Ohio Legislative Report

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'Ohio Legislative Report'

Ohio Legislative Report

Is published electronically at the beginning of each month to report on the latest information about legislative issues taking place in Columbus that could affect the lives of Veterans, Military Personnel, their families, and Veteran Organizations in Ohio.

It is emailed at no charge to all who would like to receive it.

To subscribe, send your name and email address to:
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Editor: David K. Root

Statehouse Happenings

It was spring break time for our legislators but not too many ventured down to sunny Florida like the college kids do. Or at least they aren't talking about it.

Most of Ohio's legislators spend many hours going door to door campaigning, or attending banquets, or fundraising. The primary election in May and the General election in November will keep them busy for a while.

The second week in May will see them all in the statehouse again working hard to get as much done as possible before the summer break begins. A short month and a half is all they have.

The House did not have any hearings, but the Veterans and Military Development Committee did travel to Allen County and met with the folks at several locations. On their afternoon agenda were TASK Force Lima, Regional Growth Partnership, Ohio National Guard, Lima Chamber of Commerce, Ohio Means Jobs, - Allen County, and a Federal Update.

The senators had four hearings in three committees. The senators also introduced four bills and three resolutions.

The representatives introduced two bills and two resolutions.

Hearings Held for Veteran/Military Legislation

April 13-17

On Tuesday morning the Senate Workforce Development Committee heard sponsor testimony from Representatives **Ty D. Mathews** (HD-83) and **Nick Santucci** (HD-64). Their bill was introduced in February last year to establish the Ohio Defense and Space Commission and list their responsibilities and duties. The new commission could make grants to support economic development related to the defense industry, The bill would establishes the Ohio Defense Fund and specifies allocation requirements for money in the fund, and require that any revenue from interest earned on bonds of the State of Israel, in the state treasury, be deposited into the Ohio Defense Fund. The bill had five hearings in the House Veterans and Military Development Committee before being voted on by the House with a vote of 82 to 10.

Sen. Mathews & Santucci

The Senate Select Committee on Gaming held a meeting the same morning for sponsor testimony on House Bill 476.

Continued on next Page...

Representatives **Meredith Craig** (HD-77) and **David Thomas** (HD-65) introduced the bill last September and it passed on the House Floor in November 85-0. The purpose of the bill is to authorize online raffles and make related changes to the Charitable Gaming Law.

Reps Craig & Thomas
*Stock photos of Ohio Legislature

The next day the Senate Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety Committee met in the afternoon to hear testimony on two bills. They were HB 297 and SB 218. There were no witnesses for SB 218, there for its fifth hearing, After a motion to favorably pass it, a vote was taken and it passed 6 to 0. The bill was introduced in June by Senator **Kristina D. Roegner** (SD-27) to exempt family child care providers certified by the U.S. armed forces from the law governing the regulation of child care providers, including the requirement that certain family child care homes be licensed by the Department of Children and Youth.

Amended House Bill 297 was scheduled for its third hearing but there was no testimony to be heard or read by the members. The bill was introduced by Representatives **Kevin Ritter** (HD-94) and **Johnathan Newman** (HD-80) one year ago and passed in the House in November 89-0. The bill would increase the amount a county may provide to military and veterans organizations and civic organizations for Memorial Day expenses.

April 16,2026
The Veterans and Military Development Committee traveled to Allen County to highlight Ohio's strong legacy in military service and national defense and learn about military and defense economy.

In The Month of May

Members of the General Assembly will be back to work in their offices and in the statehouse on the second week of May. During the next weeks they will be working they will be pushing hard to introduce new bills, have their bills scheduled for hearings, and get their bills past and to the governor.

They have seven weeks to get as much as they can done before they begin their summer break on July One. They know that they don't return until after the November election and then they only have a few weeks until the end of the136th General Assembly which means that all bills not passed will die. Bottom line –they have about two and a half months and then it's over.

May of course has the Ohio Primary Election, that will tell us who will be on the November ballot, It is also a big military month with lots of wonderful holidays before the end of the month and Memorial Day. They should all be more interesting and eventful because of the 250 Anniversary Celebration going on.

See the list on Page Four.

If you want to tell our readers your thoughts on Ohio Legislation for veterans and military send us your letter-To-The Editor –we love getting them.

—OLR—

A look at what the bills say... In a Nutshell

Summaries from the Office of Research and Drafting

Two bills have been introduced in the House that would benefit the many Veteran Service Organizations in Ohio. One will help them with Memorial Day expenses and the other will allow them to help veterans with basic life needs.

House Bill 297 was introduced a year ago to double the expense money provided by County Commissions for VSOs. It has not been increased since the 124th General Assembly did so more than 24 years ago.

HB 297 was passed by the House in November with an 89 to 0 vote. Since then, it has had three hearings in the Senate Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety Committee.

House Bill 721 was introduced in February and will establish a state grant program. The bill was referred to the House Veterans and Military Development Committee in March but has not had any hearings at this time.

House Bill 297-

The Detailed Analysis

As Passed by the House

Memorial Day expenses

Veterans' organizations

The bill increases, from $500 to $1,000 the amount that a county may provide to certain organizations to defray Memorial Day expenses. Under continuing law, the board of county commissioners must annually appropriate, and advance upon application made by certain organizations, a sum of money to defray the expenses of Memorial Day. Eligible organizations include each garrison or naval branch of the Army and Navy Union, U.S.A. and each chartered post, garrison, or naval branch of any organization of veterans recognized and chartered by the Congress, in the county.

The organization applying for an advance of funds must submit to the board of county commissioners, with its application, a statement of expenses incurred up to the time the application for an advance is submitted. The organization receiving money from this appropriation must file a sworn statement accounting for the complete expenditure of the funds. Any unexpended funds must be returned to the county.

Civic organizations

The bill increases from $100 to $200 the amount a county may appropriate to a civic organization for Memorial Day expenses. Under continuing law, if any veterans' organization posts have become extinct or unable to attend to Memorial Day services, the county appropriation must be made to a post or unit of the sons of union veterans of the civil war, woman's relief corps, or daughters of veterans, or to any civic or patriotic organization willing and able to undertake and perform the work of commemoration and observance of Memorial Day. Under current law, if the appropriation by the county is made to a civic organization, it must not exceed $100.

House Bill 721-

The Detailed Analysis

As Introduced

Veterans Organization Grant Program

The bill establishes the Veterans Organization Grant Program within the Department of Development. Under the program, the Director of Development, upon request from an organization eligible to receive money, may annually provide a $1,000 grant to the organization for the purpose of financing celebrations honoring veterans or for providing

See *Nut Shell* on Page Five...

Details of every bill can be found on the Ohio Legislature website. You can check the status of bills as they travel thorough committees and sessions, voting results, and read the testimonies of witnesses.

To find a bill put the bill number in the search bar and go from there.

Find the Ohio Legislature's website here:
www.legislature.ohio.gov

READERS WRITE

What Will Replaces Ohio Property Tax

We have all seen or heard about the petition to abolish the property taxes in Ohio. It looks great on paper, but we need to think about EVERYTHING that property taxes go towards. Fire Departments; especially Volunteer departments, public schools, public libraries and the County Veteran Service Offices in every county, just to name a few.

I'm all for getting rid of the property taxes, but we need to do so in a fiscally responsible way. Figure out how each portion will be paid and phase it out, lowering the property taxes as it works towards being gone. But income taxes and other taxes will increase with the abolishment, as that would be the most likely way to cover the programs currently supported by property taxes.

So before signing that petition or voting for abolishing the tax (if enough signatures are obtained), dig and find out how many programs can be lost without the property taxes.

Andrea Neutzling
VFW M.A.L.

Key Military Holidays and Observances in May

- ⇒ Silver Star Service Banner Day (May 1): Honors wounded, ill, and injured veterans.
- ⇒ Loyalty Day (May 1): Recognizes loyalty to the U.S. and the heritage of American freedom.
- ⇒ VE Day (Victory in Europe) (May 8): Marks the end of WWII in Europe.
- ⇒ Military Spouse Appreciation Day (Friday before Mother's Day): Recognizes the sacrifices of military spouses.
- ⇒ Children of Fallen Patriots Day (May 13): Honors the children of military members who died in service.
- ⇒ Armed Forces Day (Third Saturday in May): Pays tribute to men and women currently serving in all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces.
- ⇒ Memorial Day (Last Monday in May): A federal holiday honoring those who died while serving in the military.
- ⇒ Month of the Military Caregiver: Observes the dedication of caregivers to service members.

SOUND OFF

There are 61 house bills and 26 senate bills that have been introduced through April 30 and more will be added before the end of the year. That is more than 100 bills that directly affect Ohio's veterans, military personnel, or their families.

These bills attempt to address a number of issues... naming streets after fallen veterans, reducing veteran's property tax, allowing surviving spruces to purchase Purple Heart license plates, giving business owners tax credits for hiring veterans, improving the Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program, creating a Veterans Organization Grant Program, and giving veterans a larger discount at Ohio State Parks, to name a few.

With the end of the 136th General Assembly just months away, what do you think are the issues that our elected officials should get passed into law before December 31 when they will die if not passed.

~Sound Off~

OL Report wants to hear from our readers. Tell us what you think is the most important legislation our Ohio Legislators should pass before the end of the 136th General Assembly.

Email your thoughts and suggestions to oh.leg.report@gmail.com We will publish all suggestions in the July issue. We reserve the right to edit all entrees for clarity, length, and taste. All emails must be received by June 14.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

OLR welcomes letters to the editor

- * Letters are limited to 250 words.
- * Letters will be subject to editing for accuracy, clarity, length, and taste.
- * Letters must include writer's name, address, and phone number for the purpose of verification.

EMAIL YOUR LETTERS TO:
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Nutshell, from Page Three

veterans with basic necessities, including food. Under the bill, an eligible organization is:

> ...each garrison or naval branch of the Army and Navy Union, U.S.A. and to each chartered post, garrison, or naval branch of any organization of veterans recognized and chartered by the congress.

The bill requires the Director of Development to establish the procedures by which eligible organizations may apply for a grant, and must adopt rules, under the Administrative Procedure Act, for the administration of the program. The rules must require that each organization that receives a grant annually file a sworn statement with the Director accounting for the complete expenditure of the funds. The annual sworn statement must be provided until the funds from the grant have been exhausted.

Appropriation

The bill appropriates, to the Department of Development, $225,000 for FY 2026 and $225,000 for FY 2027, to be used to issue grants to qualifying veterans organizations.

—OLR—

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See you at the People's House!

The Ohio Statehouse is where history happens!

- The Ohio Statehouse is open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; weekends from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; closed holidays.
- The Capitol Café is open 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on weekdays.
- The Ohio Statehouse Museum is open, and admission is free. Free guided tours are available.

- For education and museum information, contact 614-728-2697.
- Literature is available online and in the Map Room easily accessible from the Third Street entrance.
- Contact 888-OHIO-123 for more information.
- For more information about the Ohio Statehouse visit OhioStatehouse.org.

Statehouse Announcements

The Ohio Statehouse will be closed for maintenance on Sunday, May 10 and Sunday, May 17.
The Parking Garage will be open on those days.
The Ohio Statehouse will be closed on May 25 for Memorial Day.

-EXHIBITS-

Freedom Train
March - July 2026
Governor's Hallway
In 1976, the Freedom Train moved across America for the nation's Bicentennial, carrying artifacts that told the story of 200 years of history. This exhibit brings the train's journey to life with photographer Warren Motts's powerful images and rare antiques, including an original side panel from the famous train itself!

Replicas of the American Revolution
Feb. 27 - Dec. 31, 2026
Thomas Worthington Center
The exhibit contains uniforms of the Continental Army and the Virginia Militia, a fighting kit, tomahawk, sword, coins and more! The items are shown courtesy of Steve Conrad and the Sons of the American Revolution.

Mapping the American Revolution
Map Room
Jan. 15 - July 28, 2026
Tony Holbrook, longtime member of the Brigade of the American Revolution and collector of American Revolution artifacts, shares his 18th century surveying equipment with the Statehouse. This exhibit includes maps from the time period of the Revolution, as well as maps made in the 18th century manner by Tony himself.

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Statehouse Museum Shop

Looking for Civil War or President Lincoln-themed items? The Statehouse Museum Shop has a plethora of objects that can satisfied that search.

See mini-cannon replicas, coins, Gettysburg Address copies and depictions of Lincoln himself.

Capitol Cafe

Located on the ground floor of the Ohio Statehouse, the Capitol Cafe is open 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

LEGISLATION INTRODUCED IN APRIL

SB 401 was introduced on April 1 by Senator **William P. DeMora** (SD-25).

The Bill would enact section 5.63 of the Revised Code to designate February 8th as "General William Tecumseh Sherman Day."

It was referred to the Senate Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety.

SB 402 was introduced on April 1 by Senator **William P. DeMora** (SD-25).

The Bill would enact section 5.63 of the Revised Code to designate March 6 as "General Philip Sheridan Day."

It was referred to the Senate Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety.

SB 416 was introduced on April 1 by Senator **Thomas F. Patton** (SD-24).

The bill would amend sections 3.17 and 3313.11 and to enact section 3313.111 of the Revised Code regarding school district board of education members deployed on active duty in the United States Armed Forces or Ohio National Guard.

It was referred to the Senate Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety.

SB 417 was introduced on April 1 by Senator Theresa Gavarone (SD-2).

The Bill would amend sections 123.01, 123.17, and 5913.09 and to enact section 123.012 of the Revised Code to authorize the state to enter into an enhanced lease agreement, with a private entity, to utilize unproductive and unused state real property, to empower a board of trustees of a state university and the Adjutant General to lease land, and to name this act the Advancing Strategic State and Military Asset Efficiency and Transformation (ASSET) Act.

It was referred to the Senate Finance Committee.

HR 378 was introduced on April 7 by Representative **Kevin D. Miller** (HD-69).

The resolution was memory of Captain Seth R. Koval.

It was adopted by the House the same day.

SR 324 was introduced on April 9 by Senators **Casey Weinstein** (SD-28) and **Terry Johnson** (SD-14).

The resolution was to recognize April 2026 as the Month of the Military Child in Ohio.

It was adopted by the Senate the same day.

HR 390 was introduced on April 13 by Representative **Brian Lampton** (HD-70).

The resolution praised the Beavercreek High School Air Force Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps on its remarkable success and salute its members as exemplary citizens.

It was adopted by the House the same day.

SR 332 was introduced on April 14 by Senator **Kyle Koehler** (SD-10).

The resolution was honoring the Beavercreek High School Air Force JROTC on winning two 2026 U.S. Air Force Open Drill Nationals championships.

It was adopted by the Senate the same day.

HB 823 was introduced on April 15 by Representatives **David Thomas** (HD-65) and **Ty D. Mathews** (HD-83).

The bill would amend sections 3.07, 3.17, 305.03, 503.241, and 3313.11 and to enact section 3.171 of the Revised Code to allow an elected official who is deployed on active military duty to retain the official's position and to attend meetings virtually.

The bill has not been referred to a committee yet.

HB 824 was introduced on April 15 by Representative **Sean P. Brennan** (HD-14).

The Bill would amend sections 3.07, 3.17, 305.03, 503.241, and 3313.11 and to enact section 3.171 of the Revised Code to allow an elected official who is deployed on active military duty to retain the official's position.

The bill has not been referred to a committee yet.

Legislation In The 136th Ohio General Assembly

Pertaining to Ohio Veterans, Active Duty, Reserve & National Guard and Their Families

HB 1 Enact Ohio Property Protection Act
HB 22 Authorize homestead exemption for surviving military spouses
HB 27 Designate Specialist Jacob A. Ashton Memorial Bridge
HB 40 Increase disabled veteran enhanced homestead exemption
HB 50 To designate a portion of SR 47 the "PFC John Wayne Richard Memorial Highway."
HB 56 To designate a portion of SR 421 the "CPL David James Amheiser Memorial Highway."
HB 61 Modify homestead exemption, owner-occupancy tax credit amount
HB 95 Support members of Ohio Veterans Education Council
HB 96 Make state operating appropriations for FY 2026-27
HB 135 Prohibit source of income discrimination in rental housing
HB 171 Designate a portion of State Route 28 the “CPT Louis John Speidel Memorial Highway.”
HB 192 Enact the Community Pharmacy Protection Act
HB 198 Regulate manufacture, sale of inhalable, ingestible hemp products
HB 204 Designate 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion Day
HB 228 To designate a portion of I 280 the "SSG Jack W. Coy Veterans Memorial Highway."
HB 234 Designate Cpl. Robert Dockstader Memorial Highway
HB 259 Designate Captain Joshua Michael McClimans Memorial Highway
HB 267 Regards creation, display of veterans benefit and services poster
HB 290 Enact the Atmosphere Protection Act
HB 292 Establish the Ohio Defense Commission
HB 297 Regards funds provided by county for Memorial Day expenses
HB 316 Designate MSGT Norman Michael Kilbarger Memorial Highway
HB 335 Regards county budget commissions, property and sales tax, funds
HB 339 Allow surviving spouse to retain Purple Heart license plate
HB 344 Regards electronic instant bingo, lottery terminals; levy a tax
HB 360 Designate SPC Louis P. Shuster Memorial Interchange
HB 383 Designate Litten Brothers Memorial Highway
HB 384 Designate Staff Sergeant Melvin Trushel, Sr. Memorial Highway
HB 385 Designate PFC Thomas "Tommy" Pizzino Memorial Highway
HB 414 Designate Navy Seaman Jadwisiak Memorial Highway
HB 419 Create the Save22 license plate
HB 434 Exempt military driver's license applicants from driver's ed
HB 451 Designate CPL Lindsey William Mitchell Memorial Highway
HB 452 Designate 761st Tank Battalion Day
HB 464 Exempt military-certified child care providers from licensure
HB 476 Authorize online raffles under the Charitable Gaming Law
HB 497 Designate PFC James Vincent PottKotter Memorial Highway
HB 500 Designate a school JROTC program as a career-technical ed program
HB 516 Designate 83rd Ohio Division Memorial Highway
HB 529 Authorize tax credit if hiring veterans, service members, spouse
HB 576 Designate November as Veterans' month
HB 580 Designate PFC Francis Guillozet Memorial Highway
HB 600 Designate PFC Wetzel Eldridge USMC Memorial Highway

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HB 607 Name Spc. 4th Class Frank A. Herda, Medal of Honor Rec. Mem Hwy
HB 632 Allow driver's license or ID card to show Gold Star Family status
HB 660 Regards the Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program
HB 681 Designate Marine PFC Glenn S. Wingenbach, Jr. Memorial Highway
HB 708 Govern practice of providing veterans claim consulting assistance
HB 721 Establish the Veterans Organization Grant Program
HB 730 Make capital reappropriations for biennium ending June 30, 2028
HB 731 Create the Land of U.S. Grant license plate
HB 738 Designate PFC Chris Dixon Memorial Highway
HB 740 Regards creation, display of veterans medical benefits poster
HB 748 Establish the Armed Forces Reserve Component Scholarship Program
HB 759 Enact the Ohio Vets-Military Families Childcare Act
HB 771 Modify Governor's authority re: Ohio National Guard; deployments
HB 785 Enact the ASSET Act
HB 788 Regards paid military leave for law enforcement officers
HB 790 Miller, JDesignate the Honor and Remember flag; encourage flag display
HB 823 Regards deployed elected official's office, meeting attendance
HB 824 Allow deployed elected official to retain the official's position

HCR 7 To support the work of the Am. Leg. Buckeye Boys State and the Am. Leg. Aux. Buckeye Girls State
HCR 18 Urge Congress to recognize US troops who served in Honduras
HCR 20 Honor the United States Navy; commemorate its 250th anniversary
HCR 21 Recognize the 250th anniversary of the United States Marine Corps
HCR 23 Recognize 250th anniversary of United States Army, Chaplain Corps
HCR 27 Support use of state land for a new VA National cemetery

HR 133 Honoring Battery B, 1st Battalion, 134th Field Artillery Regiment on its One Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary
HR 243 Urge selection of Rickenbacker as KC-46 Pegasus operating base
HR 365 In memory of Master Sergeant Tyler Simmons
HR 370 In Memory of Captain Curtis J. Angst
HR 378 In memory of Captain Seth R. Koval
HR 390 Honoring Beavercreek High School Air Force JROTC as a 2026 U.S. Air Force Open Drill Nationals Champion

SB 17 Designate 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion Day
SB 21 Designate Rutherford B. Hayes Day
SB 39 Provide for informational poster on veteran benefits and services
SB 56 Revise medical and adult-use marijuana laws; levy marijuana taxes
SB 88 Enact the Ohio Property Protection Act
SB 92 Authorize total property tax exemption-totally disabled veterans
SB 148 Designate a portion of State Route 2 the “Specialist Lloyd Andrew Sellers Memorial Highway.”
SB 179 Verify veteran status of imprisoned individuals
SB 193 Designate Captain Joshua Michael McClimans Memorial Highway
SB 197 Legalize, tax internet gambling; make other Gambling Law changes
SB 218 Exempt armed forces-certified child care provider from licensure
SB 223 Require ODNR discount program for veterans, service members
SB 244 Designate Abbey Gate Remembrance Day
SB 253 Designate Black Ohioan Civil War Medal of Honor Recipient Day
SB 280 Allow registration of a humvee as a historical motor vehicle
SB 293 Revise deadline to return absent voter ballots
SB 302 Create the Land of U.S. Grant license plate
SB 346 Create the 1905 Wright Flyer III license plate

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SB 351 Allow deployed service member to attend public meetings virtually
SB 356 Temporarily increase the amount of the homestead exemptions
SB 362 Establish the Ohio Defense and Space Commission
SB 372 Make capital reappropriations for biennium ending June 30, 2028
SB 401 Designate General William Tecumseh Sherman Day
SB 402 Designate General Philip Sheridan Day
SB 416 Regards board of education members deployed on active duty
SB 417 Enact the ASSET Act

SCR 7 Urge Congress reissue DoD Civilian Retiree Identification Cards

SR 21 Urge Congress support military, veteran mental health treatment
SR 22 Urge federal govt reduce processing time-veteran disability claim
SR 52 Honoring the DAR Elizabeth Sherman Reese Chapter on its 150th Anniversary
SR 97 Observing April 2025 as the Month of the Military Child in Ohio
SR 123 Honoring Deborah A. Ashenhurst on her retirement from the OVDS
SR 192 Recognizing Rutherford B. Hayes Day in Ohio
SR 233 Honoring James W. Erisman on his One Hundredth Birthday
SR 299 In memory of Captain Seth R. Koval
SR 301 In memory of Captain Curtis J. Angst
SR 324 Recognizing the Month of the Military Child in Ohio, April 2026
SR 332 Honoring Beavercreek HS AFJROTC on winning two 2026 U.S. Air Force Open Drill Nationals championships

A bill is a document by which a member of the General Assembly proposes to enact a new law or amend or repeal an existing law. The term "bill" is used to refer to the document from the time it is drafted and delivered to the members until it is considered and approved by both the House and the Senate. After passing both houses, a bill becomes an "act" and must be presented to the Governor for acceptance or rejection. If accepted, or if the Governor does not take any action for ten days, it becomes a "law."

The details of every bill can be found on the Ohio Legislature website. You can also check the status of bills as they travel thorough committees and sessions, find out how the voting went, and read the testimony of every witness.

To find a bill type the bill number (example: SB 712 or HB 943) into the search bar.

You will find the Ohio Legislature's website here:
www.legislature.ohio.gov

You can watch live every session of both chambers, all the committee hearings, Governor DeWine's press conferences, and much more on the Ohio Channel. They are also archived for viewing at a later date.
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