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**María A. Aviñó-Díaz, Phill Schultz and Marcos Zyman\***, Mathematics Department, 199 Chambers Street, Room N-599, New York, NY 10007. *The upper central series of the maximal  $p$ -subgroup of a group of automorphisms.*

Let  $G$  be a bounded abelian  $p$ -group, with automorphism group  $Aut(G)$ . We determine the upper central series and nilpotency class of the maximal normal  $p$ -subgroup of  $Aut(G)$ . In this talk we impose a condition on the  $p$ -rank of the component of  $G$  of maximal exponent. We expect our techniques to eventually yield a complete solution. (Received September 25, 2018)