

## Supporting Information

### Theoretical study on the reaction of CO<sub>2</sub> and 2-aminobenzonitrile to form quinazoline-2,4(1H,3H)-dione in water without any catalyst

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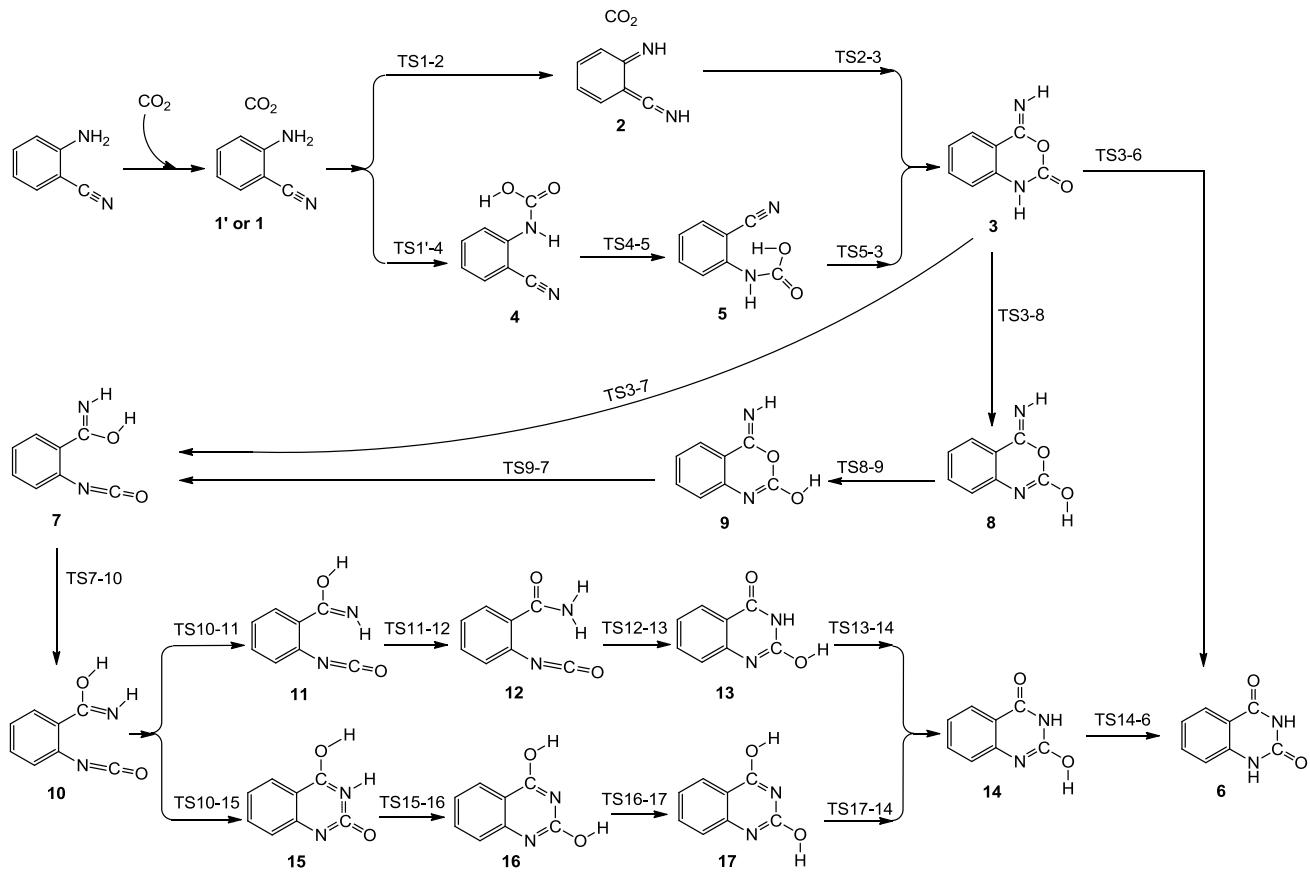
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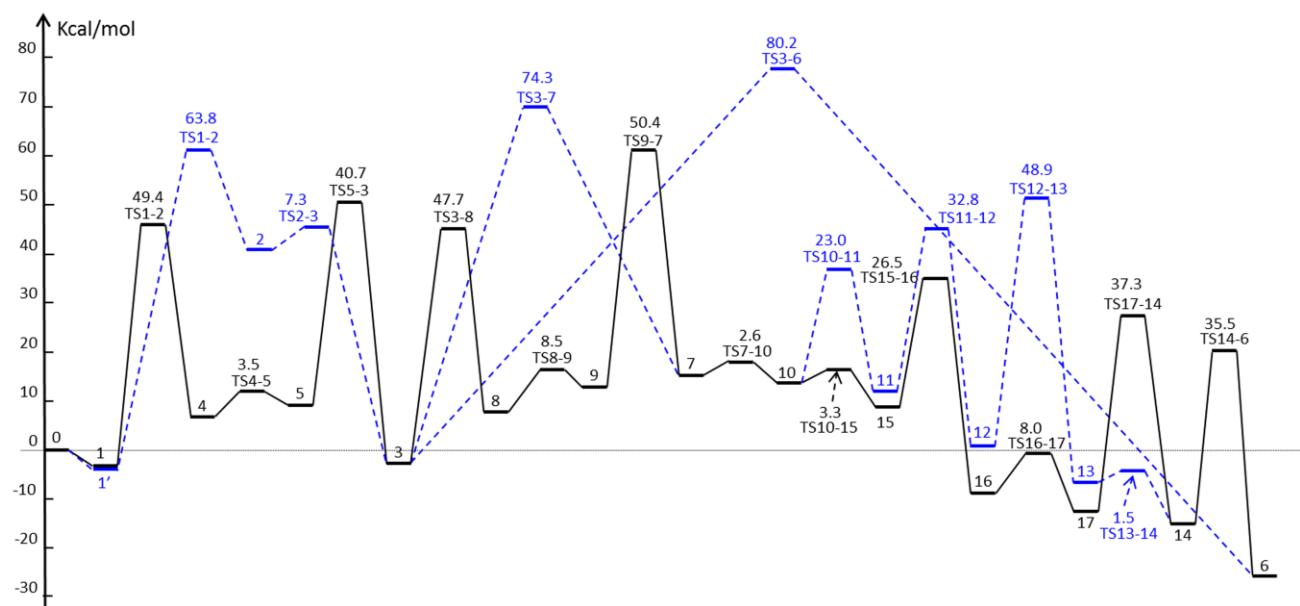
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**Scheme S1.** The pathways of the non-catalytic reaction of  $\text{CO}_2$  and 2-aminobenzonitrile.



**Figure S1.** Potential energy curves of the pathways of the reaction of  $\text{CO}_2$  and 2-aminobenzonitrile. Black solid line: the lowest energy path; Blue dashed line: less possible paths.

## Exploring of the non-catalytic reaction pathways of CO<sub>2</sub> and 2-aminobenzonitrile

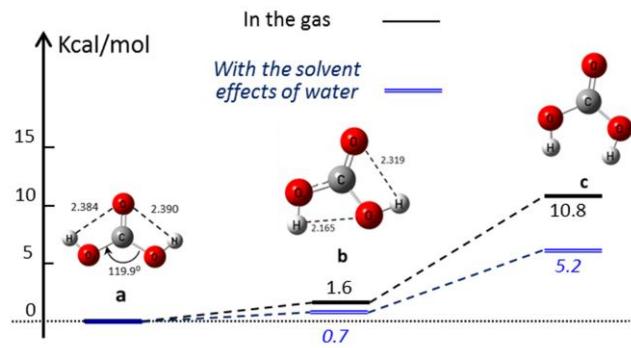
Multiple pathways of CO<sub>2</sub> and 2-aminobenzonitrile, displayed in Scheme S1, are to be discussed to illustrate how the most probable reaction pathway was discovered. A symbol is assigned underneath each structure as a notation of the species. Here, the numbers represent the reactants, product and intermediates of the reaction. TS<sub>n</sub>–m is used to denote the transition structures connecting the intermediates n and m. The potential energy curves are illustrated in Figure S1, in which the energy barriers are displayed above the corresponding transition states.

As shown in Scheme S1, there are two ways to convert 2-aminobenzonitrile to intermediate 3. The transition states of the process from intermediates 1 to 3 are shown in Figure S4. The first is through the intramolecular H transfer, converting 2-aminobenzonitrile to intermediate 2 which can be easily attacked by CO<sub>2</sub> to form intermediate 3. However, the barrier of the H transfer step is too high (63.8 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>). So the reaction prefers to form the carbamic acid (intermediate 4) by the CO<sub>2</sub> electrophilic attack on the amino group, and then followed by the isomerization of the carbamic acid (4→5) and the first intramolecular cyclization (5→3).

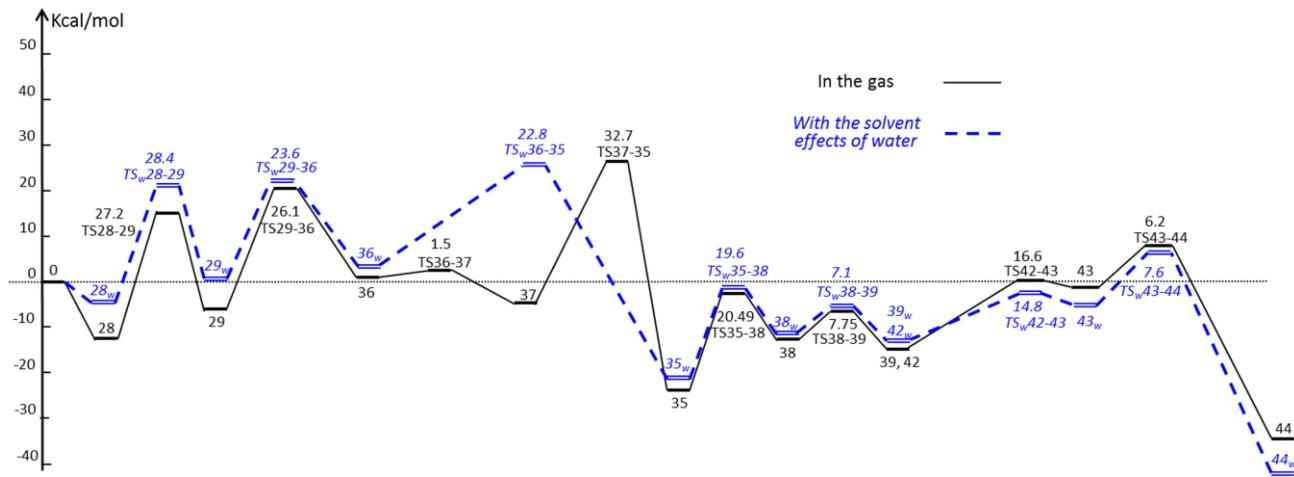
In the following process, intermediate 3 can be directly transformed into the target product quinazoline-2,4(1H,3H)-dione via transition state TS3-6 (see Figure S4). The calculated barrier for this step is 80.2 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>, which is too high to occur. There are two other pathways, both converting intermediate 3 to intermediate 7 (an isocyanate intermediate). One of them has higher energy barrier of 74.3 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>, in which intermediate 3 directly transforms to the isocyanate intermediate via a single H transfer step with transition state TS3-7 (see Figure S4). There are two H transfer steps in another pathway (3→8→9→7) with the corresponding energy barriers of 47.5 and 50.4 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup> respectively, displayed as transition states TS3-8 and TS9-7 (see Figure S4). Between these two H transfer steps, there is an isomerization (8→9) as illustrated by the changes of the dihedral angle  $\angle N1C1O1H1$ , which are 0.00°, -92.08° and 180.0° in intermediates 8, TS8-9 and 9, respectively. Based on the view point of the energy barrier, it is evident that the transformation of intermediates 3 to 7 with two H transfer steps is favorable.

The following step is the isomerization of intermediate 7, with TS7-10 as the transition state. This process is well displayed by the changes of the dihedral angle  $\angle C1C2C3O1$ , which are -145.5°, -87.5° and 0.0° at intermediate 7, transition state TS7-10 and intermediate 10, respectively. There are two channels from intermediate 10 to intermediate 14, which are distinguished by how the N atom nucleophilically attacks the isocyanate group. In one channel, the N atom is in the amide group (intermediate 12), while in the other channel the N atom is in the imino group (intermediate 10). The energy barrier of the attack of amide group is 48.94 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>, which is obviously higher than that of the attack of imino group (3.3 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>). The intermediate 15 can transform to a more stable intermediate 16 via transition state TS15-16. The rate-determining step in the imino group attack channel is the tautomerization of intermediate 17 to intermediate 14 with energy barrier of 37.3 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>, while that of the amide group attack step in the amide attack channel is 48.9 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>. Therefore, based on the view of the energy barrier, the imino group attack channel is favorable. After intermediate 14, the final product quinazoline-2,4(1H,3H)-dione (6) is formed. The transition state TS14-6 of this tautomerization is shown in Figure S4.

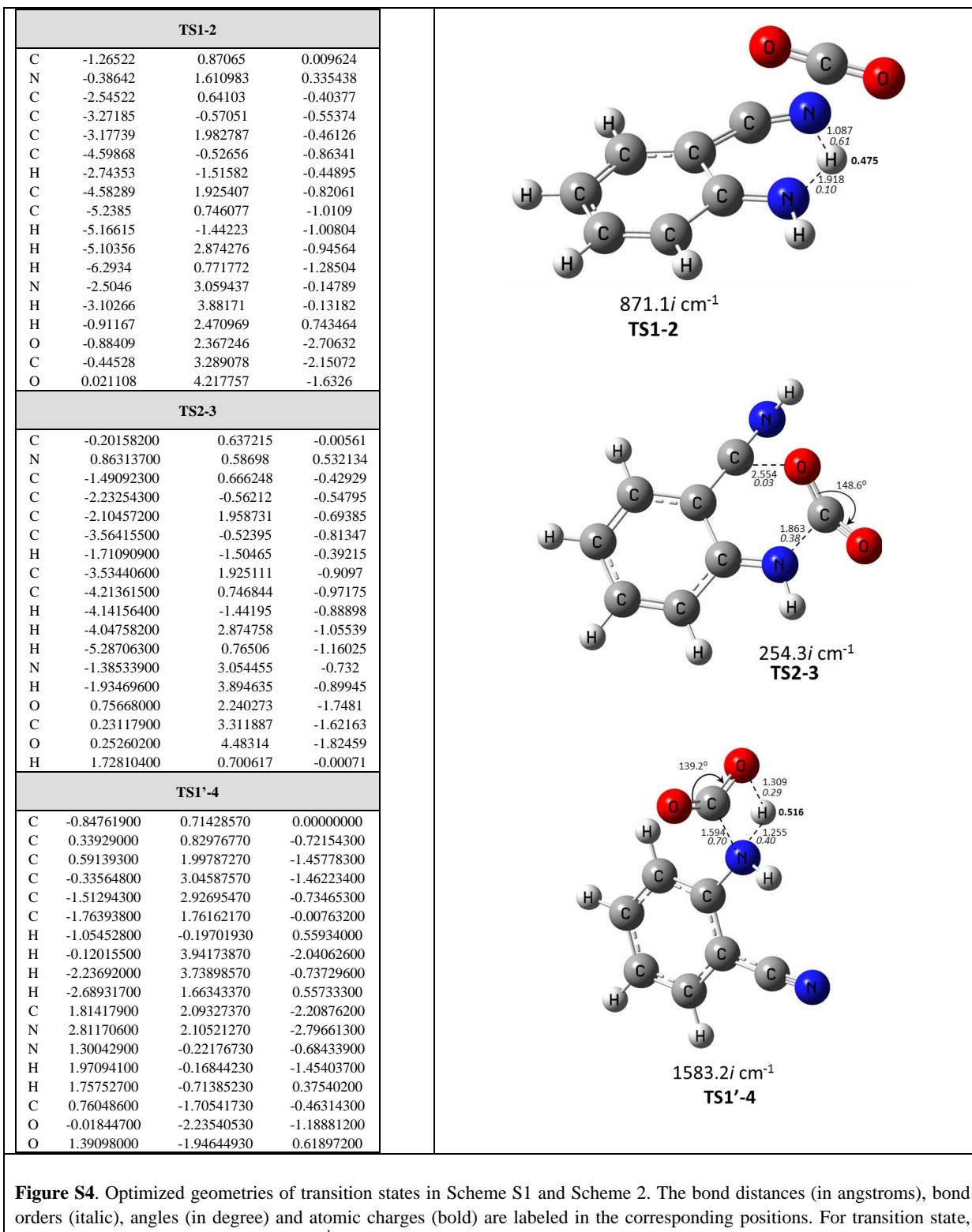
Based on the above discussions, the most probable mechanism for the reaction of CO<sub>2</sub> and 2-aminobenzonitrile without water and catalysts is extracted and drawn as Scheme 2 in the manuscript.



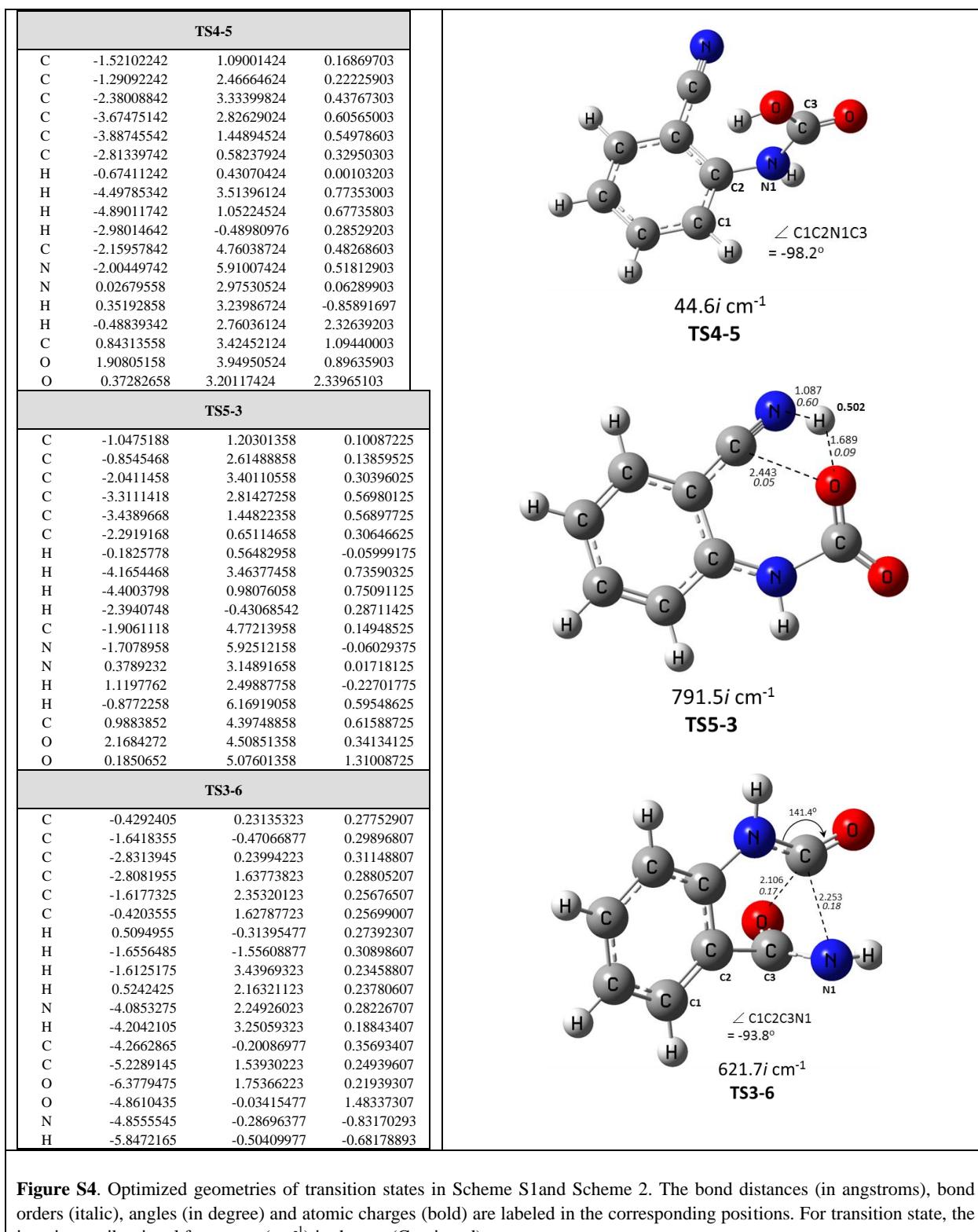
**Figure S2.** Stable structures and the corresponding potential energy curves of  $\text{H}_2\text{CO}_3$ . The bond distances (in angstroms) are labeled in the corresponding positions.

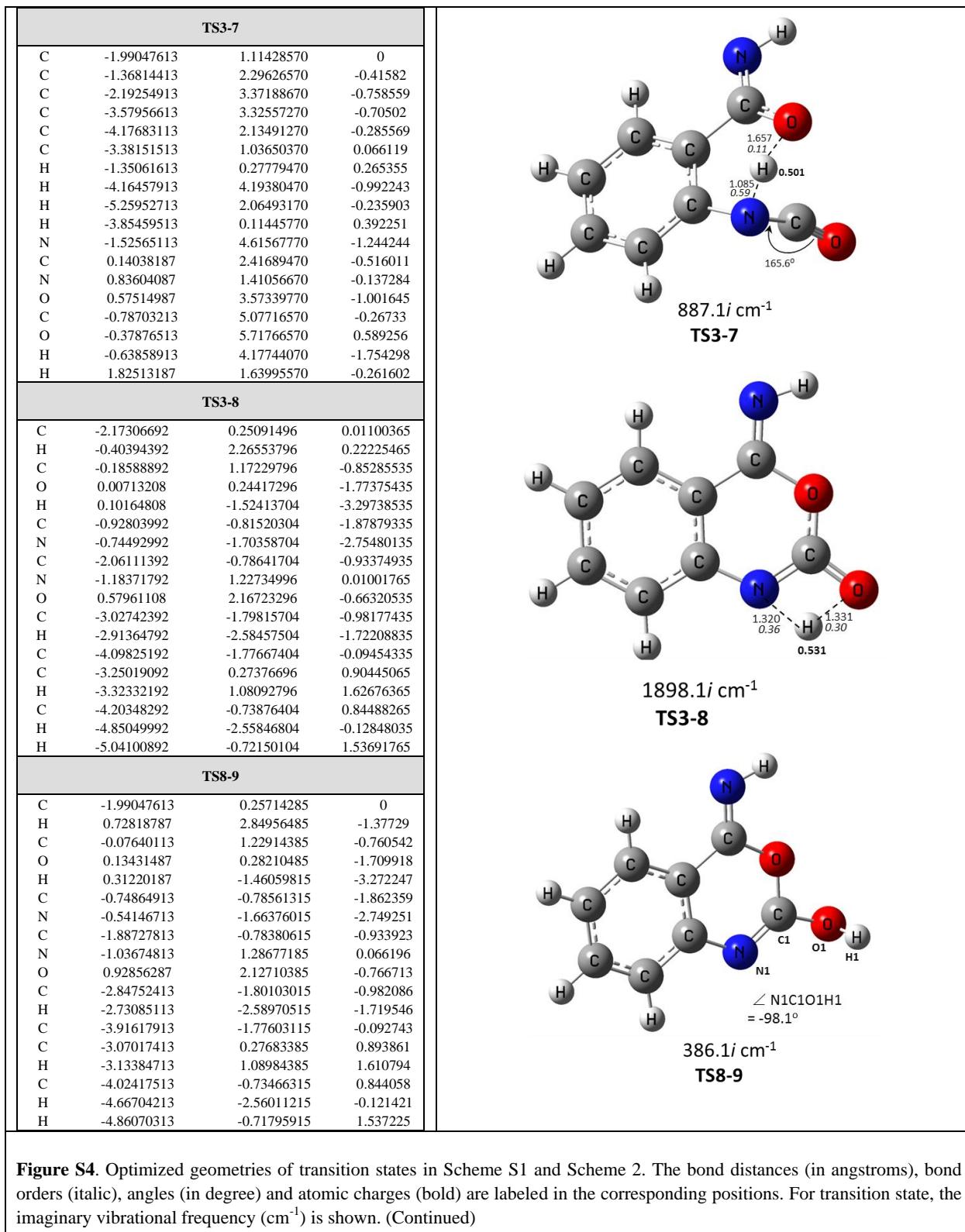


**Figure S3.** The potential energy curves of the proposed reaction mechanism of  $\text{CO}_2$  and 2-aminobenzonitrile in water.

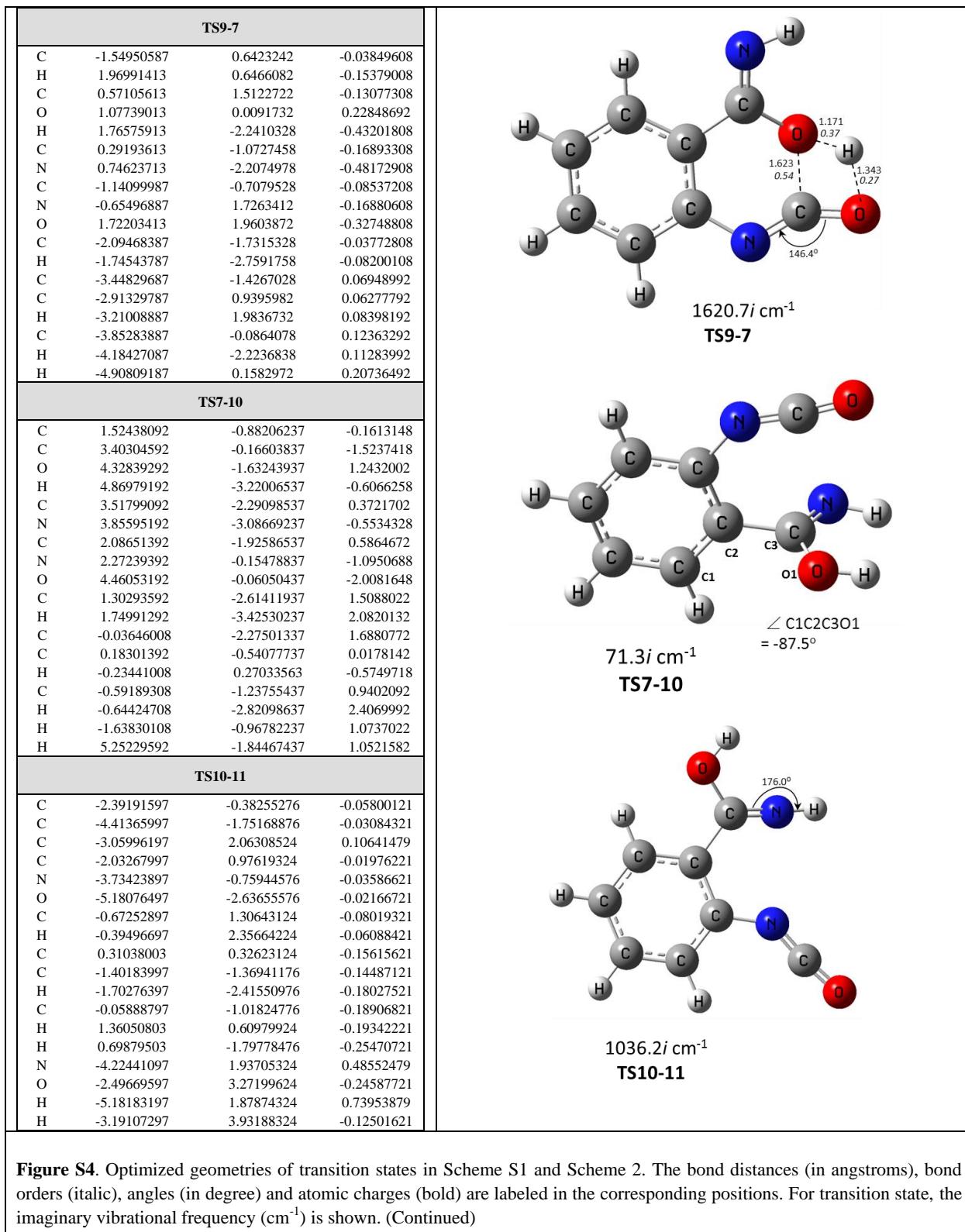


**Figure S4.** Optimized geometries of transition states in Scheme S1 and Scheme 2. The bond distances (in angstroms), bond orders (italic), angles (in degree) and atomic charges (bold) are labeled in the corresponding positions. For transition state, the imaginary vibrational frequency ( $\text{cm}^{-1}$ ) is shown. (To be continued)



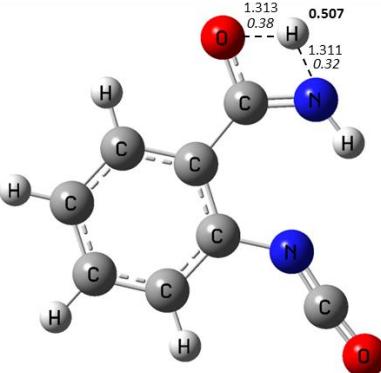


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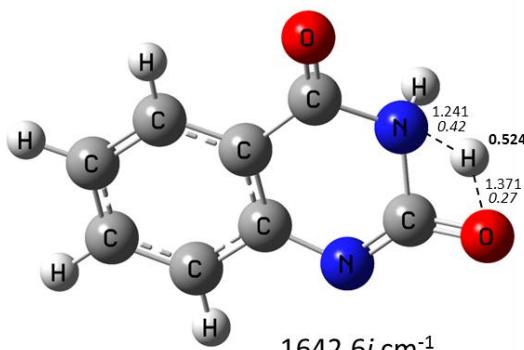


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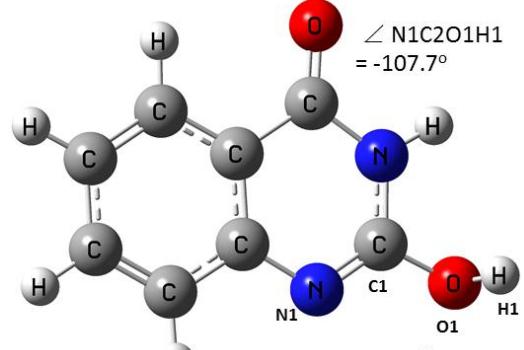
TS11-12			
C	-1.90715617	-0.10521163	0.0177925
H	-3.40247817	3.63543137	0.2479405
C	-3.87477417	-1.49266663	0.1304915
C	-2.49248417	2.36305837	0.1385475
C	-1.53044317	1.24695937	0.0300955
N	-3.26501917	-0.44498363	0.1118445
O	-4.56845617	-2.42791063	0.1586125
C	-0.17272217	1.57572437	-0.0641985
H	0.09326583	2.63058837	-0.0526575
C	0.79713983	0.58682237	-0.1687715
C	-0.93059517	-1.10135863	-0.0884665
H	-1.23332417	-2.14776863	-0.0977175
C	0.41217583	-0.75495063	-0.1812045
H	1.84862383	0.85700937	-0.2407605
H	1.16200283	-1.54030063	-0.2648985
N	-3.79522817	2.38226537	0.2465635
O	-2.09630717	3.59493837	0.1389675
H	-4.38138817	1.55865937	0.2733395
TS12-13			
C	-0.64063643	-0.55279076	0.04178927
H	2.93007557	-0.48191876	-0.35056673
C	1.48907557	0.22940224	-0.08761473
C	1.15332357	-2.29860876	-0.13619873
C	-0.26179243	-1.91457376	-0.07037473
N	0.24727557	0.52095224	-0.07032073
O	2.56076857	0.83669224	-0.40939073
C	-1.22730643	-2.93324276	-0.07204373
H	-0.88959443	-3.96393776	-0.17044773
C	-2.56934843	-2.62166476	0.06155727
C	-2.00671543	-0.26024776	0.17473127
H	-2.29789543	0.78562924	0.24551227
C	-2.94962043	-1.27752676	0.19080927
H	-3.31976743	-3.40943876	0.06722827
H	-4.00429043	-1.02511976	0.29692527
N	2.03255857	-1.15474276	0.18035227
O	1.62734057	-3.38365576	-0.32306573
H	2.29884057	-1.22819476	1.16696327
TS13-14			
C	-0.31085	0.080246	-0.00148
H	3.645842	-0.216	0.827974
C	1.957386	0.212765	0.01671
C	0.736806	2.330608	0.012227
C	-0.46058	1.479912	0.008611
N	0.933732	-0.55058	0.01276
O	3.211817	-0.31104	-0.02951
C	-1.7338	2.0662	0.003203
H	-1.80286	3.152683	0.009504
C	-2.8598	1.261185	-0.01089
C	-1.46357	-0.72416	-0.01686
H	-1.33673	-1.80482	-0.02451
C	-2.71769	-0.13697	-0.02126
H	-3.85291	1.706843	-0.01449
H	-3.6056	-0.76791	-0.03265
N	1.920248	1.586263	0.015289
O	0.7663	3.544617	0.005684
H	2.786954	2.106966	-0.05089



**1930.0*i* cm<sup>-1</sup>**  
**TS11-12**

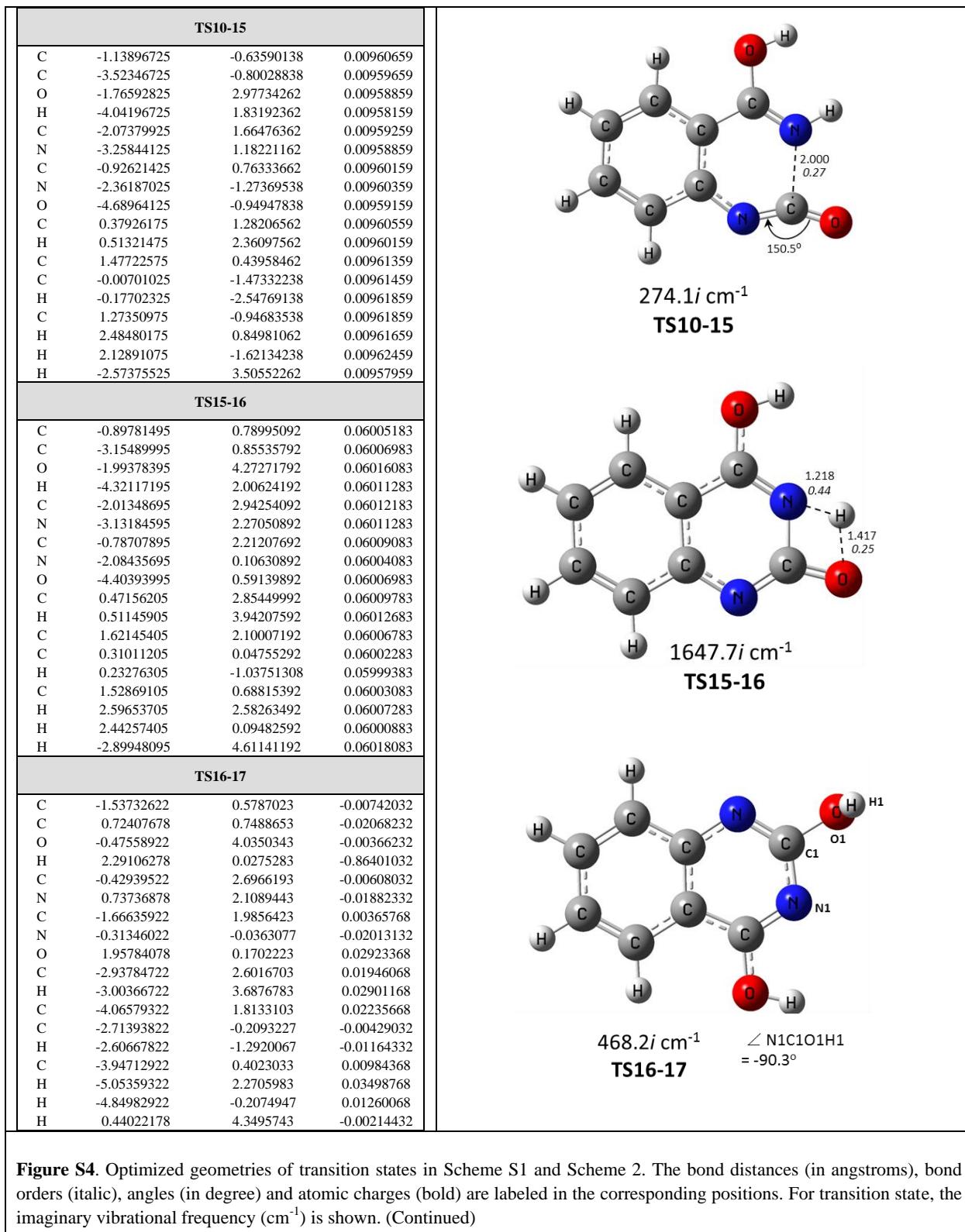


**1642.6*i* cm<sup>-1</sup>**  
**TS12-13**

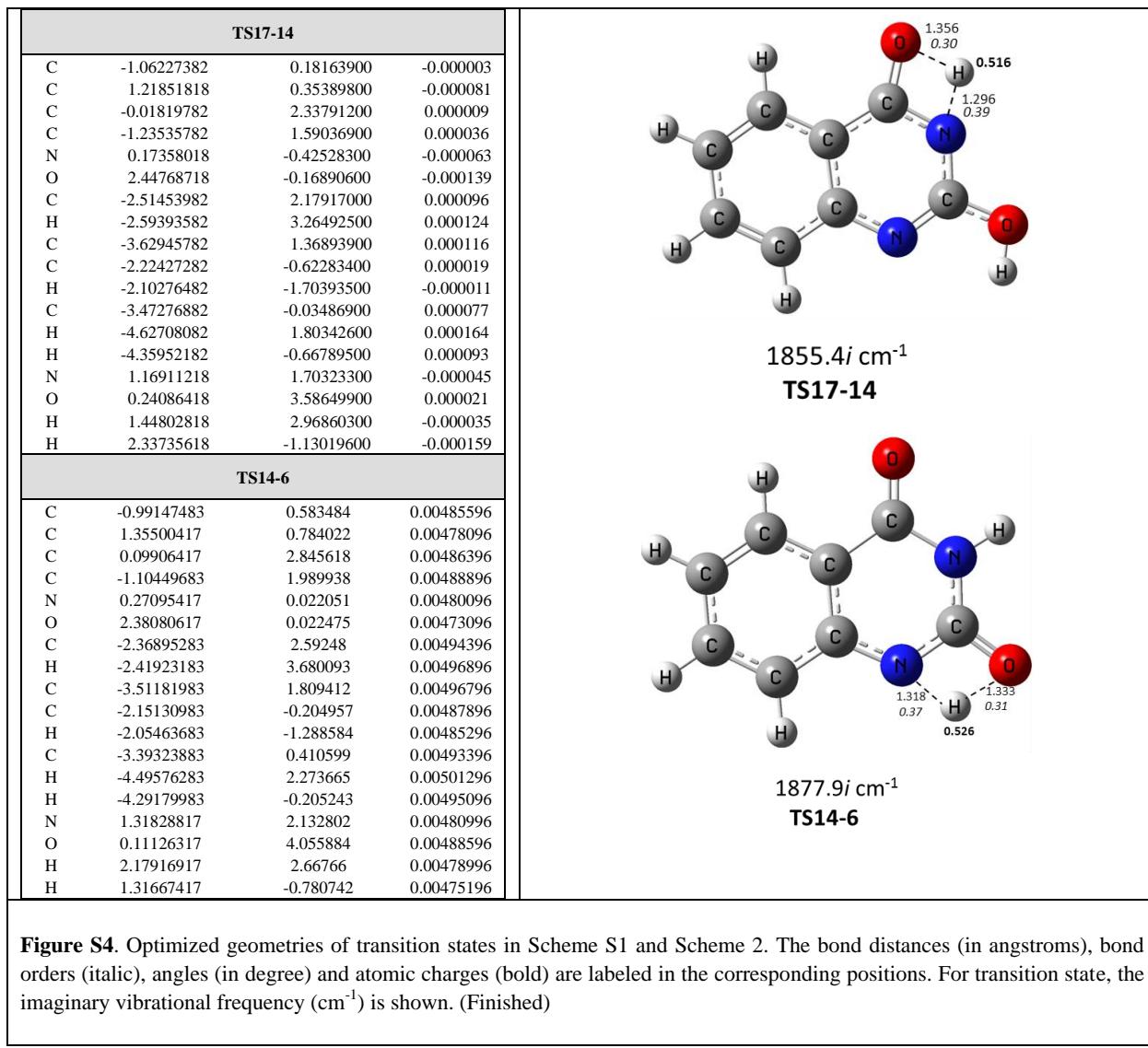


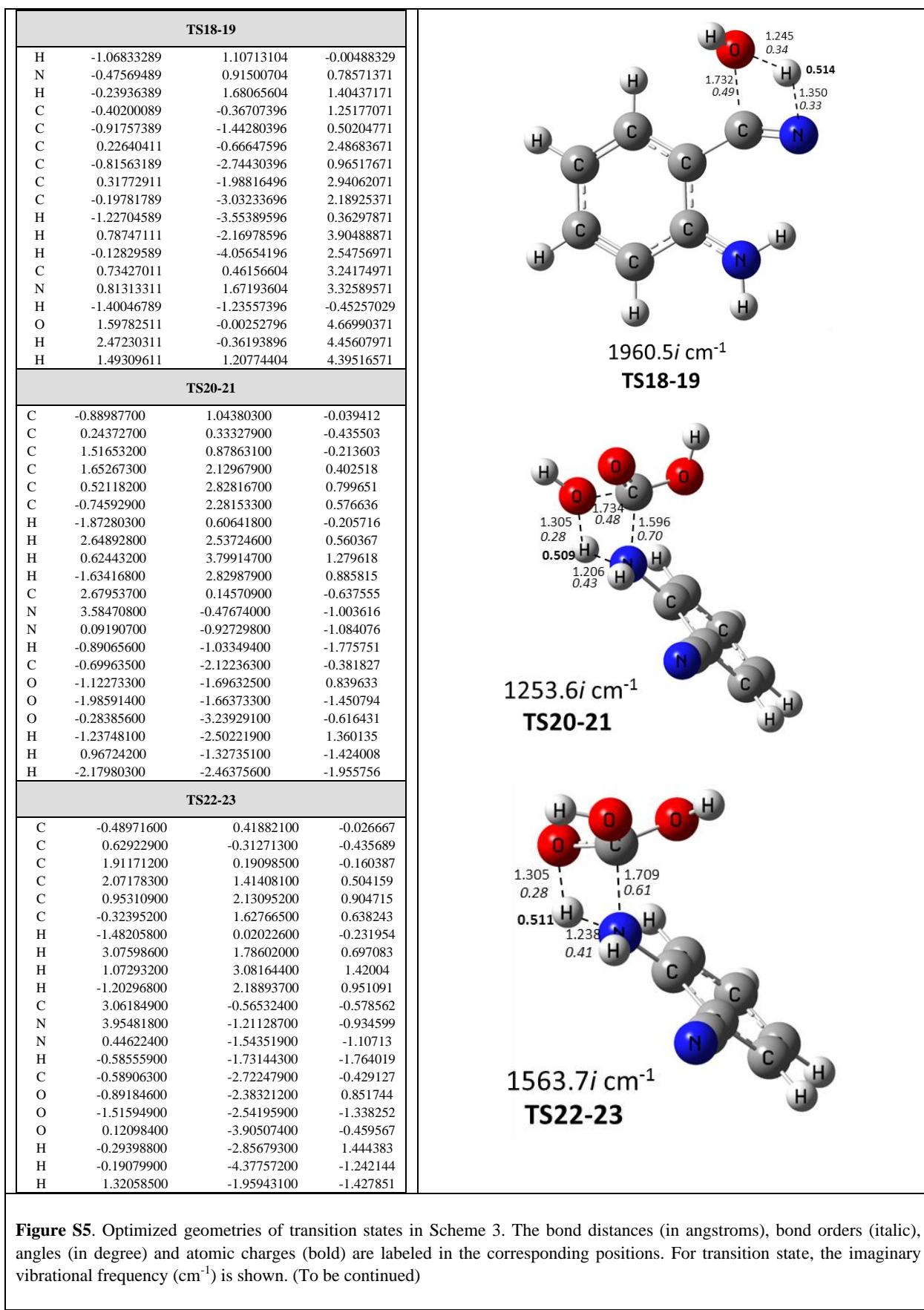
$\angle \text{N1C2O1H1} = -107.7^\circ$   
**298.1*i* cm<sup>-1</sup>**  
**TS13-14**

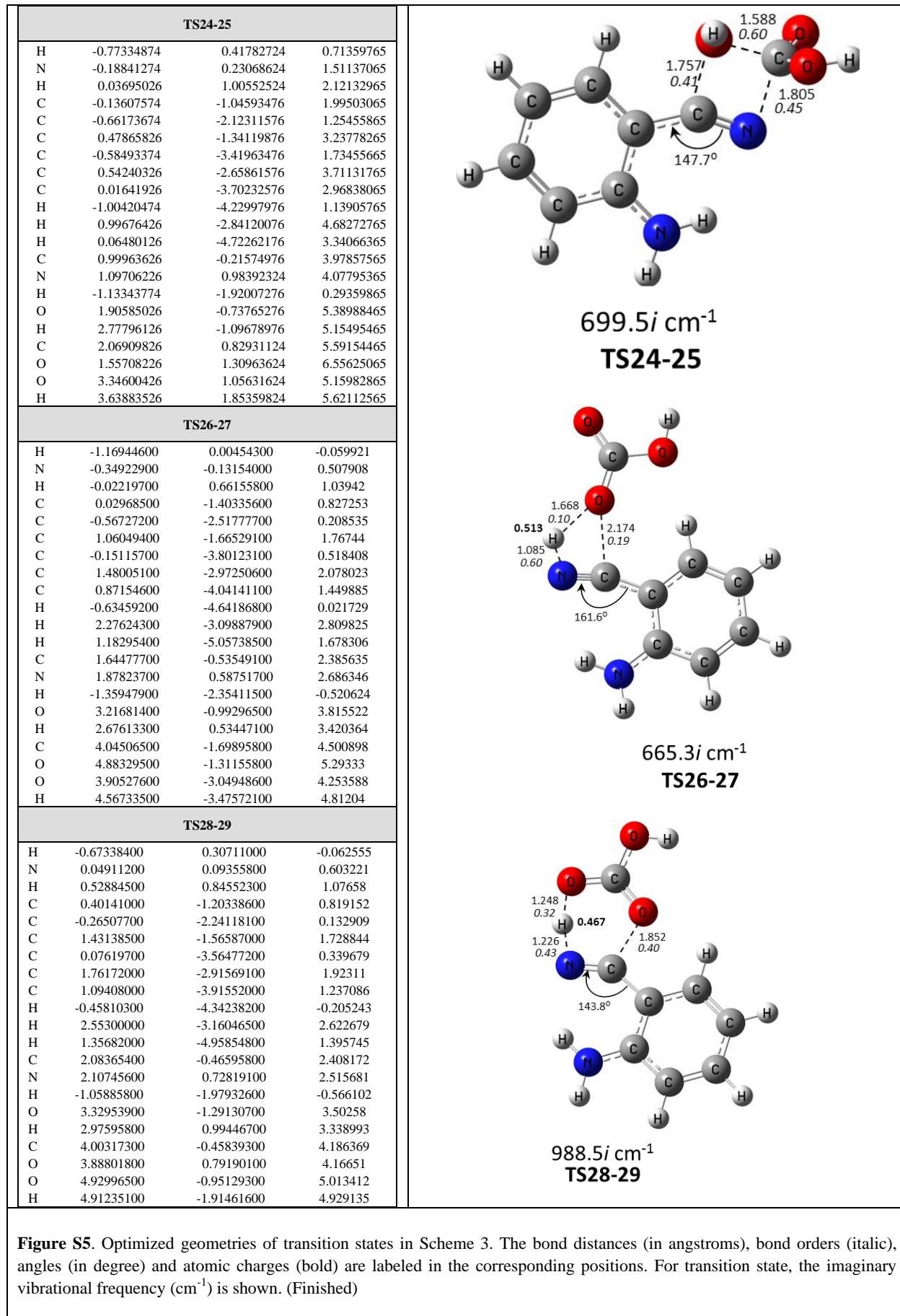
**Figure S4.** Optimized geometries of transition states in Scheme S1 and Scheme 2. The bond distances (in angstroms), bond orders (italic), angles (in degree) and atomic charges (bold) are labeled in the corresponding positions. For transition state, the imaginary vibrational frequency (cm<sup>-1</sup>) is shown. (Continued)

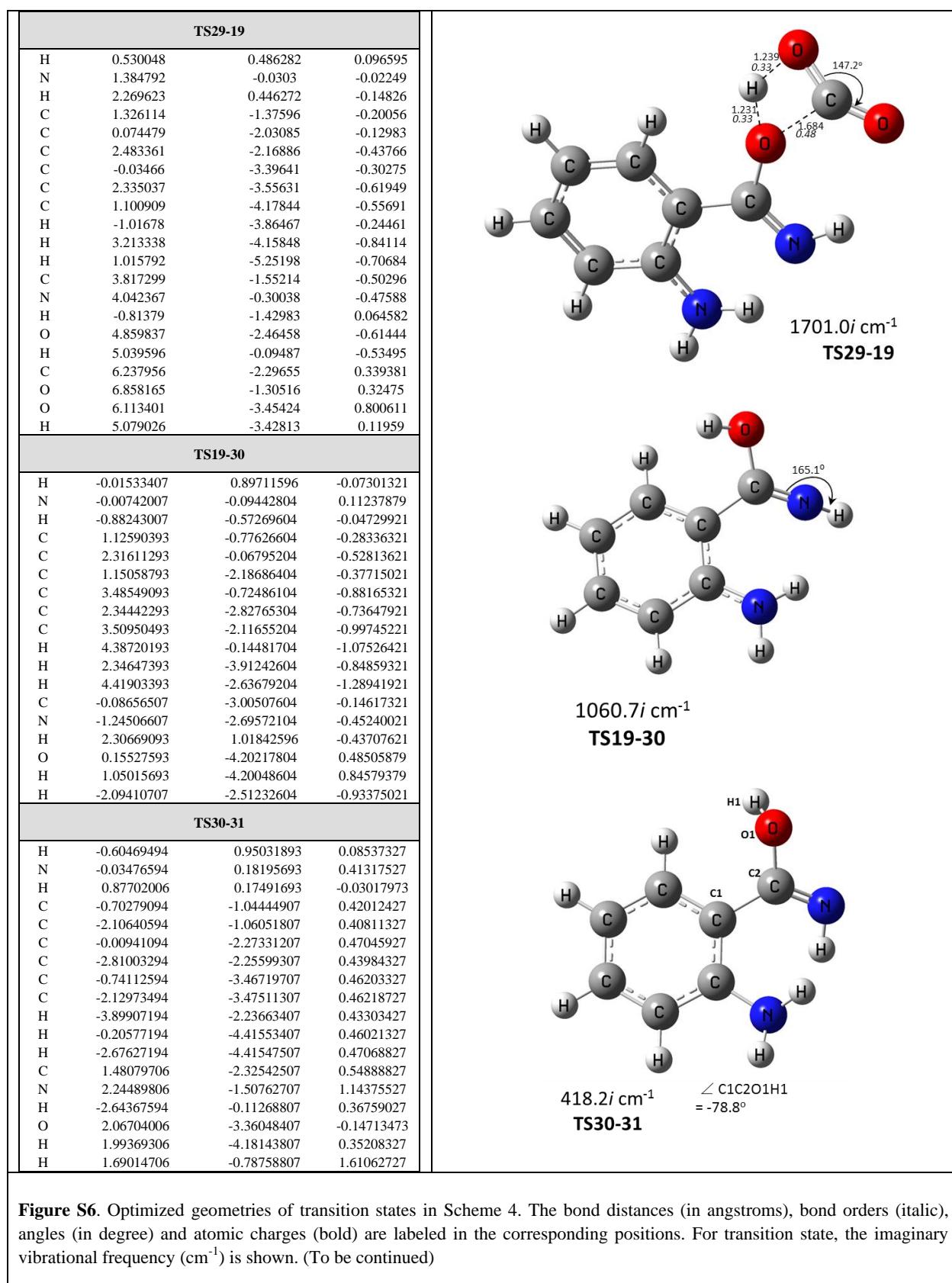


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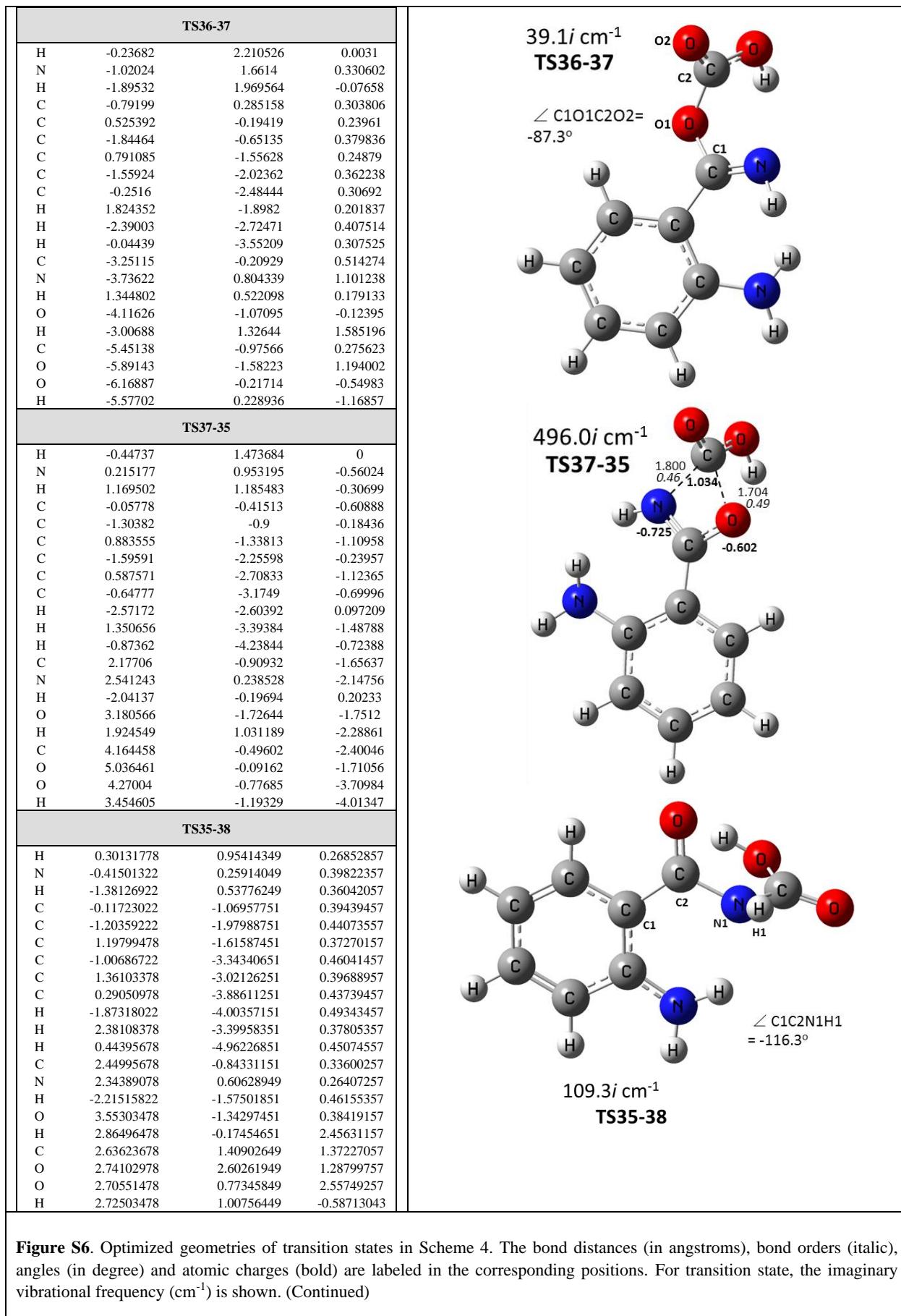
TS32-33			
H	-0.04849200	0.15431000	0.000894
N	-0.68627400	-0.81743800	0.473535
H	-1.60491700	-0.58271300	0.854495
C	-0.64098300	-2.15476500	-0.043374
C	0.59672300	-2.79132400	-0.137358
C	-1.80883600	-2.82283100	-0.442186
C	0.67584400	-4.08765600	-0.635385
C	-1.71541600	-4.13905400	-0.906637
C	-0.48057000	-4.76759400	-1.016468
H	1.64716000	-4.57345500	-0.710047
H	-2.62923700	-4.65929000	-1.185944
H	-0.41999100	-5.78746200	-1.391096
C	-3.14409500	-2.16454100	-0.399245
N	-3.44391300	-0.96578100	-0.705989
H	1.49669500	-2.27586600	0.194947
O	-4.11077500	-3.00955400	0.012622
H	-2.63799700	-0.46494100	-1.076738
C	0.46970200	-0.36928400	1.458794
O	0.71759400	-0.92125600	2.484408
O	0.90659200	0.61261300	0.768389
H	-4.94729800	-2.52404500	-0.04341
TS34-35			
H	0.02655063	0.70556434	0.34343222
N	0.68822163	0.69269834	1.10824522
H	0.34935263	1.22785334	1.89947722
C	1.16912363	-0.58402566	1.40503022
C	0.99651063	-1.61808466	0.47171322
C	1.86007263	-0.87097866	2.60143122
C	1.48044763	-2.89426266	0.71987322
C	2.31321263	-2.17445066	2.85052022
C	2.13816663	-3.18591866	1.91786322
H	1.33305763	-3.67414666	-0.02607578
H	2.82034963	-2.37265766	3.79228722
H	2.50741263	-4.18918566	2.11797822
C	2.15470863	0.17008934	3.61066422
N	2.34291263	1.42292434	3.36734122
H	0.46518163	-1.40633966	-0.45603878
O	2.24670963	-0.27955666	4.85198722
H	2.48631163	0.48857734	5.42516022
C	2.76514563	2.75029134	4.66765222
O	2.85567863	3.75541834	4.05720622
O	2.80603363	2.14832034	5.70776022
H	2.33260863	1.68866634	2.38680722
TS29-36			
H	0.105263	0.763158	0
N	0.932593	0.281883	-0.31768
H	1.821346	0.683359	-0.06164
C	0.856735	-1.08749	-0.39851
C	-0.41745	-1.68792	-0.46775
C	2.001552	-1.92367	-0.44747
C	-0.55999	-3.05671	-0.59791
C	1.823941	-3.31411	-0.57633
C	0.566667	-3.88663	-0.65876
H	-1.55957	-3.4865	-0.65677
H	2.70564	-3.94652	-0.61582
H	0.458036	-4.96338	-0.76692
C	3.360419	-1.34784	-0.37576
N	3.741654	-0.17941	-0.4144
H	-1.29766	-1.04625	-0.42915
O	4.304361	-2.3974	-0.10275
H	3.989262	0.715513	-0.77395
C	5.538213	-2.29604	-0.66708
O	5.824332	-1.68486	-1.64953
O	6.415733	-3.04126	0.022235
H	5.969174	-3.41577	0.792473

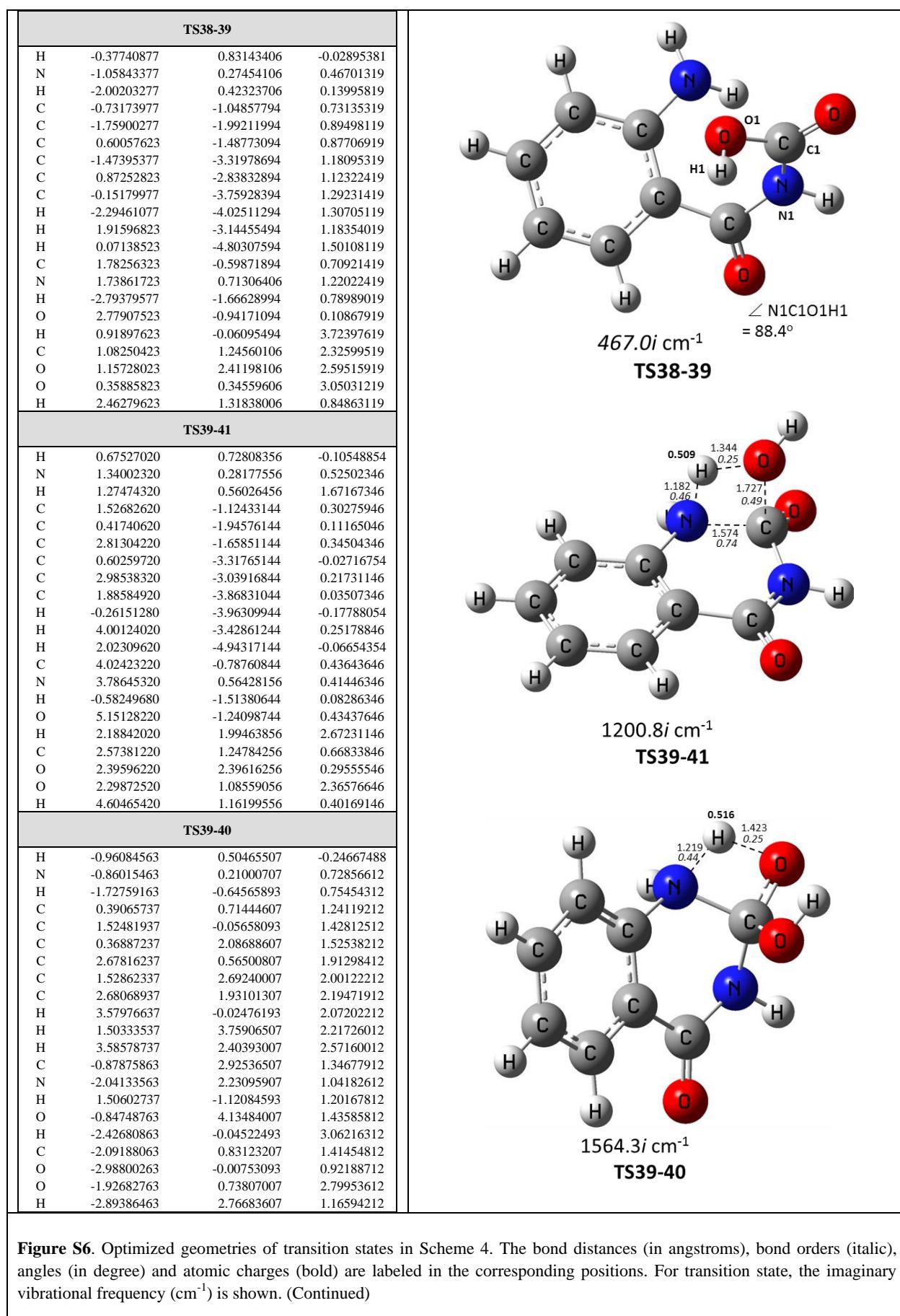
**1606.6*i* cm<sup>-1</sup>**  
**TS32-33**

**247.4*i* cm<sup>-1</sup>**  
**TS34-35**

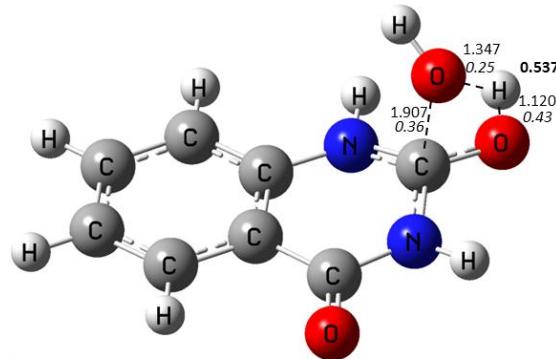
**990.9*i* cm<sup>-1</sup>**  
**TS29-36**

**Figure S6.** Optimized geometries of transition states in Scheme 4. The bond distances (in angstroms), bond orders (italic), angles (in degree) and atomic charges (bold) are labeled in the corresponding positions. For transition state, the imaginary vibrational frequency (cm<sup>-1</sup>) is shown. (Continued)

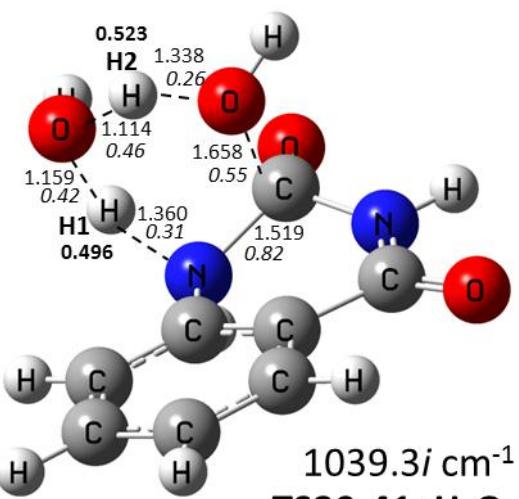




TS40-41			
H	-1.05598900	0.69301100	0.026273
N	-0.84724100	1.67974800	0.093385
H	-3.29319900	1.92255000	1.118256
C	0.45651500	2.11069300	0.313189
C	1.52542800	1.20747500	0.326329
C	0.68950900	3.47820700	0.506368
C	2.81181300	1.68278200	0.54171
C	1.99087600	3.94068000	0.72252
C	3.05242800	3.04846000	0.743443
H	3.64308300	0.97926000	0.555385
H	2.13445100	5.01023700	0.866531
H	4.06647400	3.40466000	0.911696
C	-0.43881900	4.43343900	0.449992
N	-1.67615900	3.83585300	0.216789
H	1.34246900	0.14498400	0.170407
O	-0.33389400	5.63537300	0.55866
H	-2.03635800	1.59907100	2.642395
C	-1.92612300	2.48728900	0.315862
O	-3.12723300	2.03605000	0.016404
O	-2.47967000	2.28414700	2.129535
H	-2.49012500	4.43613700	0.287894
TS39-41+H <sub>2</sub> O			
H	-0.95491	0.620941	-0.00528
N	-0.82165	0.290234	0.950812
H	-1.7661	0.772582	1.801777
C	-0.67454	-1.1445	1.007808
C	-1.80929	-1.95058	0.991288
C	0.598175	-1.71174	1.099317
C	-1.66746	-3.33498	1.062548
C	0.731007	-3.09783	1.176379
C	-0.39885	-3.90992	1.159598
H	-2.55396	-3.96713	1.051752
H	1.735668	-3.51204	1.241911
H	-0.29425	-4.99161	1.221583
C	1.828408	-0.85976	1.066719
N	1.585075	0.488305	1.096493
H	-2.79627	-1.49322	0.930576
O	2.946954	-1.32735	0.965946
H	0.754369	1.243594	3.531462
C	0.345273	1.102019	1.487107
O	0.227984	2.329499	1.354548
O	0.146244	0.652661	3.070337
H	2.382245	1.111893	1.058994
O	-2.16473	1.194862	2.804447
H	-1.1315	1.030495	3.186692
H	-2.24741	2.150131	2.674387



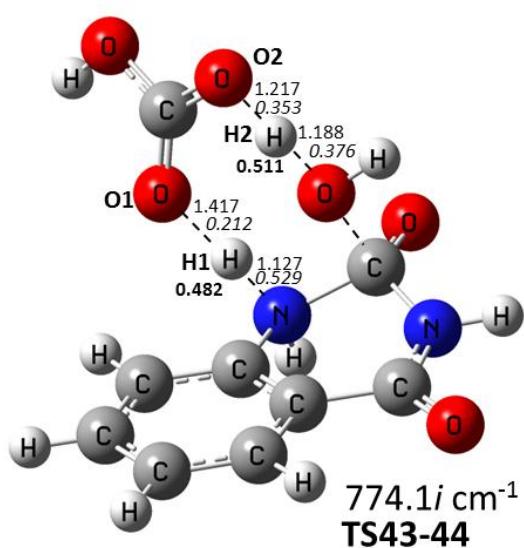
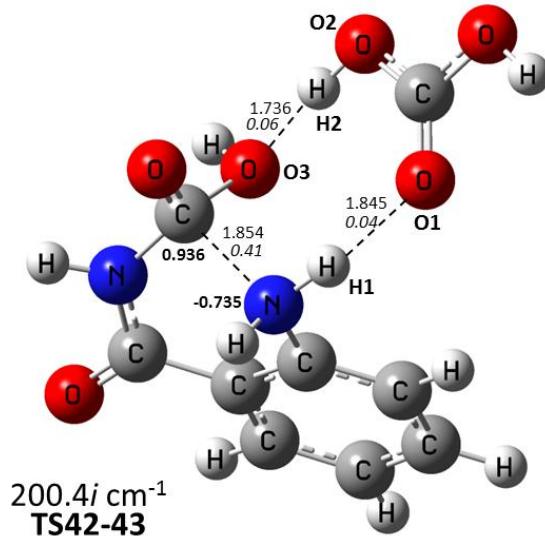
1220.9*i* cm<sup>-1</sup>  
TS40-41



1039.57 cm<sup>-1</sup>  
**TS39-41+H<sub>2</sub>O**

**Figure S6.** Optimized geometries of transition states in Scheme 4. The bond distances (in angstroms), bond orders (*italic*), angles (in degree) and atomic charges (**bold**) are labeled in the corresponding positions. For transition state, the imaginary vibrational frequency ( $\text{cm}^{-1}$ ) is shown. (Continued)

TS42-43			
H	-0.56164	-0.36986	0
N	-0.34463	-0.02574	0.93384
H	0.58562	0.414452	0.945755
C	-1.35789	0.831585	1.478605
C	-1.20261	2.213523	1.498927
C	-2.48764	0.231902	2.042935
C	-2.20212	3.004781	2.064229
C	-3.49287	1.033104	2.583402
C	-3.35024	2.418116	2.59775
H	-2.08332	4.086998	2.084133
H	-4.37457	0.545649	2.995876
H	-4.13089	3.041607	3.029764
C	-2.66493	-1.25719	2.065896
N	-1.52333	-2.01881	1.944831
H	-0.30162	2.658304	1.078655
O	-3.76254	-1.77128	2.166448
H	-0.14767	-1.38477	3.865888
C	-0.1503	-1.58395	1.920033
O	0.690606	-2.29103	1.395726
O	0.182239	-0.86964	3.118741
H	-1.65646	-3.00368	1.748877
H	1.884372	-0.53464	3.063058
C	3.028552	0.695534	2.206724
O	4.294245	1.117283	2.255568
O	2.209261	1.148223	1.423059
O	2.825298	-0.23643	3.102938
H	4.389503	1.793481	1.571955
TS43-44			
H	-0.97701	0.674704	-0.00578
N	-0.85415	0.344855	0.95555
H	-1.80227	0.58944	1.513577
C	-0.61671	-1.0904	0.99242
C	-1.70341	-1.95477	0.985217
C	0.69148	-1.56468	1.050178
C	-1.46668	-3.32884	1.019969
C	0.916104	-2.94012	1.084195
C	-0.1615	-3.82107	1.067924
H	-2.3098	-4.01748	1.016442
H	1.945853	-3.29071	1.123724
H	0.013623	-4.89482	1.097326
C	1.85521	-0.62733	1.061563
N	1.519096	0.705734	1.146505
H	-2.71602	-1.55445	0.96883
O	3.004837	-1.00206	0.961078
H	0.743407	1.026019	3.657777
C	0.251465	1.234905	1.525507
O	0.049875	2.433423	1.492986
O	0.050166	0.584907	3.150729
H	2.278021	1.377289	1.150993
H	-0.98264	0.938901	3.617882
C	-3.03252	1.194979	3.361911
O	-4.19629	1.563374	3.913565
O	-3.04223	0.80108	2.166045
O	-2.03457	1.279875	4.126245
H	-4.87414	1.474762	3.231082



**Figure S6.** Optimized geometries of transition states in Scheme 4. The bond distances (in angstroms), bond orders (*italic*), angles (in degree) and atomic charges (bold) are labeled in the corresponding positions. For transition state, the imaginary vibrational frequency ( $\text{cm}^{-1}$ ) is shown. (Finished)

**Reference 18:** Gaussian 09, Revision A.01, Frisch, M. J.; Trucks, G. W.; Schlegel, H. B.; Scuseria, G. E.; Robb, M. A.; Cheeseman, J. R.; Scalmani, G.; Barone, V.; Mennucci, B.; Petersson, G. A.; Nakatsuji, H.; Caricato, M.; Li, X.; Hratchian, H. P.; Izmaylov, A. F.; Bloino, J.; Zheng, G.; Sonnenberg, J. L.; Hada, M.; Ehara, M.; Toyota, K.; Fukuda, R.; Hasegawa, J.; Ishida, M.; Nakajima, T.; Honda, Y.; Kitao, O.; Nakai, H.; Vreven, T.; Montgomery, Jr., J. A.; Peralta, J. E.; Ogliaro, F.; Bearpark, M.; Heyd, J. J.; Brothers, E.; Kudin, K. N.; Staroverov, V. N.; Kobayashi, R.; Normand, J.; Raghavachari, K.; Rendell, A.; Burant, J. C.; Iyengar, S. S.; Tomasi, J.; Cossi, M.; Rega, N.; Millam, J. M.; Klene, M.; Knox, J. E.; Cross, J. B.; Bakken, V.; Adamo, C.; Jaramillo, J.; Gomperts, R.; Stratmann, R. E.; Yazyev, O.; Austin, A. J.; Cammi, R.; Pomelli, C.; Ochterski, J. W.; Martin, R. L.; Morokuma, K.; Zakrzewski, V. G.; Voth, G. A.; Salvador, P.; Dannenberg, J. J.; Dapprich, S.; Daniels, A. D.; Farkas, O.; Foresman, J. B.; Ortiz, J. V.; Cioslowski, J.; Fox, D. J. Gaussian, Inc., Wallingford CT, **2009**.