

1 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING TO CONSIDER S. 3038, IMPROVE  
2 ADOPTION INCENTIVES AND RELATIVE GUARDIANSHIP SUPPORT ACT  
3 of 2008; S. 1070, ELDER JUSTICE ACT OF 2008; S. 1577,  
4 PATIENT SAFETY AND ABUSE PREVENTION ACT OF 2008  
5 WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2008  
6 U.S. Senate,  
7 Committee on Finance,  
8 Washington, DC.

9 The hearing was convened, pursuant to notice, at  
10 10:10 a.m., in room 215, Dirksen Senate Office Building,  
11 Hon. Max Baucus (chairman of the committee) presiding.

12 Present: Senators Rockefeller, Lincoln, Wyden,  
13 Stabenow, Salazar, Grassley, Hatch, Snowe, Bunning,  
14 Crapo, and Sununu.

15 Also present: Democratic Staff: Bill Dauster, Deputy  
16 Staff Director and General Counsel; Elizabeth Fowler,  
17 Senior Counsel to the Chairman and Chief Health Counsel;  
18 Tiffany Smith, Tax Counsel. Republican Staff: Kolan  
19 Davis, Staff Director and Chief Counsel; Mark Hayes,  
20 Health Policy Director and Chief Health Counsel.

21 Also present: Cathy Koch, Senior Advisor, Tax and  
22 Economics; Jim Lyons, Tax Counsel; Becky Shipp, Health  
23 Policy Advisor; Diedra Henry-Spires, Professional Staff;  
24 Carla Martin, Chief Clerk; Josh Levasseur, Deputy Clerk.

25

1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MAX BAUCUS, A U.S. SENATOR FROM  
2 MONTANA, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

3  
4 The Chairman. The committee meets today to  
5 consider three items: first, a Chairman's mark in the  
6 nature of a substitute to S. 3038, the Improve Adoption  
7 Incentives and Relative Guardianship Support Act of 2008;  
8 second, a Chairman's mark in the nature of a substitute  
9 to S. 1070, the Elder Justice Act of 2008; and third, a  
10 Chairman's mark in the nature of a substitute to S. 1577,  
11 the Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act of 2008.

12 Hubert Humphrey once said--and I think everybody in  
13 the room will recognize this--"The moral test of  
14 government is how the government treats those who are in  
15 the dawn of life--the children--those who are in the  
16 twilight of life--the elderly--and those who are in the  
17 shadows of life--the sick, the needy, and the  
18 handicapped.

19 Today we consider three bills to improve the lot of  
20 those in the dawn of life, those in the twilight of life,  
21 and those in the shadows of life. Today we consider  
22 three measures that meet the moral test of what we should  
23 be doing.

24 First, the dawn of life: adoption and foster care.  
25 Children depend on the love and care of their parents.

1 Inherent in parenthood is a promise to love, support, and  
2 protection one's children. Unfortunately, sometimes for  
3 one reason or another, those promises are not kept. When  
4 that happens, a child's well-being hangs in the balance  
5 and we as a society have to decide in which direction we  
6 will tip the scale. With the adoption and foster care  
7 bill that we consider today, this committee tries to tip  
8 the scale in the right direction, in favor of kids.

9 There are more than half a million kids in foster  
10 care in America. More than 10,000 of those kids are  
11 Indian children. The adoption and foster care bill that  
12 we consider today will help those kids.

13 The adoption and foster care bill would do four  
14 things: first, it would reauthorize and improve the  
15 adoption incentives program; it would provide subsidized  
16 guardianships and other needed supports for relative  
17 caregivers; it would give tribes direct access to foster  
18 care and adoption funds; and extend foster care to kids  
19 aging out of the system.

20 Many of our colleagues have contributed pieces of  
21 the adoption and foster care package that we consider  
22 today. Senator Grassley wrote the Improved Adoption  
23 Incentives and Relative Guardianship Support Act,  
24 Senator Rockefeller wrote the Adoption Equality Act,  
25 Senators Snowe and Clinton wrote the Kinship Caregiver

1 Support Act, and Senator Boxer wrote the Foster Care  
2 Continuing Opportunities Act. All these bills, as well  
3 as my own, Tribal Foster Care and Adoption Access Act,  
4 are reflected in the Chairman's mark in the adoption and  
5 foster care bill before us today.

6 With this mark we will tip the scale in the right  
7 direction for kids, but let us remember that as a  
8 committee we must next turn our attention to child  
9 welfare finance reform and finish that job.

10 Second, we also have before the committee today the  
11 Elder Justice Act, addressing Americans in the twilight  
12 of life. We marked up almost identical legislation in  
13 the last two Congresses and the committee unanimously  
14 agreed to report it out both times. Unfortunately, it  
15 did not make it through the Senate, and I am hoping that  
16 the third time is the charm.

17 The problems that this legislation addresses have  
18 not gone away. Elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation  
19 are, if anything, getting worse. Each year, more and  
20 more seniors need care. That means more folks are  
21 susceptible to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

22 Many of our Nation's seniors are suffering.  
23 Mistreatment of elders is among the most heart-wrenching  
24 of circumstances and we must act. Elder abuse has not  
25 received the attention that it should. In part, that is

1 because not enough is known about the scope and magnitude  
2 of the problems that seniors face.

3 This legislation would increase the data available  
4 and it would dedicate a group of Federal officials with  
5 their own experts to work on issues of elder  
6 mistreatment. I am pleased that this legislation would  
7 focus attention on these problems, and I want to  
8 recognize the good work of our colleagues, Senator  
9 Lincoln, Senator Hatch, and in early years, Senator John  
10 Breaux.

11 Third on our agenda today, is the Patient Safety and  
12 Abuse Prevention Act, the criminal background checks  
13 bill. This bill would encourage every State to perform  
14 criminal background checks on nursing home and other  
15 long-term care workers with direct access to patients.  
16 The bill is on a demonstration project that Congress  
17 included in the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003.  
18 Seven States participated in that demonstration project.

19 The earlier demonstration project kept thousands of  
20 prospective employees with disqualifying criminal records  
21 from gaining access to nursing home residents and other  
22 frail patients. Patients are safer because of that law.

23 I am very pleased that we are considering this bill,  
24 and I want to recognize the work of our colleague,  
25 Senator Kohl, as a champion for criminal background

1 checks.

2           So let us report these three important bills. Let  
3 us act to improve the lot of those in the dawn of life,  
4 those in the twilight of life, and those in the shadows  
5 of life. Let us advance these measures that meet the  
6 moral test of what we should do.

7           I would now recognize Senator Grassley for any  
8 comments he might wish to make.

9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. CHUCK GRASSLEY, A U.S. SENATOR  
2 FROM IOWA

3  
4 Senator Grassley. Thank you very much, Mr.  
5 Chairman. I am very pleased that we are having this  
6 meeting today, and thank you for having it. Thank you  
7 for doing it before the end of our relatively short-  
8 ending month. We are marking up three very important  
9 measures that I think will enhance safety for seniors and  
10 improve adoption assistance and foster care for our  
11 children. I have heard you refer to the maxim that a  
12 society should be judged by how it treats its vulnerable  
13 citizens. Today is an example of government moving to  
14 help those vulnerable people. That would be true of all  
15 three bills.

16 Additionally, the process by which we came to  
17 agreement on these three bills was productive, and of  
18 course bipartisan. This gives me an opportunity to  
19 remind cynical constituents around the country that think  
20 nothing is done around here in a bipartisan way, that we  
21 have a reputation in this committee of operating in a  
22 bipartisan way. These three bills are an example of our  
23 continuing that operation, so thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24 Also, while I am very supportive of the Elder  
25 Justice Act and the background check bill, I am

1 especially pleased that we are considering the bill that  
2 I introduced earlier this year, S. 3038, the Improved  
3 Adoption Incentive and Relative Guardianship Support Act.  
4 My bill would reauthorize and improve the adoption  
5 incentive programs and phase in extending adoption  
6 assistance to all families.

7 Adoption is such a lifeline in so many ways. There  
8 is no greater gift than giving a child who does not have  
9 a family a loving home. People in their 20s who age out  
10 of foster care and who are not adopted still speak of the  
11 ache that they have for not having a family. Adoption  
12 incentive works. We can look back and take pride in the  
13 progress we have made in the 10 years since Congress  
14 enacted the adoption incentive program as part of the  
15 Adoption and Safe Families Act way back 11 years ago.

16 In the past years, adoptions facilitated by child  
17 welfare agencies have risen from 31,000 10 years ago to  
18 51,000. However, there is more that can be, and  
19 obviously should be, done to support adoption and other  
20 permanency options for children. Approximately 129,000  
21 children in foster care are waiting for permanent, safe,  
22 and loving homes. Because of an outdated formula, the  
23 adoption incentive program does not work as well as it  
24 should and my bill would make improvements in that.

25 For children for whom adoption is not possible, my

1 bill would also create an additional option for a  
2 permanent home with a relative for children who would  
3 otherwise be in foster care. According to analysis from  
4 the Center for Law and Social Policy, children in kinship  
5 foster care have been found to experience fewer placement  
6 changes than children placed with non-kin foster parents.

7 Fewer children in kinship care report having changed  
8 schools than do children in non-relative foster care or  
9 those in group care. Compared to children in non-  
10 relative and foster care and those in group care,  
11 children in kinship care are more likely to report liking  
12 those with whom they live, they are more likely to report  
13 wanting their current placement to be their permanent  
14 home, and they are less likely to report having to try to  
15 leave or run away. Most importantly, however, children  
16 in kinship care are also more likely to report that they  
17 "always felt loved".

18 Mr. Chairman, you were very generous to notice this  
19 mark-up as a modification of my bill. I am very grateful  
20 to you for your courtesy in doing this. The modification  
21 before the committee reflects the work of many members,  
22 even members off this committee. It is the most far-  
23 reaching and significant child welfare bill that the  
24 committee has considered in a decade.

25 The bill the committee will consider owes a

1 considerable debt to you, Mr. Chairman, and to Senator  
2 Smith for being long-time champions of allowing Indian  
3 tribes the ability to run their own foster care program.  
4 Senator Bunning has also been a long-time advocate of  
5 adoption. This bill includes a provision from Senator  
6 Snowe that would direct funds to a navigator program for  
7 guardians to make them aware of services for which they  
8 may be eligible.

9 The committee is deeply indebted also to work done  
10 by Senator Rockefeller--and he is here with us. Thank  
11 you, Senator Rockefeller--over the many years that you  
12 have been involved with child welfare. Senator Lincoln  
13 is also a very strong voice on this committee for this  
14 help for children.

15 So, Mr. Chairman, I know that the issue of children  
16 aging out of foster care is of particular importance to  
17 you. It is heartbreaking to hear accounts of a child  
18 who, on their 18th birthday, has to put his or her few  
19 belongings in a trash bag and then be driven to a  
20 homeless shelter. That is intolerable. I support the  
21 State option to extend foster care coverage to children  
22 until age 21.

23 The committee is taking a significant step then in  
24 improving the lives of some of our most vulnerable  
25 children. I look forward to moving this process forward

1 to enactment of this legislation before Congress adjourns  
2 this month, especially since the adoption incentive  
3 program expires at the end of September.

4 Now, as you spoke about the Elder Justice Act and  
5 complemented Senator Kohl, I have been a long-time  
6 supporter of this bill. Under my chairmanship, the  
7 committee marked it up twice. Hopefully, Mr. Chairman,  
8 this third time will be a charm.

9 I am proud that several provisions in this bill are  
10 the result of work that I did way back when I was  
11 chairman of the Senate Aging Committee. While I was  
12 chairman of that committee we did very important work on  
13 nursing home abuse and nursing home standards. A number  
14 of the reforms included in the Elder Justice Act were  
15 developed as a by-product of those oversight activities.

16 I would commend two current sponsors of the  
17 legislation, Senator Hatch and Senator Lincoln. It is  
18 the direct result of their commitment to ensuring that  
19 every older person is free from abuse, neglect, and  
20 exploitation that we are here today to consider this  
21 important bill. They have shown great tenacity in  
22 advocating for the advancement of this legislation. I  
23 also supported efforts to allow States to opt into  
24 background check demonstration programs established in  
25 the Medicare Modernization Act.

1           I understand that Health and Human Services has  
2 released an evaluation of the demonstration program  
3 established in the MMA. I hope the States will find the  
4 evaluation useful in determining whether or not to  
5 participate in the extended demonstration. Generally, I  
6 hope that the information gained from this expanded  
7 demonstration program will be useful and that all States  
8 will more vigorously screen caregivers for individuals in  
9 nursing homes.

10           Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

11           The Chairman. Thank you, Senator, very much.

12           Now I will open it up to Senators who wish to make  
13 statements, I guess in order of their arrival. Senator  
14 Rockefeller?

15           Senator Rockefeller. You want us to vote at 10:30?

16           The Chairman. We are hoping around 10:30. That is  
17 the goal.

18           Senator Rockefeller. All right.

19           The Chairman. Thank you for being so courteous.

20           Senator Rockefeller. No, no. Just a little  
21 warning to everybody that I am throwing out on your  
22 behalf.

23           The Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

24           [Laughter].

25           Senator Rockefeller. I think this is a terrific

1 package of bills. I love the way it brings in a lot of  
2 Senators who have worked on a lot of these issues for  
3 years. I remember sitting with John Chafee, what Senator  
4 Grassley was just talking about, and that is that period  
5 from 18 to 21 when they are out of foster care but not  
6 into something more permanent. He is exactly right. I  
7 can remember, John Chafee and I had a group of them in--  
8 this is some years ago--to query them on what they knew,  
9 how to run a washing machine, ATM, and all the rest of  
10 that, and none of them knew any of it and they would not  
11 have had the opportunity to learn.

12 So, this gives them that opportunity. I am a huge  
13 proponent of adoption for lots and lots of reasons. I am  
14 glad that Senator Baucus has got the Tribal Foster Care  
15 and Adoption Access part in. Obviously keeping more kids  
16 with relative guardians is desirable, but that is not  
17 always possible. Actually, those kids I was just talking  
18 about, we had a name for them: they were called Chafee  
19 kids. Chafee kids. I do not know why, but they were  
20 kids that just had no place to go, nothing to do, just  
21 out of foster care and on the streets.

22 On the abuse of elders, I have got this unbelievable  
23 statistic down here--and nobody knows because people do  
24 not talk--between 500,000 and 5 million seniors are  
25 abused in this country every year. Approximately 84

1 percent of all cases are never even reported. With 78-  
2 plus million baby-boomers on the way to join that crowd,  
3 elder justice becomes very, very strong. So, I just  
4 think it is a very good threesome of bills, they work  
5 together, and I ask you to support them.

6 The Chairman. Thank you, Senator.

7 Any other Senators wish to speak? Senator Snowe?  
8 Senator Crapo?

9 Senator Crapo. Yes, Mr. Chairman. I will be very  
10 brief. I also commend you and Senator Grassley for  
11 bringing forth these bills that are all very important.  
12 I had one concern. I am not going to object to anything,  
13 but I just wanted to note that one of the offsets being  
14 used in this package is also the same offset that we have  
15 used for the Secure Rural Schools legislation, which is  
16 very critically important.

17 And as I talked with you before the mark-up, we need  
18 to work out those offsets. I just wanted to highlight  
19 and bring back to the forefront again the need for us to  
20 pay clear attention, and very careful attention, to the  
21 Secure Rural Schools legislation as well as we move  
22 toward the end of this Congress. I would just ask to  
23 place a small statement in the record to that effect.

24 The Chairman. Without objection.

25 [The prepared statement of Senator Crapo appears in

1 the appendix.]

2 The Chairman. I might say, Senator, security in  
3 rural schools is very near and dear to my heart, as I  
4 know it is to yours. We will find a way to get that  
5 done.

6 Senator Crapo. I understand that. Thank you, Mr.  
7 Chairman.

8 The Chairman. Thank you. Thank you.

9 Senator Snowe?

10 Senator Snowe. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I  
11 want to thank you and Ranking Member Grassley for holding  
12 this mark-up today on the collective bills before us, but  
13 more specifically on Improve Adoption Incentives and  
14 Guardianship Support Act of 2008, which I think is so  
15 critical in providing better permanency options for those  
16 children in foster care, and helping them and those  
17 youths in foster care to transition them into adulthood.

18 This is an issue that Senator Clinton and I have been  
19 working on for years, the growth of kinship care. I am  
20 very pleased that both you and Senator Grassley  
21 incorporated so much of our Kinship Caregiver Act into  
22 the pending legislation before this committee.

23 I think that there is no question that there are  
24 extraordinary responsibilities associated with families  
25 taking in children, obviously both emotionally trying and

1 financially taxing, particularly for grandparents and  
2 other relatives. So this is a step forward in assisting  
3 those children to be able to be part of their families  
4 once again in another way. For many reasons, parents are  
5 unable to take care of their children. We want to make  
6 sure that relatives of these children have an option.

7 So I think it is critical that they have  
8 notification requirements, as you incorporated in this  
9 legislation, that requires States to notify grandparents  
10 and other relatives that these children are entering the  
11 foster care system, and also providing the option to the  
12 States to use their Title 4(e) grant programs for  
13 federally subsidized guardianship support, again, another  
14 option assisting families with providing support to these  
15 children.

16 Senator Clinton and I also very much appreciate you  
17 incorporating two additional measures, and one is this  
18 10-State demonstration project regarding licensure  
19 requirements, to make a difference in licensing standards  
20 between relative and non-relative homes, because  
21 obviously we do not want to create barriers for relatives  
22 who want to take these children into their homes because  
23 of licensing requirements like having a certain sized  
24 bedroom or having a separate bedroom. So these are  
25 issues that we need to make sure that we can address so

1 it does not inhibit families from taking in these  
2 children who are relatives in part of the family system.

3 Second, we also provide the kinship navigator option  
4 as well, assisting families, once again, to navigate  
5 through the maze of programs, resources, and services  
6 that are available, whether it is on education, child  
7 support, Medicaid, whatever the options are, to make sure  
8 that they are apprised of these resources that are  
9 available to them as they take these children into  
10 custody. But we want to make sure that they have these  
11 options on a permanent basis for these children to be  
12 part of a family with whom they are related.

13 So I think this is a going a long step towards  
14 helping these very vulnerable children and having a very  
15 productive future by making these critical changes in  
16 kinship care. So I want to thank both you and Senator  
17 Grassley for including this measure here today.

18 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 The Chairman. Well, thank you, Senator. You have  
20 made a very valuable contribution to this bill and that  
21 is why it is in the mark. I thank you very, very much,  
22 you and Senator Clinton, and others as well.

23 I note the presence of a quorum. Also, there is an  
24 understanding that Senators would be here by around 10:30  
25 so we could do our business. If Senators wish to make

1       brief statements I would entertain them now, but I would  
2       encourage Senators to speak very briefly. We want to  
3       exercise comity and cooperation here and do our business  
4       at the same time.

5               Senator Hatch?

6               Senator Hatch. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be  
7       brief. I will put my full statement in the record.

8               [The prepared statement of Senator Hatch appears in  
9       the appendix.]

10              Senator Hatch. I just want to thank you and  
11       Senator Grassley for your leadership on all three of  
12       these bills. I am very interested in all three of them.

13       But just on the second one, the Chairman's mark in the  
14       nature of a substitute on S. 1070, the Elder Justice Act,  
15       I just want to thank you both for that. Also, Blanche  
16       Lincoln, who has done a lot of work on this, Gordon  
17       Smith, Herb Kohl, and of course Senator John Breaux, who  
18       worked very hard on this when he was here in the Senate.

19              The Chairman. Yes, he did.

20              Senator Hatch. Then outside of the Senate, Bob  
21       Blancato did a great deal of work on this. I just wanted  
22       to thank all of them for the work that they have done.  
23       Above all, it is a privilege to serve on this committee  
24       with all of you.

25              The Chairman. Other Senators? Senator Lincoln?

1           Senator Lincoln.    Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2           I, too, want to thank the Chairman and the Ranking  
3 Member for bringing up three very important bills. I  
4 think this is legislation that is critical to working  
5 families all across this country, and it is things that  
6 they have found near and dear to their hearts and to  
7 their families.

8           I would also like to thank my good friend Senator  
9 Hatch for his tireless commitment to the passage of the  
10 Elder Justice Act, and as you mentioned Senator Breaux  
11 before, who also worked very hard on this. But Senator  
12 Hatch and I have worked very closely, our staffs have  
13 worked closely, and I very much appreciate him and all  
14 that he has done.

15          I also want to thank Senator Smith and others on the  
16 committee who have supported the legislation time and  
17 time again. I also want to applaud our colleague from  
18 Wisconsin, the Aging Committee chairman, Herb Kohl, for  
19 both his support of the Elder Justice Act and his  
20 advocacy for the background checks for long-term care  
21 employees, which is also included today. I think those  
22 are very, very important things. Background checks can  
23 help protect Americans from being placed in harm's way,  
24 whether they are elderly, whether it is child care,  
25 security workers, or a whole host of different industries

1 out there where we need more background checks being  
2 done.

3 I would just like to add, Mr. Chairman, that elder  
4 abuse is a national disgrace. In years past we have  
5 dealt with legislation for abuse against women, abuse  
6 against children, and yet not one single Federal employee  
7 works full-time on elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation  
8 issues. Its time is definitely here. We have joined in  
9 this effort to make the Elder Justice Act the first  
10 comprehensive Federal law to address elder abuse and  
11 ensure that those in their twilight of life are protected  
12 from abuse.

13 Just to those who have indicated that they do not  
14 think this is necessary, we just cannot be mistaken.  
15 Even though we do not have a good overall feel for just  
16 how widespread the problem of elder abuse is, we do know  
17 that it happens in every State.

18 There are multiple accounts that we can list: in a  
19 case in Florida, a jury convicted a man of raping an 85-  
20 year-old Alzheimer's patient in Orlando's Center for the  
21 Elderly; in Pennsylvania, a gang of crooked health care  
22 workers targeted the most vulnerable veterans, stealing  
23 their money, financing a low-level loan-sharking  
24 operation; just story upon story, so we do know it is  
25 necessary and we are certainly appreciative of the

1 Chairman and the Ranking for bringing it forward.

2 Just one last comment. The child welfare piece that  
3 we are doing today is incredibly important in the  
4 adoption of children by both family members, as well as  
5 others who really desperately want to care for these  
6 children, give them a loving and a safe home, and it is  
7 time for us to move forward on that as well.

8 So, thank you, Mr. Chairman, for doing all of this,  
9 and to our colleagues, as we have worked together to move  
10 these pieces of legislation to this point. We appreciate  
11 it.

12 The Chairman. Thank you, Senator, very much.

13 There is a minor modification before the committee  
14 in connection with the mark, and the mark is so modified.

15 If there is no further debate, I would entertain a  
16 motion that the committee report the adoption of the  
17 foster care bill.

18 Senator Hatch. So moved.

19 The Chairman. Senator Hatch makes that motion, and  
20 it has been seconded.

21 All those in favor, say "aye".

22 [A Chorus of Ayes].

23 The Chairman. Those opposed, "no".

24 [No response].

25 The Chairman. The ayes have it.

1           The next order of business is the Elder Justice Act.

2           All those in favor, signify by saying "aye".

3           [A Chorus of Ayes].

4           The Chairman.   Those opposed, "no".

5           [No response].

6           The Chairman.   The ayes have it.   The bill is  
7           passed.

8           The third, is the background check bill.   There is a  
9           modification, and that mark is so modified.

10          All those in favor of the bill, as modified, signify  
11          by saying "aye".

12          [A Chorus of Ayes].

13          The Chairman.   Those opposed, "no".

14          [No response].

15          The Chairman.   The ayes have it.

16          I ask unanimous consent for staff to make technical  
17          changes to the bill, and that is so granted.

18          If there is no further business before the  
19          committee, the committee is adjourned.   I thank all  
20          Senators for being so cooperative.

21          [Whereupon, at 10:32 a.m. the meeting was  
22          adjourned.]

23

24

25

I N D E X

PAGE

STATEMENT OF:

THE HONORABLE MAX BAUCUS A United States Senator from the State of Montana	2
--	---

THE HONORABLE CHUCK GRASSLEY A United States Senator from the State of Iowa	7
---	---