental health counselors to practice independently in TRICARE and other Department of Defense programs. The provision was included at the request of Rep. Robin Hayes (R-NC), a member of the House Armed Services Committee, who has championed TRICARE legislation on our behalf for several years.

In 2006, the identical provision was included in the House version of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 Defense Authorization Act (DAA). The Senate Armed Services Committee, however, failed to include a similar provision in their version of the FY 2007 DAA. The final conference report did not address the TRICARE counselor issue.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Beth Powell, Director, Public Policy and Professional Issues, AMHCA at <a href="mailto:bpowell@amhca.org">bpowell@amhca.org</a> or by phone at 800-326-2642, ext. 105; Peter Atlee, Legislative Representative, ACA at <a href="mailto:pate@counseling.org">pate@counseling.org</a> or by phone at 800-347-6647, ext. 242; or Kristi McCaskill, NBCC at <a href="mailto:mccaskill@nbcc.org">mccaskill@nbcc.org</a> or by phone at (336) 547-0607 ext. 3109.

# **Call For Papers**

The Virginia Association of Clinical Counselors is pleased to sponsor a professional development symposium in January of 2008. The theme of the conference is Challenges and Innovations in the Practice of Clinical Counseling

Presentations May Include (but not be limited to):

- 1. New directions or challenges in delivering counseling services
- 2. Professional development and recruitment practices
- 3. Emerging service provision issues
- 4. Effects of specialization on professional identity
- 5. Professional empowerment
- 6. Emerging ethical and legal issues

Innovations in career practices

The format of the proposal must include:

Title of Presentation

Names, credentials, address, phone and email address of the presenters

Brief biographic sketch of each presenter (200 word maximum)

Learning objectives

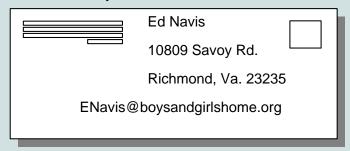
Abstract: typed, double spaced(150 words maximum)

The presenter(s) are required to type the following statement under the abstract and initial the same: "I understand that if accepted, the abstract may be reprinted by VACC in any of its official publications. I am responsible for my travel, room, and board expenses associated with my presentation.

Presentation: 1.5 hour

Audio-visual needs: VACC will provide a screen and overhead projector. The presenter will be responsible for providing any other equipment.

Submission is due August 15, 2007 and may be mailed to:





# Regional Group Update

ampton Roads Association of Clinical Counselors has continued to provide opportunities for professional development and stimulation to thirty or so members this year. A wine and cheese evening social in September generated exploration of a wide range of subjects in relaxed, conversational format, networking opportunities and a state/national update provided by Mike Nahl. Our October day meeting featured a presentation: Neuropsychology for the Non-Neuropsychologist offered by Melissa Pence, Psy.D. of The Memory Clinic. And in April our group was happy to welcome back a valued frequent presenter, Jackie Gatewood Psy.D. of Regent University who addressed Ethical Issues and Practice Risk Management. 

VACC





#### **Board Holds Annual Retreat**

by: Kimberly L.k. Finn, LPC

he Virginia Association of Clini-L cal Counselors held its annual board retreat in Sandbridge May 4th though May 6th. The Board was excited to have Katarina Briedova, an AMCHA Chapter Relations Manager, in attendance in order to discuss the relationship between and the benefits of our state chapter's affiliation with AMCHA.

Several topics were discussed during the three day retreat. Some of these topics included the high level of members' use of the VACC website as well ideas to improve the site in order to make it more user friendly for members. The website is a great resource to members and includes information on the history and function of the Board, Board members, available clinical supervisors, upcoming conferences, and links other related resources.

VACC's Treasurer's report reflected a strong financial standing that will continue to support any legislative actions that may be required to protect the Association's website, continuing



censed Professional Counselors in our state.

Saturday's meeting included developing ideas for future conferences that will benefit members as well as other LPCs throughout the state. Conferences for the '06-'07 year were extremely successful and received accolades from participants. Numerous topics for future conferences were discussed including an ethics workshop to be held before the state licensing requirement deadline at the end of June. Other potential conferences that are presently being considered include a winter symposium and workshop on topics related to clinical supervision, the business of private practice, and PTSD/risk assessments.

Membership remains strong and has increased by almost four hundred percent since VACC's separation from VCA. Ideas for strengthening benefits to Association members in order to promote membership in the Association were explored. Areas being developed include enhancing

and support Li- to provide quality, low cost workshops and to try to expand these workshops into the middle and western areas of the state, improving the quality and production of the Association's newsletter, and developing a membership The Board unanimously directory. voted to increase annual dues from \$50.00 to \$65.00 beginning July 1, 2007. This is still an extremely good value to members as chapter dues on a national level are as high as \$200 per year.

> At the final retreat meeting held on May 6th, VACC's new Board President, Lynessa Glass, from the Virginia Beach area, took over the reins from outgoing president Ed Navis. At this meeting, Board members developed committee budgets, financial and membership goals, and schedules for newsletter publication and quarterly Board meetings. The next board meeting is currently scheduled to be held in Richmond on August 24th, 2007. The Board elected Joan Normandy-Dolberg as President-Elect. This nomination as well as a slate of other candidates will be released for a membership vote this summer. VACC

# **Legislative Report**

TRICARE: AMHCA and ACA worked to obtain independent practice authority for LPCs working with TRICARE and within the Department of Defense (DOD). In order to help achieve our goal, Rep. Robin Haves (R-NC) introduced the "TRICARE Mental Health Services Enhancement Act" (H.R. 1358). The language from this bill was included in the House-passed version of the FY07 Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 5122).

#### Department of Veterans Affairs (VA):

ACA and AMHCA advocated for inclusion of licensed professional counselors in the list of appointed providers in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA).

In December 2005, the U.S. Senate passed the "Veterans Health Care Act of

2005" (S. 1182) which [ included language that would add LPCs to the VA provider list. The language was included

by the Chairman of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, Sen. Larry Craig (R-ID) and was strongly supported by the Ranking Member of the Committee, Sen. Daniel Akaka (D-HI).

In September 2006, Rep. Katherine Harris (R-FL) introduced a bill almost identical to S. 1182. The bill, "Veterans Health Care Act of 2006" (H.R. 6185) also included adding LPCs to the list of providers at the VA. Rep. Sanford Bishop (D-GA) and Rep. Rob Simmons (R-CT) cosponsored that bill.

In May 2006, Rep. Jerry Moran (R-KS)

and Rep. Michael Michaud (D-ME) introduced the "Veterans Mental Health Care Access Improvement Act of 2006" (H.R. 5396). This bill's sole purpose was to add licensed professional counselors and marriage and family therapists to the list of providers at the VA.

Medicare: In the 109th Congress a total of six bills were introduced that included language to allow LPCs to be reimbursed by Medicare.

In the Senate, Sen. Craig Thomas (R-WY) and Sen. Blanche Lincoln (D-AR) introduced the "Seniors Mental Health Access Improvement Act of 2005" (S. 784). This bill's sole purpose was to allow licensed professional counselors and marriage and family therapists to bill Medicare for providing services to its beneficiaries.

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#### Continued From Page 6

Recent Legislative Action: At the request of Congress, a Pentagon Task Force on Mental Health has been established to assess how the Department of Defense is doing in meeting service members' mental health care needs, and to develop recommendations for addressing any shortcomings. The Task Force held field hearings in San Diego, and heard from several speakers that the situation is dire. Below is an article that appeared in a recent edition of the San Diego Union-Tribune regarding the hearing, highlighting the severe—and worsening—shortage of mental health providers needed to provide adequate care.

The testimony presented constitutes further evidence of the need to allow licensed TRICARE mental health counselors to provide services independently. The American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA), the American Counseling Association (ACA), and the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) are disappointed at the failure by Congress to establish independent practice authority for licensed TRICARE mental health counselors in the recently-adopted defense spending authorization bill for fiscal year 2007. As part of our ongoing effort to gain independent practice authority for TRICARE counselors, AMHCA, ACA and NBCC will work with the Task Force to urge the inclusion of this provision in the Task Force's recommendations

"Military's Mental Care Ailing, Panel is Advised": By Rick Rogers, Union-Tribune Staff Writer

"Scant resources, poor training and staff burnout are frustrating the military's efforts to treat mental illness just as troops and their families need such services the most." That was just a sliver of the sobering testimony given yesterday to the Pentagon's Task Force on Mental Health, which began two days of public hearings in San Diego to gather information for a report due to Congress next year. The panel was formed in late spring at the urging of Sens. Joe Lieberman (D-CT) and Barbara Boxer (D-CA), after published stories detailing serious mental health issues among Marines at Camp Pendleton and service members nationwide. "The task force has a unique opportunity to help the United States become a model for how mental health care should be done," said Boxer, who attended yesterday's hearing. "This isn't about whether you are for or against this war. If we do this right, we'll have a much stronger military." An increasing number of troops on the front lines are using mental health services, with 40 percent seeking such help last year, compared with 29 percent in 2004, according to figures from the Defense Department. Ninety percent of military personnel who receive mental health treatment are able to return to duty, said Cmdr. Mark Russell, a Navy psychologist who testified at yesterday's hearing. At least 33 percent of service members returning from Iraq and Afghanistan are diagnosed with mental illness, the Pentagon and several independent studies have estimated. That percentage could increase because multiple combat tours have become the norm. Research has shown that repeated deployments raise a person's risk of suffering mental conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder. Russell described a "perfect storm" in which overwhelming demand meets lack of access to quality mental health care. "We are in a crisis situation, and it's going to get worse," said Russell, who works at U.S. bases across mainland Japan. The shortage of mental health caregivers and their relative inexperience are making it impossible to properly treat service members before long-lasting mental problems take root, he testified. Chronic conditions are expensive to tackle. In 2004, for example, the federal government spent \$4.3 billion on disability payments for post-traumatic stress disorder and other mental conditions. "By the time these people get to the (Department of Veterans Affairs), they have chronic problems," Russell said. "We need to get to them when they are still in the service." He and other speakers testified that even treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder, the best-known mental condition associated with combat duty, is embarrassingly lacking. Russell said that nearly four years into the Iraq war, 90 percent of the 133 mental health providers he surveyed informally didn't know how to treat post-traumatic stress disorder because they weren't trained to do so. Poor staffing for mental health services at military hospitals also wears on service members' families. "Word gets around the community if the quality of care is not good," said Lt. Cmdr. Shannon Johnson, a Navy psychologist transferring from Japan to San Diego. Mental health needs a much higher profile in the military and funding equal to that for physical conditions, the panel was told yesterday. A senior general or admiral should spearhead the cause, Russell suggested. He also proposed a corps dedicated to providing mental health care, halting the exodus of mental health experts from the military and offering special pay for chaplains, social workers and psychologists. "We are getting people to come in, but their quality is questionable in some cases. We are losing the brain drain," said Russell, who had submitted his retirement papers after more than 24 years of service only to take them back because he believes his experience is direly needed. He and Johnson said the burnout rate among mental health professionals is soaring. Only 80 of 135 key mental health slots in the Navy are filled, and there are five retirement requests per month, Russell testified. Not having enough personnel means more work for the remaining staff members. The result is what the panel calls "compassion fatigue and burnout." "I had known there were problems for a long time, but I did not anticipate hearing all I have heard from the providers," Johnson said. "Everyone in the medical community is pretty burned out. There is a lot of grief and loss that people are dealing with. What is going (in the war zones) is really changing people."

#### Legislation in the Commonwealth:

VACC will continue to monitor and take action on any important legislative initiatives during the upcoming legislative session. On the regulatory front, it should be noted that the course hours for LMFT is proposed to increase to 100 hours for future licenses, and VACC has not decided to oppose this proposed regulatory change.  $\square$  VACC





Mailing Address Label

We're on the web! www.vacc.org Check us out for the latest news related to your profession!

#### **Local Organization Updates**

The Northern Virginia Licensed Professional Counselors organization had a very busy and productive year. We mailed a 10 to 12 page member-written newsletter to our members on a regular basis and created and distributed a cross-referenced Membership Directory to help with referrals. We also support our members who offer presentations by maintaining an inventory of AV items available to rent at minimal cost to help demonstrate professional standards.

Due to an increase in NVLPC membership and our large geographic area, we hold our monthly luncheon meetings and NBCC-approved continuing education in two different locations. Our Eastern luncheon workshops were held in Annandale and topics included Sexual Addiction, Suicide Prevention and Intervention, Online Counseling, EMDR, Counseling Military Families and Returnees, Mediation, Psychopharmacology for Children and Adolescents, and Working with Mothers and Daughters. Our Western luncheons, which were held in Sterling, included presentations on Post-Partum Depression, EEG and Brain Research, Anger Management, Adult Psychopharmacology, Building your Private Practice, Couples and Infertility, Introduction and Demonstration to Voice Dialogue, and Helping Clients Receive Services through The Comprehensive Services Act. In addition we held 2 large workshops, one on Ethics and the other, featuring doctors from the Amen Clinic, on Neuropsychiatry and Brain Research. --Joan Normandy-Dolberg, LPC

## How Counselors Are Licensed in Virginia

Sign-on to the internet and point your internet browser to **http://www.vacc.org/valicensed.html** to read the article.

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