# Metal-Free Sulfonylation of Arenes with N-Fluorobenzenesulfonimide *via* Cleavage of S-N Bonds: Expeditious Synthesis of Diarylsulfones (Supporting Information)

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# **General remarks**

All manipulations were conducted with sealed tubes. <sup>1</sup>H-NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker AVIII-400 spectrometers. Chemical shifts (in ppm) were calibrated with Chloroform-d. <sup>13</sup>C-NMR spectra were obtained by using the same NMR spectrometers and were calibrated with Chloroform-d. Analytical thin-layer chromatography (TLC) was conducted with TLC plates (Silica gel 60 F254, Qingdao Haiyang). Flash column chromatography was performed on silica gel 200-300 mesh with freshly distilled solvents. HRMS data were recorded on a maXis UHR-TOF mass spectrometer. Unless otherwise noted, materials obtained from commercial suppliers were used without further purification.

CI	+	onditions	o o S
1a	2a		3a
Entry	Acid (1.0 eq)	Time (h)	Yield <sup>b</sup> (%)
1	TfOH	48	73
2	HCI (36%)	48	37
3	HNO₃ (65%)	48	65
4	AICI <sub>3</sub>	48	32
5	—	48	—
6	TfOH	30	75
7	TfOH	36	79
8	TfOH	44	75

# Table S1. Optimization of reaction conditions (Representative results).<sup>*a, b*</sup>

<sup>*a*</sup> Reaction conditions: **2a** (1.0 mmol) and acid in **1a** (2 mL) at 130 °C under air. <sup>*b*</sup> Isolated yields.

# Experimental procedure and characterization data

1) 1-Chloro-4-(phenylsulfonyl)benzene (3a)<sup>[1]</sup>



#### **Typical procedure:**

The reaction of chlorobenzene (2.5 mmol, 281.0 mg), *N*-fluorobenzenesulfonimide (**2a**) (0.5 mmol, 157.7 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 60 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 199.2 mg (79%) of **3a** as solid: <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.93 (dd, *J* = 7.6, 1.6 Hz, 2H), 7.89 (dd, *J* = 6.8, 2.0 Hz, 2H), 7.58 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.52-7.47 (m, 4H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>))  $\delta$ : 141.1, 140.0, 139.8, 133.4, 129.5, 129.4, 129.1, 127.6. MS (70 eV): m/z (%): [M]<sup>+</sup>, 252 (45).

#### 2) 1-Fluoro-4-(phenylsulfonyl)benzene (3b)<sup>[2]</sup>



The reaction of fluorobenzene (2.5 mmol, 240.3 mg), *N*-fluorobenzenesulfonimide (**2a**) (0.5 mmol, 157.7 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 60 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 178.7 mg (76%) of **3b** as solid: <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.99-7.93 (m, 4H), 7.58 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 1H), 7.57-7.50 (m, 2H), 7.18 (t, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 2H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>))  $\delta$ : 165.3 (d, <sup>1</sup>*J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 254.7 Hz), 141.3, 137.5 (d, <sup>4</sup>*J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 2.5 Hz), 133.3, 130.4 (d, <sup>3</sup>*J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 9.4 Hz), 129.3, 127.5, 116.5 (d, <sup>2</sup>*J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 22.4 Hz). <sup>19</sup>F NMR (376 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  -104.2 ppm. MS (70 eV): m/z (%): [M]<sup>+</sup>, 236 (50).

#### 3) 1-Bromo-4-(phenylsulfonyl)benzene (3c)<sup>[2]</sup>



The reaction of bromobenzene (2.5 mmol, 392.5 mg), *N*-fluorobenzenesulfonimide (**2a**) (0.5 mmol, 157.7 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 100 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 203.3 mg (68%) of **3c** as solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.92 (t, *J* = 1.2 Hz, 2H), 7.81 (dd, *J* = 6.4, 2.0 Hz, 2H), 7.65 (dd, *J* = 6.8, 2.0 Hz, 2H), 7.58 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.52 (dd, *J* = 8.0, 7.2 Hz, 2H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 141.0, 140.6, 133.4, 132.5, 129.4, 129.1, 128.4, 127.6. MS (70 eV): m/z (%): [M]<sup>+</sup>, 296 (35). [M]<sup>+</sup>, 296 (35).

# 4) 1-Iodo-4-(phenylsulfonyl)benzene (3d)<sup>[1]</sup>



The reaction of iodobenzene (2.5 mmol, 510.0 mg), *N*-fluorobenzenesulfonimide (2a) (0.5 mmol, 157.7 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66 µL), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 100 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 218.0 mg (63%) of **3d** as solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.93 (dd, *J* = 7.6, 1.6 Hz, 2H), 7.86 (dd, *J* = 6.4, 2.0 Hz, 2H), 7.65 (dd, *J* = 6.8, 2.0 Hz, 2H), 7.58 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.52 (dd, *J* = 8.4, 6.8 Hz, 2H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 141.2, 141.0, 138.5, 133.4, 129.3, 129.0, 127.5, 101.0. MS (70 eV): m/z (%): [M]<sup>+</sup>, 344 (100).

# 5) Sulfonyldibenzene (3e)<sup>[2]</sup>



The reaction of benzene (1.25 mmol, 97.6 mg), *N*-fluorobenzenesulfonimide (**2a**) (0.25 mmol, 78.9 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 33  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 60 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 158.4 mg (73%) of **3e** as solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz,

CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.95 (dd, J = 8.0, 1.2 Hz, 4H), 7.56 (dd, J = 4.0, 1.2 Hz, 2H), 7.51(dd, J = 8.0, 7.2 Hz, 4H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 141.4, 133.1, 129.2, 127.6. MS (70 eV): m/z (%): [M]<sup>+</sup>, 218 (25).

#### 6) 1-Methyl-4-(phenylsulfonyl)benzene (3f)<sup>[2]</sup>



The reaction of toluene (2.5 mmol, 230.4 mg), *N*-fluorobenzenesulfonimide (**2a**) (0.5 mmol, 157.7 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 100 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 185.8 mg (80%)(1.3:1) of **3f** as solid. (major): <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.93 (t, *J* = 1.6 Hz, 2H), 7.83 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.54 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.49 (t, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 2H), 7.30 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 2.40 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 144.1, 141.9, 138.6, 133.0, 129.9, 129.2, 127.7, 127.4, 21.5. (minor): <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 8.22 (dd, *J* = 8.0, 1.6 Hz, 1H), 7.86 (t, *J* = 1.2 Hz, 2H), 7.57 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.52-7.47 (m,3H), 7.41 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.23 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 2.44 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 141.2, 138.7, 137.9, 133.6, 133.0, 132.6, 129.4, 129.0, 127.6, 126.4, 20.2. MS (70 eV): m/z (%): [M]<sup>+</sup>, 232 (100).

### 7) 1-Isopropyl-4-(phenylsulfonyl)benzene (3g)<sup>[4]</sup>



The reaction of cumene (2.5 mmol, 300.4 mg), *N*-fluorobenzenesulfonimide (**2a**) (0.5 mmol, 157.7 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 100 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 256.2 mg (97%) (4:1) of **3g** as solid. (major): <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.96-7.94 (m, 2H), 7.86 (dd, *J* = 6.4, 1.6 Hz, 2H), 7.54 (t, *J* = 0.8 Hz, 1H), 7.52-7.48 (m, 4H), 7.39 (s, 1H), 7.35 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 2.94 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 1.25 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 3H), 1.23 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 154.8, 141.9, 138.8, 133.0, 129.2, 127.8, 127.6, 127.4, 34.2, 23.6. (minor): <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 8.21 (dd, *J* = 8.0, 1.6

Hz, 1H), 7.86 (dd, J = 6.8, 1.6 Hz, 2H), 7.57-7.48 (m, 4H), 7.31 (d, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 2.86 (dd, J = 15.2, 7.2 Hz, 2H),1.03 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 144.1, 141.9, 138.4, 133.7, 132.9, 130.9, 129.5, 129.0, 127.4, 126.2, 25.5, 15.0. MS (70 eV): m/z (%): [M]<sup>+</sup>, 260 (80).

#### 8) 1-(tert-Butyl)-4-(phenylsulfonyl)benzene (3h)<sup>[5]</sup>



The reaction of *tert*-butylbenzene (2.5 mmol, 335.6 mg), *N*-fluorobenzenesulfonimide (**2a**) (0.5 mmol, 157.7 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 60 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 251.4 mg (92%) of **3h** as solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.96-7.94 (m, 2H), 7.86 (dd, *J* = 6.4, 1.6 Hz, 2H), 7.54 (t, *J* = 0.8 Hz, 1H), 7.52-7.48 (m, 4H), 1.31 (s, 9H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 154.8, 141.9, 138.8, 133.0, 129.2, 127.8, 127.6, 127.4, 34.2, 23.6. MS (70 eV): m/z (%): [M]<sup>+</sup>, 274 (25).

# 9) 1-Cyclohexyl-4-(phenylsulfonyl)benzene (3i)



The reaction of cyclohexylbenzene (2.5 mmol, 400.7 mg), *N*-fluorobenzenesulfonimide (**2a**) (0.5 mmol, 157.7 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 80 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 224.8 mg (75%) (4:1) of **3i** as solid. (major): <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.95 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.85 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.57-7.48 (m, 3H), 7.31 (t, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 2.55 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 1.84-1.74 (d, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 4H), 1.43-1.22 (m, 6H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, Chloroform-d)  $\delta$ : 153.9, 141.9, 138.7, 133.0, 129.2, 127.8, 127.7, 127.5, 44.5, 34.0, 26.6, 26.0. (minor): <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 8.27 (dd, *J* = 8.4, 1.6 Hz, 1H), 7.86 (dd, *J* = 7.2, 1.6 Hz, 2H), 7.56 (t, *J* = 4.4 Hz, 2H), 7.51 (t, *J* = 1.6 Hz, 2H), 7.40-7.36 (m, 2H), 1.67 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 4H), 1.23 (t, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 6H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 147.8, 142.5, 138.0, 133.8, 132.8, 129.0, 128.9, 128.8, 127.4, 126.0, 39.5, 33.7, 26.7, 25.9. HRMS

(EI), m/z calcd. for  $C_{18}H_{20}O_2S [M]^+$ : 300.1184, found: 300.1177.

#### 10) 1-Methoxy-4-(phenylsulfonyl)benzene (3j)<sup>[1]</sup>



The reaction of anisole (2.5 mmol, 270.4 mg), *N*-fluorobenzenesulfonimide (**2a**) (0.5 mmol, 157.7 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 100 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 224.0 mg (90%) (1.5:1) of **3j** as solid. (major): <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.92 (t, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 2H), 7.88 (dd, *J* =7.2, 2.0 Hz, 2H), 7.54 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.50 (t, *J* = 1.6 Hz, 2H), 6.97 (dd, *J* =7.2, 2.4 Hz, 2H), 3.85 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 8.17 (dd, *J* = 7.6, 1.6 Hz, 1H), 7.97 (t, *J* = 1.2 Hz, 2H), 7.56 (dd, *J* = 7.6, 2.0 Hz, 2H), 7.49 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.12 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 6.91 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 3.76 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, Chloroform-d)  $\delta$ : 157.0, 141.1, 135.5, 132.9, 129.8, 128.9, 128.4, 128.3, 120.5, 112.4, 55.8. MS(70 eV): m/z (%): [M]<sup>+</sup>, 248 (60).

#### 11) 4-(Phenylsulfonyl)phenol (3k)<sup>[3]</sup>



The reaction of phenol (0.8 mmol, 75.3 mg), *N*-fluorobenzenesulfonimide (**2a**) (0.4 mmol, 126.4 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (500 mol %, 177  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 1.0 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 100 °C under air for 12 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 29.2 mg (16%) of **3k** as solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.94-7.90 (m, 2H), 7.86-7.82 (m, 2H), 7.57-7.47 (m, 3H), 6.93-6.89 (m, 2H), 5.62 (s, 1H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 160.6, 141.8, 133.7, 132.07, 130.0, 129.3, 127.1, 116.2. HRMS: m/z [M+Na]<sup>+</sup>: calcd for C<sub>12</sub>H<sub>10</sub>NaO<sub>3</sub>S : 257.0243; found: 257.0241.

# 12) 1,4-Dimethyl-2-(phenylsulfonyl)benzene (3m)<sup>[1]</sup>



The reaction of *p*-xylene (2.5 mmol, 268.1 mg), *N*-fluorobenzenesulfonimide (**2a**) (0.5 mmol, 157.7 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 60 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 152.3 mg (62%) of **3m** as solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 8.05 (d, *J* = 0.8 Hz, 1H), 7.86 (t, *J* = 1.6 Hz, 2H), 7.56 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.50 (dd, *J* = 8.0, 6.8 Hz, 2H), 7.28 (d, *J* = 0.8 Hz, 1H), 7.11 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 141.2, 138.2, 136.3, 134.6, 134.3, 132.8, 132.5, 129.6, 128.9, 127.4, 20.8, 19.6. MS (70 eV): m/z (%): [M]<sup>+</sup>, 246 (90).

#### 13) 1-Chloro-4-methyl-2-(phenylsulfonyl)benzene (3n)



The reaction of 1-chloro-4-methylbenzene (2.5 mmol, 316.5 mg), *N*-fluorobenzenesulfonimide (**2a**) (0.5 mmol, 157.7 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 100 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 170.0 mg (64%) of **3n** as solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 8.22 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.88 (t, *J* = 1.6 Hz, 2H), 7.60 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.53 (dd, *J* = 8.0, 6.8 Hz, 2H), 7.45 (dd, *J* = 8.0, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.17 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 2.40 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 140.5, 140.3, 136.3, 134.0, 133.5, 133.4, 132.5, 129.2, 129.1, 127.8, 19.6. HRMS (EI), m/z calcd. for C<sub>13</sub>H<sub>11</sub>ClO<sub>2</sub>S [M]<sup>+</sup>: 266.0168, found: 266.0174.

#### 14) 2,4-Dimethyl-1-(phenylsulfonyl)benzene (30)<sup>[6]</sup>



The reaction of *m*-xylene (2.5 mmol, 265.0 mg), *N*-fluorobenzenesulfonimide (**2a**) (0.5 mmol, 157.7 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic

acid at 60 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 208.0 mg (84%) of **30** as solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 8.11 (d, J = 0.8 Hz, 1H), 7.84 (t, J = 1.6 Hz, 2H), 7.60 (d, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.51-7.47 (m, 2H), 7.20 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.04 (s, 1H), 2.39 (s, 3H), 2.37 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 144.4, 141.5, 137.7, 135.8, 133.3, 132.8, 129.6, 128.9, 127.5, 127.0, 21.3, 20.1. MS (70 eV): m/z (%): [M]<sup>+</sup>, 246 (60).

#### 15) 2,4-Dichloro-1-(phenylsulfonyl)benzene (3p)



The reaction of 1,3-dichlorobenzene (2.5 mmol, 371.2 mg), *N*-fluorobenzenesulfonimide (**2a**) (0.5 mmol, 157.7 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 100 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 169.6 mg (59%) of **3p** as solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 8.31 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.94 (dd, *J*= 7.2, 5.6 Hz, 2H),7.62 (d, *J*= 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.53 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H),7.49-7.45 (m, 2H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 140.6, 139.6, 137.0, 133.9, 133.7, 132.0, 131.8, 129.0, 128.5, 127.6. HRMS (EI), m/z calcd. for C<sub>12</sub>H<sub>8</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S [M]<sup>+</sup> : 285.9622, found: 285.9625.

#### 16) 2-Chloro-1-methyl-4-(phenylsulfonyl)benzene (3q) <sup>[7]</sup>



The reaction of 1-chloro-2-methylbenzene (2.5 mmol, 316.5 mg), *N*-fluorobenzenesulfonimide (**2a**) (0.5 mmol, 157.7 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 100 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 225.6 mg (85%) (3.5:1) of **3q** as solid. (major): <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.96 (m, , 2H), 7.81 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.71 (dd, *J* = 8.4, 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.58 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 1H), 7.56-7.49 (m, 2H), 7.45 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 2.40

(d, J = 2.4 Hz, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 141.2, 139.9, 139.7, 137.7, 133.3, 129.9, 129.7, 129.3, 127.6, 126.3, 20.1. (minor): <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.95 – 7.91 (m, 3H), 7.72 (dd, J = 8.0, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.59 -7.57 (m, 1H), 7.54-7.50 (m, 2H), 7.36 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 2.41 (s, 3H).<sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 142.2, 141.2, 140.5, 135.4, 133.4, 131.7, 129.4, 128.2, 127.6, 125.7, 20.4. HRMS (EI), m/z calcd. for C<sub>13</sub>H<sub>11</sub>ClO<sub>2</sub>S [M]<sup>+</sup> : 266.0168, found: 266.0173.

# 17) 1,3,5-Trimethyl-2-(phenylsulfonyl)benzene (3r)<sup>[1]</sup>



The reaction of mesitylene (2.5 mmol, 300.5 mg), *N*-fluorobenzenesulfonimide (**2a**) (0.5 mmol, 157.7 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 80 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 183.2 mg (70%) of **3s** as solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.78 (t, *J* = 1.2, Hz, 2H), 7.54 (s, 1H), 7.47 (t, *J* = 1.6, Hz, 2H), 6.94 (s, 2H), 2.59 (s, 6H), 2.30 (s, 3H) ppm. <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 143.4, 143.4, 140.0, 133.7, 132.5, 132.2, 128.8, 126.2, 22.8, 21.0 ppm. MS (70 eV): m/z (%): [M]<sup>+</sup>, 260 (40).

## 18) 1-Chloro-4-tosylbenzene (4a)<sup>[8]</sup>



The reaction of chlorobenzene (2.5)mmol, 281.0 mg), *N*-fluoro-4-methyl-*N*-tosylbenzenesulfonamide (**2b**) (0.5)mmol, 171.7 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66 µL), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 60 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 204.3 mg (76%) of 4a as solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.86 (dd, J = 19.2, 6.8 Hz, 4H), 7.46 (d, J = 6.8 Hz, 2H), 7.31 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 2.41 (s, 3H) ppm. <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ: 144.1, 141.9, 133.0, 129.9, 129.2, 127.7, 127.5, 21.6. MS  $(70 \text{ eV}): \text{m/z} (\%): [M]^+, 266 (60).$ 

#### 19) 1-Fluoro-4-tosylbenzene (4b)<sup>[2]</sup>



The reaction of fluorobenzene (2.5)mmol. 242.7 mg), N-fluoro-4-methyl-N-tosylbenzenesulfonamide (4b)(0.5)171.7 mmol, mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 60 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 204.7 mg (82%) of 4b as solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.94 (dd, J = 8.8, 5.6 Hz, 2H), 7.81 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.29 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.16 (dd, J = 8.8, 7.6 Hz, 2H), 2.40 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 165.3 (d, <sup>1</sup>J<sub>C-F</sub> = 253.6 Hz), 144.3, 138.4, 138.0 (d,  ${}^{4}J_{C-F} = 2.5$  Hz), 130.3 (d,  ${}^{3}J_{C-F} = 9.4$  Hz), 130.0, 127.6, 116.5 (d,  ${}^{2}J_{C-F} = 21.9$ Hz), 21.6. <sup>19</sup>F NMR (376 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ -104.2 ppm. MS (70 eV): m/z (%): [M]<sup>+</sup>, 250 (100).

#### 20) 4,4'-Sulfonylbis(methylbenzene) (4c) [8]



The reaction of toluene (2.5 mmol, 230.4 mg), *N*-fluoro-4-methyl-*N*-tosylbenzenesulfonamide (**2b**) (0.5 mmol, 171.7 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 60 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 201.7 mg (82%) (3:1) of **4c** as solid. (major): <sup>1</sup>HNMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.81 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 4H), 7.26 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 4H), 2.35 (s, 6H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 143.8, 138.8, 129.7, 127.3, 21.3. (minor): <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 8.19 (dd, *J* = 7.6, 1.2 Hz, 1H), 7.75 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.47 (td, *J* = 7.5, 1.6 Hz, 1H), 7.42 - 7.33 (m, 1H), 7.32 - 7.27 (m, 2H), 7.22 (dd, *J* = 7.4, 1.4 Hz, 1H), 2.44 (s, 3H), 2.41 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 143.9, 139.0, 138.1, 133.4, 132.5, 129.6, 129.2, 127.7, 126.4, 21.5, 20.1. HRMS: m/z [M+Na]<sup>+</sup>: calcd for C<sub>14</sub>H<sub>14</sub>NaO<sub>2</sub>S : 269.0607; found: 269.0605.

#### 21) 1-Methyl-4-(phenylsulfonyl)benzene (3f)<sup>[2]</sup>



The reaction of benzene (2.5 mmol, 195.3 mg), *N*-fluoro-4-methyl-*N*-tosylbenzenesulfonamide (**2b**) (0.5 mmol, 171.7 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL

trifluoroacetic acid at 60 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 80.1 mg (34%) of **3f** as solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.93 (t, *J* = 1.6 Hz, 2H), 7.83 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.54 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.49 (t, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 2H), 7.30 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 2.40 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 144.1, 141.9, 138.6, 133.0, 129.9, 129.2, 127.7, 127.4, 21.5. MS (70 eV): m/z (%): [M]<sup>+</sup>, 232 (100).

#### 22) 1-Methyl-4-(phenylsulfonyl)benzene (3f)<sup>[2]</sup>



The reaction of benzene (2.5)mmol, 195.3 mg), *N*-fluoro-4-methyl-*N*-(phenylsulfonyl)benzenesulfonamide (2c)(0.5)164.7 mmol, mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66 µL), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 100 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 70.1 mg (60%) of **3f** as solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ: 7.93 (t, J = 1.6 Hz, 2H), 7.83 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.54 (d, J = 7.6Hz, 2H), 7.49 (t, J = 6.8 Hz, 2H), 7.30 (d, J = 8.4Hz, 2H), 2.40 (s, 3H).<sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 144.1, 141.9, 138.6, 133.0, 129.9, 129.2, 127.7, 127.4, 21.5. MS (70 eV): m/z (%): [M]<sup>+</sup>, 232 (100).

# 23) Sulfonyldibenzene (3e)<sup>[2]</sup>



The reaction of benzene (2.5)mmol, 195.3 mg), *N*-fluoro-4-nitro-*N*-(phenylsulfonyl)benzenesulfonamide (**2d**) 180.2 (0.5)mmol, mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66 µL), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 60 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 40.1 mg (35%) of **3e** as solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.95 (dd, J = 8.0, 1.2 Hz, 4H), 7.56 (dd, J = 4.0, 1.2 Hz, 2H), 7.51(dd, J = 8.0, 7.2 Hz, 4H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ: 141.4, 133.1, 129.2, 127.6. MS (70 eV): m/z (%): [M]<sup>+</sup>, 218 (25).

# Structural modification of $\beta$ -estradiol derivative 5

# (8R,9S,13S,14S)-3,17-Dimethoxy-13-methyl-2-(phenylsulfonyl)-7,8,9,11,12,13,14,15,16,17-deca

hydro-6H-cyclopenta[a]phenanthrene (5)



The

# reaction

of

(8*R*,9*S*,13*S*,14*S*)-3,17-dimethoxy-13-methyl-7,8,9,11,12,13,14,15,16,17-decahydro-6H-cyclopenta[ a]phenanthrene (0.25 mmol, 75.0 mg), *N*-fluoro-*N*-(phenylsulfonyl)benzenesulfonamide (**2a**) (0.0625 mmol, 19.8 mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (600 mol %, 33 μL), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 30 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 30.2 mg (55%) of **5** as solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ: 8.04 (s, 1H), 7.97-7.95 (m, 2H), 7.56-7.52 (m, 1H), 7.46 (dd, J = 14.8, 7.6 Hz, 2H), 6.58 (s, 1H), 3.69 (s, 3H), 3.47 (s, 3H), 3.32 (dd, J = 16.8, 8.4 Hz, 1H), 2.85 (dd, J = 8.8, 4.2 Hz, 2H), 2.42 (dt, J = 12.9, 3.5 Hz, 1H), 2.27- 2.14 (m, 1H), 2.08 (ddd, J = 13.8, 9.5, 3.5 Hz, 2H), 1.88 (ddt, J = 12.3, 4.4, 2.5 Hz, 1H), 1.75-1.22 (m, 8H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ: 154.7, 145.4, 141.9, 133.1, 132.6, 128.4, 128.2, 126.9, 126.1, 112.7, 90.6, 76.7, 57.9, 55.8, 50.2, 43.7, 43.2, 38.3, 37.8, 30.1, 27.7, 26.7, 26.4, 23.0, 11.5. HRMS (EI), m/z calcd. for C<sub>26</sub>H<sub>32</sub>O<sub>4</sub>S [M]<sup>+</sup>: 440.2021, found: 440.2028.

# Synthesis of the intermediate 6 of an inhibitor of Farnesyl-protein transferase

# 4-Bromo-2-methyl-1-(phenylsulfonyl)benzene (6)<sup>[9]</sup>



The reaction of 1-bromo-3-methylbenzene (1.25)mmol, 427.6 mg), *N*-fluoro-*N*-(phenylsulfonyl)benzenesulfonamide (0.5)158.0 (2a)mmol, mg), trifluoromethanesulfonic (0.75 mmol, 66 µL), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 60 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 196.0 mg (63%) of 6 as solid. (major): <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 8.08 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.85 (m, 2H), 7.59 (d, J = 3.6 Hz, 1H), 7.54-7.50 (m, 3H), 7.40 (d, J = 1.2 Hz, 1H), 2.41 (s, 3H) ppm. <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 140.8, 139.9, 138.0, 135.4, 133.2, 130.9, 129.7, 129.1, 128.5, 127.6, 20.0 ppm. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 56.1 mg (18%) of **6** (minor) as solid. (minor): <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 8.29 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.94 (d, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.58 (d, J = 3.6 Hz, 1H), 7.52-7.48 (m, 3H), 7.33 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 2.39 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 146.0, 140.2, 136.9, 136.0, 133.2, 131.3, 128.7, 128.5, 128.4, 120.9, 21.0. HRMS: m/z [M+Na]<sup>+</sup>: calcd for C<sub>13</sub>H<sub>11</sub>BrNaO<sub>2</sub>S : 332.9555; found: 332.9553.

# Gram-scale synthesis of EPAC2 antagonist 8

# 1,3,5-Trimethyl-2-tosylbenzene (8)<sup>[6]</sup>



The reaction of mesitylene (23.1 mmol, 2.78 g), *N*-fluoro-4-methyl-*N*-tosylbenzenesulfonamide (**2b**) (4.62 mmol, 1.59 g), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL CH<sub>3</sub>CN at 130 °C under air for 36 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford 2.38 g (94%) of **8** as solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.67 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.26 (t, *J* = 5.6 Hz, 2H), 6.93 (s, 2H), 2.59 (s, 6H), 2.40 (s, 3H), 2.29 (s, 3H) ppm. <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 143.3, 143.1, 140.5, 139.9, 134.1, 132.1, 129.4, 126.2, 22.8, 21.5, 21.0 ppm. HRMS: m/z [M+Na]<sup>+</sup>: calcd for C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>18</sub>NaO<sub>2</sub>S : 297.0920; found: 297.0917.

#### Scheme S1 Control Experiments



# **Typical procedure:**

The reaction of chlorobenzene **1a** (2.5 mmol, 281.0 mg), **2** (0.5 mmol), trifluoromethanesulfonic (150 mol %, 66  $\mu$ L), was carried out in 0.5 mL trifluoroacetic acid at 60 °C under air for 24 h as monitored by TLC. The resulting mixture was concentrated and purified by flash chromatography on silica gel to afford the product.

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# <sup>1</sup>H NMR, <sup>13</sup>C NMR and <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectra for products









0.000





















--0.000









- 0.000











2.438





- 0.000











- 3.700



0 0 \\// *i*Pr **3g** (minor)










-0.001















S45

























0.000













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--0.000


















