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Kaiser Health Tracking Poll: Election 2008

March 2008

Methodology

The *Kaiser Health Tracking Survey: Election 2008* was designed and analyzed by public opinion researchers at the Kaiser Family Foundation led by Mollyann Brodie, Ph.D., including Elizabeth Hamel and Carolina Gutiérrez. The survey was conducted from February 7 – 16, 2008, among a nationally representative random sample of 2,007 adults ages 18 and older, including 1,770 adults who say they are registered to vote. The results reported in this document are based on the 1,770 registered voters. Of these registered voters, there are 522 self-identified Republicans, 626 self-identified Democrats, and 481 self-identified independents. Telephone interviews were carried out in English and Spanish by Princeton Survey Research Associates.

The margin of sampling error for the total sample of registered voters is plus or minus 3 percentage points, and plus or minus 5 percentage points for self-identified Republican, Democratic, and independent registered voters; for results based on subgroups, the margin of sampling error is higher. Note that sampling error is only one of many potential sources of error in this or any other public opinion poll.

Values less than 0.5% are indicated by an asterisk (*).

“VOL” indicates that a response was volunteered by respondent, not an explicitly offered choice.

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100.

- 1a. Thinking about the campaign for the presidential election in 2008, what two issues would you most like to hear the presidential candidates talk about? **IF RESPONDENT GIVES ONE ISSUE PROBE FOR SECOND:** Is there another issue you'd like to hear about? (**OPEN-END**)

Based on Half Sample (n=873)

<u>Total RV</u>	<u>Rep RV</u>	<u>Dem RV</u>	<u>Ind RV</u>	
45	42	47	48	Economic issues (Net)
34	36	33	35	Economy (general)
4	1	6	3	Jobs
1	*	2	1	Poverty/homelessness
7	5	7	11	Other economy mentions
32	28	36	32	Iraq/War in Iraq
28	18	40	20	Health care (Net)
17	11	25	15	Health care (general)
6	5	8	4	The uninsured/access to health care/universal coverage
2	2	4	1	Health care costs
1	--	2	*	Medicare/Elderly
3	1	4	*	Other health care mentions
14	24	7	10	Immigration/illegal immigration
7	6	8	8	Education/schools
6	14	1	7	Terrorism/National security (Net)
5	11	1	6	National security
1	3	*	1	Terrorism/war on terror
*	--	*	--	Other terrorism/national security mentions
5	6	4	6	Taxes
4	4	5	3	Social Security
3	2	3	6	Budget deficit/national debt
3	2	1	5	Foreign affairs/not Iraq (Net)
*	1	--	*	Middle East
3	2	1	4	Other foreign affairs mentions
2	2	3	1	Gas prices/Energy (Net)
2	2	2	1	Gas prices
*	*	*	--	Energy issues
2	2	3	1	Frustration with government/Corruption (Net)
1	1	--	1	Government ethics/scandals/corruption
*	--	--	--	Partisan politics/Party bickering
*	*	--	--	Campaigns/elections
1	1	3	*	Other frustration with government mentions
2	5	2	1	Morality issues (Net)
2	4	1	*	Abortion
*	--	1	--	Same sex marriage/gay marriage
*	1	--	--	Moral issues (general)
*	1	--	--	Other mentions moral issues, values issues
2	1	3	4	Environmental issues/pollution/global warming
1	--	1	*	Seniors/retirement issues (not Medicare/health care)
*	1	--	--	Crime/violence
4	6	3	5	Other
9	8	7	12	Don't know/Refused
(n=873)	(n=262)	(n=317)	(n=228)	

Note: Table will add to more than 100% due to multiple responses.

Q.1b Thinking ahead to the November 2008 presidential election, what is the single most important issue in your choice for president? **IF RESPONDENT GIVES ONE ISSUE PROBE FOR SECOND:** Is there another issue you'd like to hear about? (**OPEN-END**)

Based on Half Sample (n=897)

<u>Total RV</u>	<u>Rep RV</u>	<u>Dem RV</u>	<u>Ind RV</u>	
43	41	41	46	Economic issues (Net)
31	27	28	35	Economy (general)
5	5	6	4	Jobs
*	--	1	--	Poverty/homelessness
8	10	7	10	Other economy mentions
29	18	37	30	Iraq/War in Iraq
21	11	27	19	Health care (Net)
13	6	18	12	Health care (general)
5	2	5	5	The uninsured/access to health care/universal coverage
2	1	1	2	Health care costs
1	*	1	--	Medicare/Elderly
2	1	2	1	Other health care mentions
13	13	16	11	Frustration with government/Corruption (Net)
4	4	5	3	Government ethics/scandals/corruption
*	*	--	*	Partisan politics/Party bickering
*	*	--	--	Campaigns/elections
10	10	11	8	Other frustration with government mentions
9	21	1	11	Terrorism/National security (Net)
7	15	1	8	National security
3	7	*	3	Terrorism/war on terror
7	12	3	6	Immigration/illegal immigration
7	9	7	4	Taxes
5	12	2	3	Morality issues (Net)
2	6	1	1	Abortion
1	2	*	*	Moral issues (general)
*	1	--	--	Same sex marriage/gay marriage
*	--	--	1	Stem cells
2	3	1	1	Other mentions moral issues, values issues
4	*	5	7	Education/schools
3	3	5	2	Social Security
3	4	2	4	Budget deficit/national debt
3	4	1	2	Foreign affairs/not Iraq (Net)
*	1	--	*	Middle East
*	*	--	--	Iran
2	4	1	2	Other foreign affairs mentions
1	1	2	1	Gas prices/Energy (Net)
1	1	2	1	Gas prices
1	*	2	1	Environmental issues/pollution/global warming
*	--	*	1	Seniors/retirement issues (not Medicare/health care)
*	--	*	*	Crime/violence
*	*	--	--	Local issues
5	4	7	5	Other
11	11	11	12	Don't know/Refused
(n=897)	(n=260)	(n=309)	(n=253)	

Note: Table will add to more than 100% due to multiple responses.

2. When you say the economy is an important issue, can you tell me more specifically what you mean? (OPEN-END)

Based on those who gave economy-related responses to Q1a or Q1b (n=813)

<u>Total RV</u>	<u>Rep RV</u>	<u>Dem RV</u>	<u>Ind RV</u>	
31	21	39	30	Jobs (Net)
18	12	25	14	More jobs/unemployment
5	2	3	8	Jobs going overseas
5	5	6	5	Better jobs/better wages/increase minimum wage
5	3	6	5	Other job mentions
18	20	16	20	Economic issues (Net)
11	13	10	10	Economy (general)
7	7	6	10	“Fix bad economy”
*	*	--	--	“Keep good economy”
13	9	17	10	Housing (Net)
6	4	8	5	Mortgage crisis
5	3	6	3	Cost of housing (general)
3	3	4	2	Other housing mentions
12	13	11	13	Possible recession/fear of recession
8	10	5	8	National debt
8	8	7	8	Inflation/rising cost of living
5	7	4	4	Gas prices
5	8	5	5	Taxes
3	3	3	4	Stock market
3	1	4	2	Health care/health insurance costs
2	1	1	4	Social Security/Retirement
2	*	2	3	Devaluation of the dollar
2	2	2	2	Interest rates
2	2	1	2	Balance of trade
1	1	3	1	Poverty/homelessness
1	2	1	2	Small business
1	--	2	1	Cost of Iraq war
1	1	1	2	Class inequality/gap between rich and poor
*	--	*	1	Cost of education
11	12	10	12	Other economic mention
2	2	2	1	Other non-economic mention
(n=813)	(n=223)	(n=301)	(n=237)	

Note: Table will add to more than 100% due to multiple responses.

3. Now thinking specifically about HEALTH CARE, which ONE of the following health care issues would you most like to hear the presidential candidates talk about? **(READ AND RANDOMIZE 1-4, ACCEPT ONE RESPONSE ONLY)**

<u>Total RV</u>	<u>Rep RV</u>	<u>Dem RV</u>	<u>Ind RV</u>	
37	45	31	37	Reducing the costs of health care and health insurance
31	16	43	32	Expanding health insurance coverage for the uninsured
17	21	13	18	Improving the quality of care and reducing medical errors
7	10	7	6	Reducing spending on government health programs like Medicare and Medicaid
3	3	2	2	None of these (VOL.)
2	3	1	2	Other issue (VOL.)
2	2	1	2	(DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused

Thinking about your choice for president...

- 4a. Overall, which of the following will be MOST important when you decide who to vote for. Will it be...**(ROTATE:** (the candidates' stands on the issues) or (the candidates' personal characteristics, including leadership abilities, character, values, and experience)?

Based on Half Sample (n=873)

<u>Total RV</u>	<u>Rep RV</u>	<u>Dem RV</u>	<u>Ind RV</u>	
45	35	50	51	The candidates' stands on the issues
39	48	37	31	The candidates' personal characteristics, including leadership abilities, character, values, and experience
12	14	10	13	Both (VOL.)
2	1	1	3	Neither/something else (VOL.)
2	1	3	1	(DO NOT READ) Don't know/ Refused
(n=873)	(262)	(317)	(228)	

- 4b. Overall, which of the following will be MOST important when you decide who to vote for. Will it be the candidates' ... **(READ AND RANDOMIZE 1-5)?**

Based on Half Sample (n=897)

<u>Total RV</u>	<u>Rep RV</u>	<u>Dem RV</u>	<u>Ind RV</u>	
29	17	37	30	Ability to bring about change
22	24	21	26	Stands on issues
18	30	10	17	Personal morals and values
14	12	17	13	Experience
2	1	3	2	Chances of getting elected
9	9	9	9	All/some combination of above (VOL.)
2	3	1	2	Neither/something else (VOL.)
3	3	2	2	(DO NOT READ) Don't know/ Refused
(n=897)	(260)	(309)	(253)	

5. Thinking about all of the candidates for president in 2008, regardless of political party or who you intend to vote for, which candidate BEST represents your own views on health care? **(OPEN-END)**

<u>Total RV</u>	<u>Rep RV</u>	<u>Dem RV</u>	<u>Ind RV</u>	
26	7	45	22	Hillary Clinton
19	8	28	19	Barack Obama
11	24	2	11	John McCain
4	10	*	3	Mike Huckabee
2	5	*	1	Mitt Romney
2	2	--	3	Ron Paul
1	1	1	1	John Edwards
*	--	*	*	Dennis Kucinich
*	--	--	*	Ralph Nader
*	*	*	1	Rudy Giuliani
*	*	--	--	George W. Bush
*	*	--	--	Other candidate
2	--	3	2	Democratic candidate, non-specific
1	2	1	*	Republican candidate, non-specific
7	11	2	9	No candidate represents my views
9	11	7	11	Can't name a candidate
16	18	11	17	Don't know/Refused

6. And still thinking about all of the candidates for president, regardless of political party and whether or not you agree with their views, which candidate do you think is placing the BIGGEST EMPHASIS on health care issues? **(OPEN-END)**

<u>Total RV</u>	<u>Rep RV</u>	<u>Dem RV</u>	<u>Ind RV</u>	
52	46	58	51	Hillary Clinton
15	11	19	14	Barack Obama
2	5	*	2	John McCain
1	1	*	1	Mike Huckabee
1	*	*	1	Ron Paul
*	1	--	*	Mitt Romney
*	--	*	1	John Edwards
*	*	--	--	George W. Bush
*	--	--	*	Other candidate
2	2	2	2	Democratic candidate, non-specific
*	*	*	--	Republican candidate, non-specific
4	5	1	6	No candidate is placing a big emphasis on health care
7	9	5	6	Can't name a candidate
16	19	12	16	Don't know/Refused

7. Thinking about how the issue of health care might affect your vote for president, would you ...
(CATEGORIES READ IN ORDER AND REVERSE ORDER)

<u>Total RV</u>	<u>Rep RV</u>	<u>Dem RV</u>	<u>Ind RV</u>	
11	9	14	10	ONLY vote for a candidate who shares your views on health care (or)
70	62	74	74	Consider a candidate's position on health care as just one of many important factors (or)
15	24	9	11	Not see health care as a major issue in your vote (or)
5	4	3	6	(DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused

8. Which ONE of the following three things would you like to see in a health care reform proposal from a presidential candidate? Would you want your candidate to propose... **(READ)?**

READ IF NECESSARY: Which would you want your presidential candidate to propose - a major plan OR a more limited plan OR to keep things as they are?

<u>Total RV</u>	<u>Rep RV</u>	<u>Dem RV</u>	<u>Ind RV</u>	
47	26	65	47	A new health plan that would make a major effort to provide health insurance for all or nearly all of the uninsured BUT would involve a substantial increase in spending
28	35	24	27	A new health plan that is more limited and would cover only some of the uninsured BUT would involve less new spending
15	28	6	12	Keeping things basically as they are?
10	10	5	14	(DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused

On another subject...

9. Would you describe the state of the nation's economy these days as... **(READ)**

<u>Total RV</u>	<u>Rep RV</u>	<u>Dem RV</u>	<u>Ind RV</u>	
1	3	*	1	Excellent
21	36	11	18	Good
44	45	44	42	Not so good OR
34	16	45	39	Poor?
1	*	*	1	(DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused

10. For each of the following, please tell me whether it is a major reason, a minor reason or not a reason why you rate the economy as (IF Q9=3: not so good/IF Q9=4: poor). (First/Next)... **(READ AND RANDOMIZE)?**

READ FOR FIRST ITEM, REPEAT AS NECESSARY: Is this a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason you rate the economy as (IF Q9=3: not so good/IF Q9=4: poor)?

Based on registered voters who describe the economy as “not so good” or “poor” (n=1,359)

	<u>Major Reason</u>	<u>Minor Reason</u>	<u>Not a Reason</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>
a. The cost of health care and health insurance				
	Total RV:	69	24	6
	Rep RV (n=312):	55	35	10
	Dem RV (n=556):	77	17	5
	Ind RV (n=384):	67	25	6
b. The cost of education				
	Total RV:	51	36	11
	Rep RV (n=312):	43	40	15
	Dem RV (n=556):	56	32	10
	Ind RV (n=384):	51	39	10
c. Gas prices				
	Total RV:	77	19	3
	Rep RV (n=312):	72	23	4
	Dem RV (n=556):	81	17	2
	Ind RV (n=384):	73	22	5
d. The state of the housing market				
	Total RV:	70	21	6
	Rep RV (n=312):	69	22	6
	Dem RV (n=556):	75	17	5
	Ind RV (n=384):	66	26	7
e. The federal budget deficit				
	Total RV:	75	16	6
	Rep RV (n=312):	66	22	8
	Dem RV (n=556):	80	13	5
	Ind RV (n=384):	76	15	6
f. The cost of living in general				
	Total RV:	75	20	3
	Rep RV (n=312):	70	23	5
	Dem RV (n=556):	78	19	2
	Ind RV (n=384):	73	22	3

Q.10 continued on next page

Q.10 continued

10. For each of the following, please tell me whether it is a major reason, a minor reason or not a reason why you rate the economy as (IF Q9=3: not so good/IF Q9=4: poor). (First/Next)... **(READ AND RANDOMIZE)?**

READ FOR FIRST ITEM, REPEAT AS NECESSARY: Is this a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason you rate the economy as (IF Q9=3: not so good/IF Q9=4: poor)?

Based on registered voters who describe the economy as “not so good” or “poor” (n=1,359)

	<u>Major Reason</u>	<u>Minor Reason</u>	<u>Not a Reason</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>
g. The availability of good jobs				
	Total RV:	70	22	6
	Rep RV (n=312):	60	28	9
	Dem RV (n=556):	76	18	5
	Ind RV (n=384):	68	24	6
h. Interest rates				
	Total RV:	50	35	12
	Rep RV (n=312):	44	38	16
	Dem RV (n=556):	59	30	8
	Ind RV (n=384):	42	40	15
i. The state of the stock market				
	Total RV:	42	34	14
	Rep RV (n=312):	43	37	12
	Dem RV (n=556):	43	32	15
	Ind RV (n=384):	41	37	14
j. News about a potential economic recession				
	Total RV:	63	27	8
	Rep RV (n=312):	61	31	7
	Dem RV (n=556):	68	22	8
	Ind RV (n=384):	58	31	8

11. You named several things as major reasons why you think the economy is not doing well. If you had to choose, which of these would you say is the MAIN influence on your judgment of the economy. Is it... **(READ ITEMS RATED MAJOR REASONS)**

*Based on registered voters who describe the economy as “not so good” or “poor” (n=1,359)
Note: Includes those who rated only one as a “major reason”*

<u>Total RV</u>	<u>Rep RV</u>	<u>Dem RV</u>	<u>Ind RV</u>	
21	22	21	18	The cost of living in general
19	14	21	19	The federal budget deficit
13	11	12	16	The availability of good jobs
10	9	11	11	Gas prices
10	11	10	11	News about a potential economic recession
9	15	9	6	The state of the housing market
5	5	5	6	The cost of health care
2	3	2	3	The state of the stock market
2	3	1	1	Interest rates
1	*	2	1	The cost of education
3	3	3	2	None of these/Other (VOL.)
1	1	*	*	None named a “major reason”
4	3	3	4	(DO NOT READ) Don’t know/Refused

And now thinking about you and your family...

12. Which of the following is the single most important economic issue facing you and your family? If it’s a different economic issue than the ones on the list, just tell me that. Is it **(READ AND RANDOMIZE 1-8)**

<u>Total RV</u>	<u>Rep RV</u>	<u>Dem RV</u>	<u>Ind RV</u>	
26	23	27	25	Inflation or rising prices overall
13	20	7	13	High taxes
11	15	9	12	The price of gasoline
10	6	12	11	Health care costs
9	7	12	9	Problems getting a good-paying job or a raise in pay
6	4	7	7	The cost of housing
6	7	6	7	Difficulty saving for retirement
6	7	8	3	Credit card debt and other personal debt
2	2	3	2	Something else (VOL.)
8	7	6	9	All of these (VOL.)
2	1	3	1	None of these (VOL.)
1	1	1	1	(DO NOT READ) Don’t know/refused

13. If (INSERT – READ AND ROTATE), do you think this would (ROTATE: help or hurt) the overall economic situation in the U.S., or wouldn't it make much difference?

	<u>Help</u>	<u>Hurt</u>	<u>No difference</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. all Americans had health insurance coverage				
Total RV:	53	18	22	7
Rep RV (n=522):	36	29	27	8
Dem RV (n=626):	69	10	18	4
Ind RV (n=481):	52	18	22	8
b. the cost of health care in this country was significantly lowered				
Total RV:	64	6	25	6
Rep RV (n=522):	57	9	29	5
Dem RV (n=626):	70	4	22	4
Ind RV (n=481):	66	6	22	6

14. Next, I'm going to read you a list of things that some people worry about and others do not. I'd like you to tell me how worried you are about each of the following things. (First/Next,) how worried are you about... (INSERT – READ AND ROTATE)?

READ FOR FIRST ITEM AND THEN AS NECESSARY: Are you very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not at all worried?

	<u>Very worried</u>	<u>Somewhat worried</u>	<u>Not too worried</u>	<u>Not at all worried</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. Having to pay more for your health care or health insurance					
Total RV:	34	33	17	13	2
Rep RV (n=522):	26	34	23	16	1
Dem RV (n=626):	41	32	14	11	2
Ind RV (n=481):	34	36	15	13	2
b. Your income not keeping up with rising prices					
Total RV:	39	33	16	10	1
Rep RV (n=522):	27	35	23	15	1
Dem RV (n=626):	48	34	10	8	1
Ind RV (n=481):	38	34	17	10	*

DEMOGRAPHICS BASED ON TOTAL REGISTERED VOTERS:

(READ) Finally, I have just a few questions we will use to describe the people who took part in our survey...

D1. RECORD RESPONDENT'S SEX

48 Male
52 Female

D2. What is your age? (RECORD EXACT AGE AS TWO-DIGIT CODE.)

14 18-29
37 30-49
27 50-64
19 65 and older
2 Undesignated

D3. In general, would you say your health is excellent, very good, good, only fair, or poor?

22 Excellent
32 Very good
29 Good
12 Only fair
4 Poor
1 Don't know/Refused

D4. In politics today, do you consider yourself a [ROTATE: Republican, Democrat/Democrat, Republican], an Independent, or what?

28 Republican
38 Democrat
26 Independent
4 Other/None (VOL.)
4 Don't know/Refused

D4b. Do you lean more towards the [ROTATE: Republican Party or the Democratic Party/Democratic Party or the Republican Party]?

Party ID including Leaners

38 Republican/Lean Republican
50 Democrat/Lean Democratic
13 Refused to Lean

D5. Some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you currently registered to vote at your present address?

100 Yes
-- No
-- Don't know/Refused

D5b. How often would you say you vote in presidential elections...always, nearly always, part of the time, or seldom?

80 Always
11 Nearly always
4 Part of the time
3 Seldom
1 Never vote (vol.)
1 Other (vol.)
* Don't know/Refused

D5c. Did you happen to vote in your state's recent presidential primary or caucus in January or February, or did you skip that one?

D5d. Did you vote in the [ROTATE: Republican/Democratic] primary or caucus, OR the [ROTATE: Republican/Democratic] primary or caucus?

Based on registered voters in states that had a primary/caucus on or before Feb 5th (n=1,042)

57 Total voted in a primary or caucus
23 Voted in a Republican primary or caucus
31 Voted in a Democratic primary or caucus
4 DK/Ref.
41 Did not vote in a primary or caucus
1 Don't know/Refused

D6. Would you say your views in most political matters are liberal, moderate or conservative?

22 Liberal
37 Moderate
37 Conservative
3 Don't know
1 Refused

D7. Are you NOW self-employed, working full-time for an employer, working part-time for an employer, are you retired, or are you not employed for pay?

13 Self-employed
36 Full-time for an employer
9 Part-time for an employer
24 Retired
11 Not employed
2 Homemaker (VOL.)
1 Student (VOL.)
3 Disabled (VOL.)
1 **(DO NOT READ)** Don't know/Refused

D8. Are you, yourself, now covered by any form of health insurance or health plan or do you not have health insurance at this time? A health plan would include any private insurance plan through your employer or a plan that you purchased yourself, as well as a government program like Medicare or (Medicaid)? **USE VARIANT WORDING IN CALIFORNIA:** (Medi-Cal)

87 Yes, insured
12 No, not insured
* Don't know/Refused

D9. What is the LAST grade or class that you COMPLETED in school? **(DO NOT READ)**

2 None, or grade 1-8
7 High school incomplete (grades 9-11)
30 High school graduate (grade 12 or GED certificate)
4 Technical, trade or vocational school AFTER high school
25 Some college, no four-year degree (includes associate degree)
19 College graduate (B.S., B.A., or other four-year degree)
13 Post-graduate or professional schooling after college (e.g., toward a Master's degree or Ph.D; law or medical school)
1 Refused

D10. Do you have any children under age 18 living at home, or not?

37 Yes
62 No
* Don't know/Refused

D11. Are you currently married, living with a partner, widowed, divorced, separated, or have you never been married?

59 Married
5 Living with a partner
9 Divorced
1 Separated
10 Widowed
15 Never been married
1 Undesignated

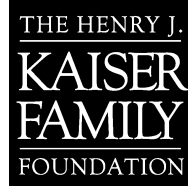
D12. Are you, yourself, of Hispanic or Latino background, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or some other Spanish background?

D13. What is your race? Are you white, black, Asian or some other race? **(IF RESPONDENT SAYS HISPANIC ASK: Do you consider yourself a white Hispanic or a black Hispanic? CODE AS WHITE (1) OR BLACK (2). IF RESPONDENTS REFUSED TO PICK WHITE OR BLACK HISPANIC, RECORD HISPANIC AS "OTHER," CODE 4)**

76 White, Non Hispanic
22 Total Non-White
10 Black or African-American
8 Hispanic
2 Asian
1 Other or mixed race
2 Undesignated

D14. Last year -- that is, in 2007 -- what was your total family income from all sources, before taxes? Just stop me when I get to the right category. **(READ)**

13 Less than \$20,000
11 \$20,000 to less than \$30,000
18 \$30,000 to less than \$50,000
19 \$50,000 to less than \$75,000
12 \$75,000 to less than \$100,000
14 \$100,000 or more
3 **(DO NOT READ)** Don't know
10 **(DO NOT READ)** Refused



The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation

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