

Article

# A First-Principle Study of Two-Dimensional Boron Nitride Polymorph with Tunable Magnetism

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**Abstract:** Using the first-principles calculation, two doping two-dimensional (2D) BN (boron nitride) polymorphs are constructed in this work. The two doping 2D BN polymorphs  $B_5N_6Al$  and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets are thermally stable under 500 K. All the  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets are semiconductor materials with indirect band gaps on the basis of a hybrid functional. The anisotropic calculation results indicate that Young's modulus ( $E$ ) and Poisson's ratio ( $\nu$ ) of the  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets are anisotropic in the  $xy$  plane. In addition, the magnetic properties of the  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets have also been investigated. According to the calculation of the magnetic properties,  $B_6N_6$  sheet does not exhibit magnetism, while it shows weak magnetism after doping carbon atom to the BN sheet. This paper explores the influence mechanism of doping different atoms on the basic physical properties of two-dimensional BN sheets. It not only constructs a relationship between structure and performance but also provides theoretical support for the performance regulation of BN materials.

**Keywords:** two-dimensional (2D) BN sheet; electronic band structure; density of states; anisotropic properties; magnetism



**Citation:** Qiao, L.; Ma, Z.; Yan, F.; Wang, S.; Fan, Q. A First-Principle Study of Two-Dimensional Boron Nitride Polymorph with Tunable Magnetism. *Inorganics* **2024**, *12*, 59. <https://doi.org/10.3390/inorganics12020059>

Academic Editor: Jean-François Halet

Received: 25 December 2023

Revised: 30 January 2024

Accepted: 30 January 2024

Published: 15 February 2024



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## 1. Introduction

Graphene is a planar 2D carbon allotrope with single atomic thickness. Due to its special electronic and magnetic characteristics, graphene is considered to be a revolutionary material for multiple facilities, such as high-speed electronic devices, thermal and conductivity-enhancing composite materials, sensors, RF logic devices, transparent electrodes, etc. [1–6]. In recent years, novel theoretical two-dimensional materials based on first-principles calculations have shown many interesting physical and chemical properties [7–12]. As isoelectronic bodies, BN and carbon also have rich and colorful physical properties and polymorphs [13–18].

Research on low-dimensional boron nitride nanomaterials is important in the field of materials science [19–24], especially because their excellent chemical properties and thermal stability have been widely studied [25]. They can enhance the mechanical enhancement and thermal conductivity of various crystal structures, for instance, polymers, ceramics, and metals [26–28]. Research has shown that graphene-like h-BN sheets have remarkable electronic and optical characteristics [29] and show a wide band gap and intense absorption capacity in the ultraviolet region. In other studies in the literature, it was shown that at low doping rates, B-N prefers to replace  $sp$  hybrid carbon on the chain than hexagonal. At high doping rates, it first attacks the hexagonal structure and then the chain.

Qi et al. [30] predicted 2D  $B_xN_y$  ( $1 < x/y \leq 2$ ) sheets using the density functional theory (DFT) [31,32].  $B_5N_3$  and  $B_7N_5$  sheets possess enough low enthalpy of formation

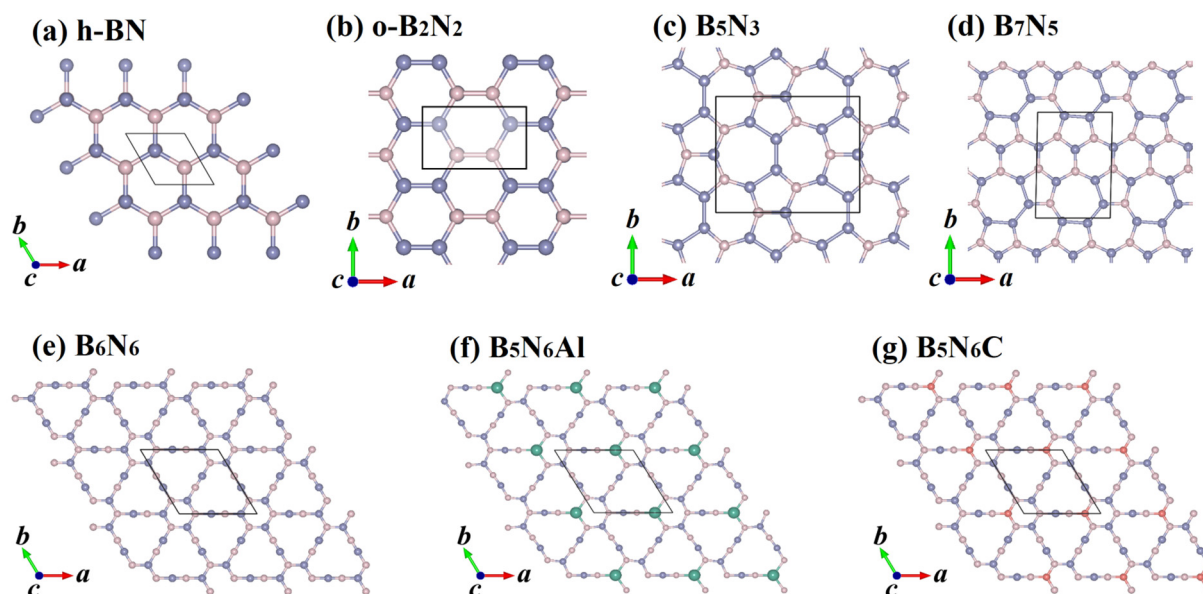
and outstanding dynamic stability, which makes them possible to be found in experiments. Unlike previous BN, both  $B_5N_3$  and  $B_7N_5$  sheets exhibit narrow band gaps of 1.99 eV and 2.40 eV, respectively. Two-dimensional orthorhombic boron nitride crystal, named  $o\text{-}B_2N_2$ , was designed by Demirci et al. [23]. The stability of  $o\text{-}B_2N_2$  at room temperature and ambient pressure has been confirmed.  $o\text{-}B_2N_2$  is a semiconductor with a direct band gap of 1.70 eV. An appropriate band gap makes this structure exhibit higher light absorption in the visible light range along the armchair direction. The in-plane stiffness of  $o\text{-}B_2N_2$  is also very close to that of hexagonal BN. Based on the DFT, Fan et al. [33] first proposed and studied in detail a new 2D *Pmma*-BN sheet. The stability of *Pmma*-BN sheet was demonstrated by phonon spectroscopy and ab initio molecular dynamics simulations at 300 and 500 K. Uniaxial strain has weakened the *ZT* of the *Pmma*-BN sheet and led to a decrease in thermoelectric conversion efficiency. Anota et al. [34] reported boron nitride nanosheets containing homonuclear boron bonds and found that the proportion of boron atoms in nanosheets is related to conductivity.

By inserting *sp*-hybridized BN bonds into a monolayer h-BN structure, Li et al. [24] designed B<sub>N</sub>yne, Bndiyne, and BNtryne. To explore the influence mechanism on the physical properties of doped 2D boron nitride,  $B_6N_6$  sheets (called B<sub>N</sub>yne in ref. [24]) with doping Al or C atoms are proposed in this work, named  $B_5N_6Al$  sheet and  $B_5N_6C$  sheet, respectively. Both carbon and aluminum have the advantages of being cheap and easy to obtain. The doping of C element is selected to improve the mechanical properties of  $B_6N_6$ , and the selection of Al element is to observe the influence of metal elements on the electrical properties of semiconductor materials. We verify the structural stability of  $B_5N_6Al$  sheet and  $B_5N_6C$  sheet from mechanical and thermal perspectives and study their elementary physical characteristics based on first-principles calculations.  $B_5N_6Al$  and  $B_5N_6C$  are both indirect band gap semiconductor materials, which are the same as  $B_6N_6$ . The band gap width of  $B_5N_6C$  is significantly reduced. More importantly, the spin-up and spin-down electronic band structures indicate that  $B_6N_6$  sheet does not exhibit magnetism. But after adding carbon to the BN sheet, it changes from a nonmagnetic material to a magnetic material.

## 2. Results and Discussion

Two-dimensional boron nitride structures and the crystal structure model doped with aluminum and carbon atoms are shown in Figure 1, together with the configurations of h-BN,  $o\text{-}B_2N_2$  [23],  $B_5N_3$  [30], and  $B_7N_5$  [30]. Here, light blue, light pink, green, and light red represent boron atoms, nitrogen atoms, aluminum atoms, and carbon atoms, respectively. h-BN is a hexagonal network-layered crystal composed of nitrogen atoms and boron atoms; its layered structure is similar to graphite.  $o\text{-}B_2N_2$  is a two-dimensional monolayer of boron nitride in an orthorhombic structure with a B-B and N-N double-atom structure. h-BN and  $o\text{-}B_2N_2$  are only composed of six-membered rings, while the crystal structure of  $B_5N_3$  is composed of seven-membered rings and five-membered rings.  $B_7N_5$  contains seven-membered rings, six-membered rings, and five-membered rings. By inserting B-N bonds into h-BN sheet, Li et al. [24] proposed two-dimensional  $B_6N_6$ , as shown in Figure 1. After being fully optimized, all of them— $B_6N_6$  sheet,  $B_5N_6Al$  sheet, and  $B_5N_6C$  sheet—retain their planar structure. All the unit cells of three  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets contain twelve atoms. The boron and nitrogen atoms in  $B_6N_6$  sheet are half the same, and the other two doping models replace one B atom.

The lattice parameters of the three  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets are listed in Table 1. The optimized lattice parameter of  $B_6N_6$  is  $a = 6.20 \text{ \AA}$ . After doping with Al and C atoms, the symmetry of the crystal structure changes, and the lattice parameters  $a$  and  $b$  of  $B_5N_6Al$  and  $B_5N_6C$  are no longer equal. In  $B_6N_6$  sheet structure, due to the larger radius of aluminum atoms, the lattice parameters of  $B_5N_6Al$  increase, while the lattice parameters of  $B_5N_6C$  do not change much. However, the radius difference between carbon atoms, boron atoms, and nitrogen atoms is not significant.



**Figure 1.** Crystal structures of the h-BN (a), o-B<sub>2</sub>N<sub>2</sub> (b), B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>3</sub> (c), B<sub>7</sub>N<sub>5</sub> (d), B<sub>6</sub>N<sub>6</sub> (e), B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>6</sub>Al (f), and B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>6</sub>C (g). Light blue, light pink, green, and light red represent boron atoms, nitrogen atoms, aluminum atoms, and carbon atoms, respectively.

**Table 1.** Lattice constant (Å) and bond length (Å) of B<sub>6</sub>N<sub>6</sub>, B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>6</sub>Al, and B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>6</sub>C.

	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i> <sub>1</sub>	<i>b</i> <sub>2</sub>	<i>b</i> <sub>3</sub>	<i>b</i> <sub>4</sub>	<i>b</i> <sub>5</sub>	<i>b</i> <sub>6</sub>
B <sub>6</sub> N <sub>6</sub>	6.20		1.275	1.278	1.094			
B <sub>5</sub> N <sub>6</sub> Al	7.40	7.18	1.796	1.451	1.465	1.390	1.264	1.374
B <sub>5</sub> N <sub>6</sub> C	6.86	5.93	1.381	1.451	1.441	1.380	1.260	1.391

The decrease in lattice parameters is caused by structural distortion in the six-membered ring in the structure, and the details of this are shown in Figure 2. The bond lengths of B<sub>6</sub>N<sub>6</sub>, B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>6</sub>Al, and B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>6</sub>C sheets are also listed in Table 1. The doping of atoms makes the bond lengths in both B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>6</sub>Al and B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>6</sub>C sheets increase to six different bond lengths, which is three more than in B<sub>6</sub>N<sub>6</sub> sheet, and the angles of the six-membered ring have also become irregular. In B<sub>6</sub>N<sub>6</sub> sheet, the bond length of the six-membered ring is uniform, the bond angle is 120°, the maximum bond length is 1.278 Å, and the shortest bond length is 1.094 Å. For B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>6</sub>Al sheet, the six-membered ring has undergone serious distortion, and the bond angle and bond length have changed. The maximum bond length of B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>6</sub>Al is 1.796 Å, which is approximately 41% higher than that of B<sub>6</sub>N<sub>6</sub>. The shortest bond length is 1.264 Å. Regarding B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>6</sub>C sheet, the six-membered ring has a small degree of distortion, and the maximum bond length is 1.451 Å, which is approximately 14% longer than that of B<sub>6</sub>N<sub>6</sub>, and the shortest bond length is 1.260 Å.

Ab initio molecular dynamic (AIMD) simulations were performed to evaluate the thermal stabilities of B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>6</sub>Al and B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>6</sub>C sheets under 500 K. The supercell of B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>6</sub>Al and B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>6</sub>C sheets before and after 5 ps simulation at a temperature of 500 K is also shown in Figure 3. The supercells of B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>6</sub>Al and B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>6</sub>C did not change significantly, and the B-N, N-Al and B-C bonds were not broken. The total energy fluctuation was also maintained at a stable level, indicating that B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>6</sub>Al and B<sub>5</sub>N<sub>6</sub>C have thermal stability at 500 K.

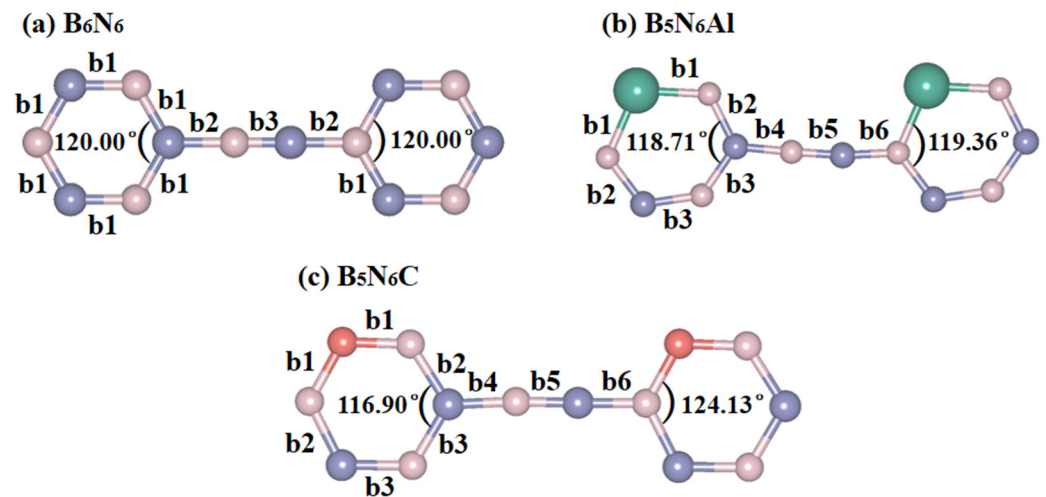


Figure 2. The bond length and bond angle of  $B_6N_6$  (a),  $B_5N_6Al$  (b), and  $B_5N_6C$  (c).

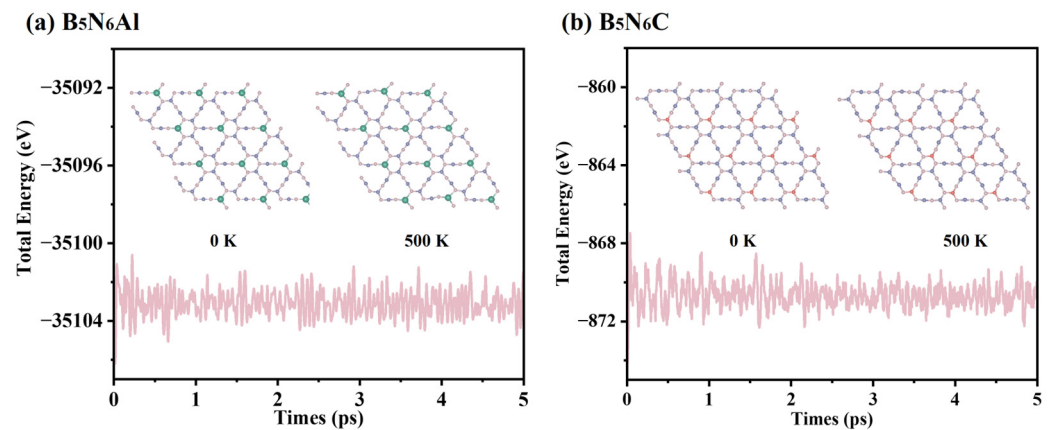


Figure 3. Total energy fluctuations of  $B_5AlN_6$  and  $B_5N_6C$  as a function of the AIMDs simulation at 500 K.

The mechanical stability of  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets was also estimated, and the mechanical stability was evaluated by estimating the elastic constant. For 2D materials, the elastic constants can be obtained by the energy–strain method. That is, by applying different strains to the structure, the total energy of the system relative to the ground state energy change can be calculated. The relationship between the strain and the resulting energy change is expressed as [35]:

$$E(\epsilon) - E_0 = \frac{1}{2}C_{11}\epsilon_{xx}^2 + \frac{1}{2}C_{22}\epsilon_{yy}^2 + C_{12}\epsilon_{xx}\epsilon_{yy} + 2C_{44}\epsilon_{xy}^2 \quad (1)$$

where  $E_0$  and  $E(\epsilon)$  represent the ground state configuration and total energy after strain application, respectively.  $\epsilon$  denotes the strain;  $xx$  and  $yy$  denote the direction. By fitting the energy curve corresponding to the strain,  $C_{11}$ ,  $C_{22}$ ,  $C_{12}$ , and  $C_{44}$  as elastic constants can be obtained. The Born–Huang criteria [36] are a necessary condition for the elastic constants of 2D materials with mechanical stability, that is,  $C_{11}C_{22} - C_{12}^2 > 0$  and  $C_{44} > 0$ . The elastic constants of  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets are shown in Table 2, which obviously meet the mechanical stability conditions. The  $C_{11} = C_{22} = 180.98$  N/m of  $B_6N_6$ , which is lower than that of h-BN ( $C_{11} = C_{22} = 290$  N/m [37]) and *pmma* BN ( $C_{11} = 195$  N/m,  $C_{22} = 256$  N/m).

**Table 2.** Elastic constants  $C_{ij}$  (N/m), Young's modulus  $E$  (N/m), and Poisson's ratio  $\nu$  of  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $P-62m$   $B_5N_6C$ .

	$C_{11}$	$C_{12}$	$C_{22}$	$C_{66}$	$E_x$	$E_y$	$\nu_x$	$\nu_y$
$B_6N_6$	180.98	82.09	180.98	49.45	141.18	141.18	0.46	0.46
$B_5N_6Al$	152.14	86.84	126.11	44.78	97.83	76.19	0.69	0.57
$B_5N_6C$	201.78	103.48	204.66	53.35	149.46	151.59	0.50	0.51

Compared with  $B_6N_6$ , the  $C_{11}$  of  $B_5N_6Al$  is reduced by approximately 16%, and the  $C_{22}$  is reduced by approximately 30%, which indicates that the ability to resist deformation along the  $x$  and  $y$  directions is weakened. That is, the Al atom plays a weakening role in the mechanical properties of  $B_6N_6$ . However, the addition of carbon atoms leads to an improvement in mechanical properties. The elastic constants  $C_{11}$  and  $C_{22}$  of  $B_5N_6C$  are increased by approximately 12~13%. Young's modulus along the  $x$  and  $y$  directions  $E_x$  and  $E_y$  of  $B_5N_6C$  is also greater than that of  $B_6N_6$ , which may be due to the fact that carbon atoms are more likely to form stable covalent bonds. With the addition of aluminum and carbon atoms,  $B_5N_6Al$  and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets have lower and higher elastic constants than  $B_6N_6$  sheets, respectively. Thus, the doping of carbon and aluminum atoms has different influence mechanisms on the mechanical properties of  $B_6N_6$  sheets. The former significantly improves the elastic constants and elastic modulus, while the latter weakens the ability of  $B_6N_6$  sheets to resist deformation and makes them easier to compress. Poisson's ratios of  $B_5N_6Al$  and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets are 0.69 and 0.50 along the  $x$ -axis and 0.57 and 0.51 along the  $y$ -axis, respectively, which are higher than those of  $B_6N_6$  sheets.

On the basis of the elastic constants, the in-plane  $E$  and  $\nu$  along any direction  $\theta$  can be taken as [35]:

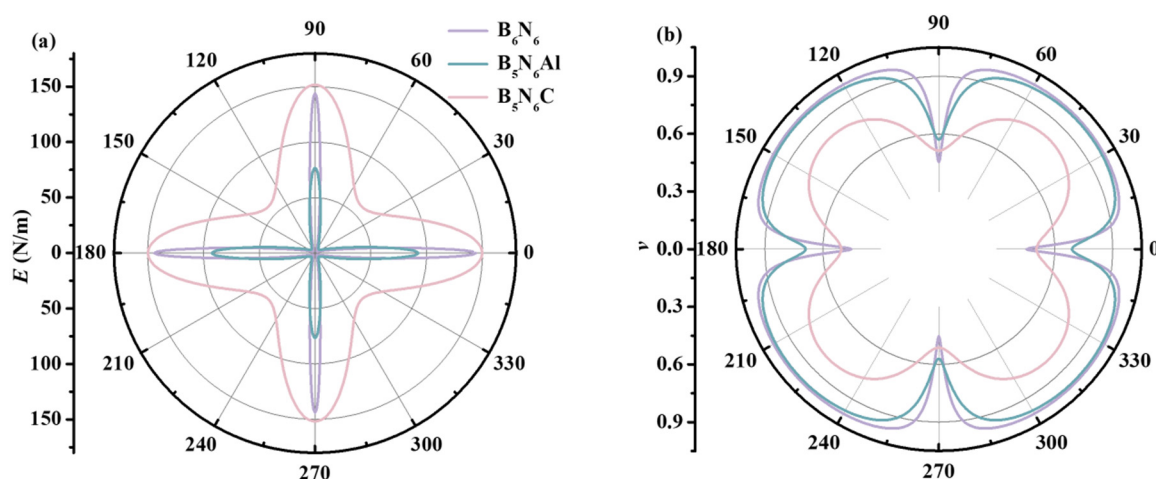
$$E(\theta) = \frac{C_{11}C_{22} - C_{12}^2}{C_{11}\alpha^4 + C_{22}\beta^4 + \left(\frac{C_{11}C_{22} - C_{12}^2}{C_{44}} - 2C_{12}\right)\alpha^2\beta^2} \quad (2)$$

$$\nu(\theta) = -\frac{(C_{11} + C_{22} - \frac{C_{11}C_{22} - C_{12}^2}{C_{44}})\alpha^2\beta^2 - C_{12}(\alpha^4 + \beta^4)}{C_{11}\alpha^4 + C_{22}\beta^4 + \left(\frac{C_{11}C_{22} - C_{12}^2}{C_{44}} - 2C_{12}\right)\alpha^2\beta^2} \quad (3)$$

where  $\alpha = \sin\theta$ ;  $\beta = \cos\theta$ . In order to further explore the effect of carbon and aluminum atoms doping on the elastic anisotropy of  $B_6N_6$  sheets, the angle-dependent in-plane  $E$  and  $\nu$  of  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets are illustrated in Figure 4. Further,  $0^\circ$  and  $90^\circ$  represent the directions of orthorhombic unit cells along the  $x$ - and  $y$ -axes, respectively. With the addition of aluminum, the maximum value of the  $E$  of  $B_5N_6Al$  sheet is lower than that of  $B_6N_6$  sheet, but the minimum value is greater than that of  $B_6N_6$  sheet, while the  $E$  of  $B_5N_6C$  sheet is larger than that of  $B_6N_6$  sheet, and it shows an in-plane stiffness superior to  $B_6N_6$  sheet. For Poisson's ratio,  $B_6N_6$  sheet has a higher Poisson ratio than that of  $B_5N_6Al$  and  $B_5N_6C$  sheet, indicating that  $B_6N_6$  sheet is more likely to expand laterally than  $B_5N_6Al$  and  $B_5N_6C$  sheet when tension is applied. The smallest in-plane Poisson's ratio of  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets occurs along the  $x$ -axis. When they are stretched diagonally, a maximum value occurs.

The orientation dependence of 2D Young's modulus is closer to the sphere, indicating that the weaker the anisotropy, the smaller the difference between the maximum and minimum values. On the contrary, the more it deviates from the spherical shape, the stronger the anisotropy. The minimum value of Young's modulus of  $B_6N_6$  is 2.36 N/m, and the maximum value is 144 N/m, showing strong anisotropy. The minimum value of Young's modulus of  $B_5N_6Al$  is 4.63 N/m, and the maximum value is 92 N/m; anisotropy is weakened compared with  $B_6N_6$ . The minimum Young's modulus of  $B_5N_6C$  is 59 N/m, and the maximum is 152 N/m, showing the weakest Young's modulus anisotropy. The ratio of the maximum to minimum Young's modulus of  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets is 60.91, 19.94, and 2.57, respectively. These values clearly and intuitively show the influence of atomic doping on the anisotropy of Young's modulus. Both carbon atoms and

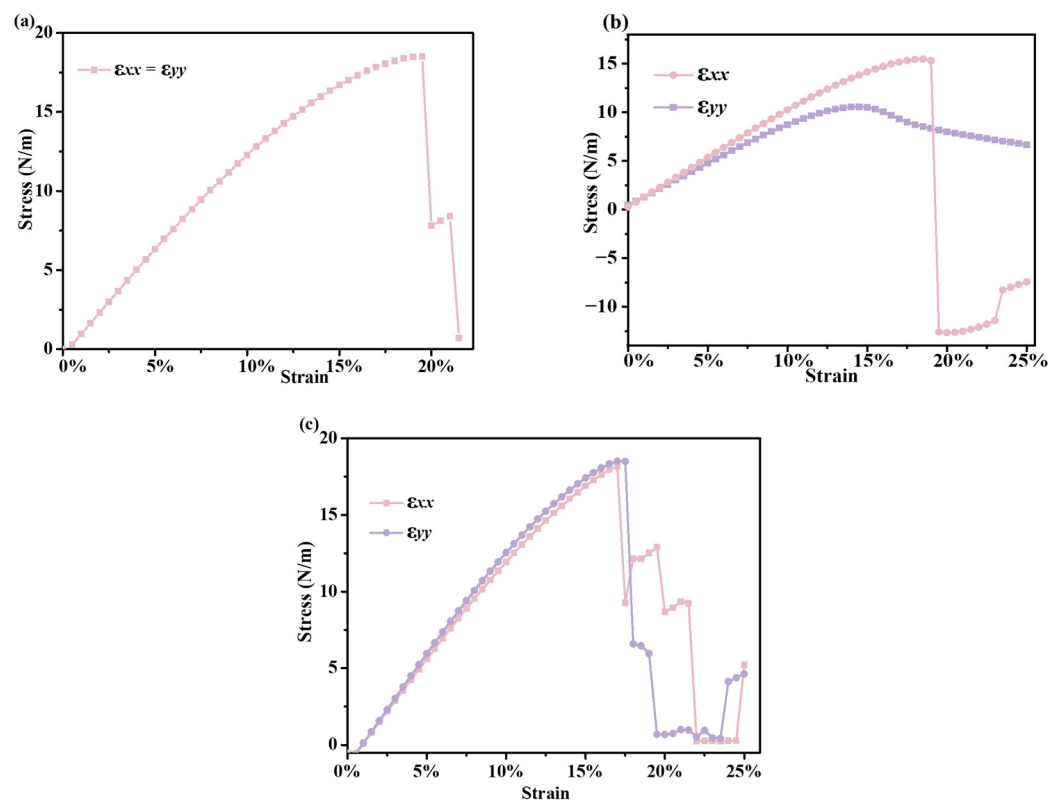
aluminum atoms can weaken anisotropy, especially when the effect of carbon atoms is more significant. The ratio of the 2D extreme values of Poisson's ratio of  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets is 2.2, 1.72, and 1.60, respectively, indicating that the order of Poisson's ratio anisotropy is  $B_6N_6 > B_5N_6Al > B_5N_6C$ , which is consistent with the order of anisotropy of Young's modulus.



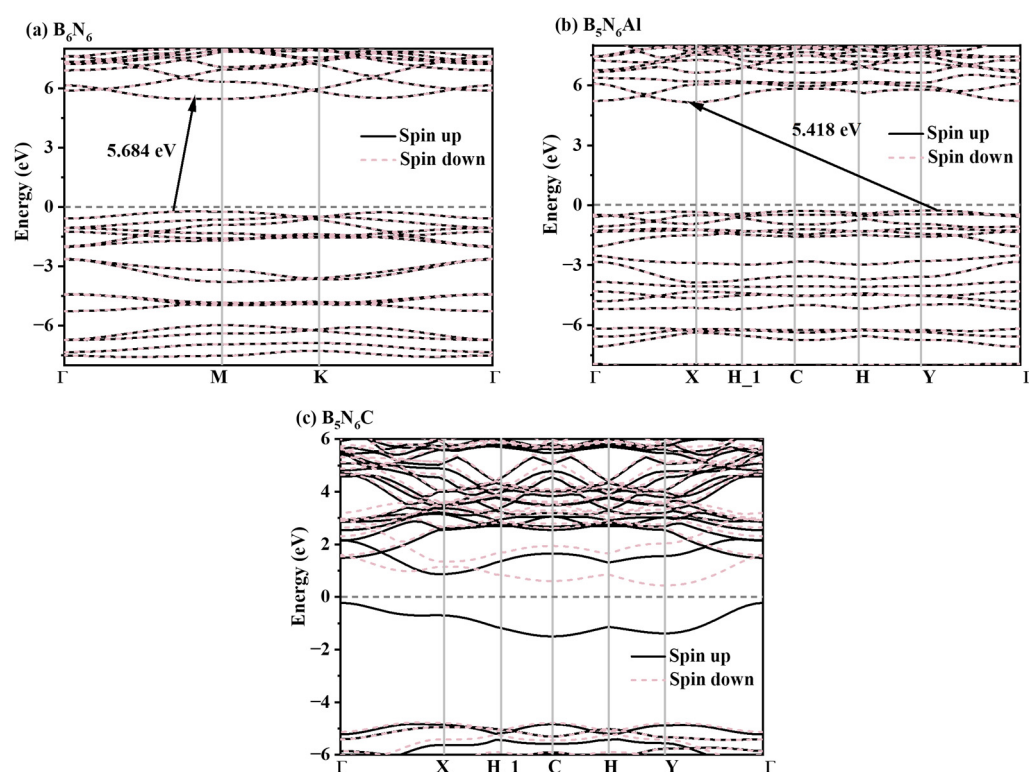
**Figure 4.** Orientation dependencies of Young's modulus (a) and Poisson's ratio (b) for  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$ .

In addition to in-plane stiffness, the stress neutralization of  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets under uniaxial strain is further analyzed, and the detailed results are presented in Figure 5. The ultimate strength of  $B_6N_6$  sheet is 18.49 N/m loaded along the  $x$  ( $y$ )-axis with 19.5% uniaxial strain, while with the addition of aluminum atoms, although the ultimate strength has decreased slightly, the strain along the  $x$ -axis is not significantly different (18.5%). The  $x$ - and  $y$ -axis of  $B_5N_6C$  sheet have similar and good uniaxial strain limitations. The ultimate strength along the  $x$ - and  $y$ -axis of  $B_5N_6C$  sheet under the calculated maximum strength is 17.0%, respectively. For  $B_5N_6C$  sheet, the ultimate strength is 18.14 N/m and 18.50 N/m along the  $x$  or  $y$  direction, respectively. Therefore,  $B_6N_6$  sheet and  $B_6N_6$  sheet doped with carbon atom have good mechanical properties compared to  $B_5N_6Al$  sheet, which may be suitable for nanomechanical applications.

The band structures of the  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets are shown in Figure 6. The related results show that all the  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets exhibit semiconductor characters, and the band gaps of  $B_6N_6$  and  $B_5N_6Al$  sheets are 5.684 and 5.418 eV, respectively. After doping with Al atoms, the variation in the band gap of  $B_5N_6Al$  sheet is relatively small, while after doping the C atoms, the change in the band gap of  $B_5N_6C$  sheet is significant. To study the magnetism of these materials, we also calculated spin-up and spin-down band structures of  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets. From the band structures analysis, there is no difference between spin-up and spin-down for  $B_6N_6$  and  $B_5N_6Al$  sheets, which indicates that they do not conform to the characteristics of magnetic materials. Nevertheless, after doping with carbon atoms, there is a significant difference in the band structure of spin-up and spin-down. The conduction band minimum (CBM) and valence band maximum (VBM) of the spin-up band structure are located at the X and  $\Gamma$  points, respectively, with a wide indirect band gap of 5.181 eV, while the CBM and VBM of the -up appear at the Y and X points, with the narrow band gap being only 1.062 eV.



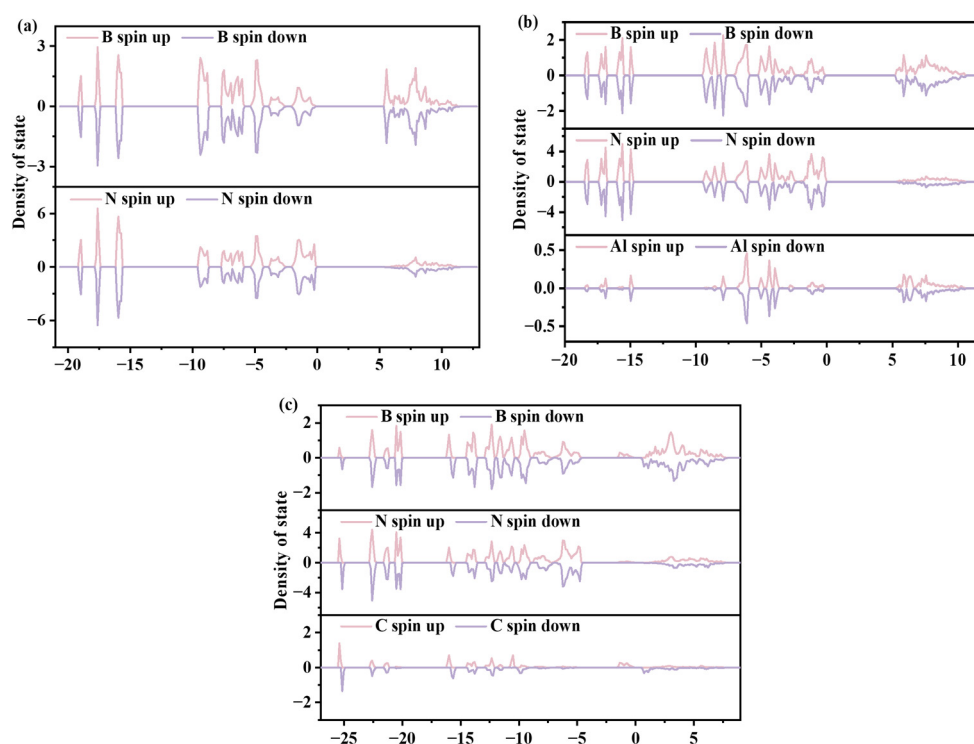
**Figure 5.** Strain–stress curves for the uniaxial tensile strains of  $B_6N_6$  (a),  $B_5N_6Al$  (b), and  $B_5N_6C$  (c).



**Figure 6.** Electronic band structures of  $B_6N_6$  (a),  $B_5N_6Al$  (b), and  $B_5N_6C$  (c). Black and red lines in the band structure present spin-up electrons and spin-down electrons, respectively.

We then explored the electronic properties of  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets by using the density of states (DOSs) and band decomposition charge density (BDCD) at the CBM and VBM. To verify the magnetism of these materials, their spin-up and spin-down

DOSs were simulated and are shown in Figure 7. For  $B_6N_6$  sheet, the spin-up and spin-down density of states of N and B atoms are the same. In the energy range of 0~−20 eV, the contribution of N atoms is more than that of B atoms. In 5~10 eV, the contribution of the energy band is mainly from B atoms, that is, the conduction band is mainly contributed by N atoms, while the valence band is mainly contributed by B atoms. After doping with Al atoms, the spin-up and spin-down DOSs of nitrogen, boron, and aluminum atoms are also the same. It can be seen that the electrons contributed by Al atoms have always been the least, which may be due to the smallest proportion of Al atoms. At 0~−20 eV, N atoms contribute the most, which is similar to  $B_6N_6$ . At 5~8 eV, electrons mainly come from B atoms, while after doping with carbon atoms, both boron, nitrogen, and carbon atoms in  $B_5N_6C$  sheet exhibit differences, which indicates that  $B_5N_6C$  has a modicum of magnetism. For  $B_5N_6C$  sheet, the spin-up electrons come from B and C atoms in the energy window of −2~0 eV, which indicates that the narrowing of the spin-up band gap is mainly due to B and C atoms, independent of N atoms. In the energy ranges of −3~−27 eV and 0~5 eV, the N atom contributes the most to the electronic band, while at 5~10 eV, and the electrons are mainly derived from the B atom.

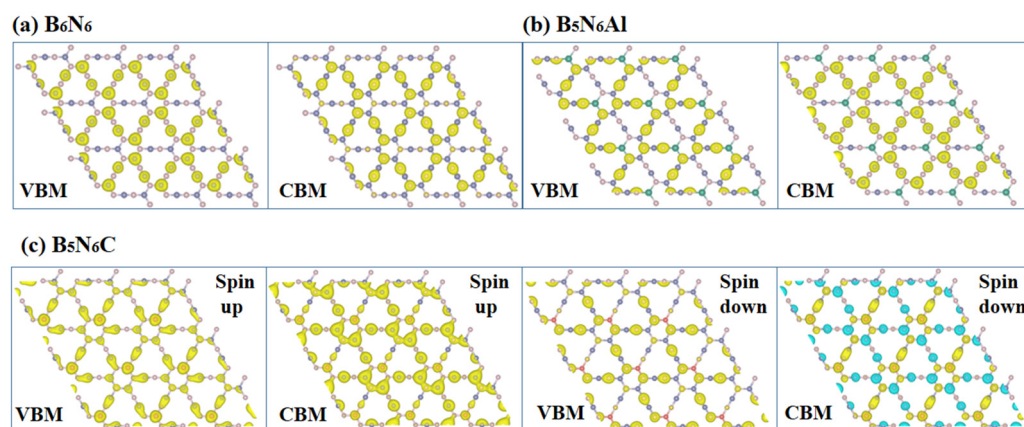


**Figure 7.** Spin-up and spin-down density of states for  $B_6N_6$  (a),  $B_5N_6Al$  (b), and  $B_5N_6C$  (c).

The band decomposed charge densities (BDCDs) at the CBM and VBM of  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets are shown in Figure 8. As shown in the BDCDs, the electrons at the VBM of  $B_6N_6$  sheet are mainly from the B atom, while the electrons at the CBM are mainly from the N atom. With the doping of Al atoms, the main contribution atoms of the CBM and VBM have reversed from before doping, while the Al atoms have no contribution to the CBM and VBM. For  $B_5N_6Al$  sheet, the VBM of  $B_5N_6Al$  sheet mainly comes from N atoms, and the CBM of  $B_6N_6$  sheet mainly comes from B atoms. However, with the addition of the C atom, the distribution of electrons near the  $B_5N_6C$  sheet's CBM and VBM is irregular compared to that of the previous  $B_6N_6$  sheet and  $B_5N_6Al$  sheet. After doping the C atom, the main contribution of the CBM and VBM is participated by doped atoms, but this also occurs mainly by nitrogen and boron atoms. In addition, the charge density at the spin-up VBM and CBM is also significantly different from that at the spin-down VBM and CBM. The charge at the spin-up VBM is mainly contributed by B and C atoms, while

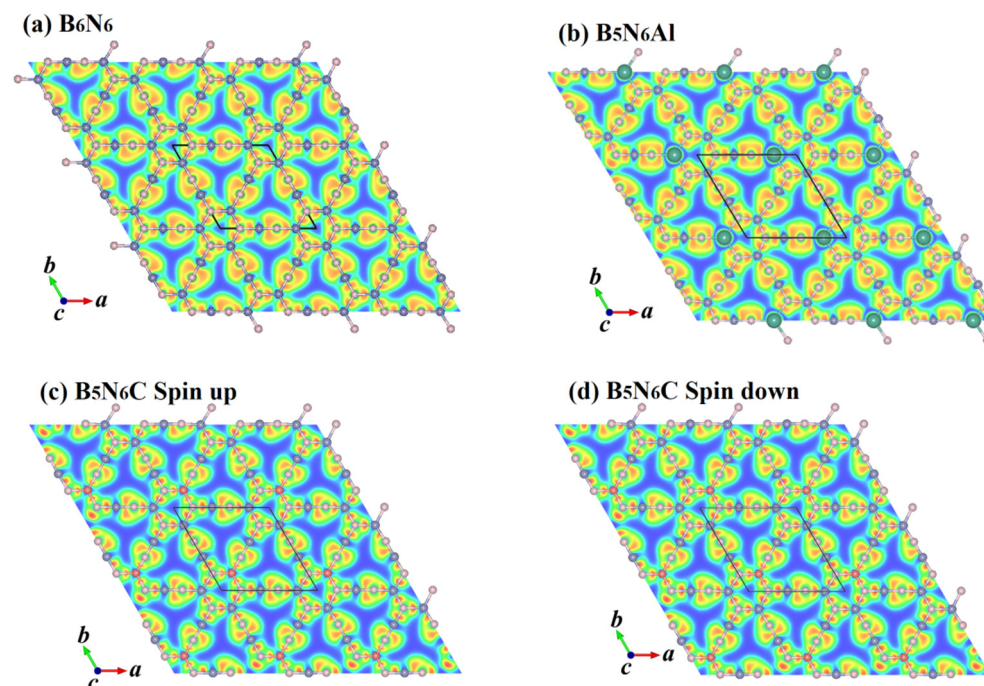


the charge at the spin-down VBM is mainly contributed by N atoms. More rarely, negative charge appears at the spin-down CBM, as shown in the green part of Figure 8c.

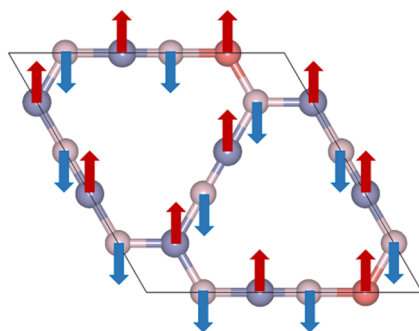


**Figure 8.** The band decomposed charge densities at the CBM and VBM of  $B_6N_6$  (a),  $B_5N_6Al$  (b), and  $B_5N_6C$  (c).

Figure 9 illustrates the electron localization function (ELF) of  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$ . The electrons are well localized around the B-N bond, Al-N bond, and C-N bond. The strength of the covalent bond in  $B_6N_6$  and  $B_5N_6Al$  sheets is similar, indicating that the doping of Al does not have a significant effect on the ELF. Compared with  $B_6N_6$ , the electron localization function of  $B_5N_6C$  is weaker. For  $B_5N_6C$ , the difference between the spin-up and spin-down ELF is less evident, but they are not exactly the same. Careful observation shows that the spin-down charge is slightly more than the spin-up charge. The magnetization direction for each atom of  $B_5N_6C$  is shown in Figure 10, where the blue arrow represents spin-up, and the red arrow represents spin-down. Both B and C atoms are spin-up, while N atoms are spin-down.



**Figure 9.** The electron localization function (ELF) of  $B_6N_6$  (a),  $B_5N_6Al$  (b), and  $B_5N_6C$  (c,d).



**Figure 10.** The magnetization direction for each atom of  $B_5N_6C$ ; arrows denote spins.

### 3. Materials and Methods

The prediction of all the geometric optimization and properties of  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  in this article was made on the basis of the first-principles calculation of the density functional theory (DFT) implemented in Mede A and VASP (3.3) [38,39]. The cutoff energy was selected to be 500 eV for plane waves. Electron–ion interactions were represented with the projector augmented wave (PAW) [40] pseudopotentials. The generalized gradients approximation proposed by the Perdew–Burke–Ernzerhof (GGA-PBE) functional is employed for the exchange correlation potential [41]. In order to fully optimize the geometry of the unit cell, the total energy convergence was set to  $1 \times 10^{-8}$  eV, and the atomic convergence force was 0.001 eV/Å. The Brillouin zone was sampled with an  $8 \times 8 \times 1$  Monkhorst–Pack (MP) [42] special k-point grid for geometric optimization and properties prediction. The hybrid Heyd–Scuseria–Ernzerhof functional (HSE06) [43] was used to simulate the band structures. In order to verify the mechanical stability, the elastic constants of  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets were estimated in vaspkit (1.4.0) [44] using the energy–strain method.

### 4. Conclusions

Based on density functional theory, we studied the electronic properties, mechanical properties, anisotropy properties, and magnetic properties of  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets.  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets are all composed of six-membered rings and twelve-membered rings. All the  $B_6N_6$ ,  $B_5N_6Al$ , and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets are anisotropic materials, and  $B_6N_6$  sheet has the largest anisotropy in terms of Young’s modulus and Poisson’s ratio.  $B_6N_6$  and  $B_5N_6C$  sheets have good mechanical properties compared to  $B_5N_6Al$  sheet, making them suitable for nanomechanical applications.  $B_6N_6$  and  $B_5N_6Al$  sheets have indirect band gaps of 5.684 and 5.418 eV, respectively. Therefore, by calculating the spin-up and spin-down band structures, it was found that  $B_6N_6$  sheet did not exhibit magnetic properties. With the insertion of aluminum atoms,  $B_5N_6Al$  sheet also did not show magnetism. However, with the doping of carbon atoms,  $B_5N_6C$  sheet shows a modicum of magnetism, and all three atoms (B atom, N atom, and C atom) that were not magnetic atoms themselves showed magnetism.

**Author Contributions:** Conceptualization, L.Q.; methodology, L.Q.; software, L.Q.; validation, Z.M.; formal analysis, Z.M.; investigation, F.Y.; resources, Q.F.; data curation, F.Y.; writing—original draft preparation, Q.F.; writing—review and editing, S.W.; visualization, S.W.; supervision, L.Q.; project administration, Q.F.; funding acquisition, L.Q. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

**Funding:** This work was supported by the National Natural Science Foundation of China (Nos. 62164011 and 61804120), China Postdoctoral Science Foundation (Nos. 2019TQ0243, 2019M663646), the Natural Science Basic Research Program of Shaanxi Province (No. 2023-JC-YB-567), Key Science and Technology Innovation Team of Shaanxi Province (2022TD-34), the Natural Science Foundation of Jiangsu Province (No. BK20211002), as well as Qinglan Project of Jiangsu Province of China.

**Data Availability Statement:** Data are contained within the article.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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