

Supporting Information

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Synthesis and NMR characterization of dendrimers based on 2, 2-bis-(hydroxymethyl)-propanoic acid (*bis*-HMPA) containing peripheral amino acid residues for gene transfection

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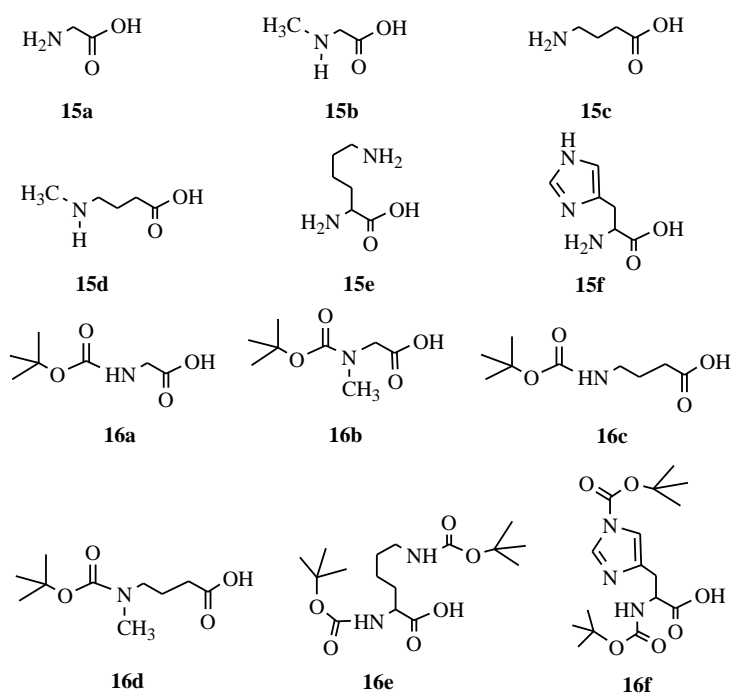
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Synthesis of *N*-BOC-amino acids **16a-f**



General Procedure for protecting Amino Acids **15a-f**:

A solution of the amino acid and base in the proper solvent system was cooled to 0 °C and treated with di-*tert*-butylcarbonate (1.1 equiv./amino group). The mixture was left overnight at r.t. under magnetic stirring. The disappearance of amino acid was checked by TLC using EtOAc containing a spatula tip of ninhydrin as the eluent. The mixture was concentrated at reduced pressure to half the volume, extracted with hexane to remove unreacted di-*tert*-butylcarbonate and the organic phase was washed with satd. aq. NaHCO₃. The combined aqueous phases were cooled to 0 °C and acidified with 10% aq. KHSO₄ to pH = 2, extracted with Et₂O (**16a**) or EtOAc (**16b-f**) and dried (Na₂SO₄). The removal of the solvents at reduced pressure afforded the desired amino acid. Table 1 collects data for the preparation of protected amino acids **16a-f**.

Table 1. Preparation of BOC-protected amino acids **16a-f**

Amino acid (g; mmol)	Solvent v/v (mL)	Base (mmol)	<i>N</i> -BOC Amino acid	Yield %
15a (1.00; 13.2)	<i>t</i> -BuOH (10)	NaOH 1N (14.5)	16a	84
15b (1.00; 11.2)	H ₂ O (100)	Et ₃ N (33.6)	16b	94
15c (1.00; 9.7)	Dioxane/H ₂ O 2/1 (30)	NaOH 1N (9.7)	16c	94
15d (2.00; 13.1)	Dioxane/H ₂ O 1/1 (18)	NaOH(s) (26.2)	16d	94
15e (2.00; 13.7)	Dioxane/H ₂ O 1/1 (40)	NaOH 1N (13.7)	16e	93
15f (1.00; 6.4)	DMF/H ₂ O 1/1.3 (5.9)	Et ₃ N (24.4)	16f	67

N-BOC-Glycine (**16a**): White crystalline powder, mixture of rotamers, m. p.: 88-90 °C (Lit.¹: 87-88 °C). FTIR (KBr, cm⁻¹): 3500-2400 (OH), 3410 (NH), 1749 (C=O acid + urethane), 1535 (NH). ¹H NMR of rotamer A (minor) (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ = 1.46 [s, 9H, C(CH₃)₃], 3.91 (br d, 2H, CH₂COOH), 6.83 (br s, 1H, NH), 10.24 (br s, 1H, COOH). ¹³C NMR of rotamer A (minor) (CDCl₃, 75.5 MHz): δ = 28.28 [C(CH₃)₃], 43.40 (NCH₃), 81.83 [C(CH₃)₃], 157.29 (C=O urethane), 174.04 (C=O acid). ¹H NMR of rotamer B (major) (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ = 1.46 [s, 9H, C(CH₃)₃], 3.97 (d, 2H, *J* = 5.3 Hz, CH₂COOH), 5.19 (br s, 1H, NH), 10.24 (br s, 1H, COOH). ¹³C NMR of rotamer B (major) (CDCl₃, 75.5 MHz): δ = 28.28 [C(CH₃)₃], 42.24 (NCH₃), 80.44 [C(CH₃)₃], 156.03 (C=O urethane), 174.83 (C=O acid). NMR data were consistent with those of the literature.¹

N-BOC-Sarcosine (**16b**): Off-white crystalline powder, mixture of rotamers. m. p.: 88-90 °C. FTIR (KBr, cm⁻¹): 3500-2400 (OH), 3114 (NH), 1764 (C=O acid), 1751 (C=O urethane). ¹H NMR of rotamer A (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ = 1.44 [s, 9H C(CH₃)₃], 2.94 (s, 3H, NCH₃), 3.95 (s, 2H, CH₂COOH). ¹³C NMR of rotamer A (CDCl₃, 75.5 MHz): δ = 28.26 [C(CH₃)₃], 35.57 (NCH₃), 50.21 (CH₂COOH), 80.67 [C(CH₃)₃], 155.63 (C=O urethane), 175.03 (C=O acid). ¹H NMR of rotamer B (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ = 1.47 [s, 9H C(CH₃)₃], 2.95 (s, 3H, NCH₃), 4.03 (s, 2H, CH₂COOH). ¹³C NMR of rotamer B (CDCl₃, 75.5 MHz): δ = 28.32 [C(CH₃)₃], 35.64 (NCH₃), 50.78 (CH₂COOH), 80.67 [C(CH₃)₃], 156.43 (C=O urethane), 175.14 (C=O acid). NMR data were consistent with those of the literature.²

N-BOC-GABA (**16c**): Yellowish viscous resin, mixture of rotamers. FTIR (film, cm⁻¹): 3500-2400 (OH), 3345 (NH), 1715 (C=O acid + urethane), 1528 (NH). ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ = 1.44 [s, 9H, C(CH₃)₃], 1.82 (m, 2H, CH₂CH₂CH₂), 2.39 (t, 2H, *J* = 7.3 Hz, CH₂COOH), 3.17 (m, 2H, CH₂NH), 4.81 (major) and 6.11 (two br s, 1H, NH), 10.78 (br s, 1H, OH). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75.5 MHz): δ = 25.15 (CH₂CH₂CH₂), 28.39 [C(CH₃)₃], 31.35 (CH₂COOH), 40.21 (major) and 40.96 (CH₂NH), 79.47 (major) and 80.75 [C(CH₃)₃], 156.26 (major) and 157.76 (C=O urethane), 178.26 (C=O acid). NMR data were consistent with those of the literature.³

Synthesis of *N*-Methyl-GABA (**15d**):

A mixture of *N*-methylpyrrolidone (1.00 g, 0.010 mol, 0.97 mL), NaOH (1.62 g, 0.04 mol) and H₂O (6 mL) was kept at reflux under magnetic stirring for 4 h then added with 12 M HCl up to pH = 1-2. The removal of the solvent at reduced pressure gave a solid residue which was treated with hot EtOH filtered and washed with the same solvent to extract the undesired product, the solvent was removed under reduced pressure to obtain an oil which was crystallized with acetonitrile to afford *N*-methyl-GABA hydrochloride as a off-white hygroscopic solid (0.9214 g, 0.0060 mol, 59 %, Mp. 115-119 °C). A portion of 0.4848 g was washed in turn with acetone and diethyl ether achieving **15d** as crystalline powder (0.4465 g, 0.0029 mol).

N-Methyl-GABA (**15d**): White crystalline powder, m. p.: 122-123 °C, Lit.⁴ 120-121 °C. FTIR (KBr, cm⁻¹): 3500-2400 (OH + NH₂⁺), 1732 (C=O), 1571 (NH). ¹H NMR (DMSO-*d*₆, 300 MHz): δ = 1.84 (m, 2H, CH₂CH₂CH₂), 2.36 (t, 2H, *J* = 7.4 Hz, CH₂COOH), 2.49 (s, 3H, CH₃NH₂⁺), 2.86 (t, 2H, *J* = 7.4 Hz, CH₂NH₂⁺), 9.22 (broad s, 1H, NH₂⁺). ¹³C NMR (DMSO-*d*₆, 75.5 MHz): δ 22.24 (CH₂CH₂CH₂), 31.96 (CH₂COOH), 33.48 (CH₃NH₂⁺), 48.79 (CH₂NH₂⁺), 174.90 (C=O acid).

N-Methyl-GABA hydrochloride was used in the BOC-protection reaction as described above to give *N*-methyl-*N*-BOC-GABA (**16d**).

N-methyl-*N*-BOC-GABA (**16d**): Yellowish viscous resin. FTIR (film, cm⁻¹): 3500-2400 (OH), 3166 (NH), 1728 (C=O acid + urethane). ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ = 1.45 [s, 9H, C(CH₃)₃], 1.84 (m, 2H, CH₂CH₂CH₂), 2.36 (t, 2H, *J* = 7.3 Hz, CH₂COOH), 2.85 (s, 3H, CH₃N), 3.28 (t, 2H, *J* = 7.3 Hz, CH₂N), 10.78 (br s, 1H, OH). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75.5 MHz): δ = 22.88 (CH₂CH₂CH₂), 28.41 [C(CH₃)₃], 31.11 (CH₂COOH), 34.16 (CH₃N), 47.94 (CH₂N), 79.79 [C(CH₃)₃], 156.05 (C=O urethane), 178.43 (C=O acid). NMR data were consistent with those of the literature.⁵

^αN, ^εN -*di*BOC-*L*-Lysine (**16e**): Off-white glassy solid, mixture of rotamers. FTIR (KBr, cm⁻¹): 3500-2400 (OH), 3374 (NH), 1713 (C=O acid + urethane), 1529 (NH). ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ = 1.45 [s, 18H, C(CH₃)₃], 1.30-2.00 (m, 6H, CH₂CH₂CH₂), 3.11 (m, 2H, CH₂NH), 4.11-4.38 (m, 1H, CHNH), 4.70 and 6.30 (two m, 1H, ^αNH), 5.27 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H, ^αNH), 8.50 (broad s, 1H, OH). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75.5 MHz): δ = 22.42 (CH₂), 28.35 [C(CH₃)₃], 28.42 [C(CH₃)₃], 29.45 (CH₂), 32.10 (CH₂), 40.13 (major) and 41.24

(CH₂NH), 53.24 (major) and 54.58 (CHNH), 79.34 (major) and 80.86 [C(CH₃)₃], 79.95 (major) and 81.48 [C(CH₃)₃], 155.79 (major) and 156.88 (C=O urethane), 156.33 (major) and 158.16 (C=O urethane), 176.27 (C=O acid). NMR data were consistent with those of the literature.⁶

^aN, ^{im}N -diBOC-L-Histidine (**16f**): Off-white solid, mixture of regioisomers, m. p. : 165-168. Lit.⁷: 165-167 °C. FTIR (KBr, cm⁻¹): 3500-2400 (OH), 3406 (NH), 3141 (CH=), 1762 (C=O acid), 1714 (C=O urethane), 1497 (NH). ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ = 1.47 [s, 9H, C(CH₃)₃], 1.60 [s, 9H, C(CH₃)₃], 3.15-3.34 (m, 2H, CH₂), 4.49 (m, 1H, CHNH), 5.49 (d, 1H J = 5.8 Hz, NH), 7.21 (s, 1H, CH imidazole), 8.17 (s, 1H, CH imidazole). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75.5 MHz): δ = 27.86 [C(CH₃)₃], 28.39 [C(CH₃)₃], 29.71 (CH₂), 52.77 (CHNH), 79.74 [C(CH₃)₃], 86.57 [C(CH₃)₃], 115.63 (CH imidazole), 136.40 (quaternary C imidazole), 136.92 (CH imidazole), 146.29 (C=O urethane), 155.21 (C=O urethane), 173.02 (C=O acid).

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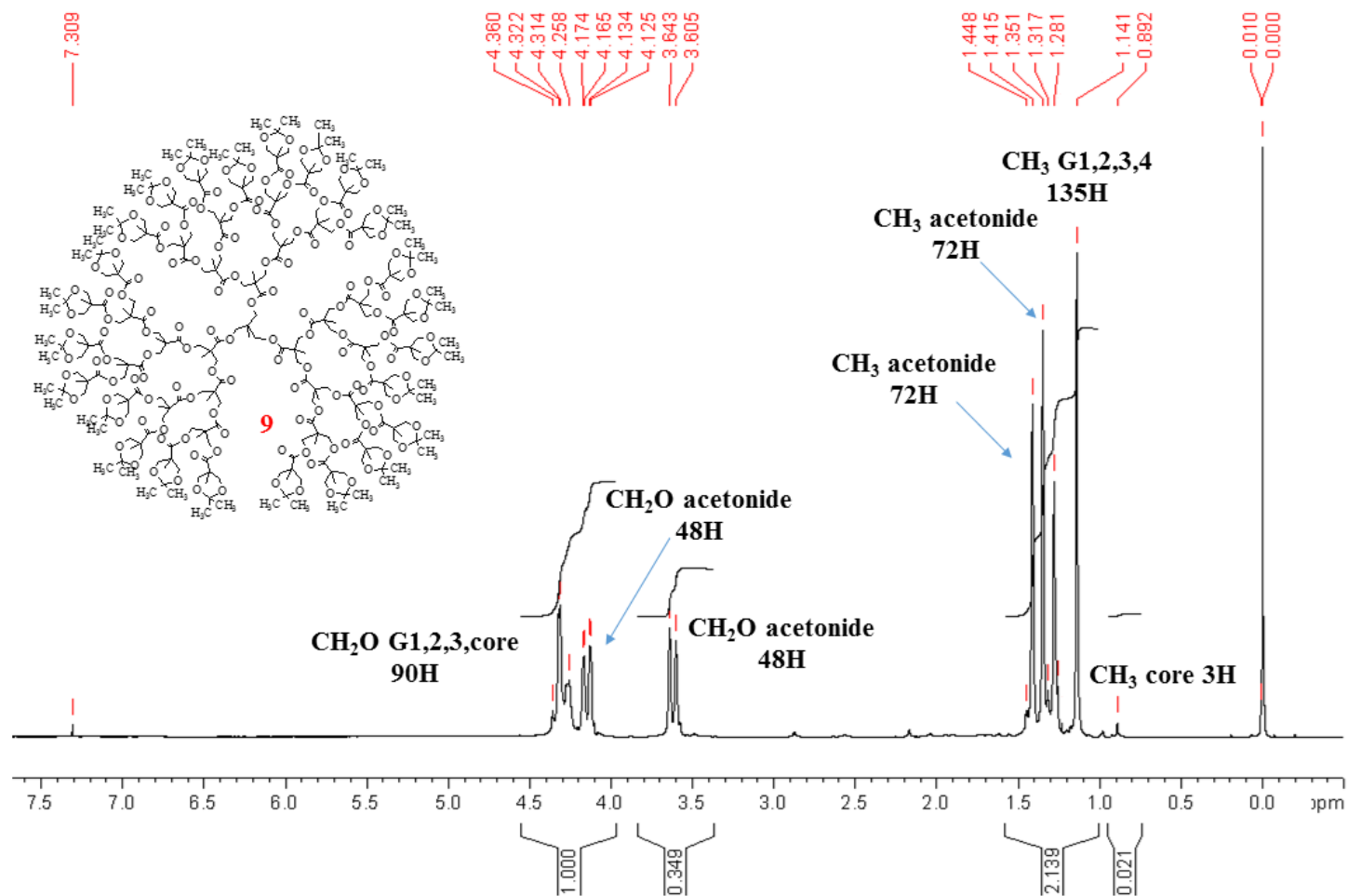


Figure S1. ^1H NMR (DMSO- d_6 , 300 MHz) spectrum of compound **G4(A)** (**9**)

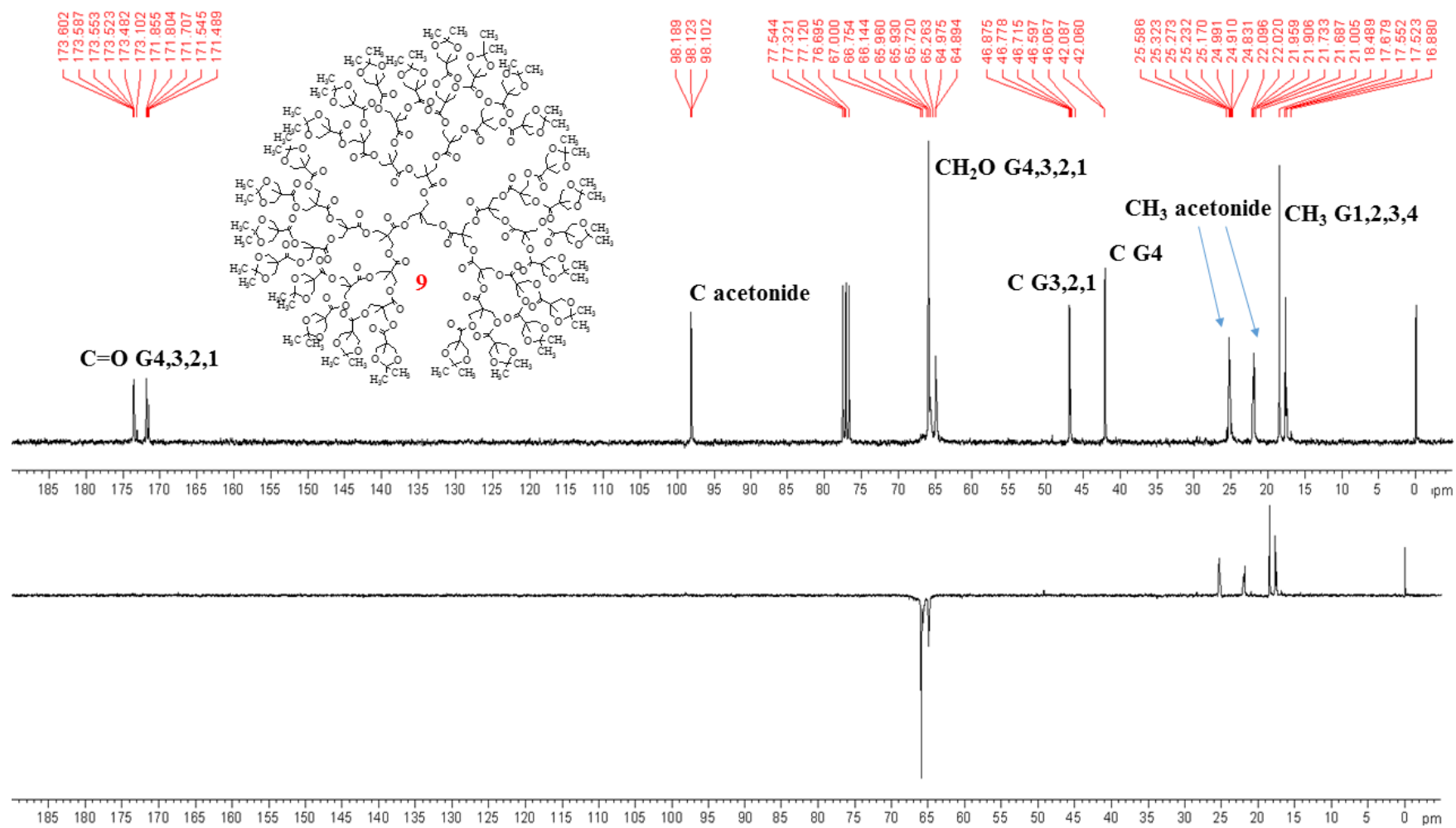


Figure S2. ^{13}C NMR and DEPT-135 (DMSO- d_6 , 75.5 MHz) spectra of compound **G4(A) (9)**

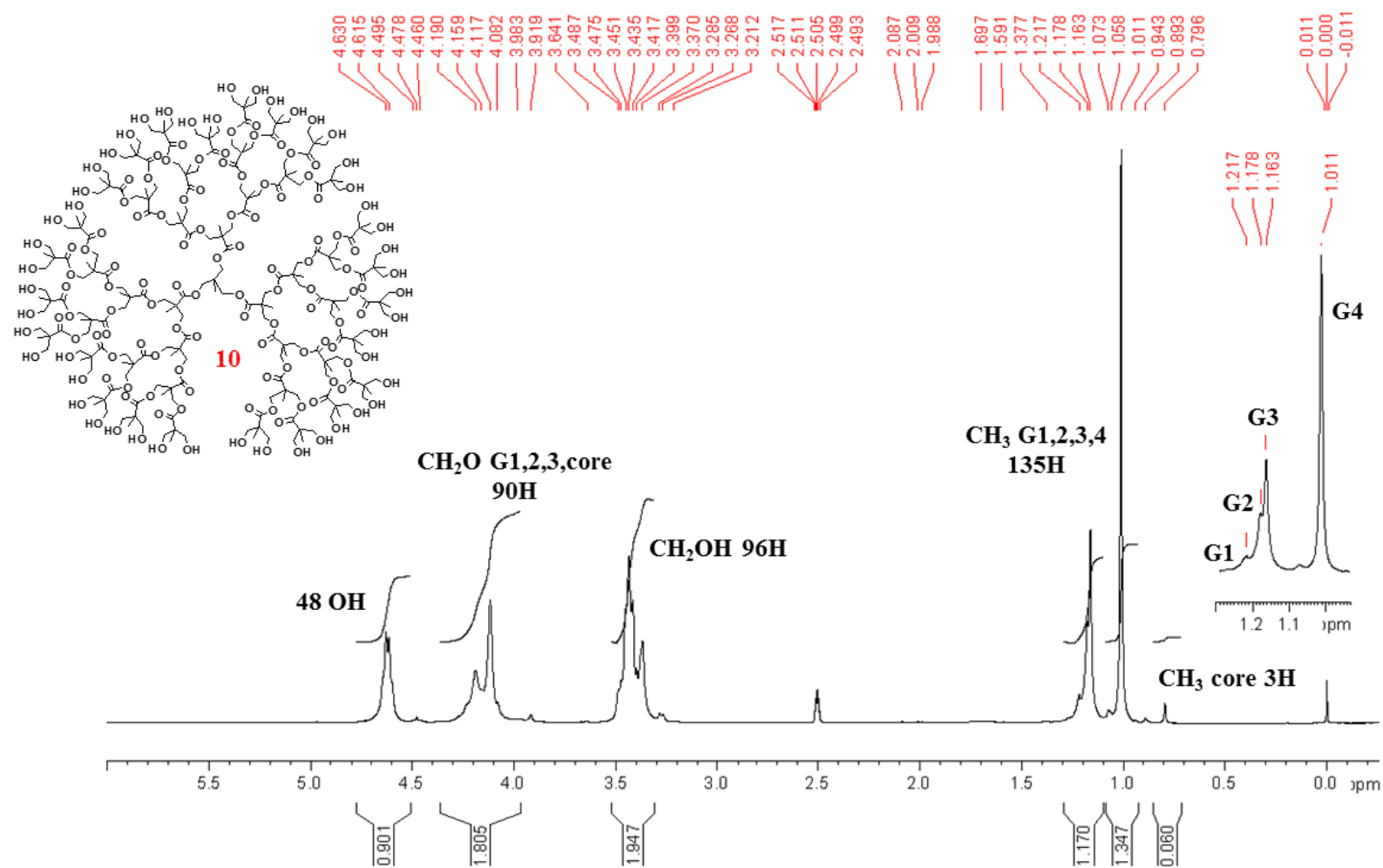


Figure S3. ¹H NMR (DMSO-*d*₆, 300 MHz) spectrum of compound G4(OH) (10)

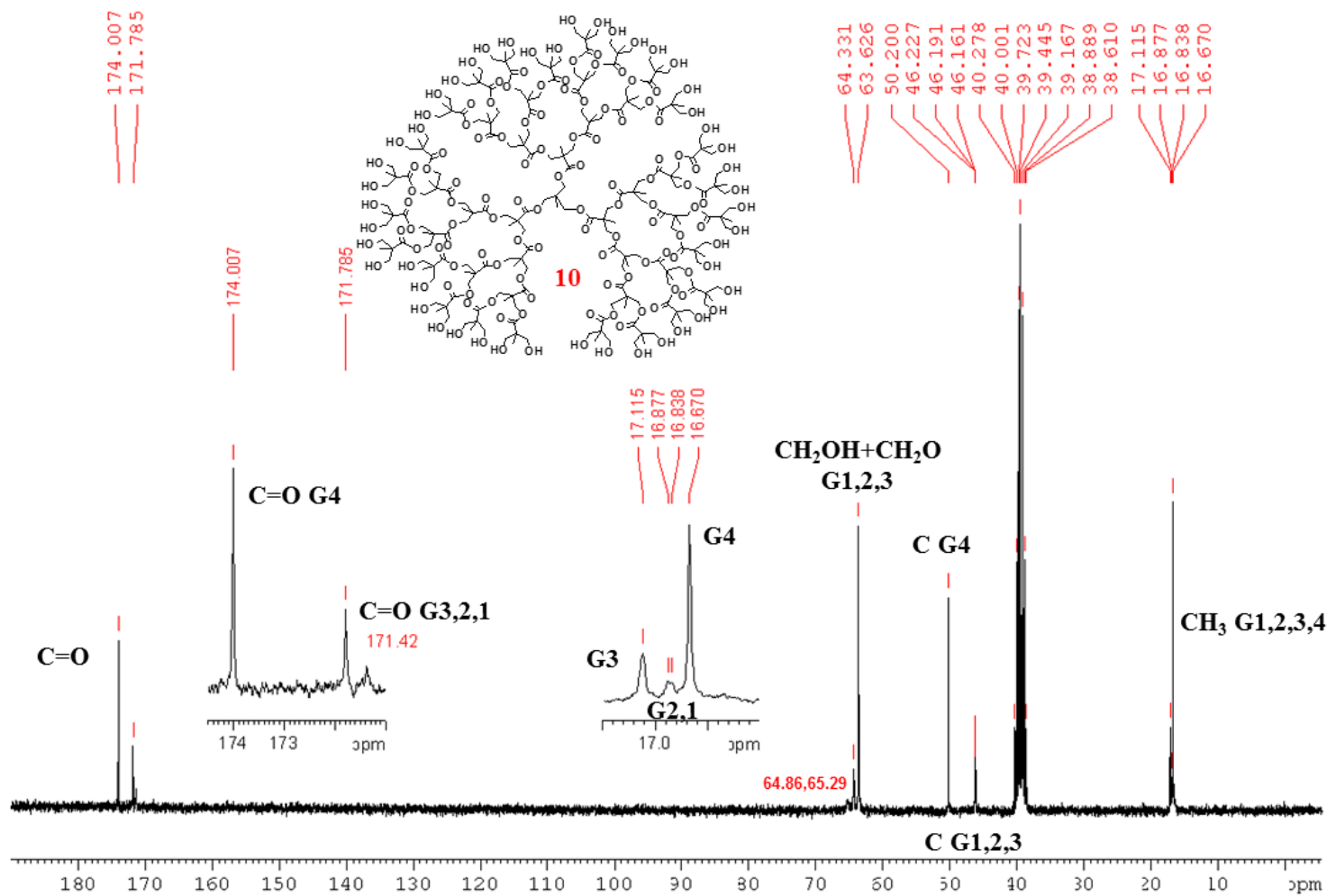


Figure S4. ^{13}C NMR ($\text{DMSO-}d_6$, 75.5 MHz) spectrum of compound **G4(OH)** (**10**)

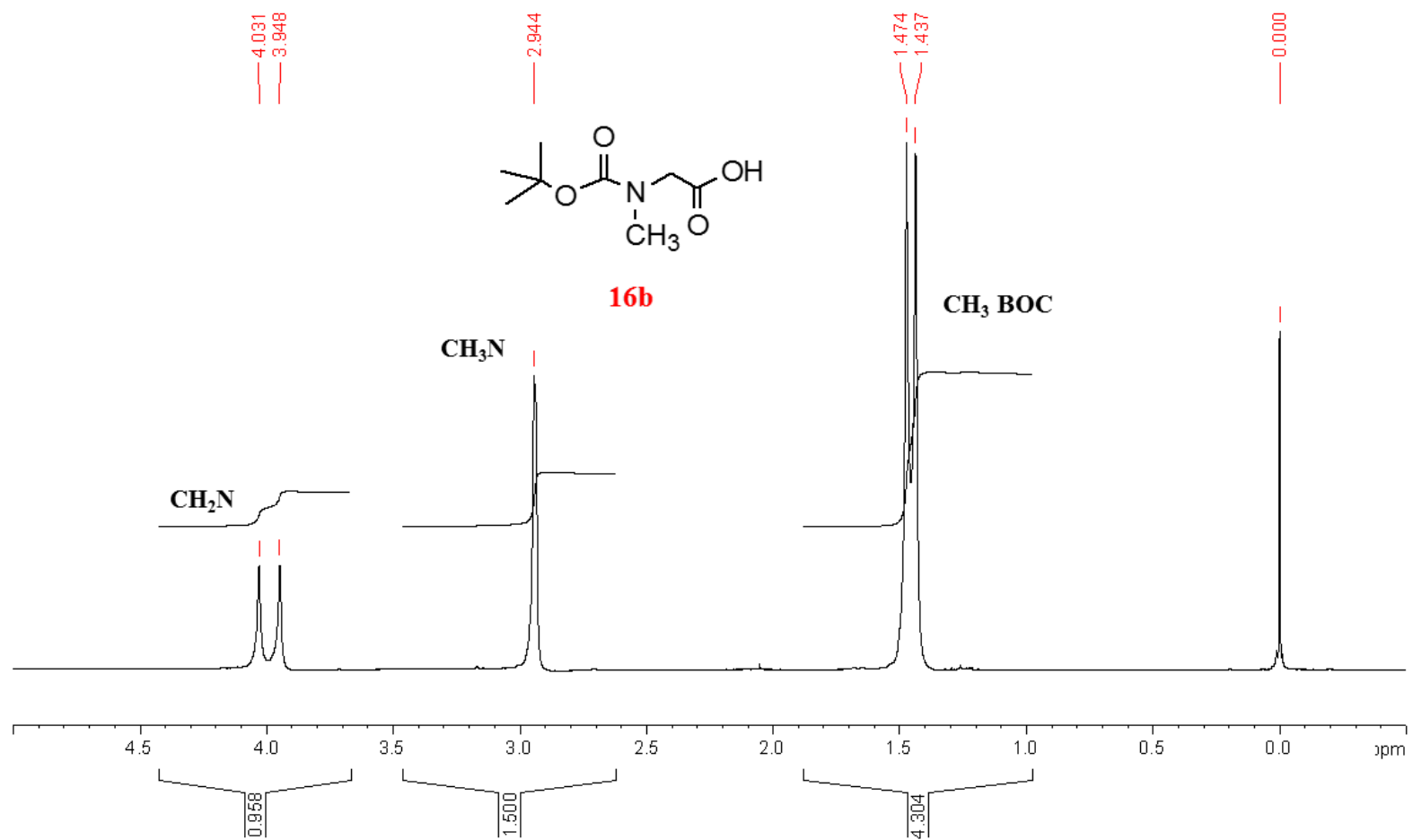


Figure S5. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz) spectrum of **16b**.

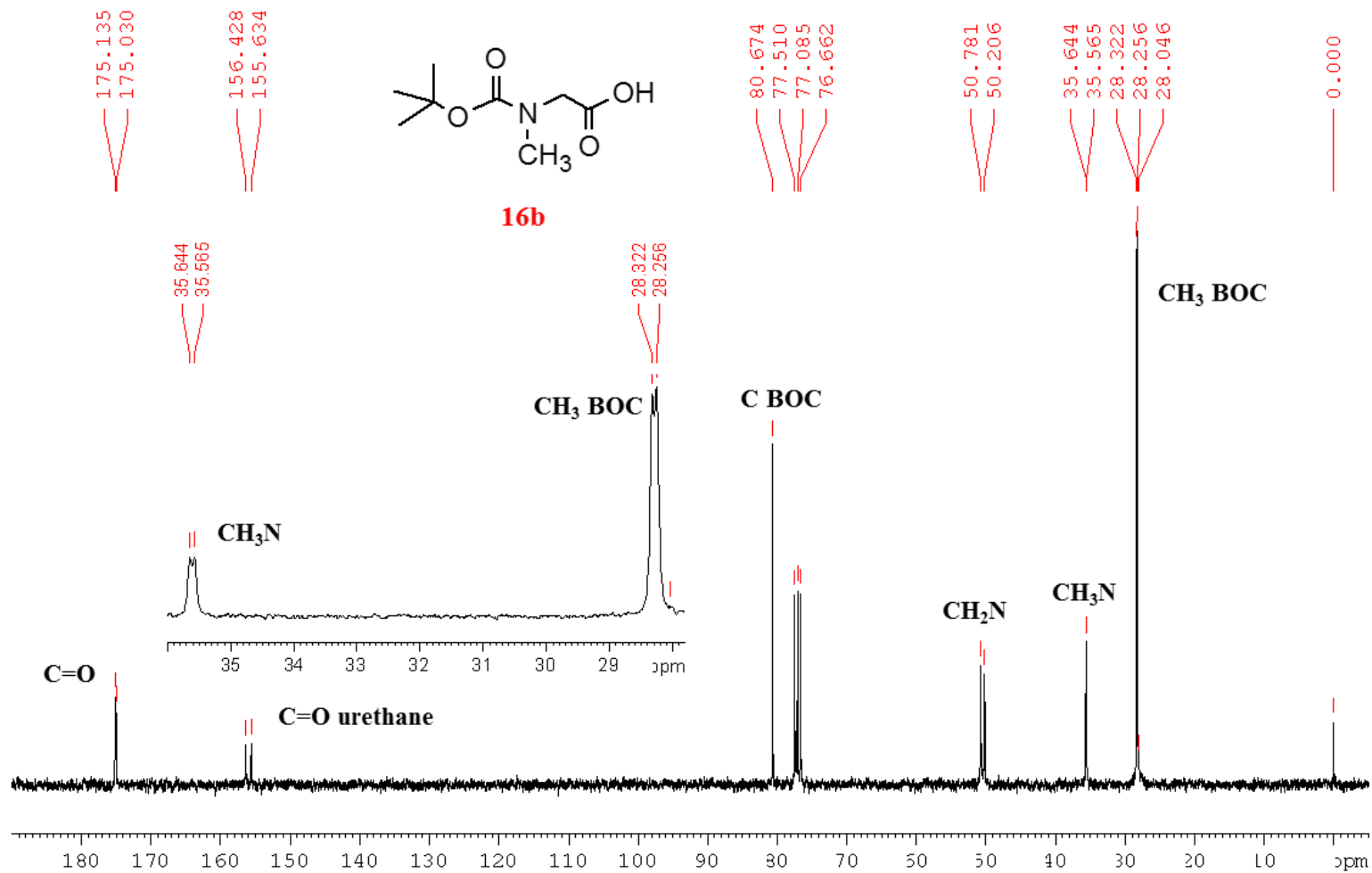


Figure S6. ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75.5 MHz) spectrum of compound **16b**

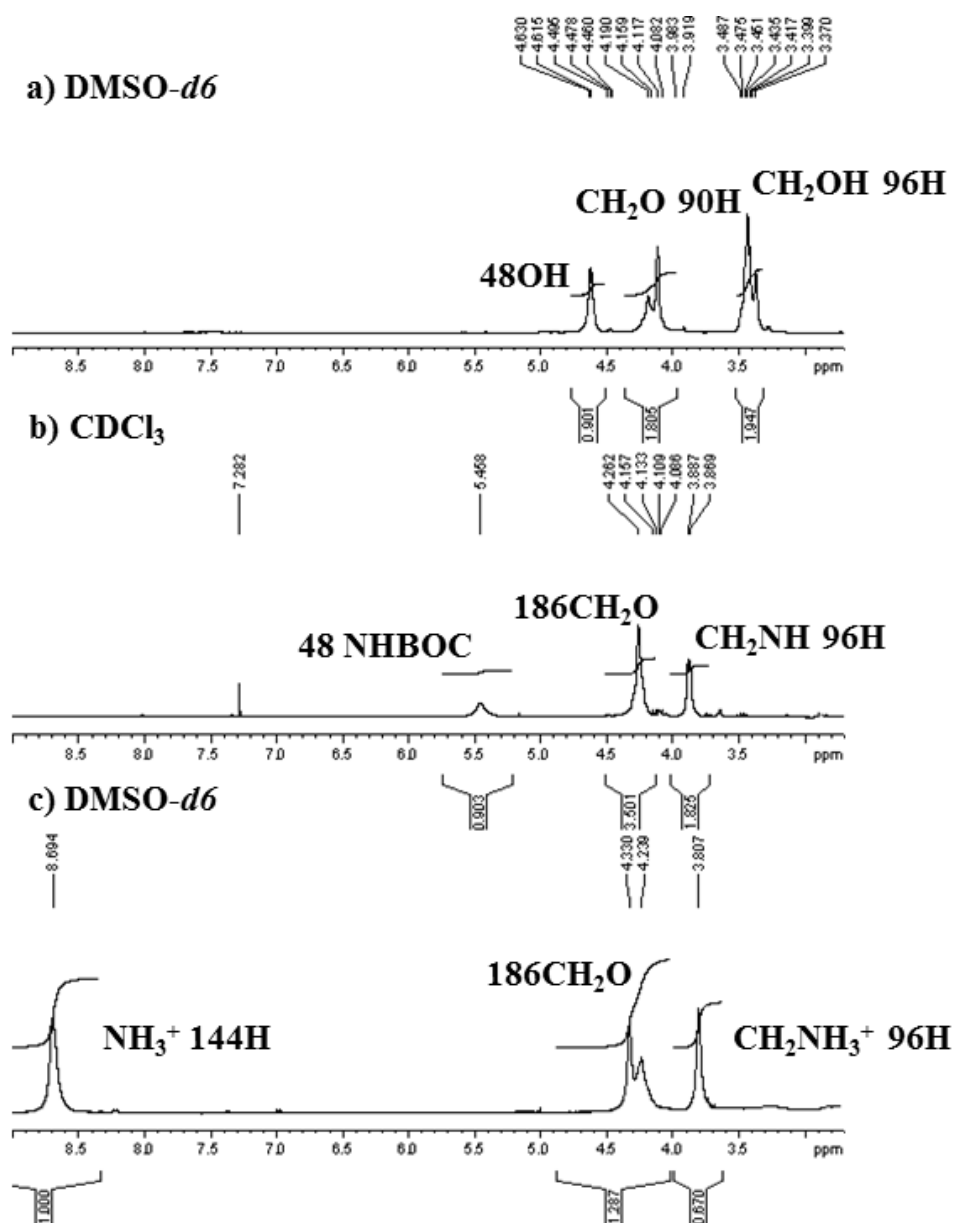


Figure S7. Comparison of ¹H NMR spectra of G4(OH) (10) (a), G4(16a) (17) (b) and G4(15aHCl) (23) (c)

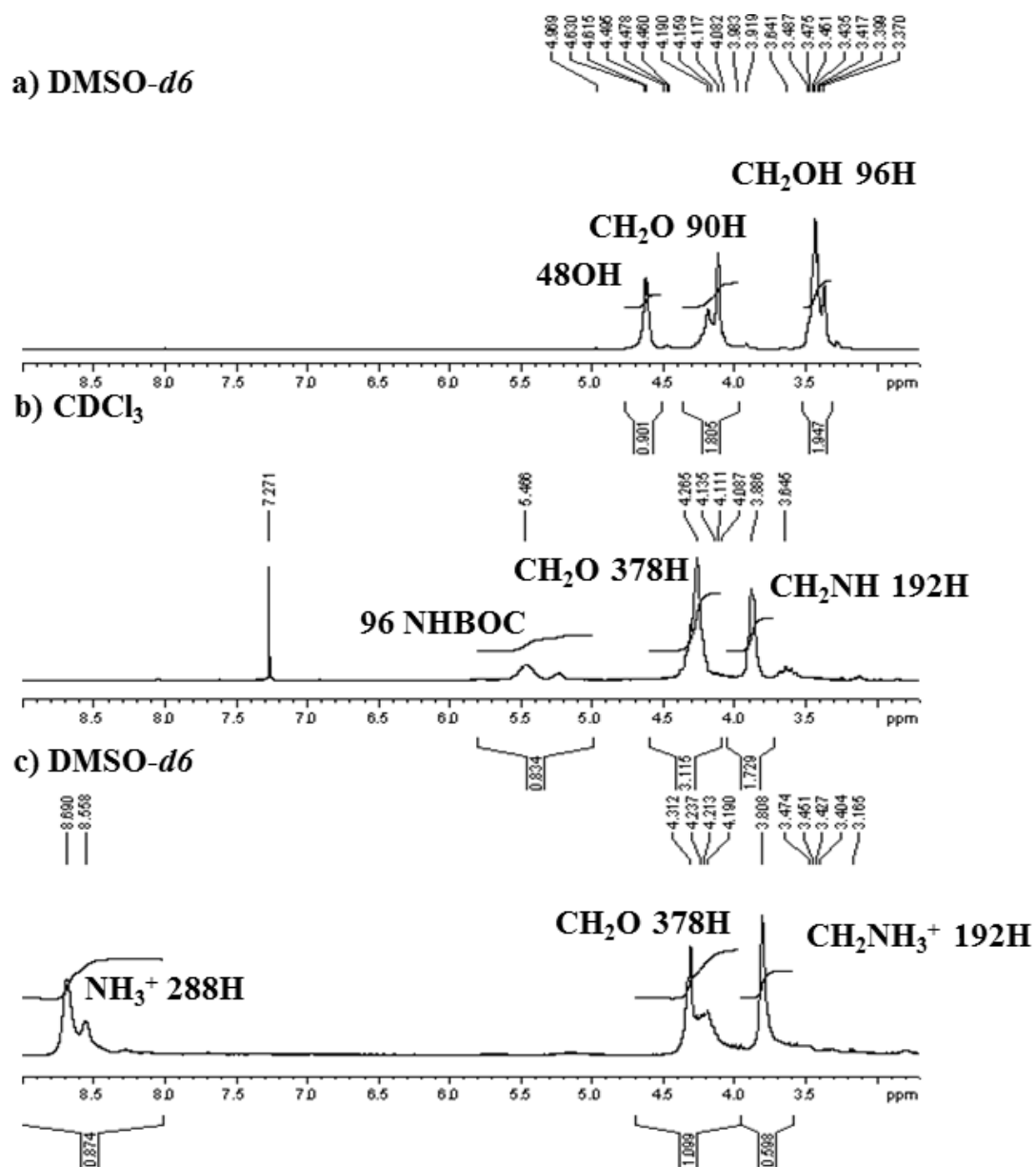


Figure S8. Comparison of ¹H NMR spectra of **G4(OH) (10)** (a), **G5(16a) (47)** (b) and **G5(15aHCl) (56)** (c)

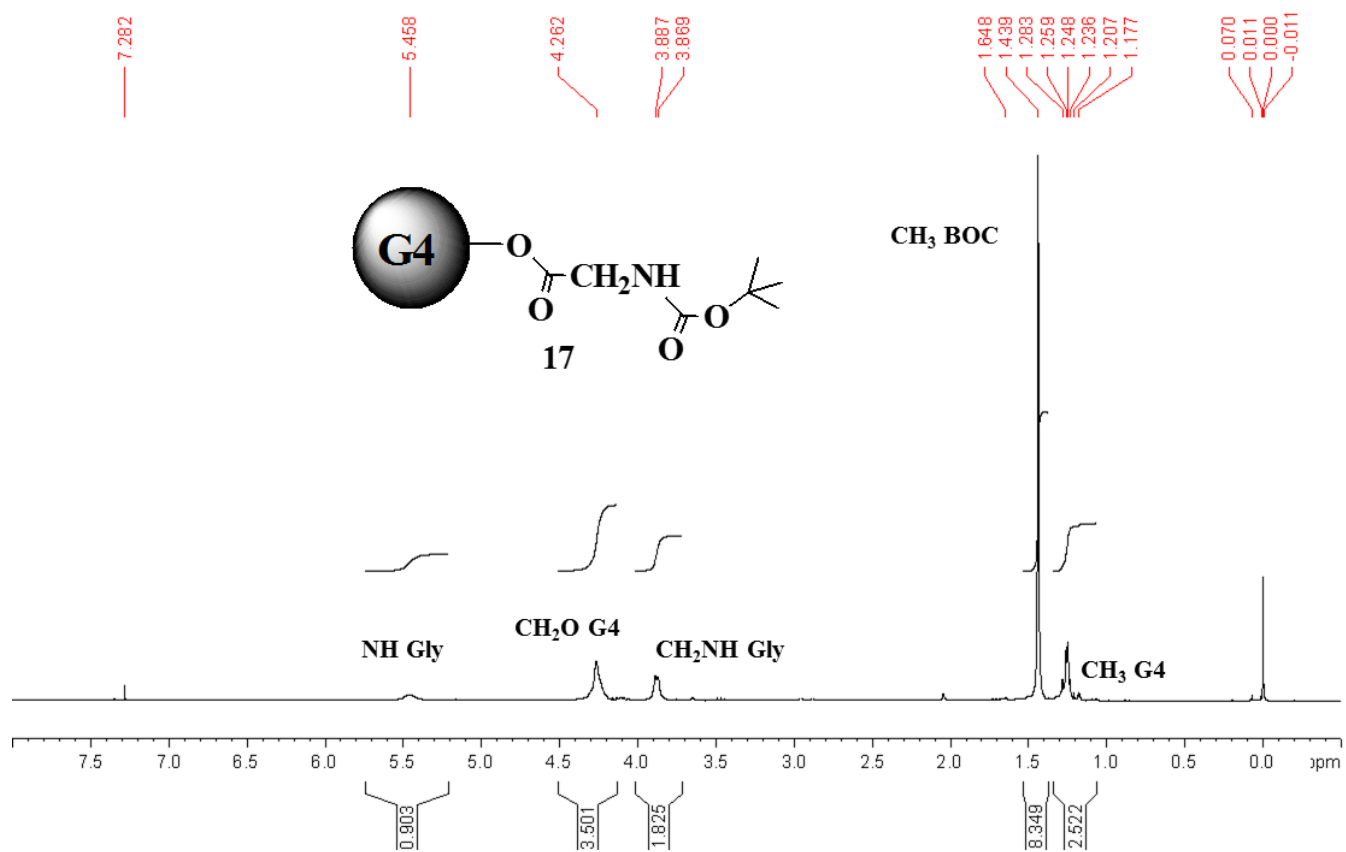


Figure S9. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz) spectrum of compound 17

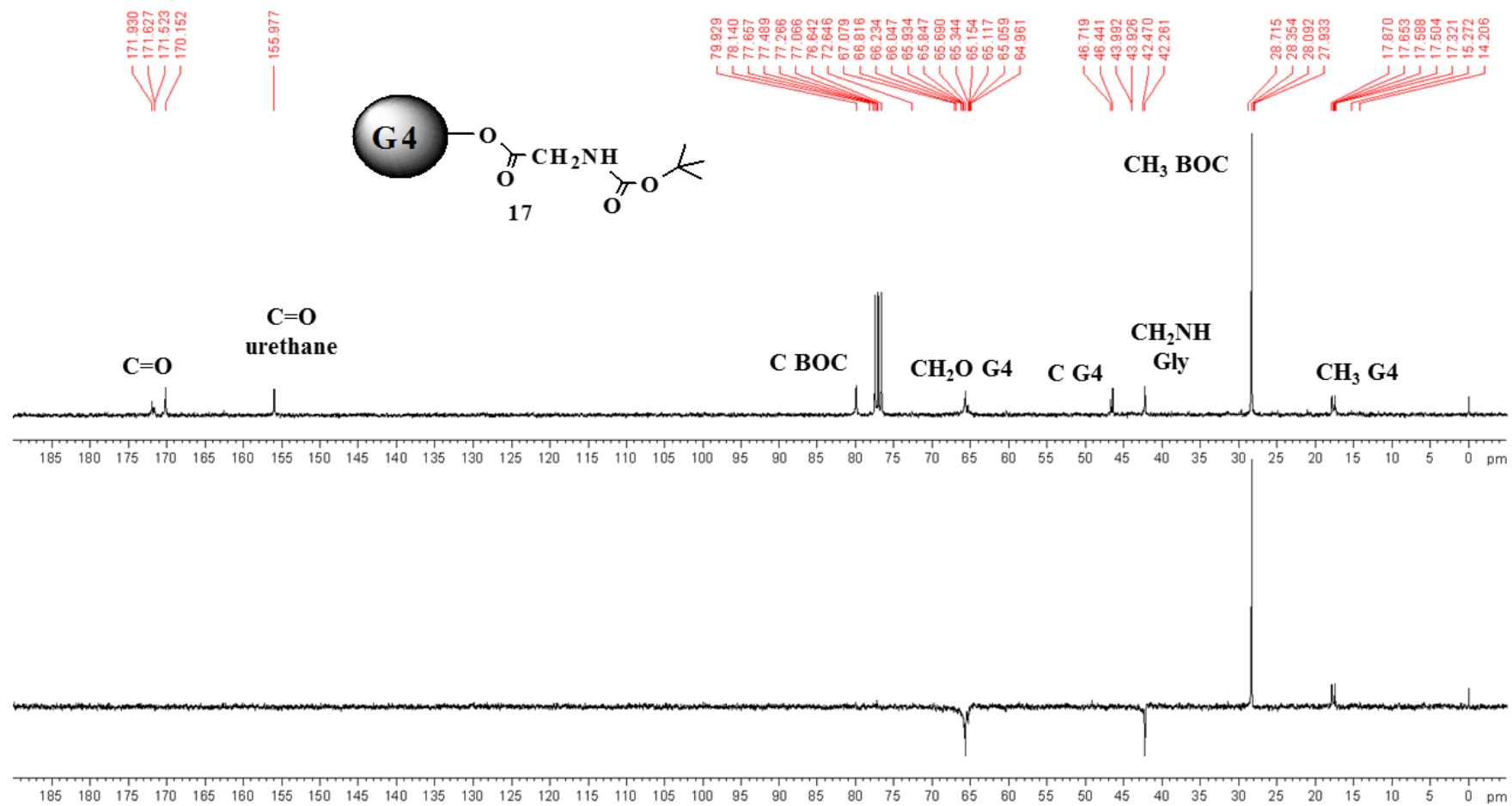


Figure S10. ^{13}C NMR and DEPT-135 (CDCl_3 , 75.5 MHz) spectra of compound **17**

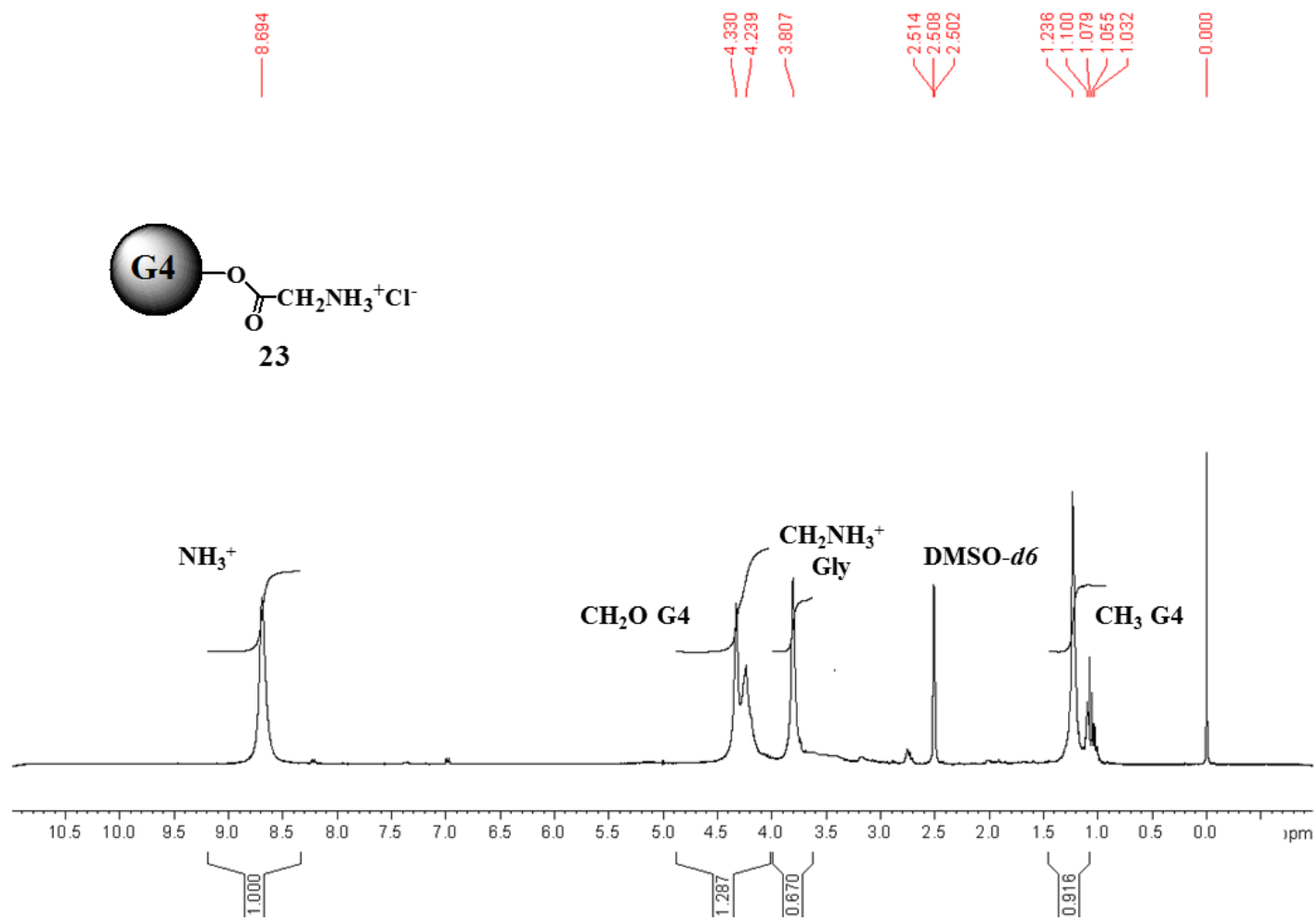


Figure S11. ^1H NMR (DMSO-*d*₆, 300 MHz) spectrum of compound 23

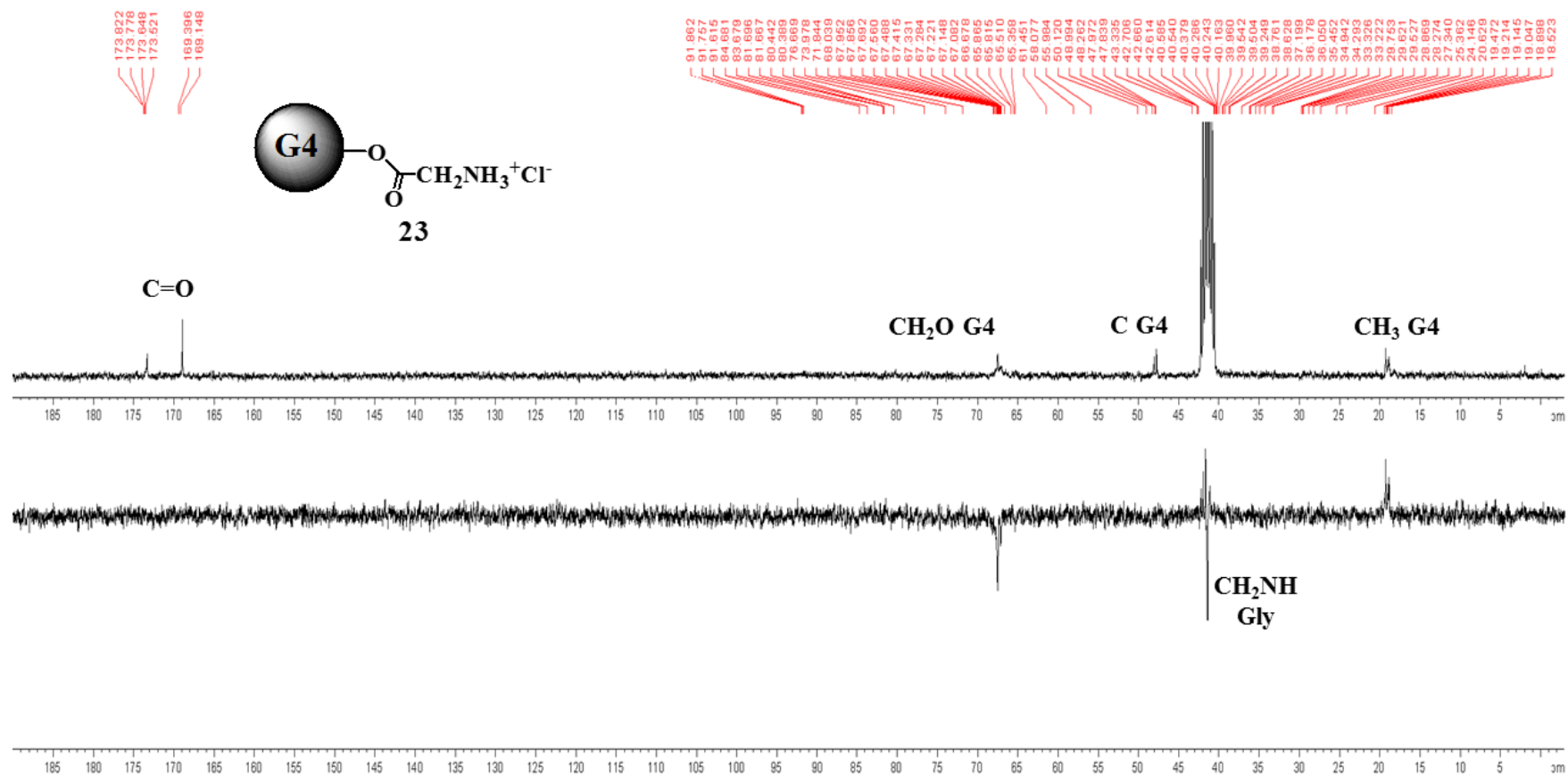


Figure S12. ¹³C NMR and DEPT-135 (DMSO-*d*₆, 75.5 MHz) spectra of compound **23**

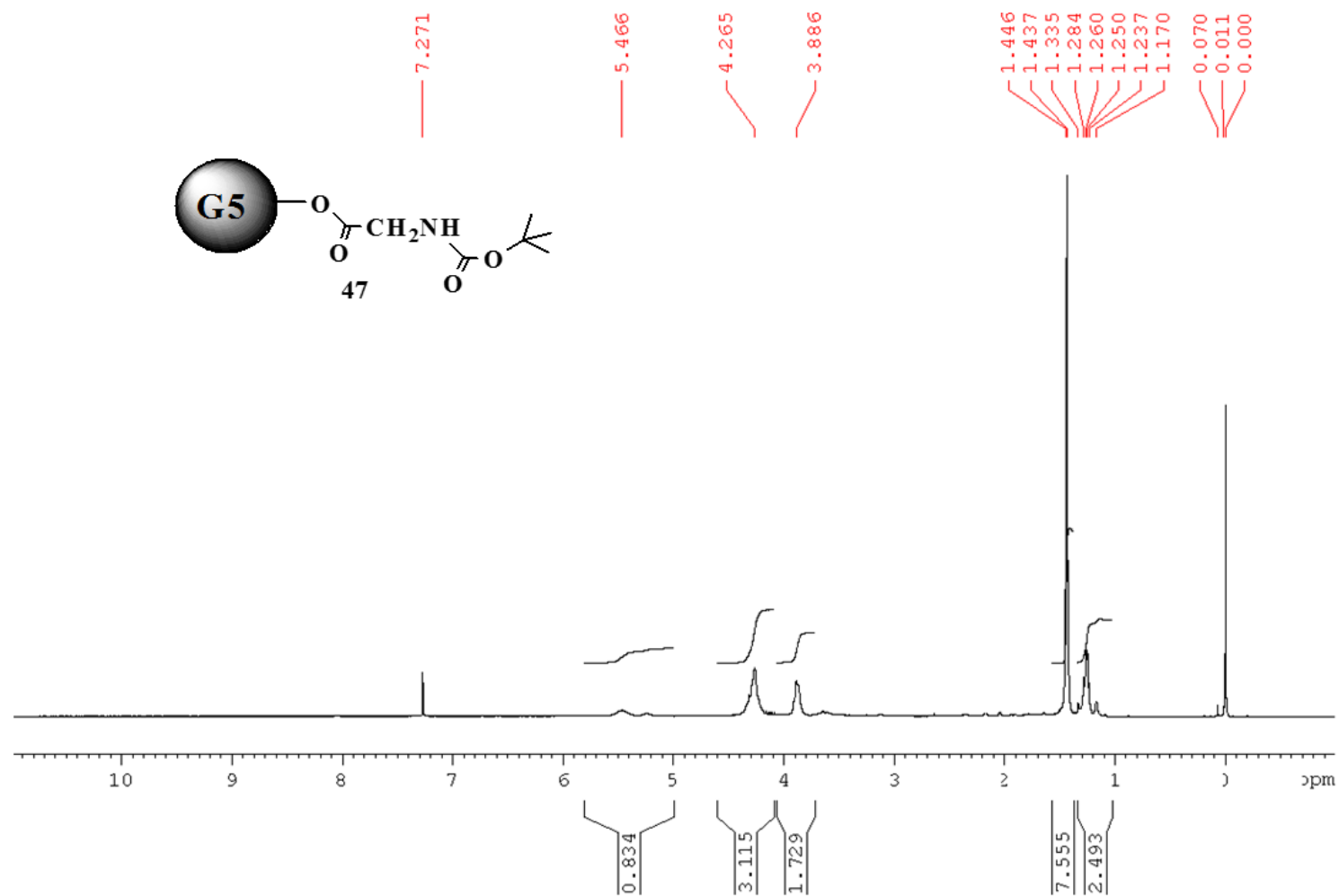


Figure S13. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz) spectrum of compound 47

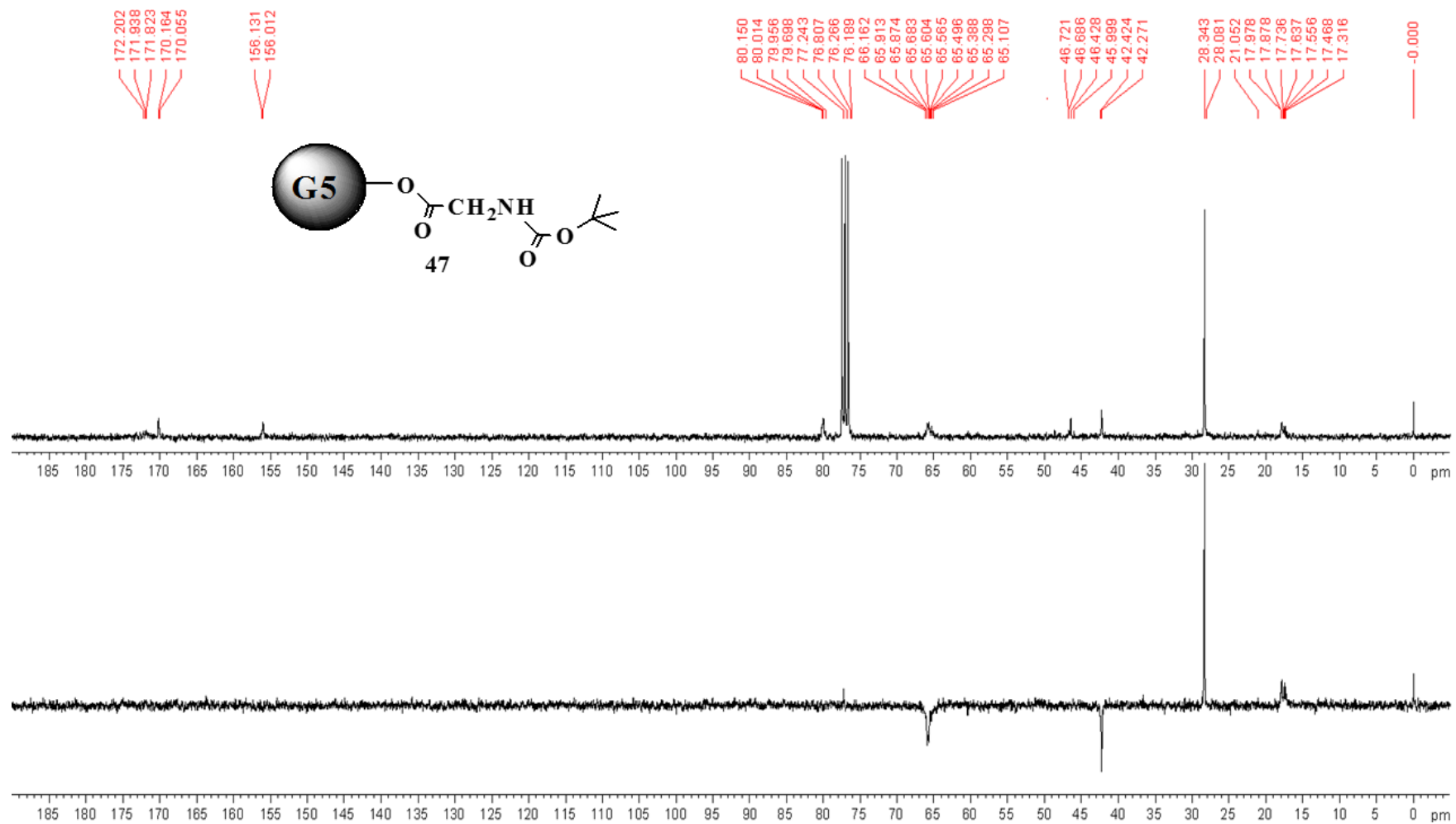


Figure S14. ^{13}C NMR and DEPT-135 (CDCl_3 , 75.5 MHz) spectra of compound 47

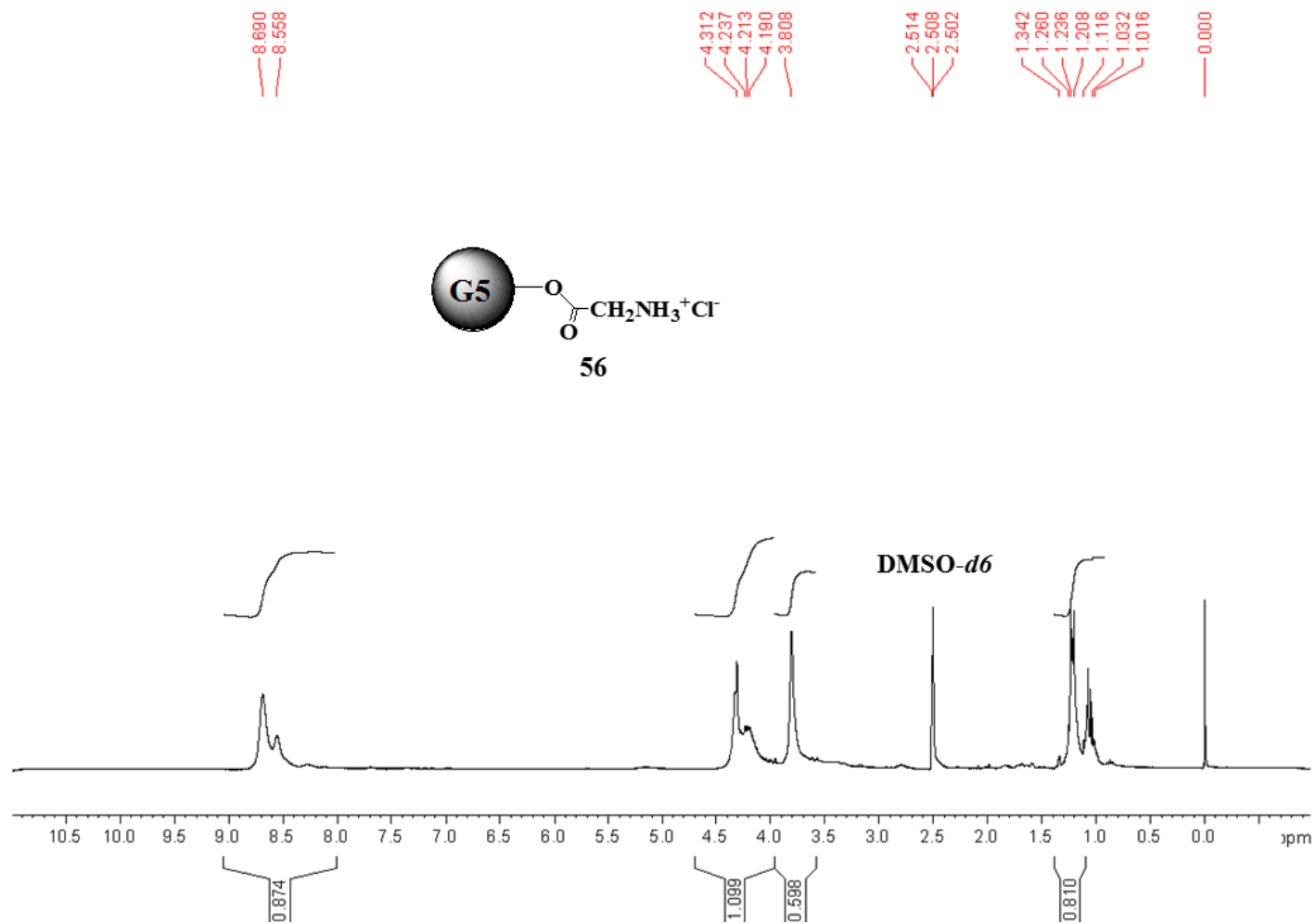


Figure S15. ^1H NMR (DMSO-*d*₆, 300 MHz) spectrum of compound **56**

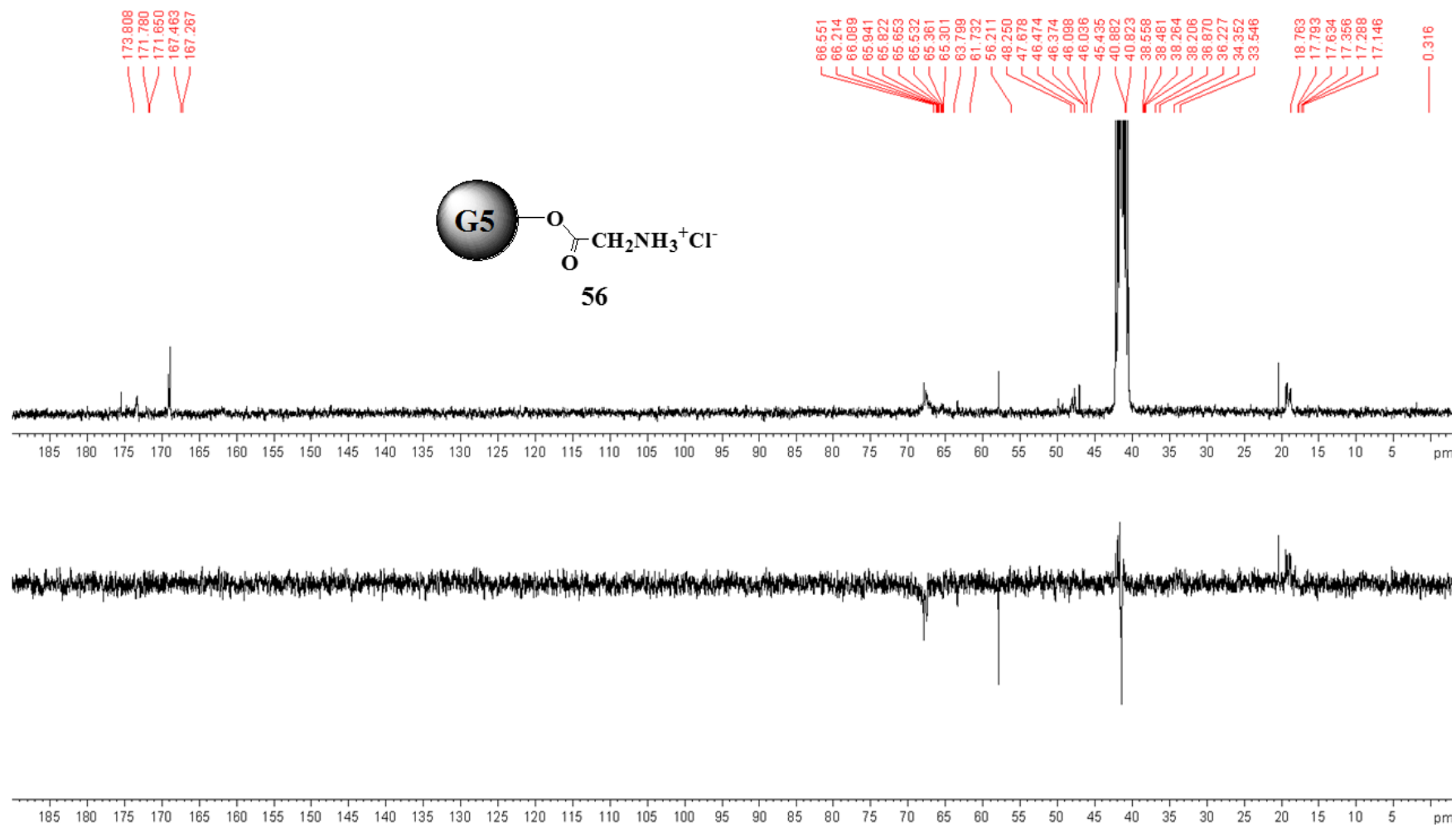


Figure S16. ¹³C NMR and DEPT-135 (DMSO-*d*₆, 75.5 MHz) spectra of compound **56**

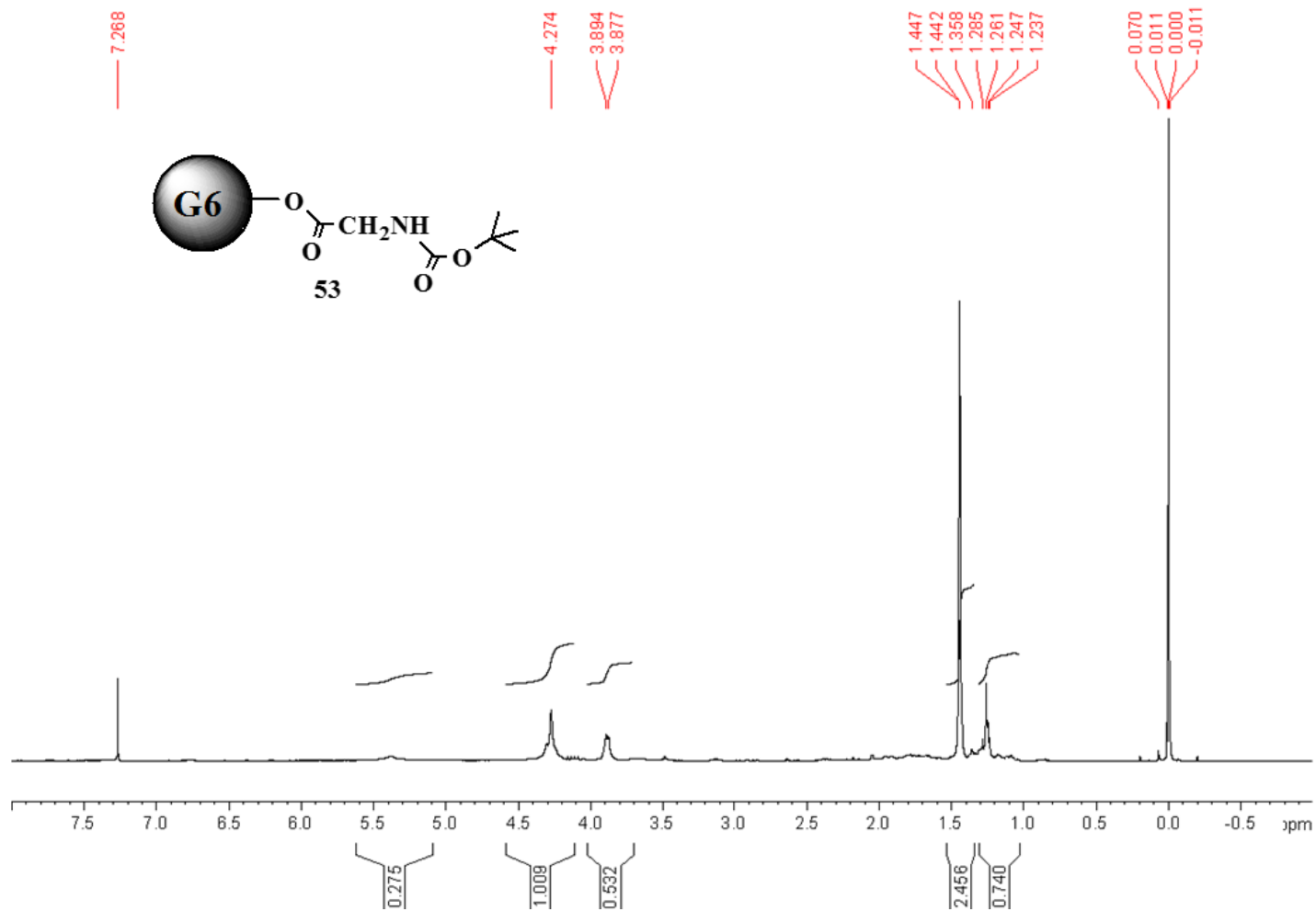


Figure S17. ^1H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz) spectrum of compound **53**

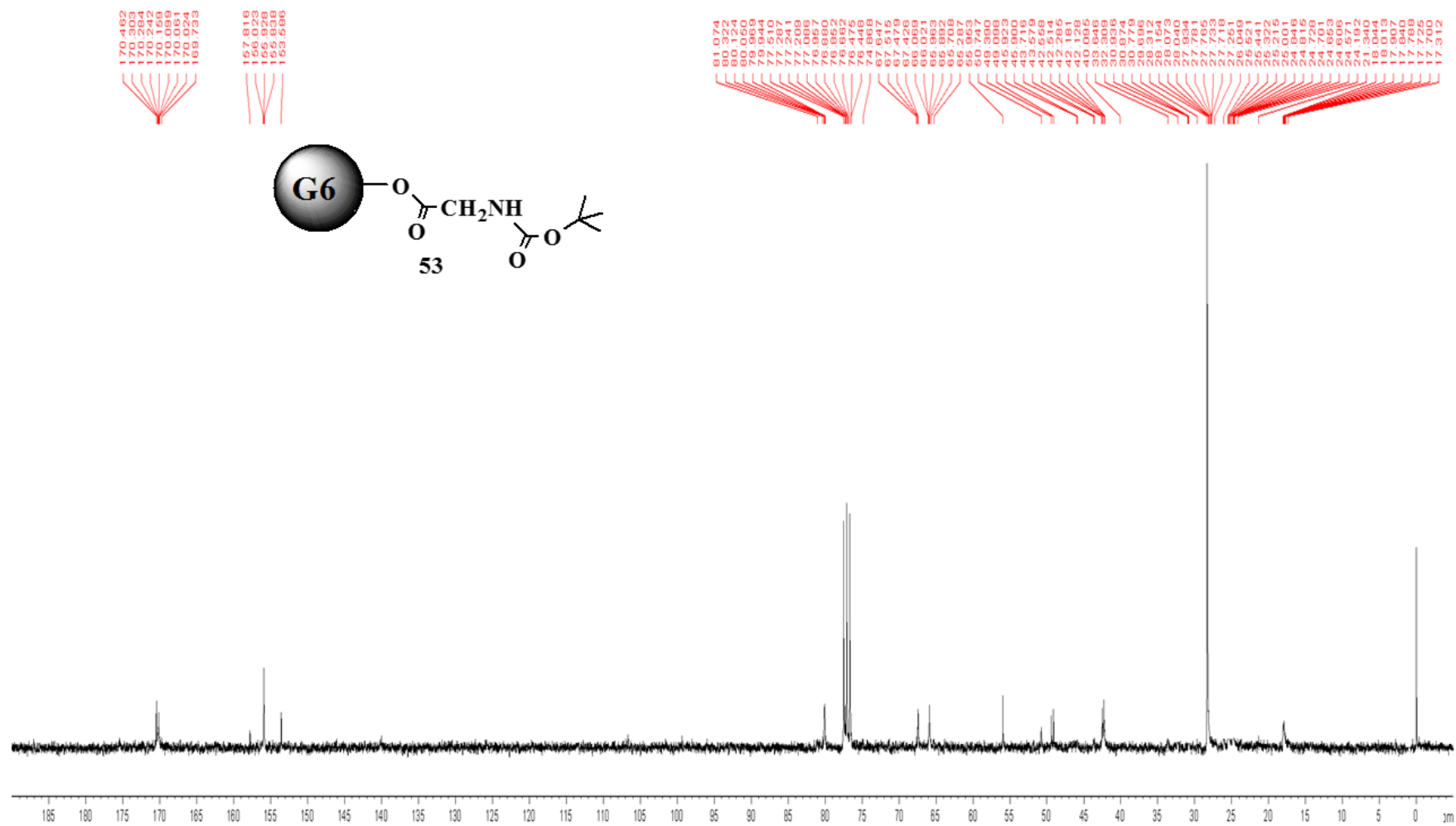


Figure S18. ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75.5 MHz) spectrum of compound 53

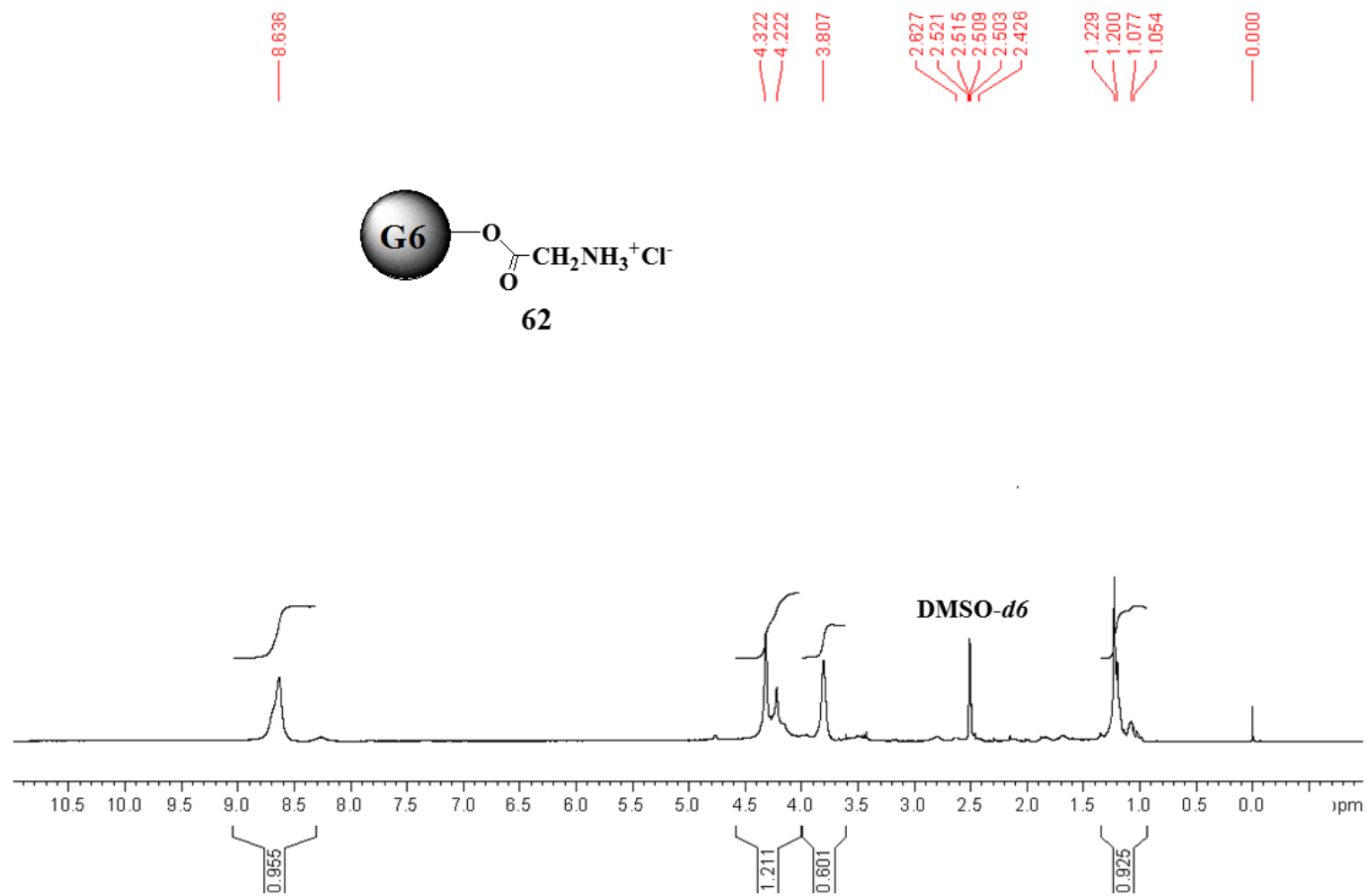


Figure S19. ¹H NMR (DMSO-*d*₆, 300 MHz) spectra of compound **62**

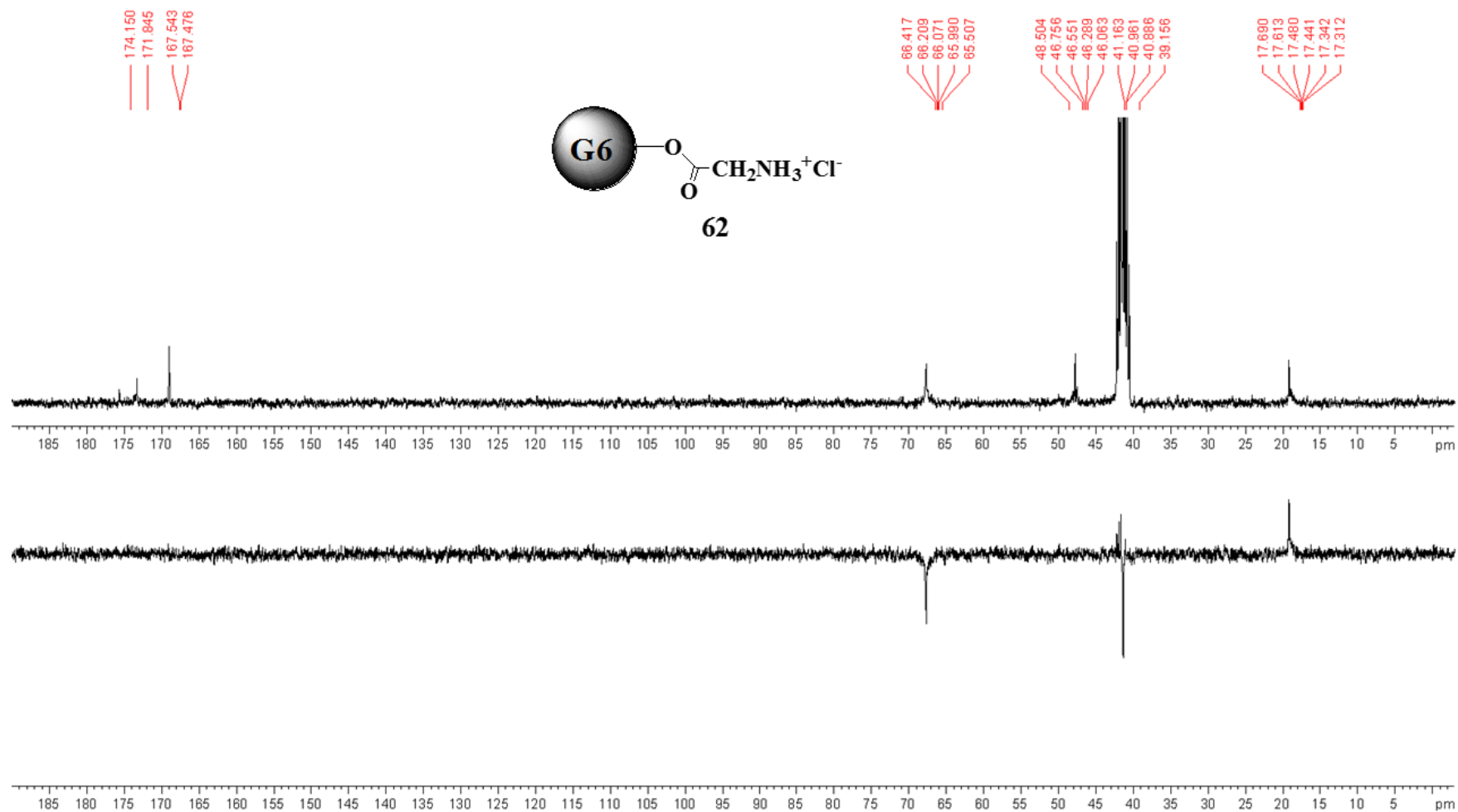


Figure S20. ^{13}C NMR and DEPT-135 (DMSO- d_6 , 75.5 MHz) spectra of compound **62**

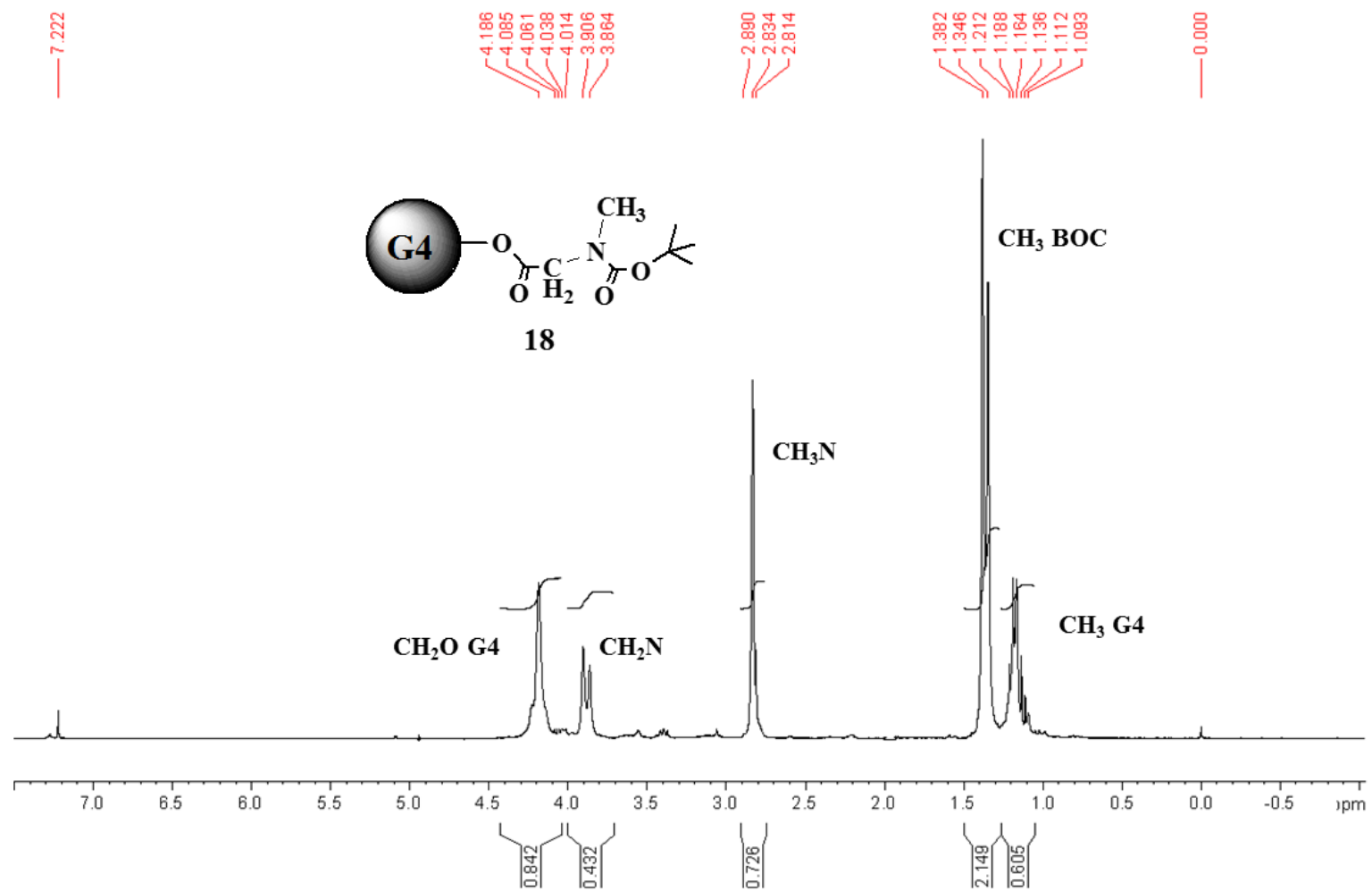


Figure S21. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz) spectrum of compound **18**

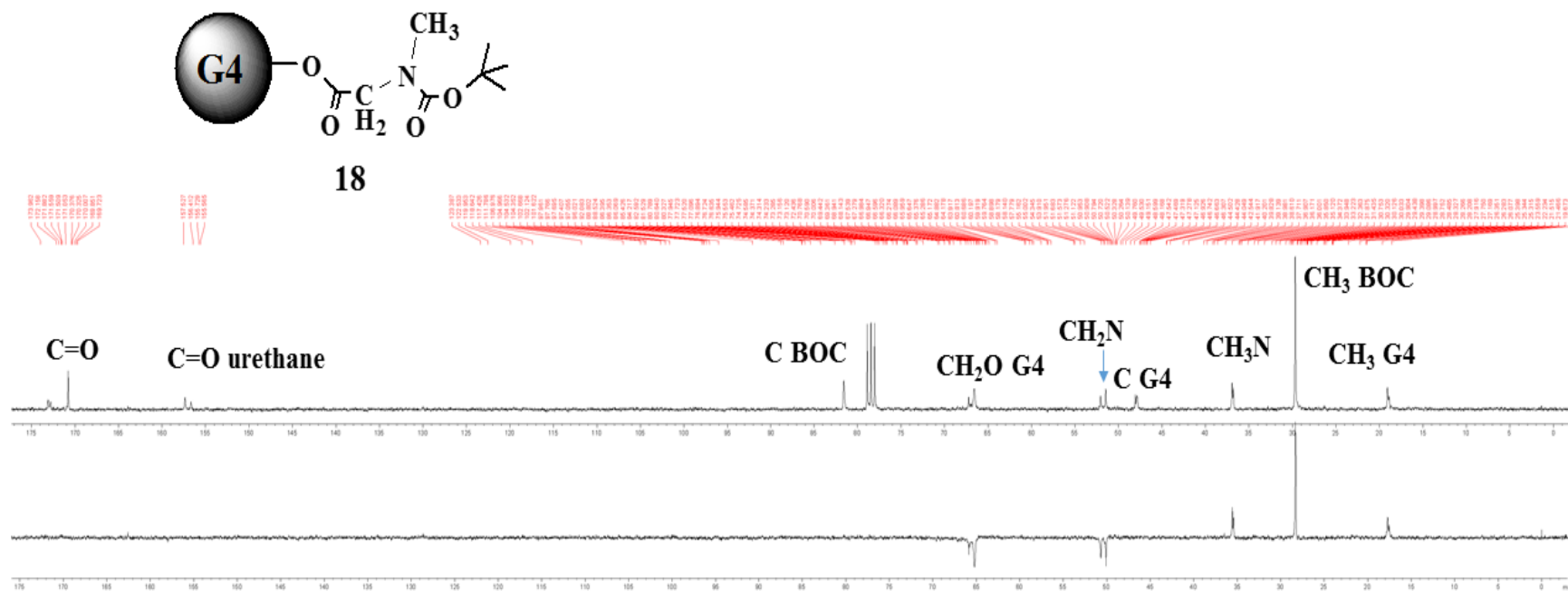


Figure S22. ¹³C NMR and DEPT-135 (CDCl₃, 75.5 MHz) spectra of compound **18**

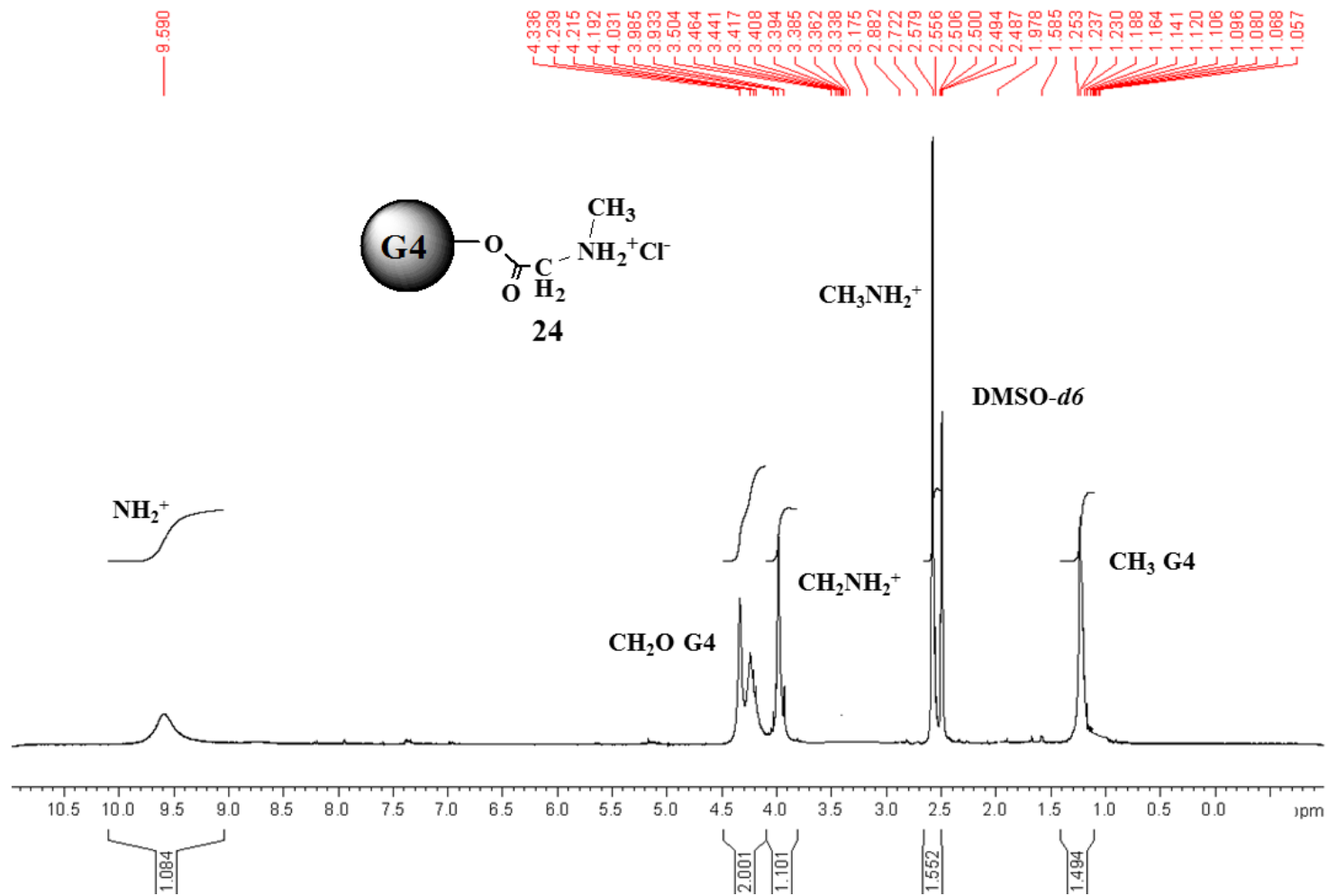


Figure S23. $^1\text{H NMR}$ (DMSO- d_6 , 300 MHz) spectrum of compound 24

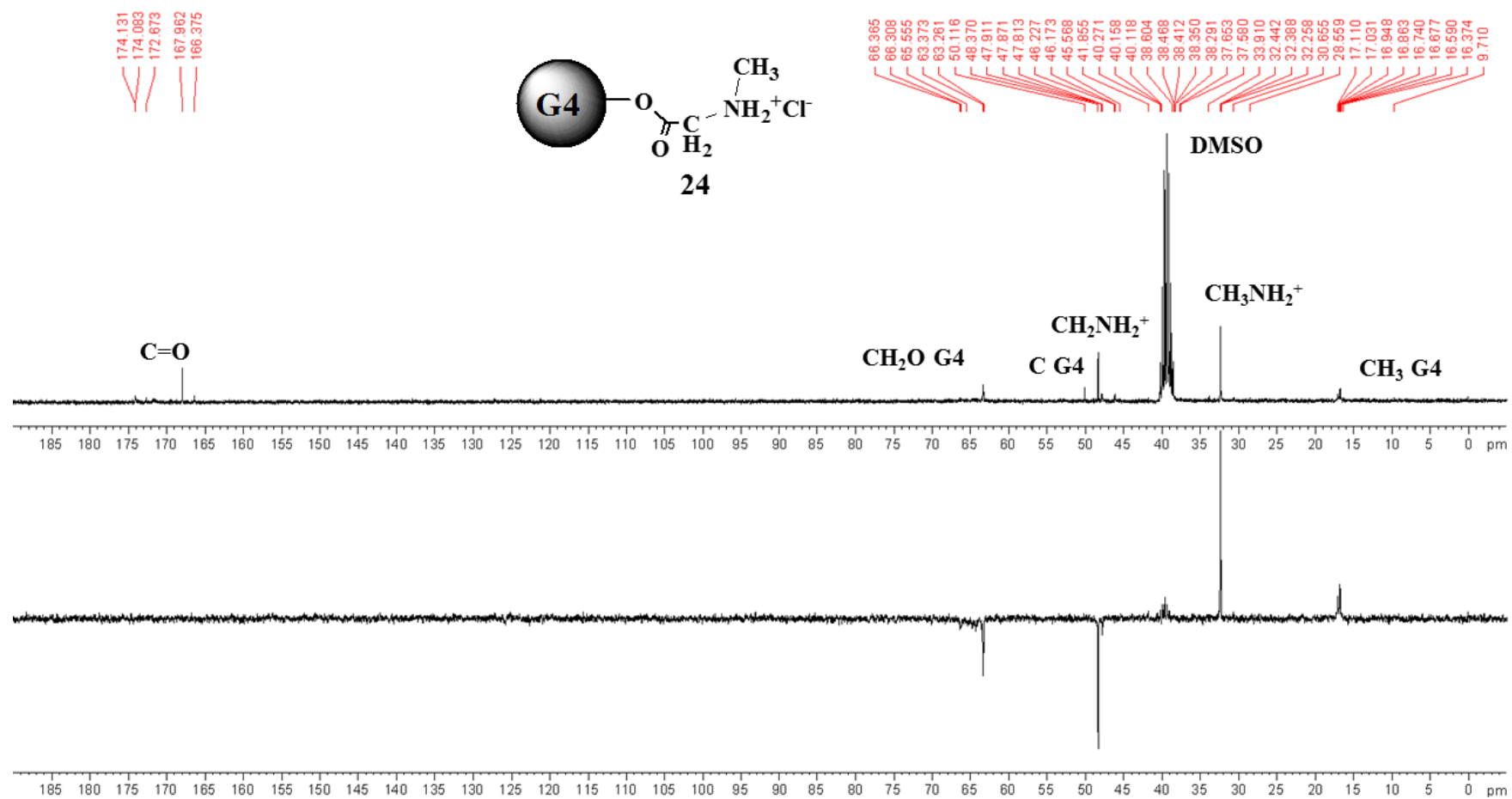


Figure S24. ¹³C NMR and DEPT-135 (DMSO-*d*₆, 75.5 MHz) spectra of compound **24**

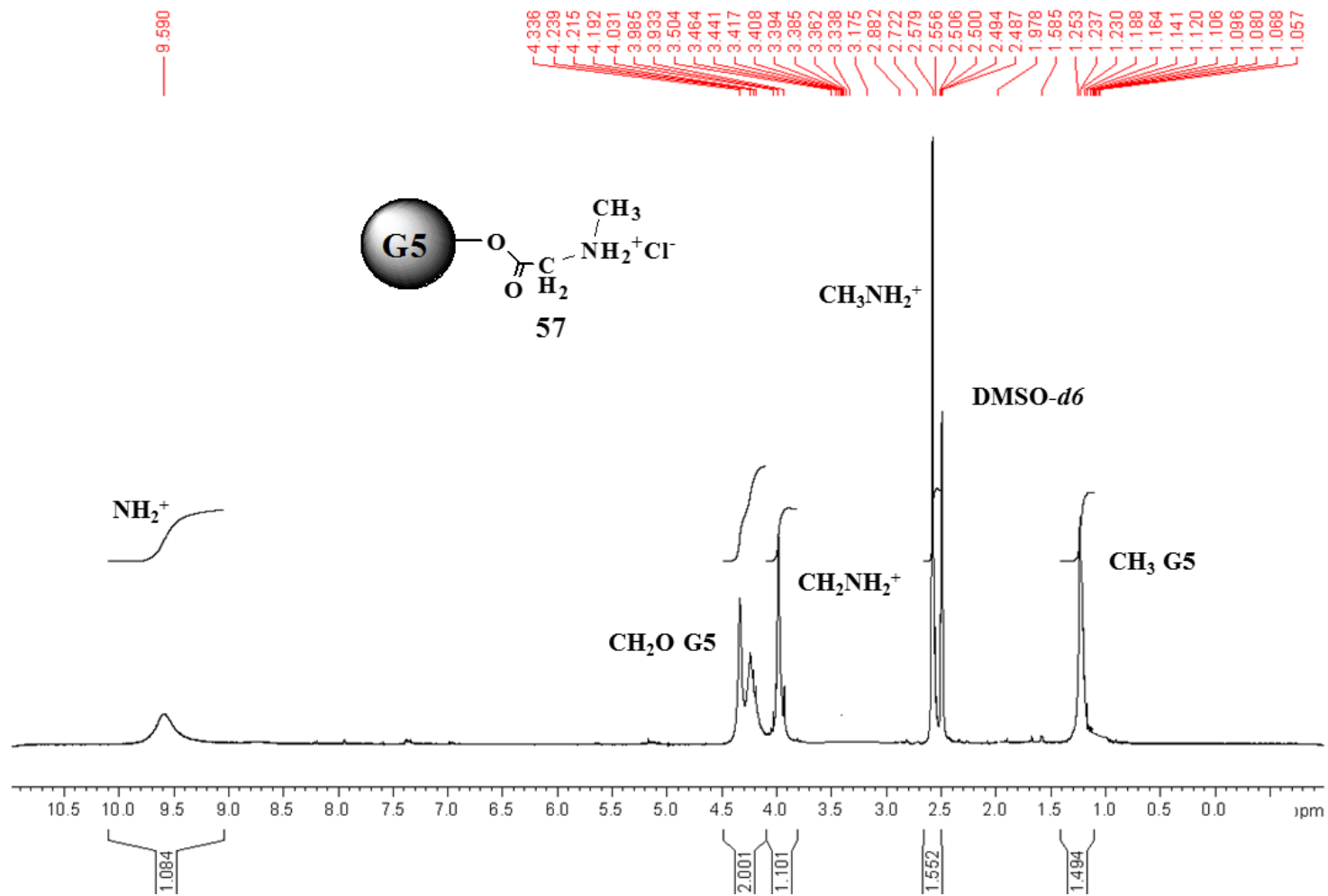


Figure S25. $^1\text{H NMR}$ (DMSO- d_6 , 300 MHz) spectrum of compound 57

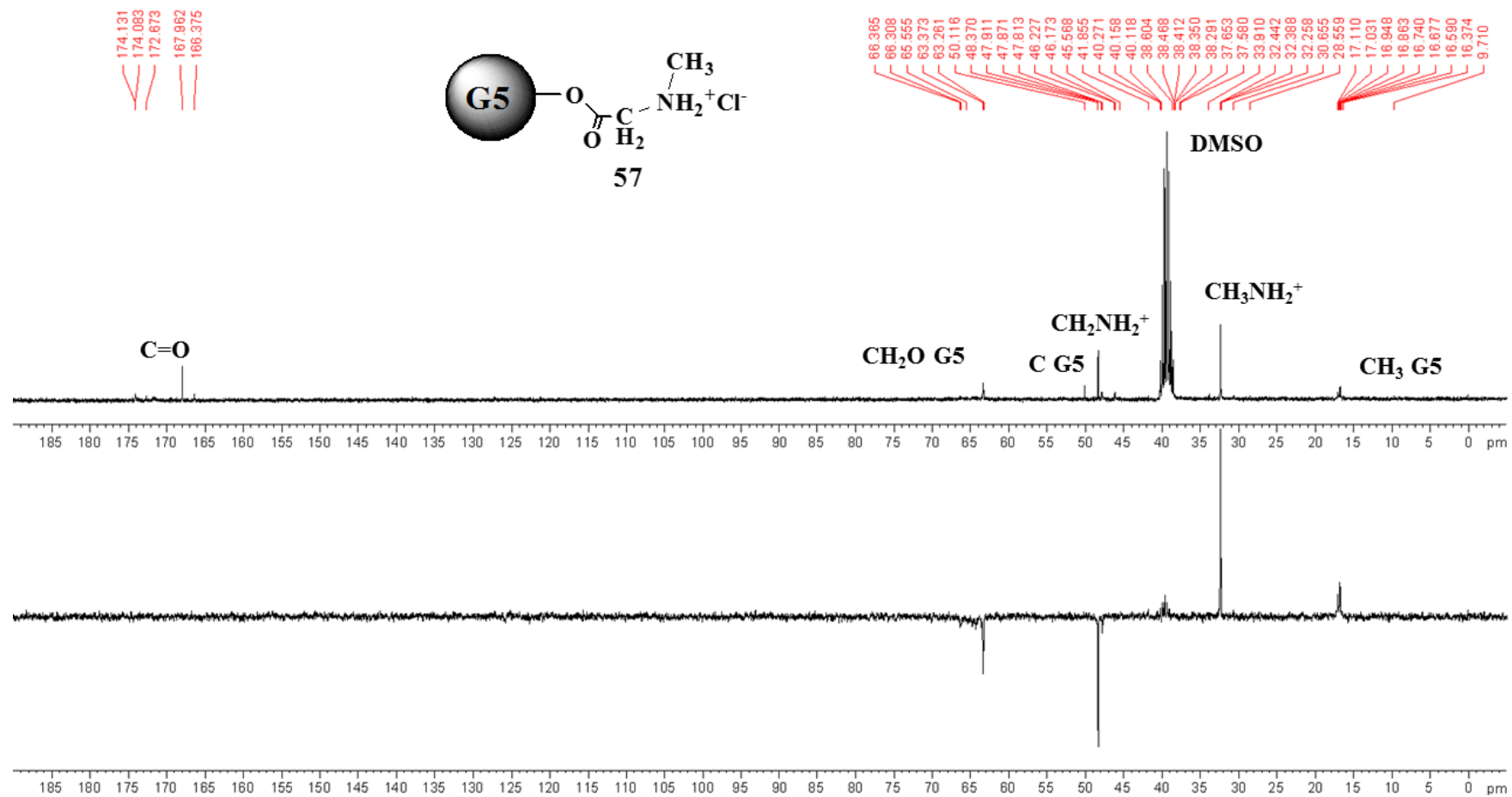


Figure S26. $^1\text{H NMR}$ (DMSO- d_6 , 300 MHz) spectrum of compound **57**

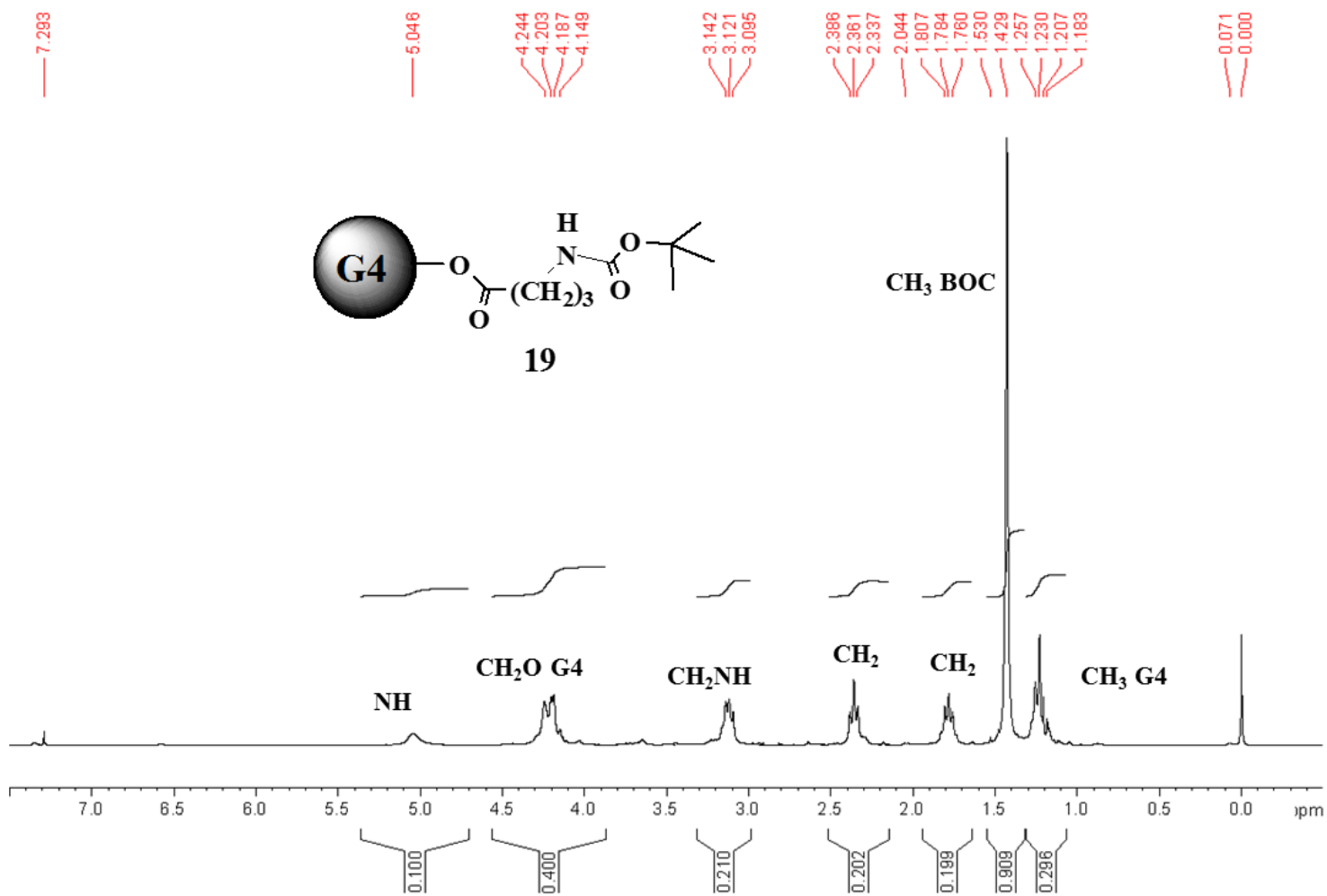


Figure S27. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz) spectrum of compound **19**

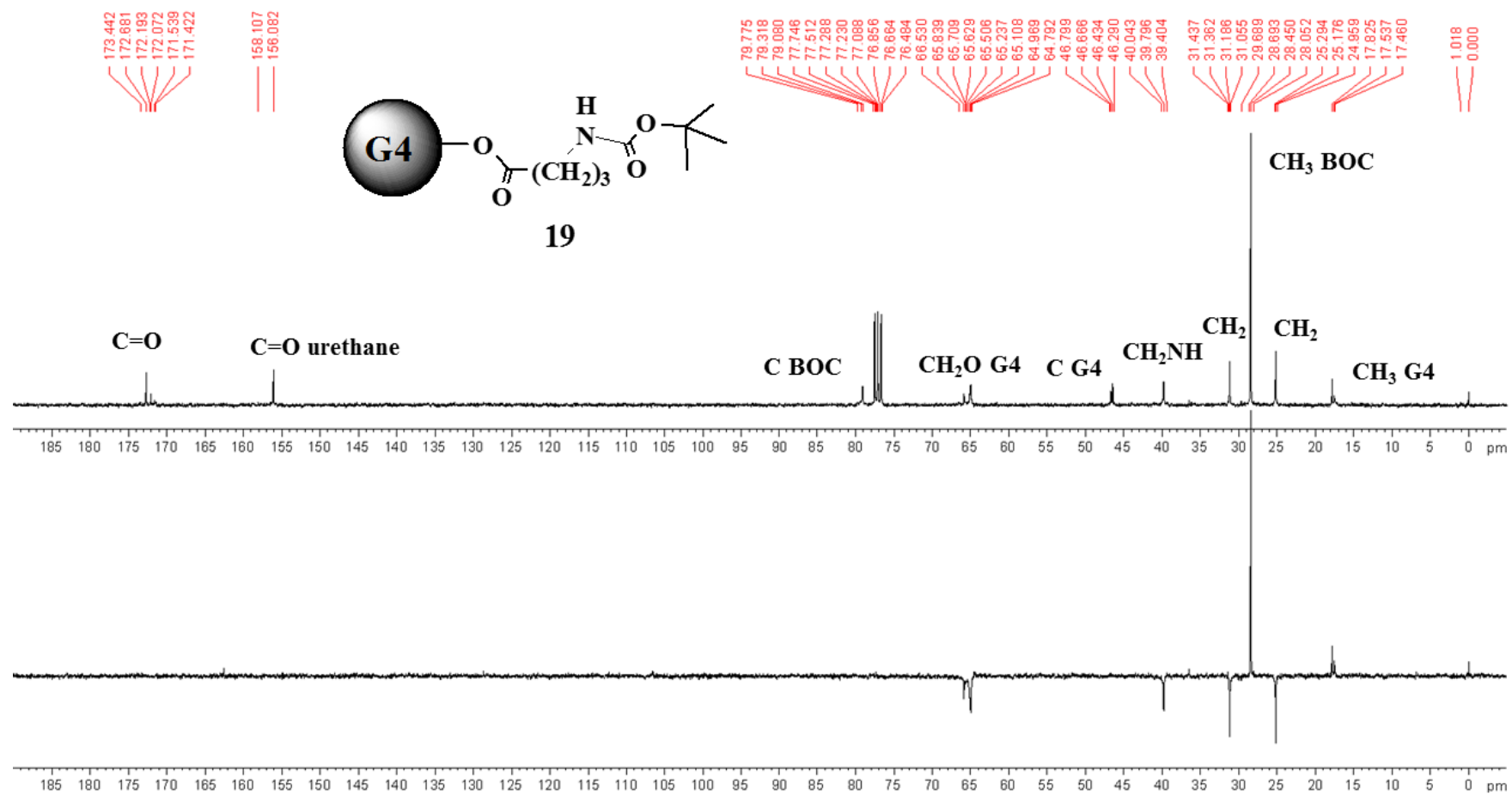


Figure S28. ^{13}C NMR and DEPT-135 (CDCl_3 , 75.5 MHz) spectra of compound **19**

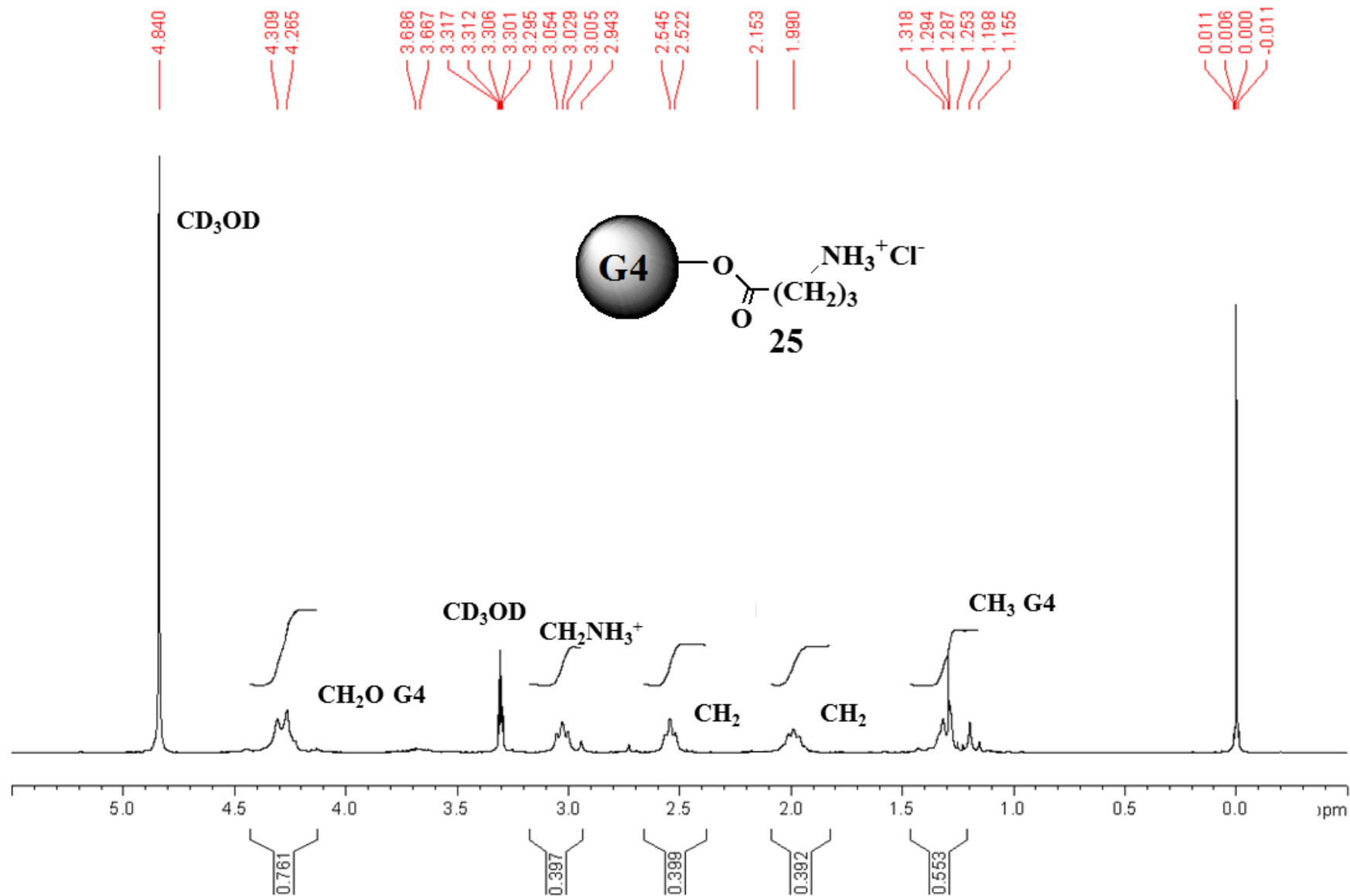


Figure S29. ^1H NMR (CD₃OD, 300 MHz) spectrum of compound **25**

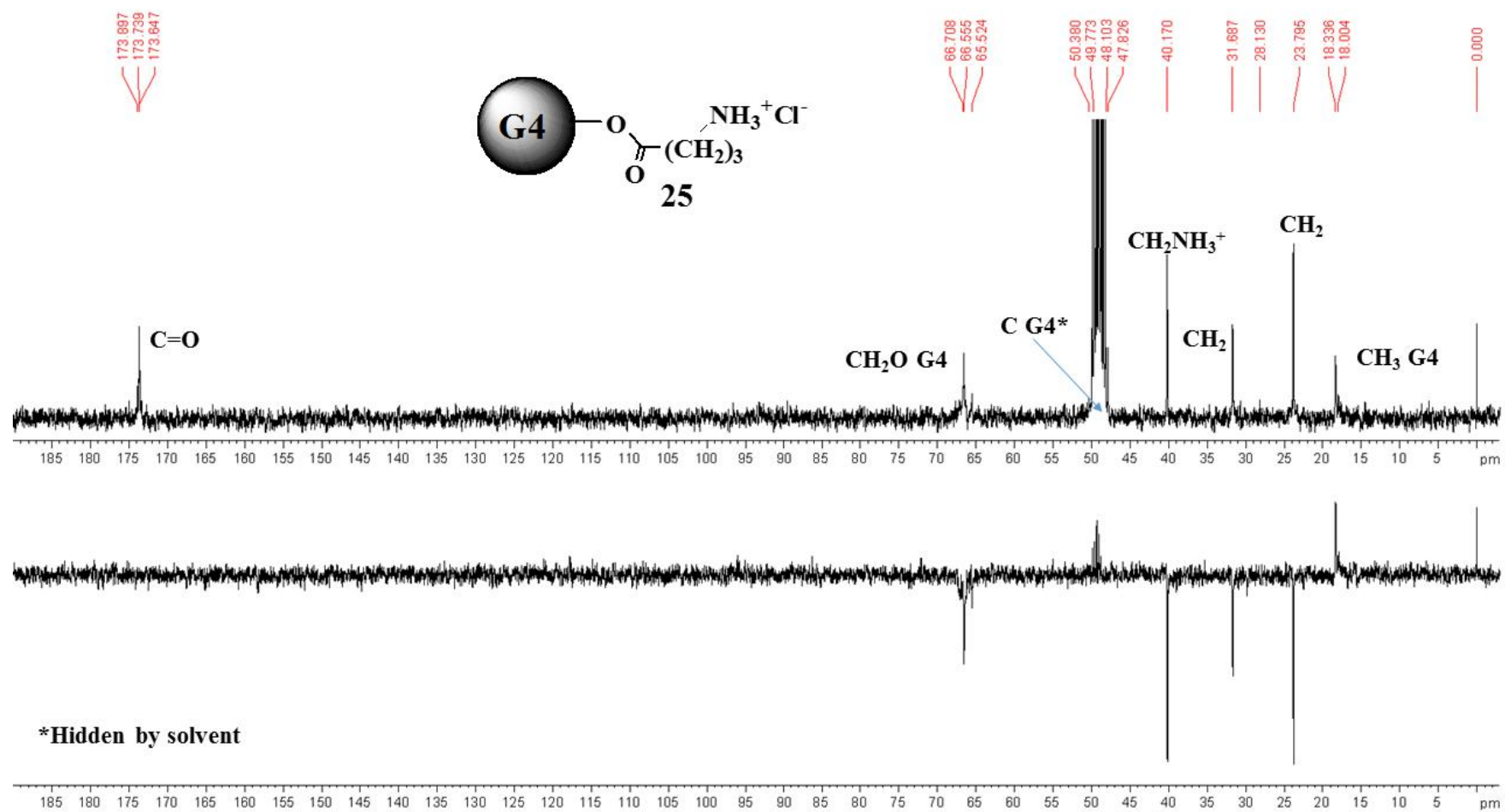


Figure S30. ¹³C NMR and DEPT-135 (CD₃OD, 75.5 MHz) spectra of compound **25**

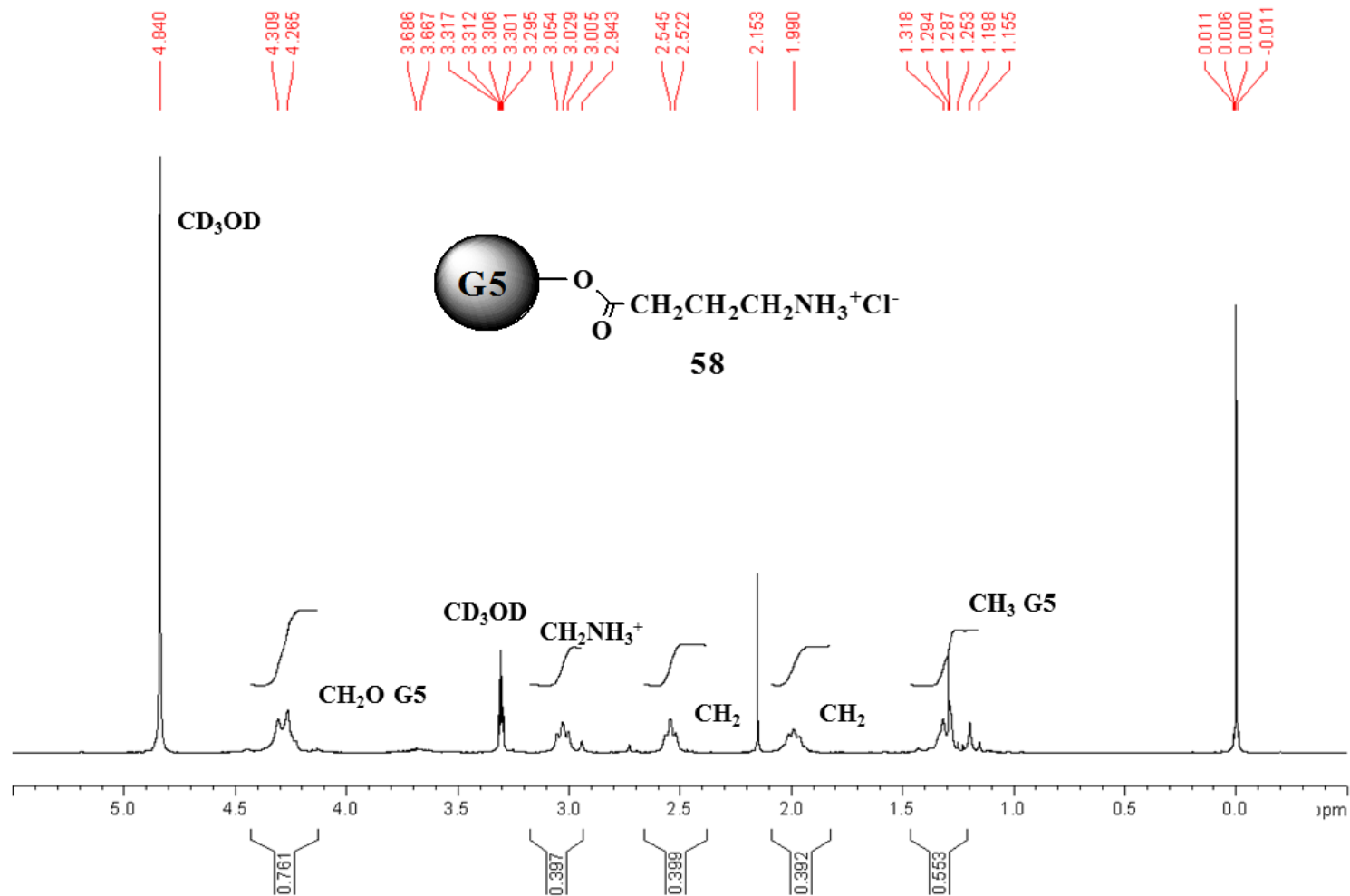


Figure S31. ¹H NMR (CD₃OD, 300 MHz) spectrum of compound **58**

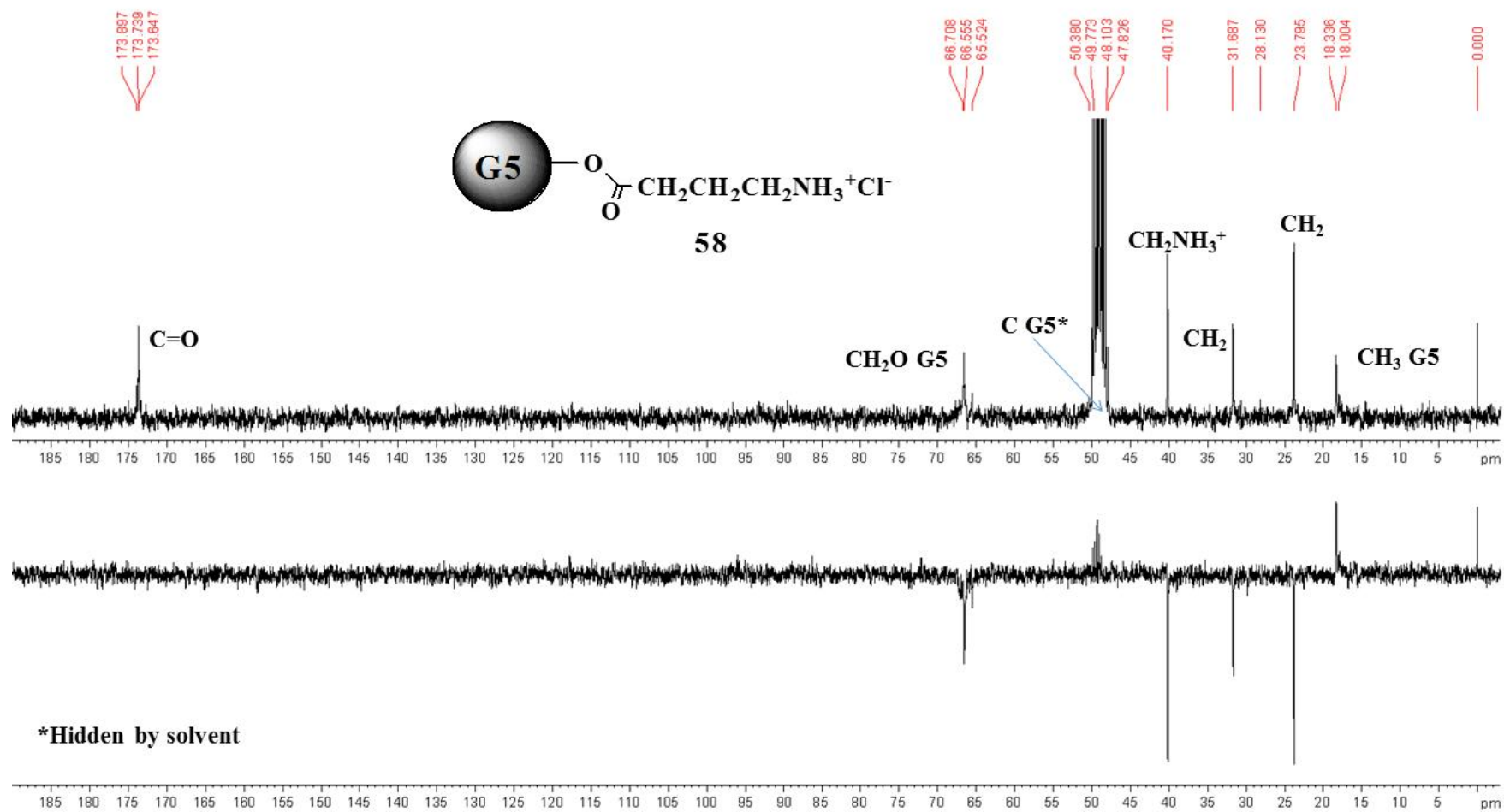


Figure S32. ¹³C NMR and DEPT-135 (CD₃OD, 75.5 MHz) spectra of compound **58**

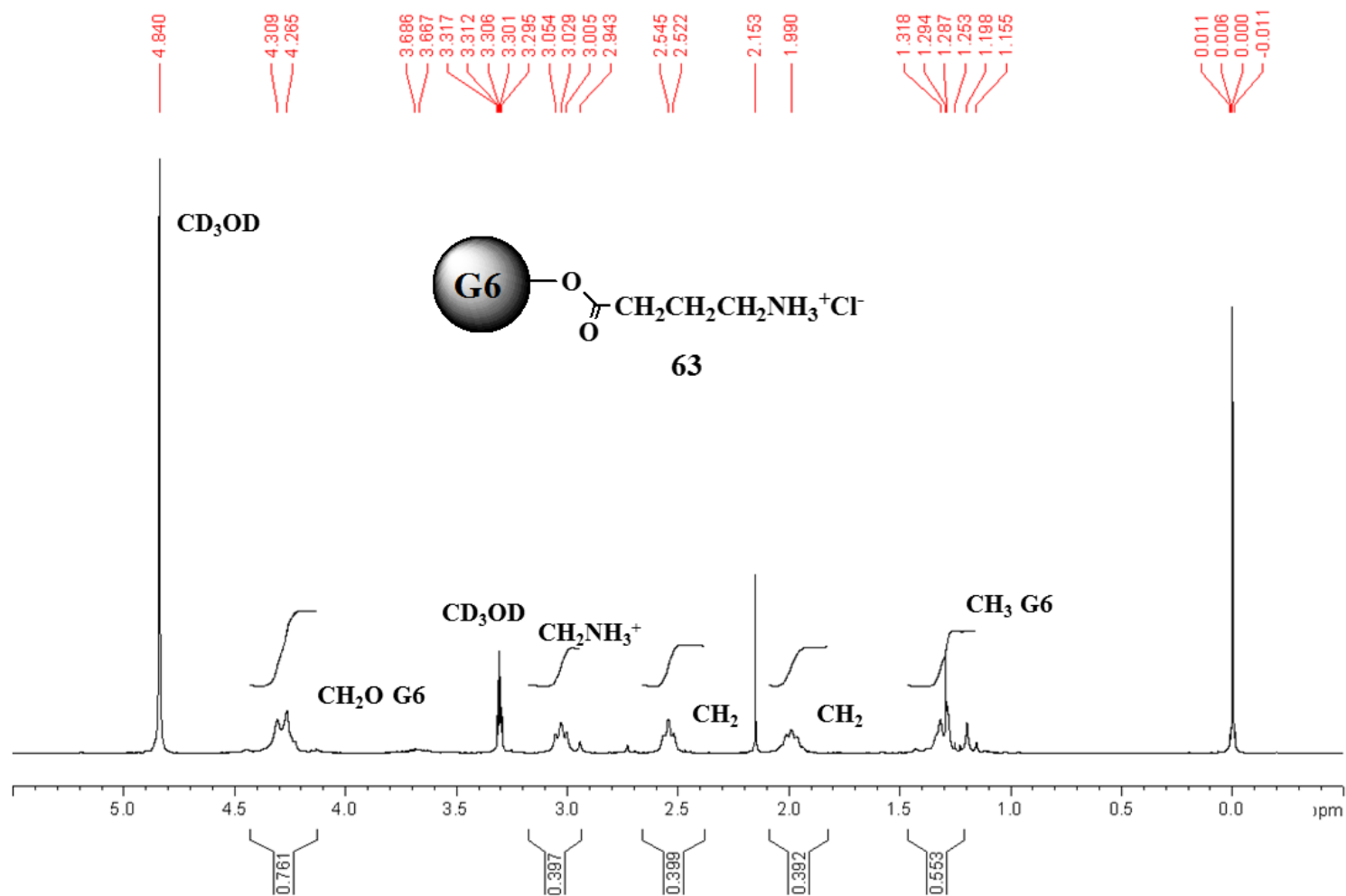


Figure S33. ¹H NMR (CD₃OD, 300 MHz) spectrum of compound **63**

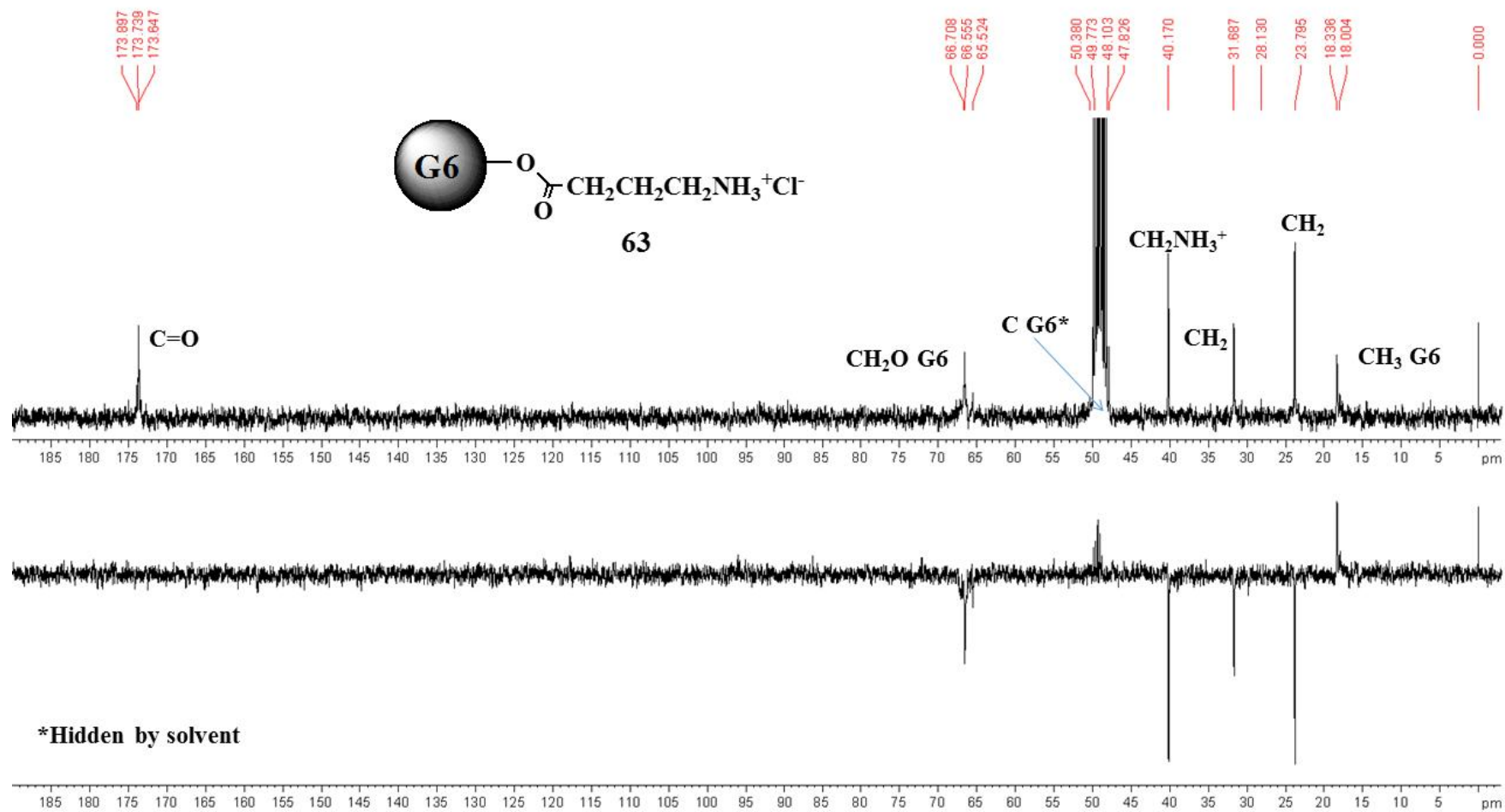


Figure S34. ¹³C NMR and DEPT-135 (CD₃OD, 75.5 MHz) spectra of compound **63**

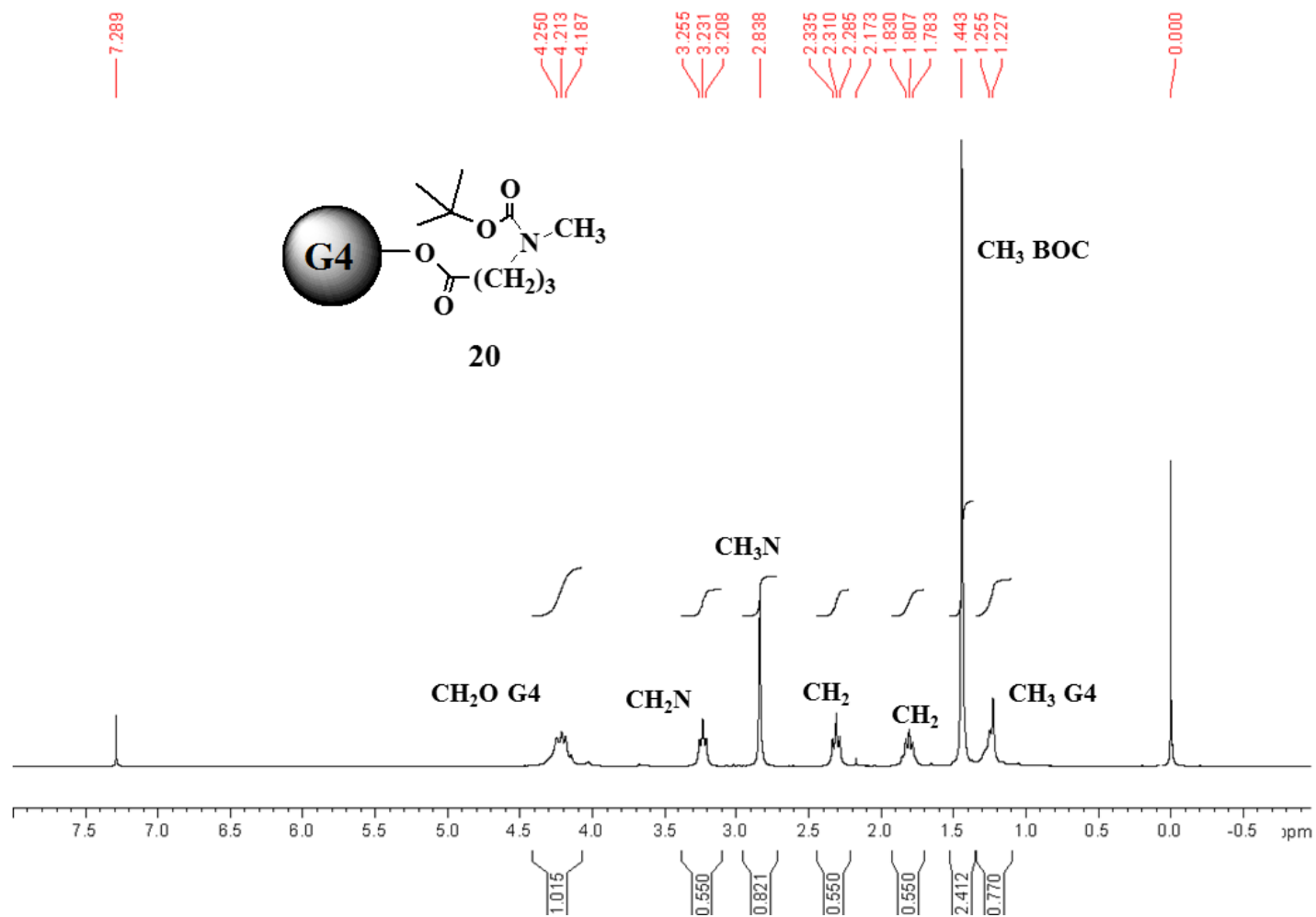


Figure S35. $^1\text{H NMR}$ (CDCl₃, 300 MHz) spectrum of compound **20**

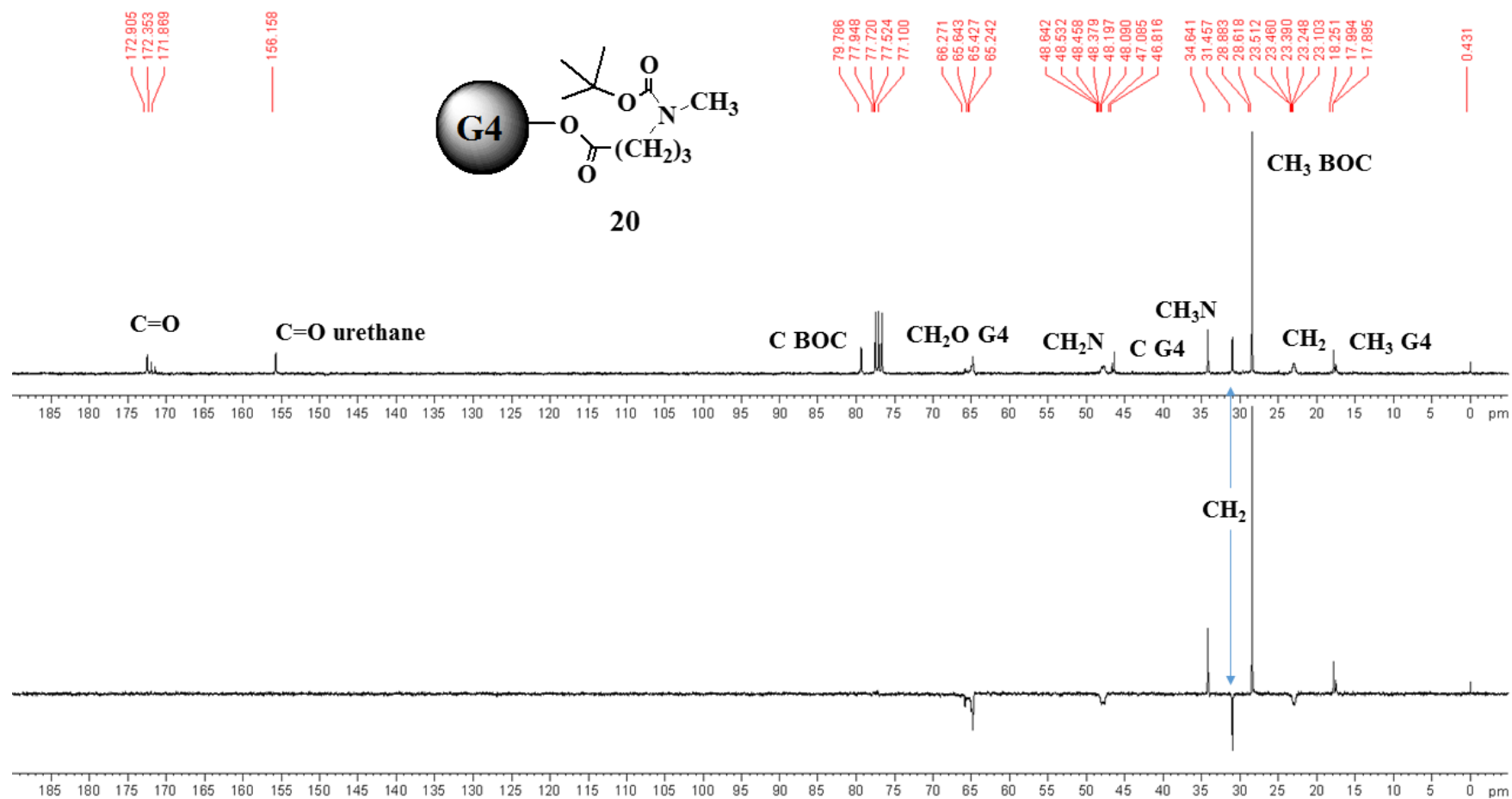


Figure S36. ^{13}C NMR and DEPT-135 (CDCl_3 , 75.5 MHz) spectra of compound **20**

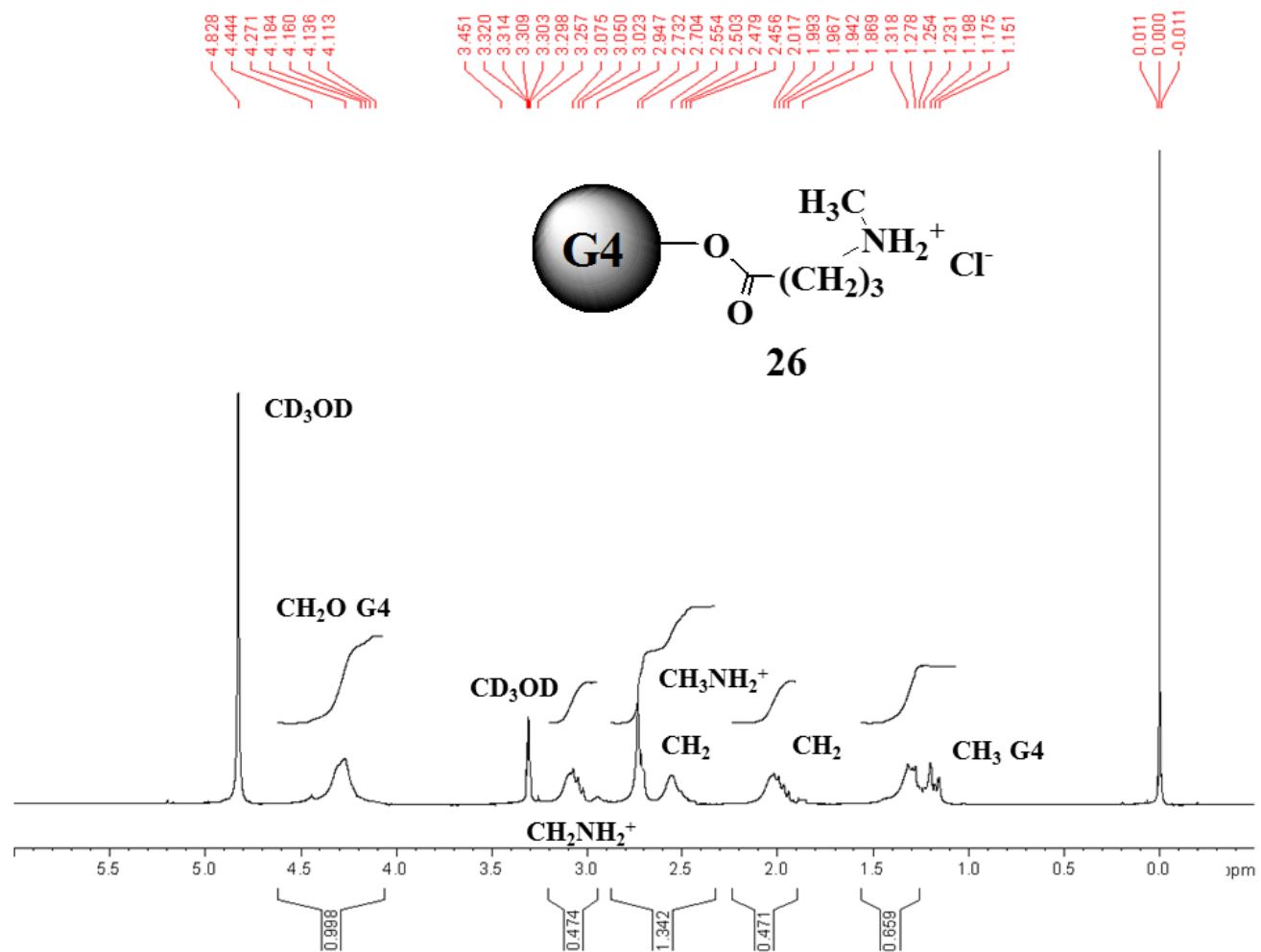


Figure S37. ^1H NMR (CD_3OD , 300 MHz) spectrum of compound 26

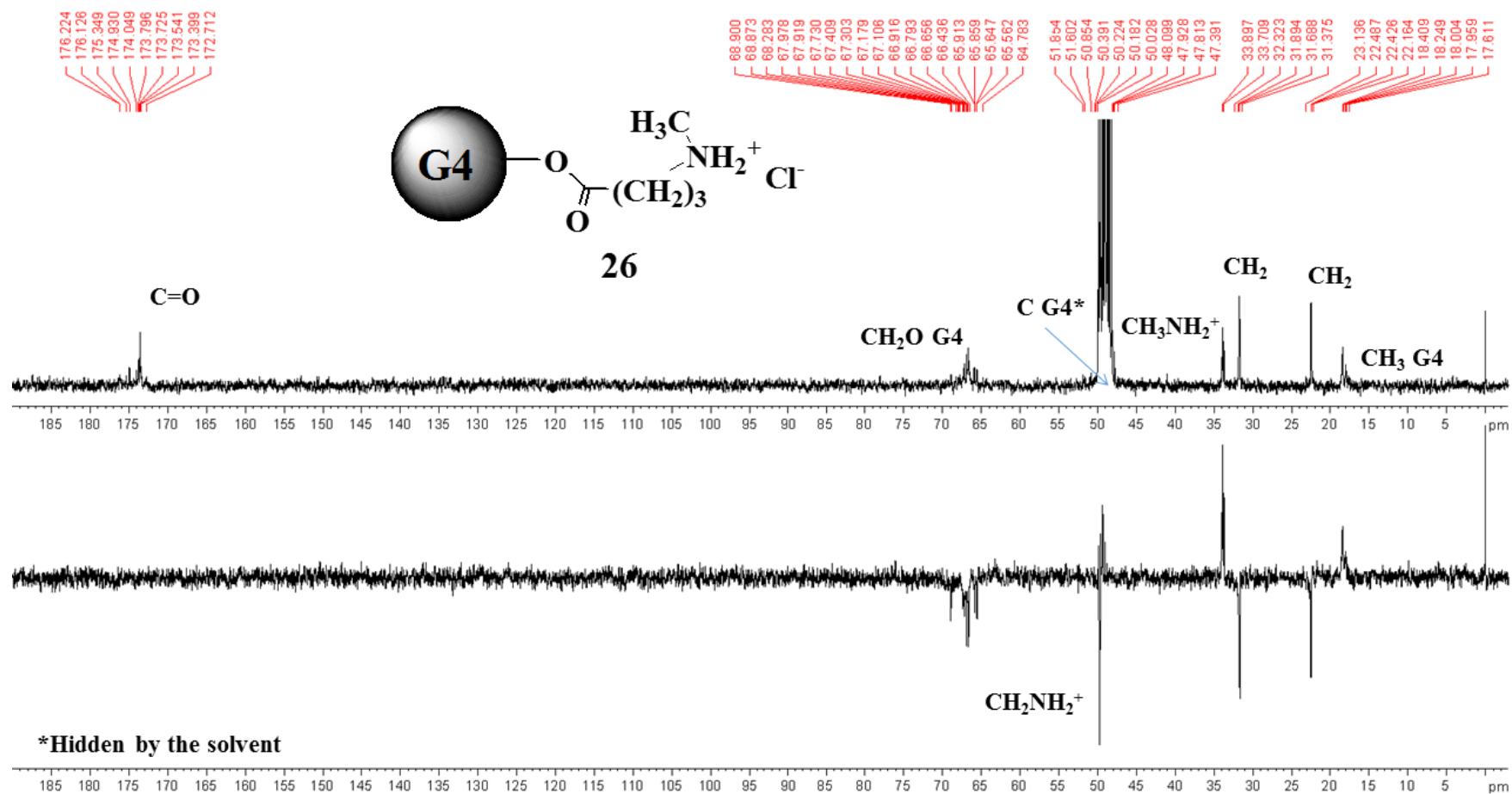


Figure S38. ¹³C NMR and DEPT-135 (CD₃OD, 75.5 MHz) spectra of compound **26**

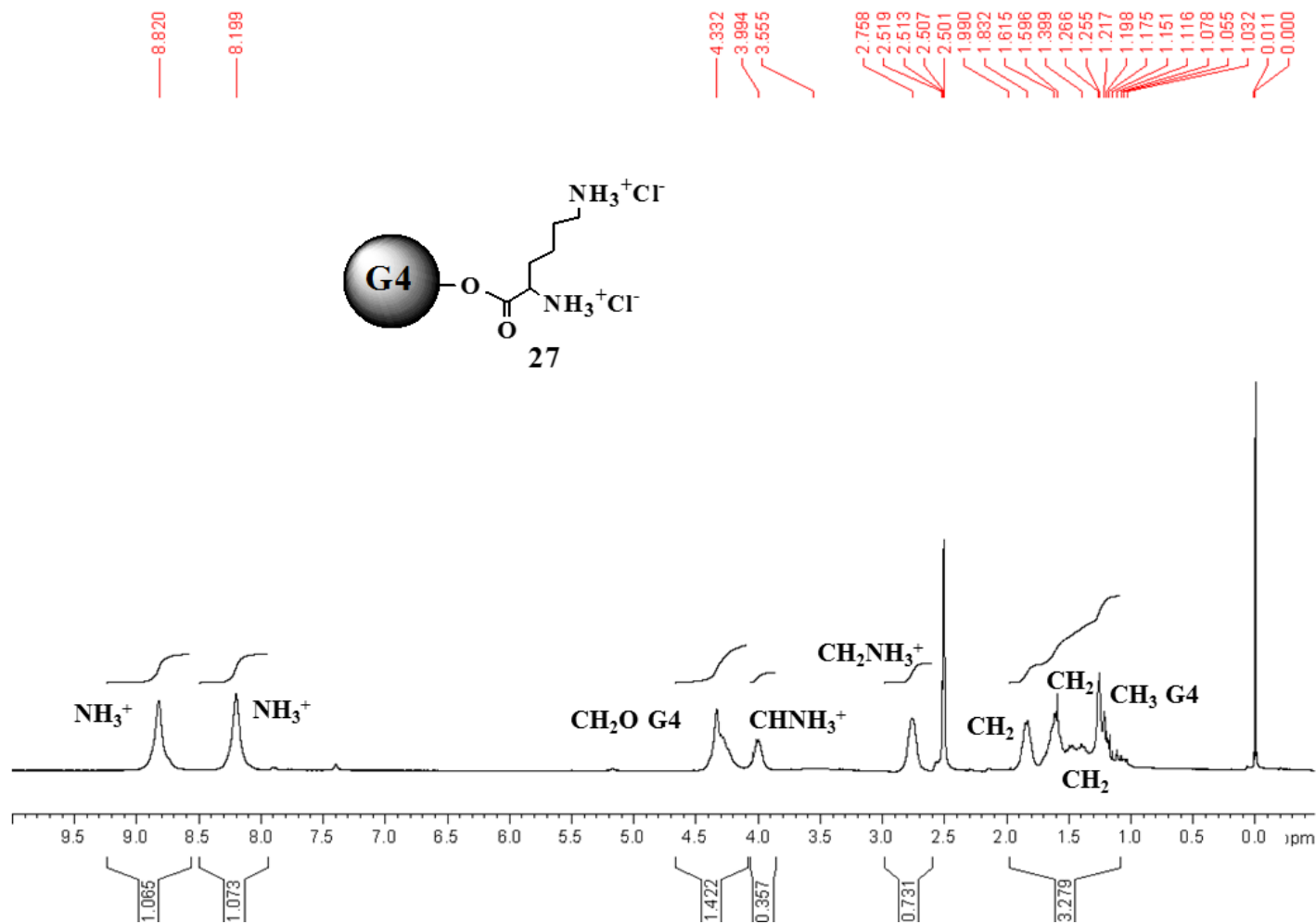


Figure S39. ^1H NMR (DMSO- d_6 , 300 MHz) spectrum of compound 24

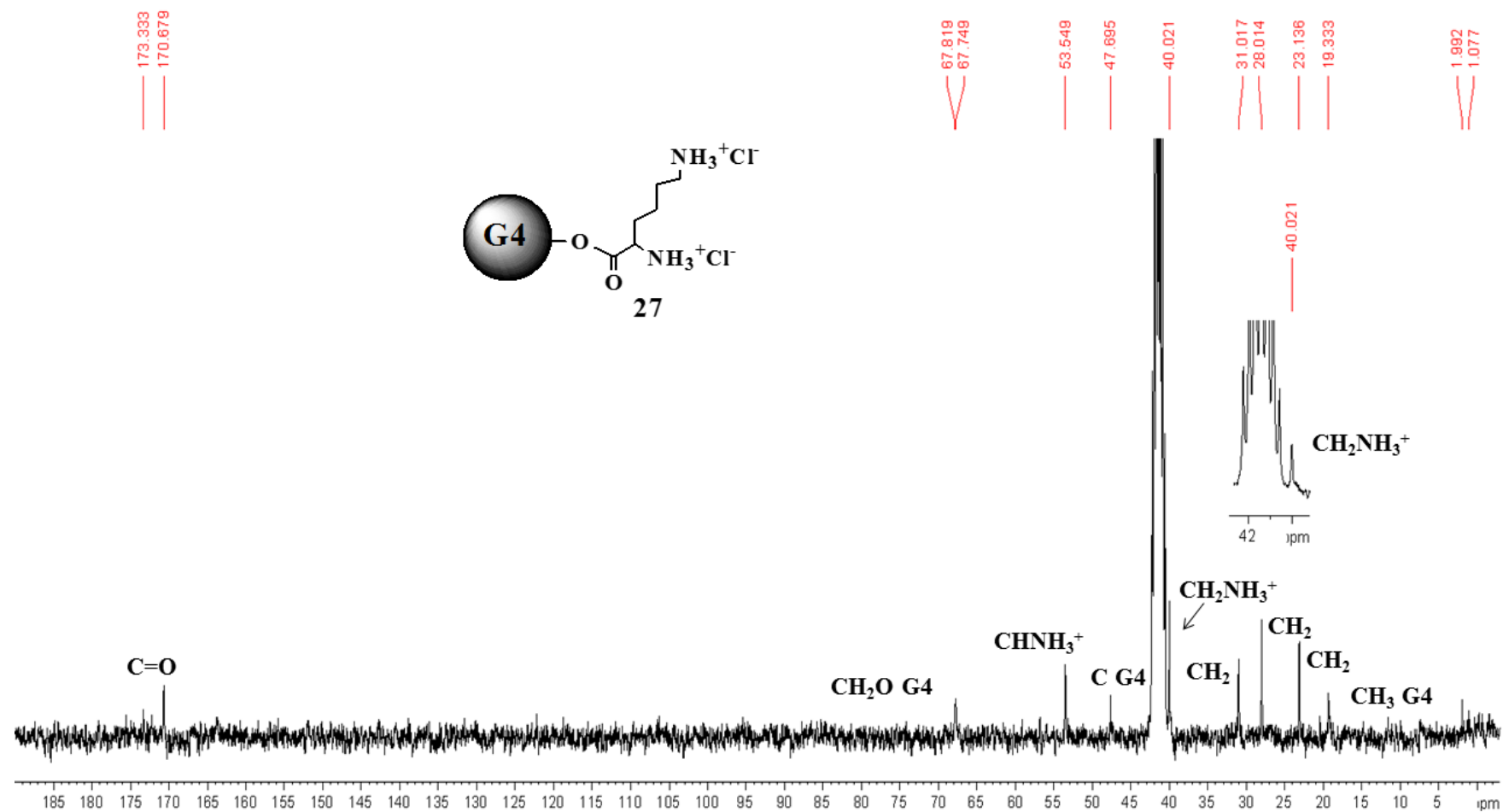


Figure S40. ¹³C NMR and DEPT-135 (DMSO-*d*₆, 75.5 MHz) spectra of compound **27**

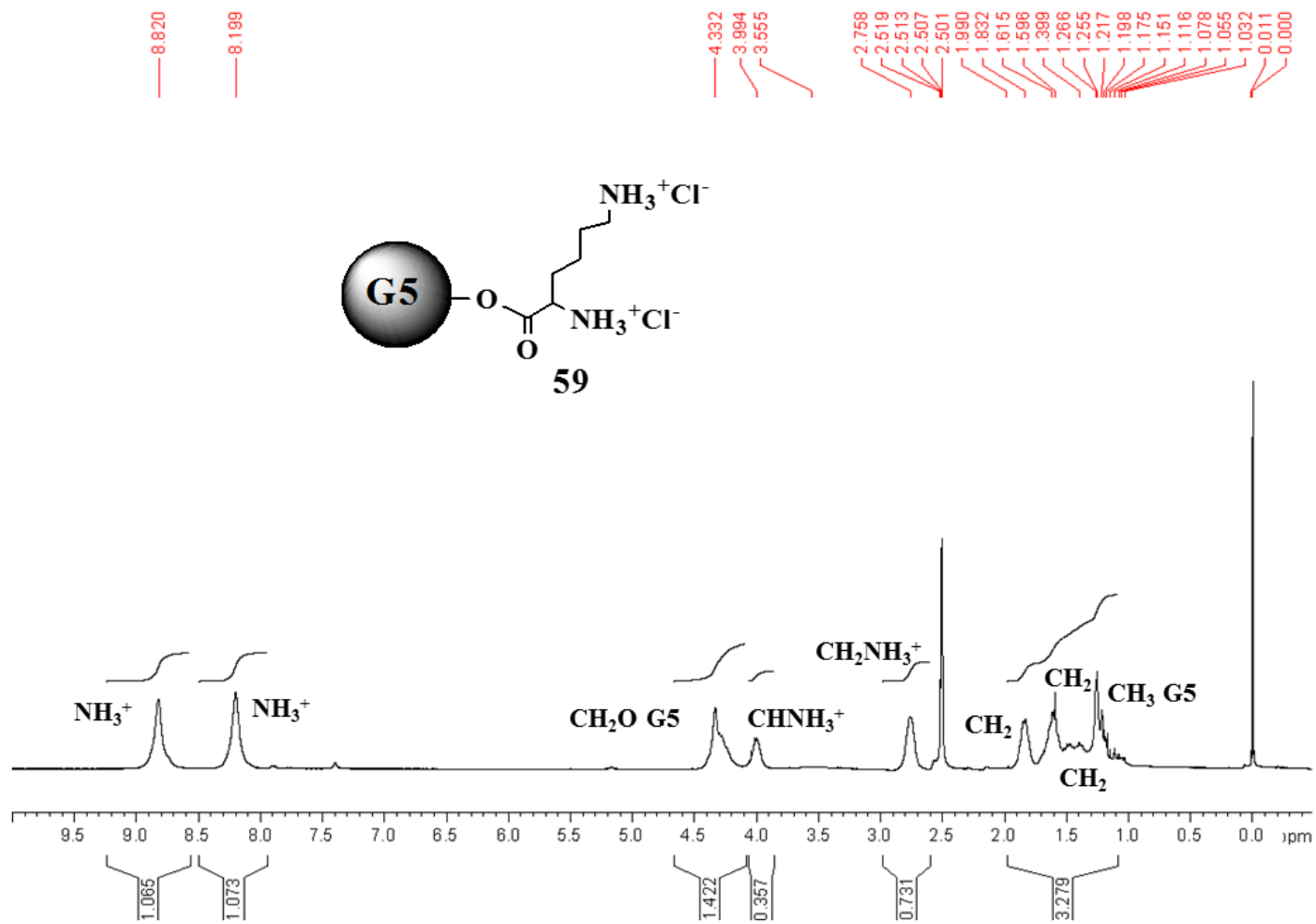


Figure S41. ^1H NMR (DMSO- d_6 , 300 MHz) spectrum of compound **59**

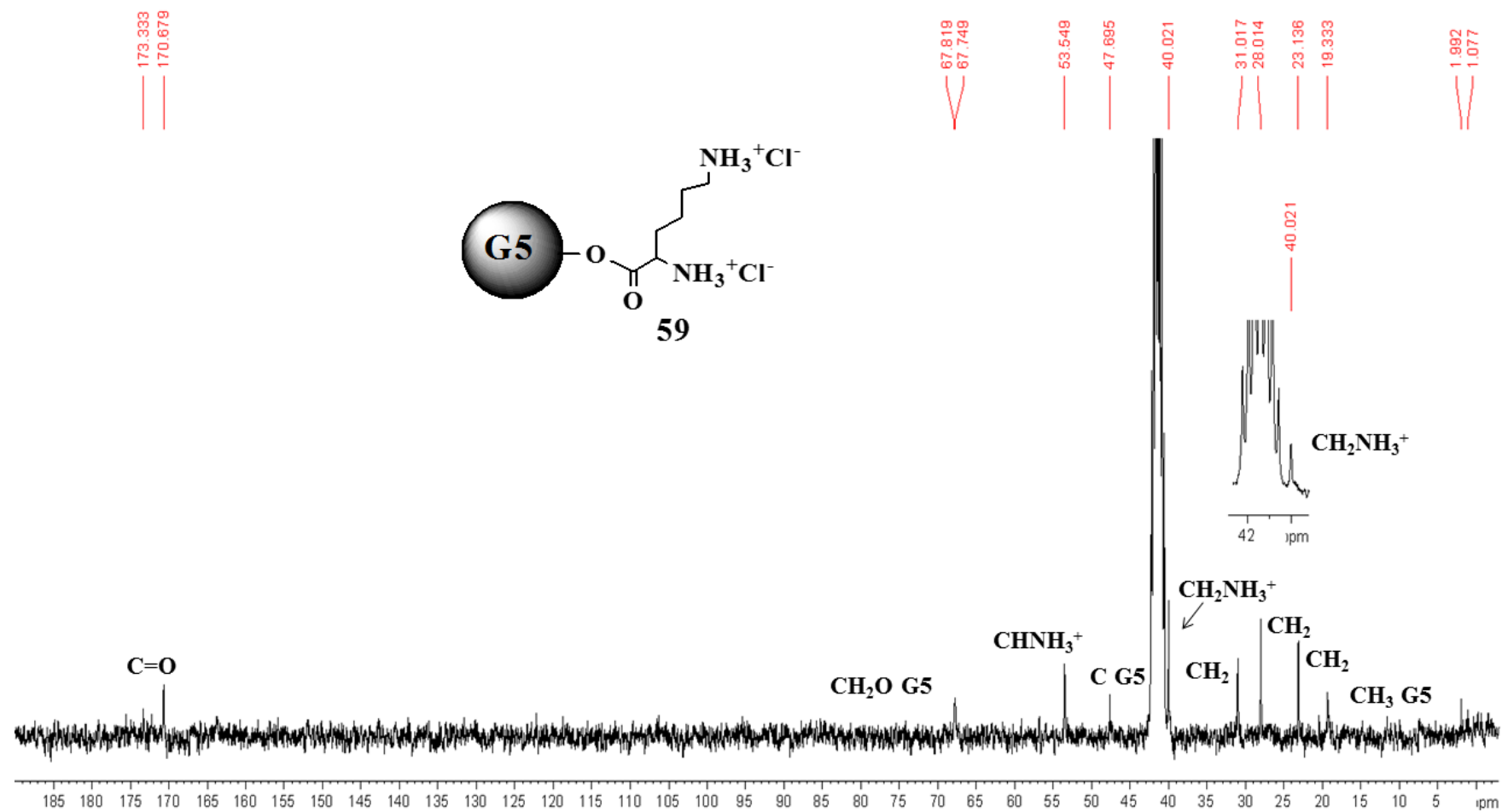


Figure S42. ^{13}C NMR and DEPT-135 (DMSO-*d*₆, 75.5 MHz) spectra of compound **59**

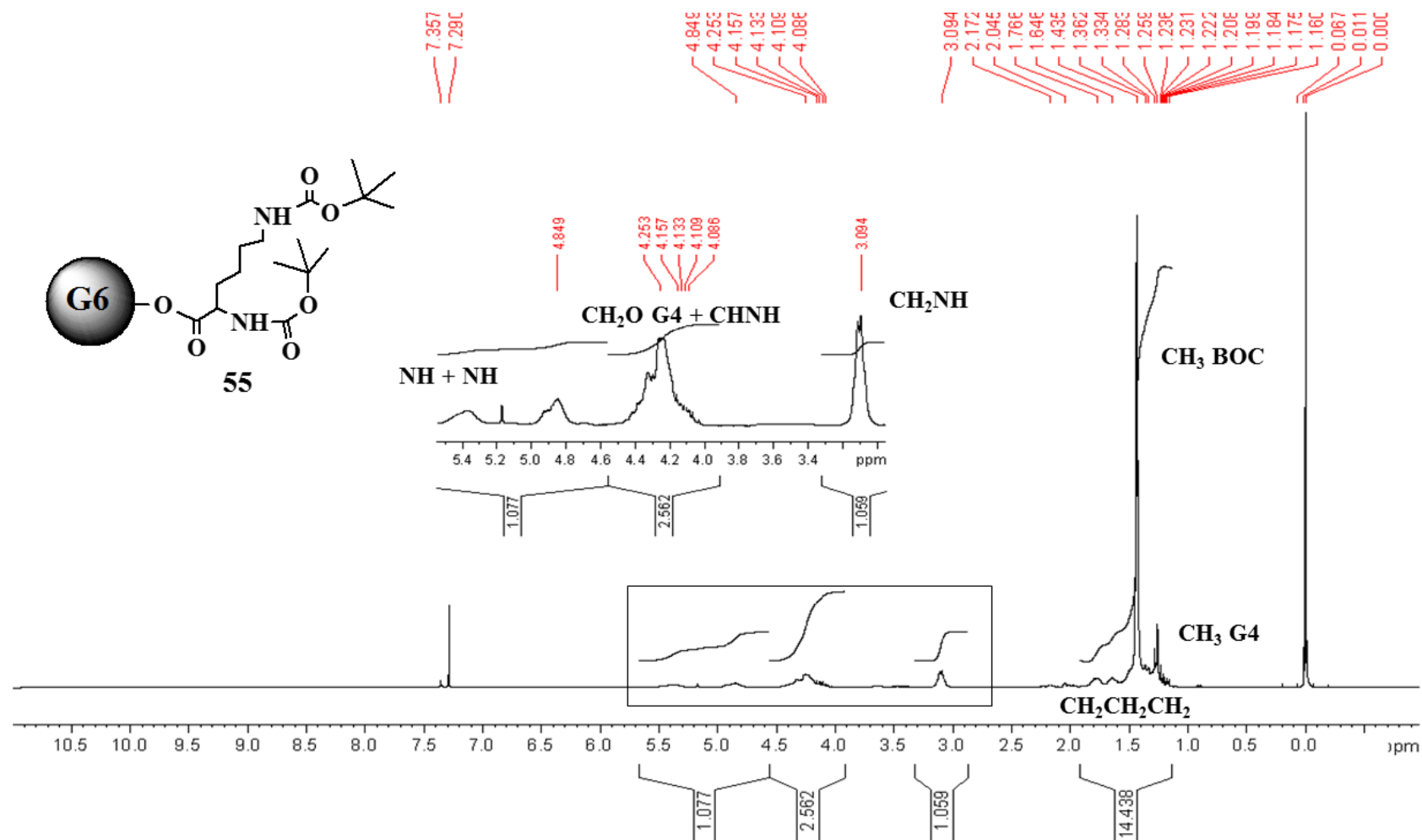


Figure S43. ^1H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz) spectrum of compound **55**

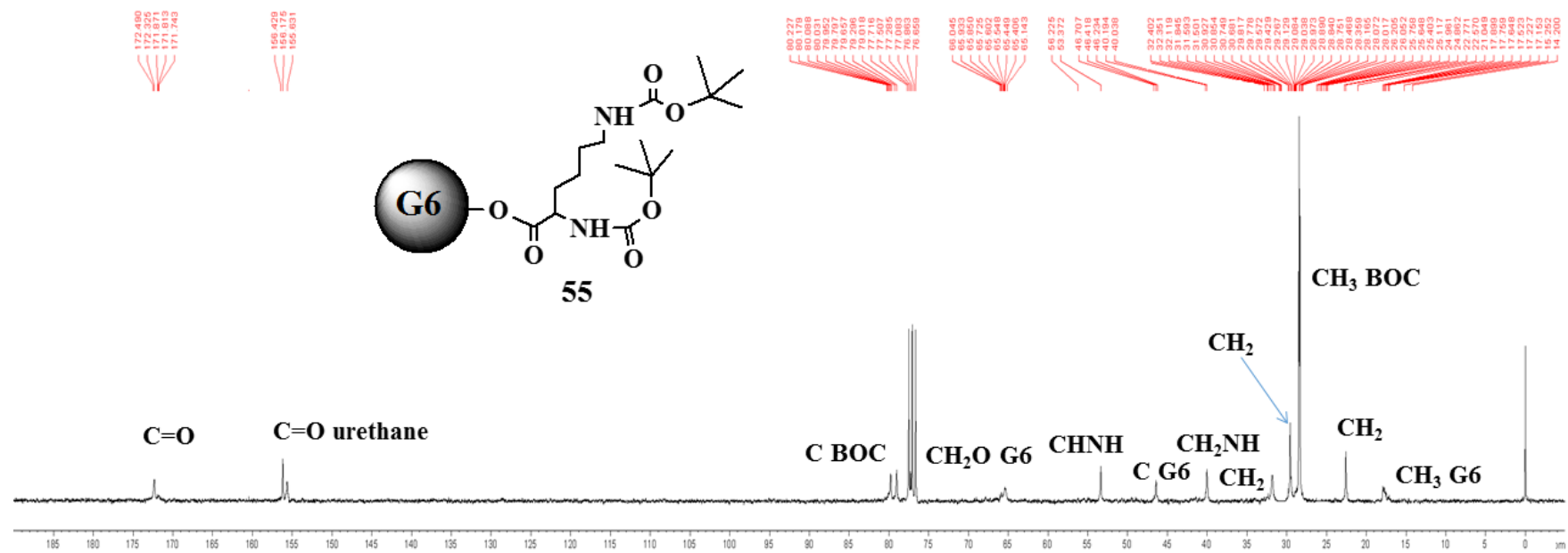


Figure S44. ^{13}C NMR (CDCl₃, 75.5 MHz) spectrum of compound **55**

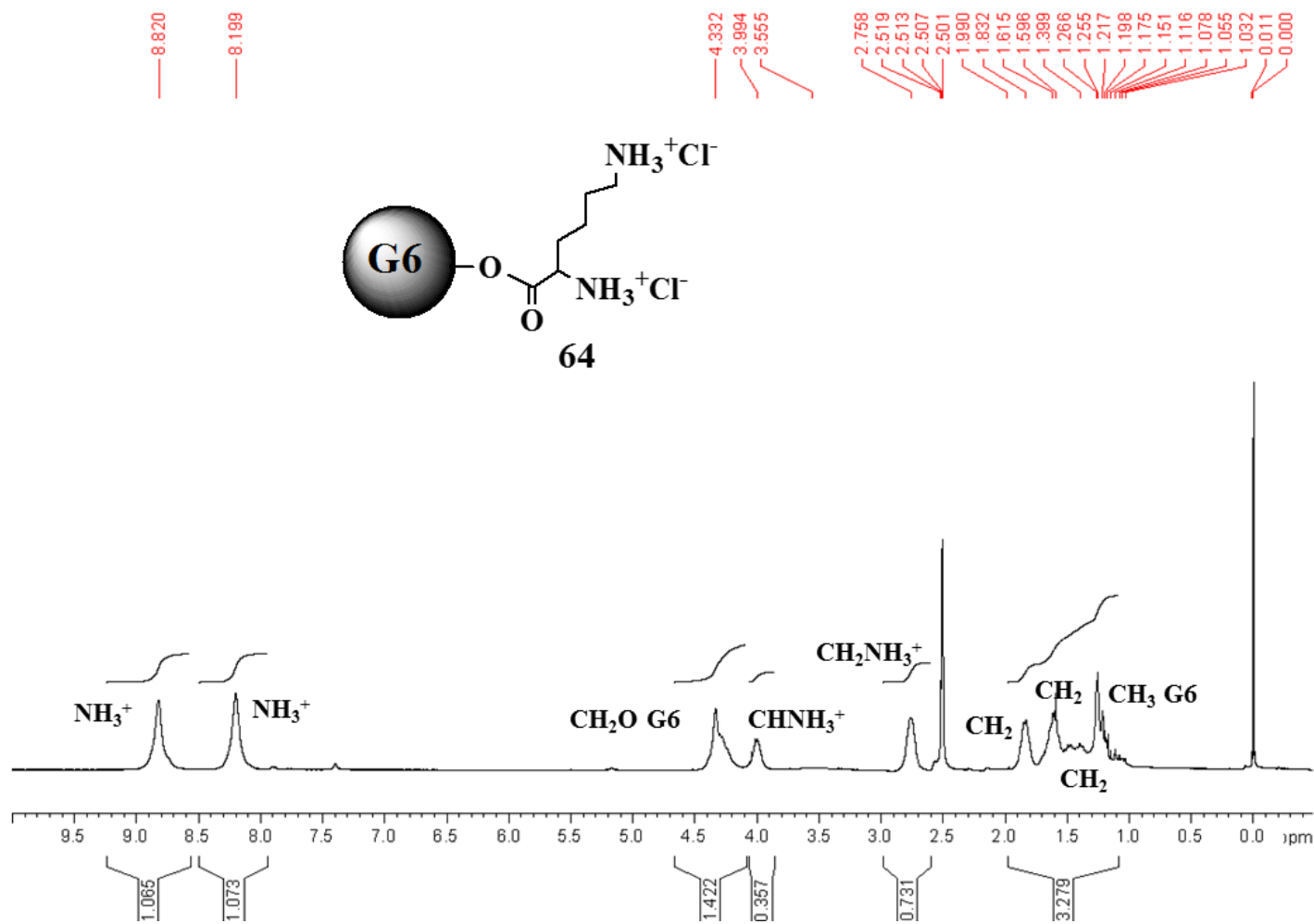


Figure S45. $^1\text{H NMR}$ (DMSO- d_6 , 300 MHz) spectrum of compound **64**

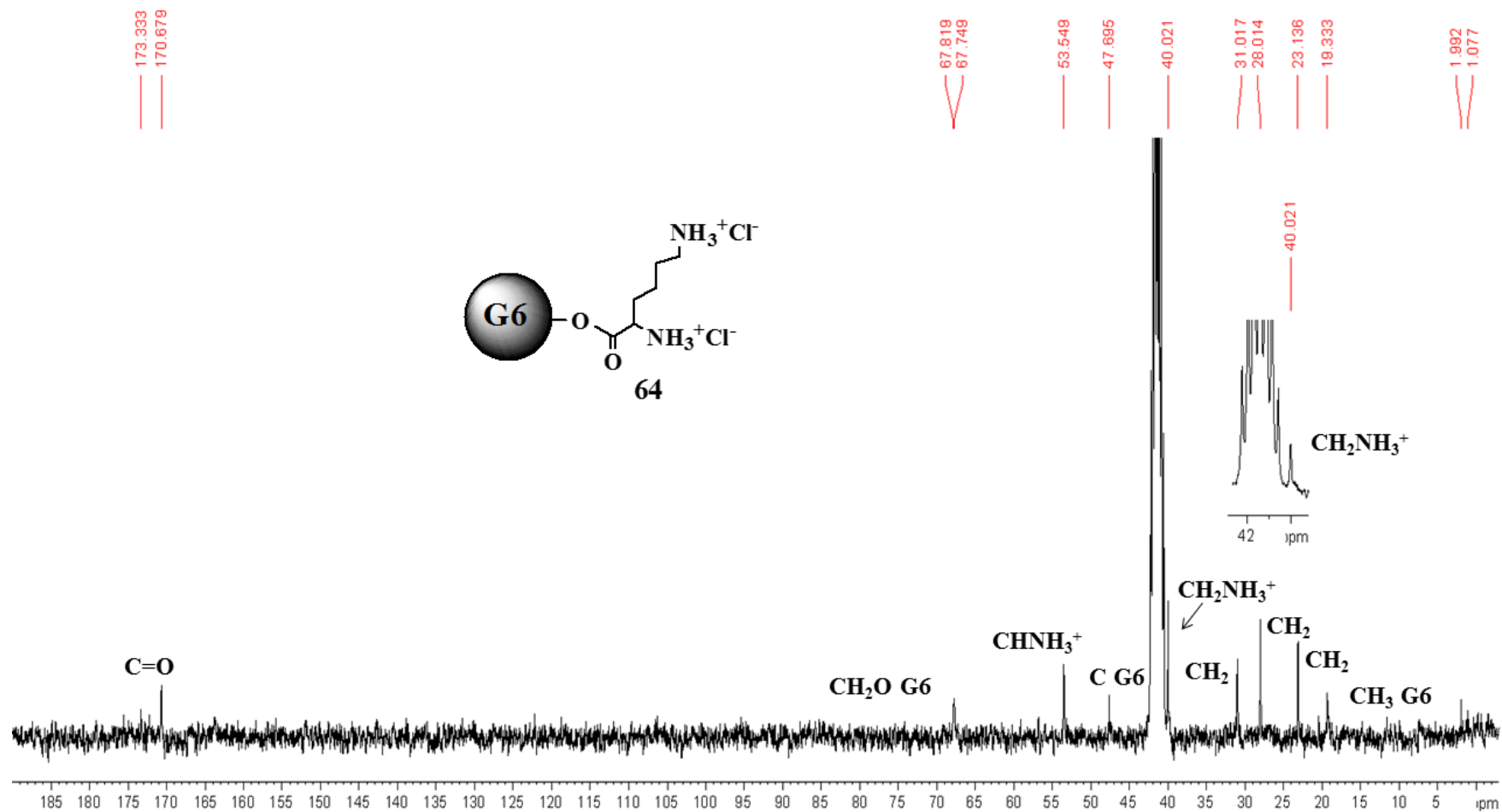


Figure S46. ¹³C NMR (DMSO-*d*₆, 75.5 MHz) spectrum of compound **64**

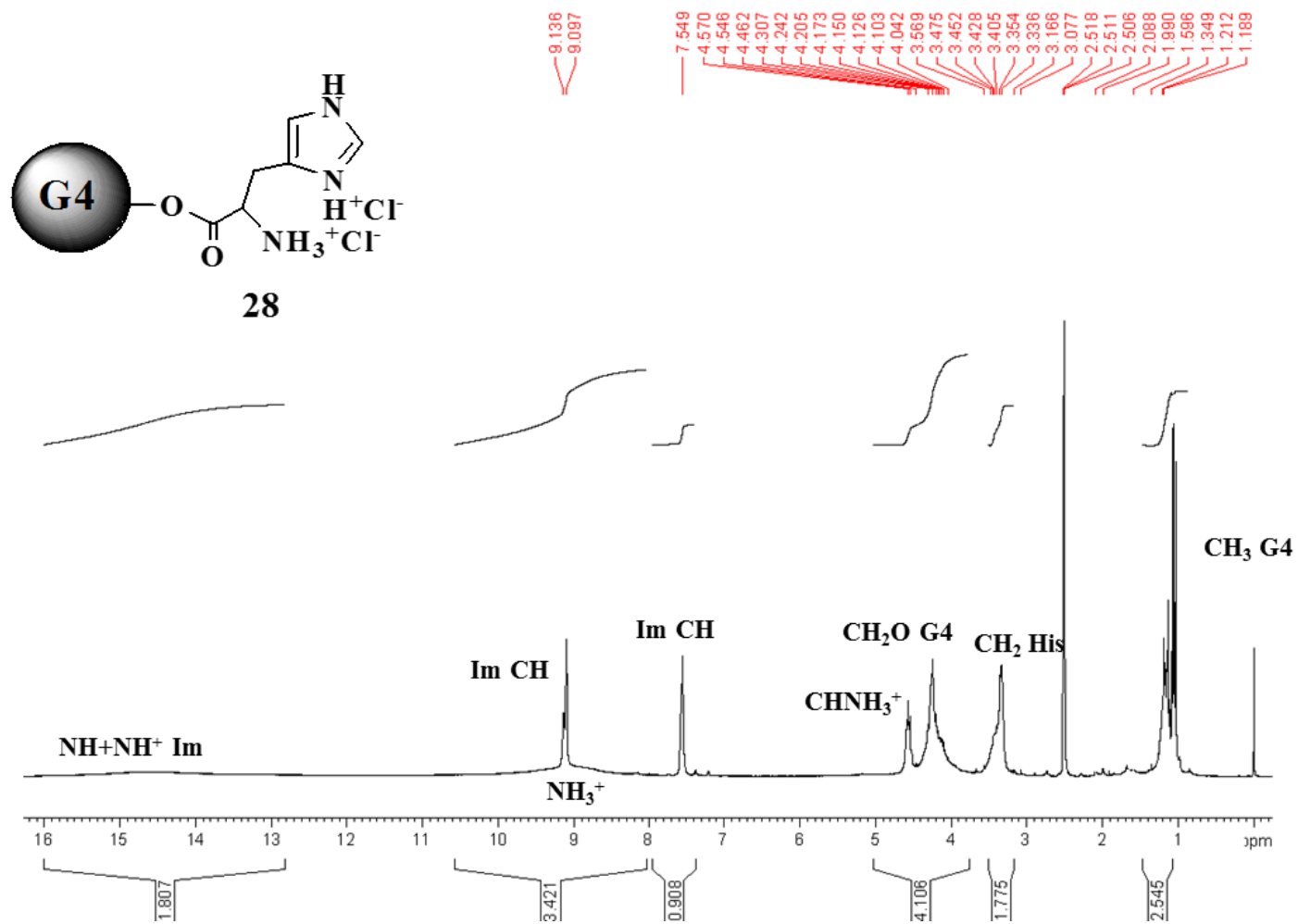


Figure S47. ¹H NMR (DMSO-*d*₆, 300 MHz) spectrum of compound 28

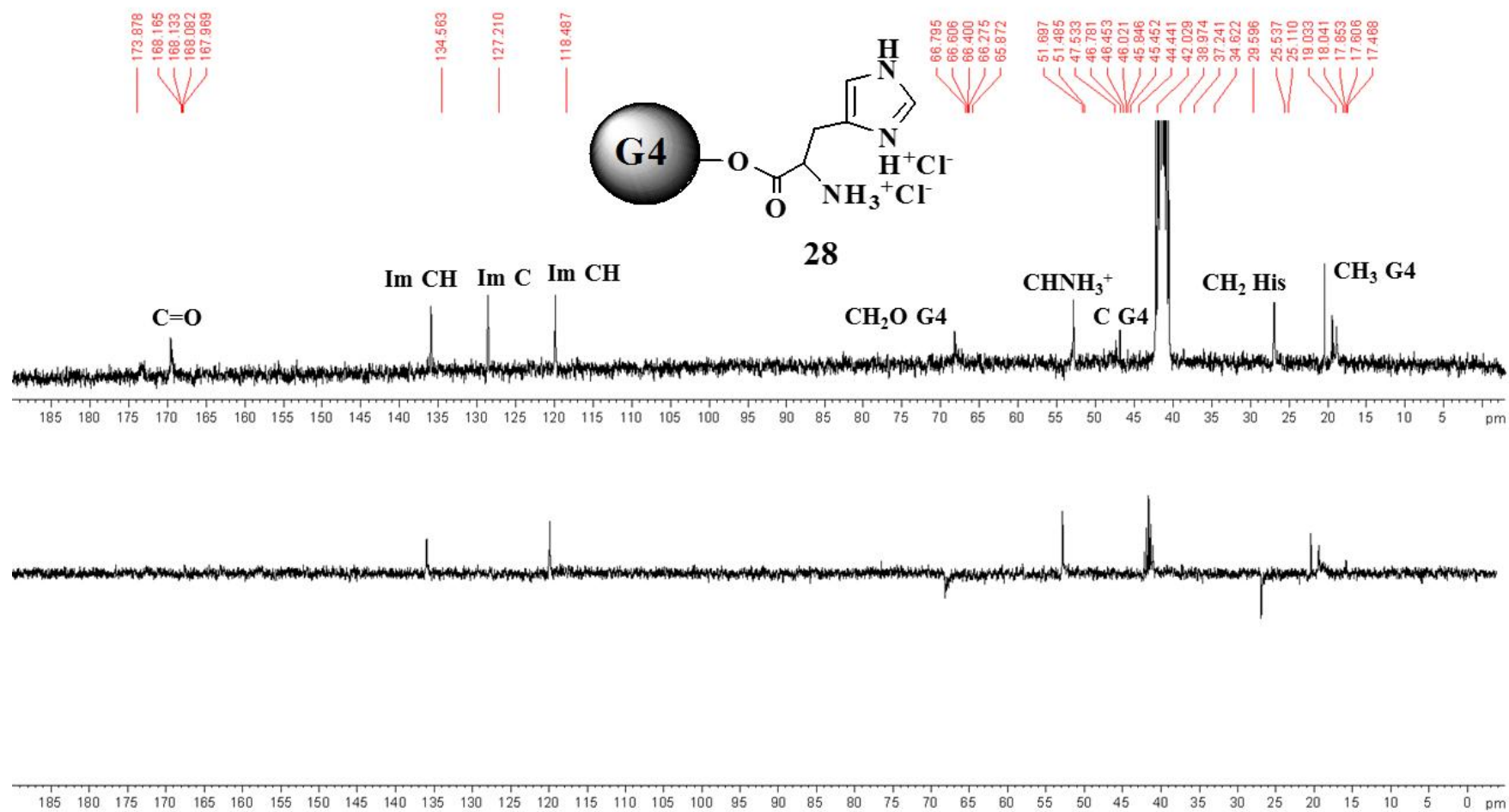


Figure S48. ^{13}C NMR and DEPT-135 (DMSO- d_6 , 75.5 MHz) spectra of compound **28**

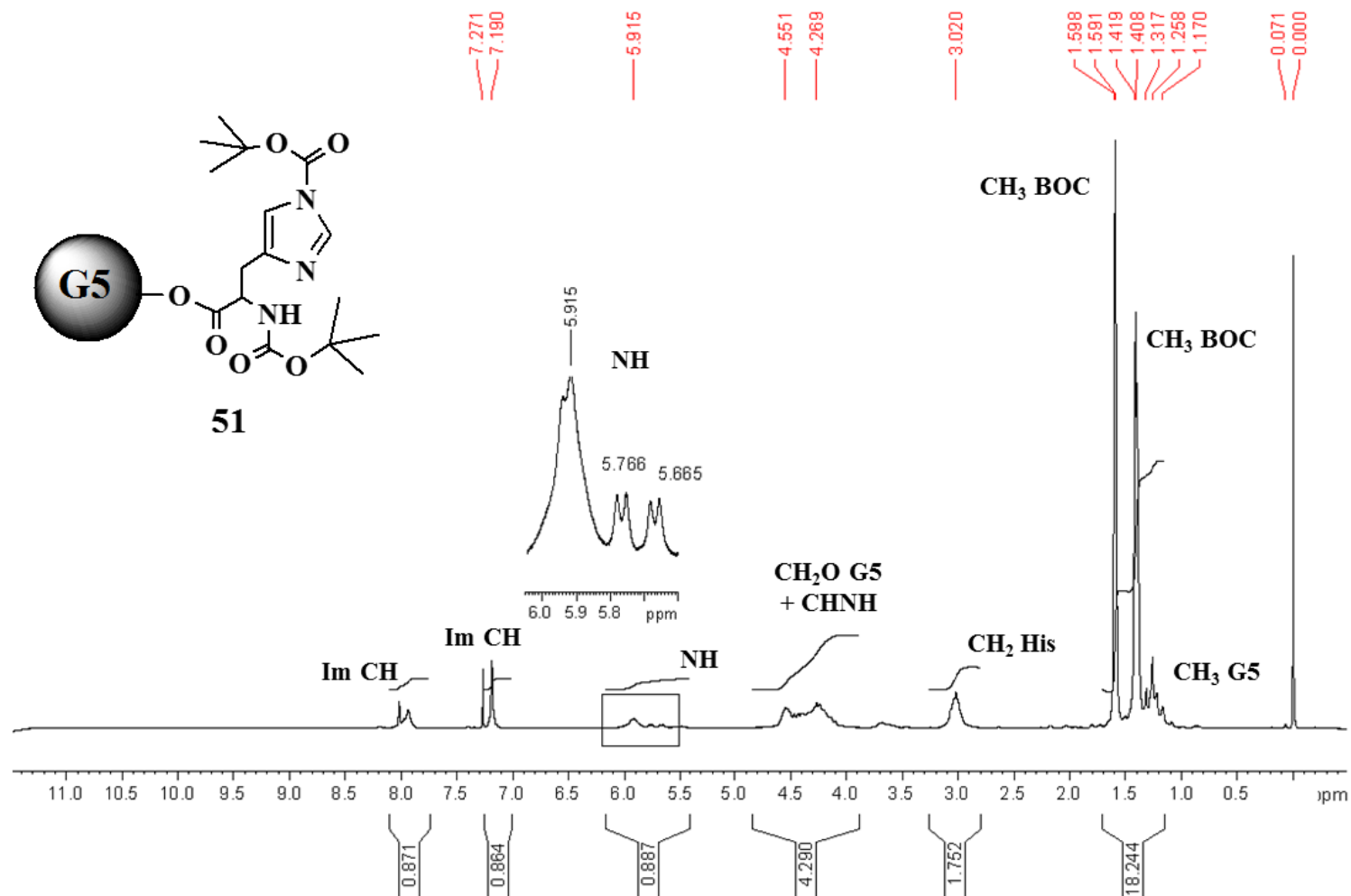


Figure S49. ^1H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz) spectrum of compound **51**

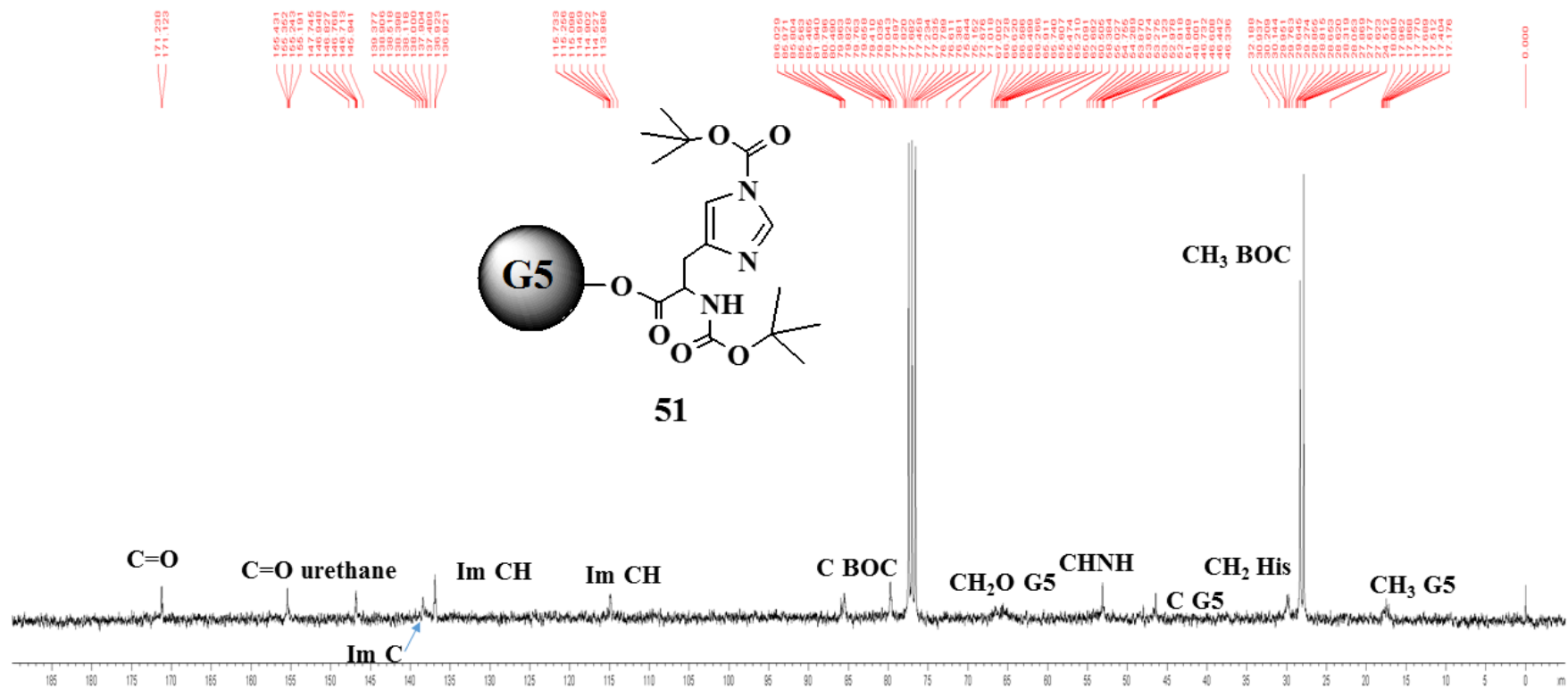


Figure S50. ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75.5 MHz) spectrum of compound **51**

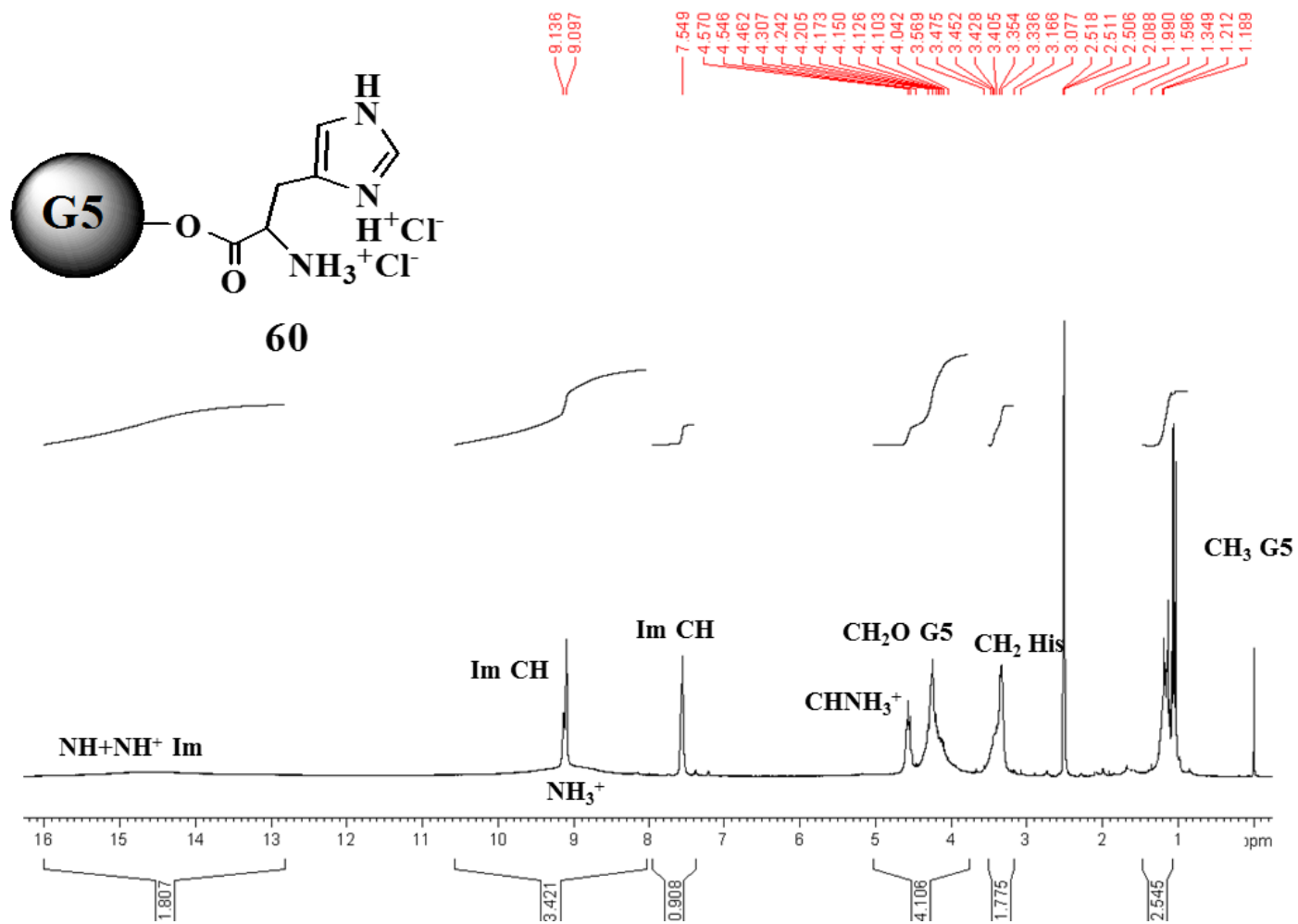


Figure S51. ¹H NMR (DMSO-*d*₆, 300 MHz) spectrum of compound **60**

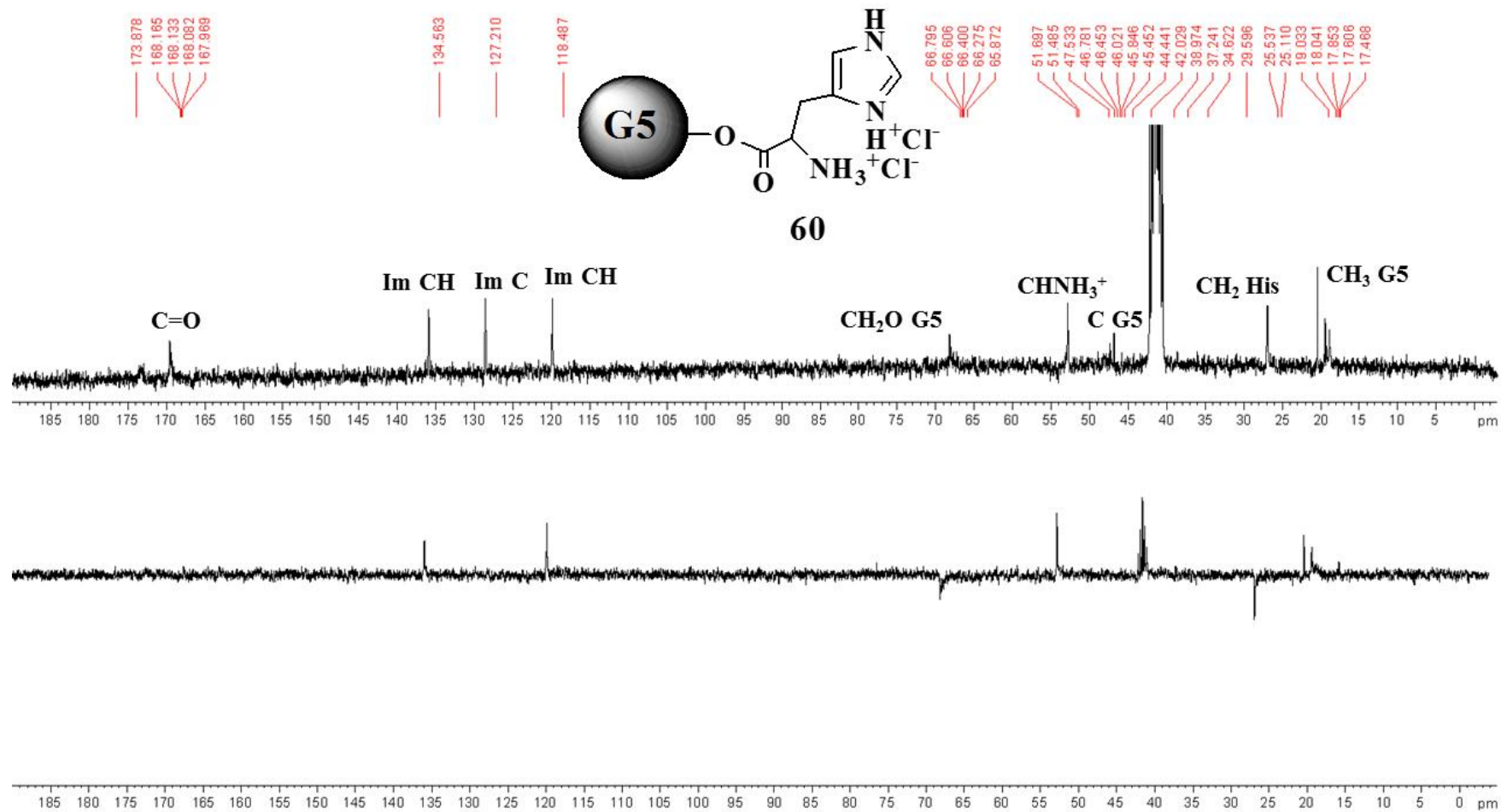


Figure S52. ¹³C NMR and DEPT-135 (DMSO-*d*₆, 75.5 MHz) spectra of compound **60**

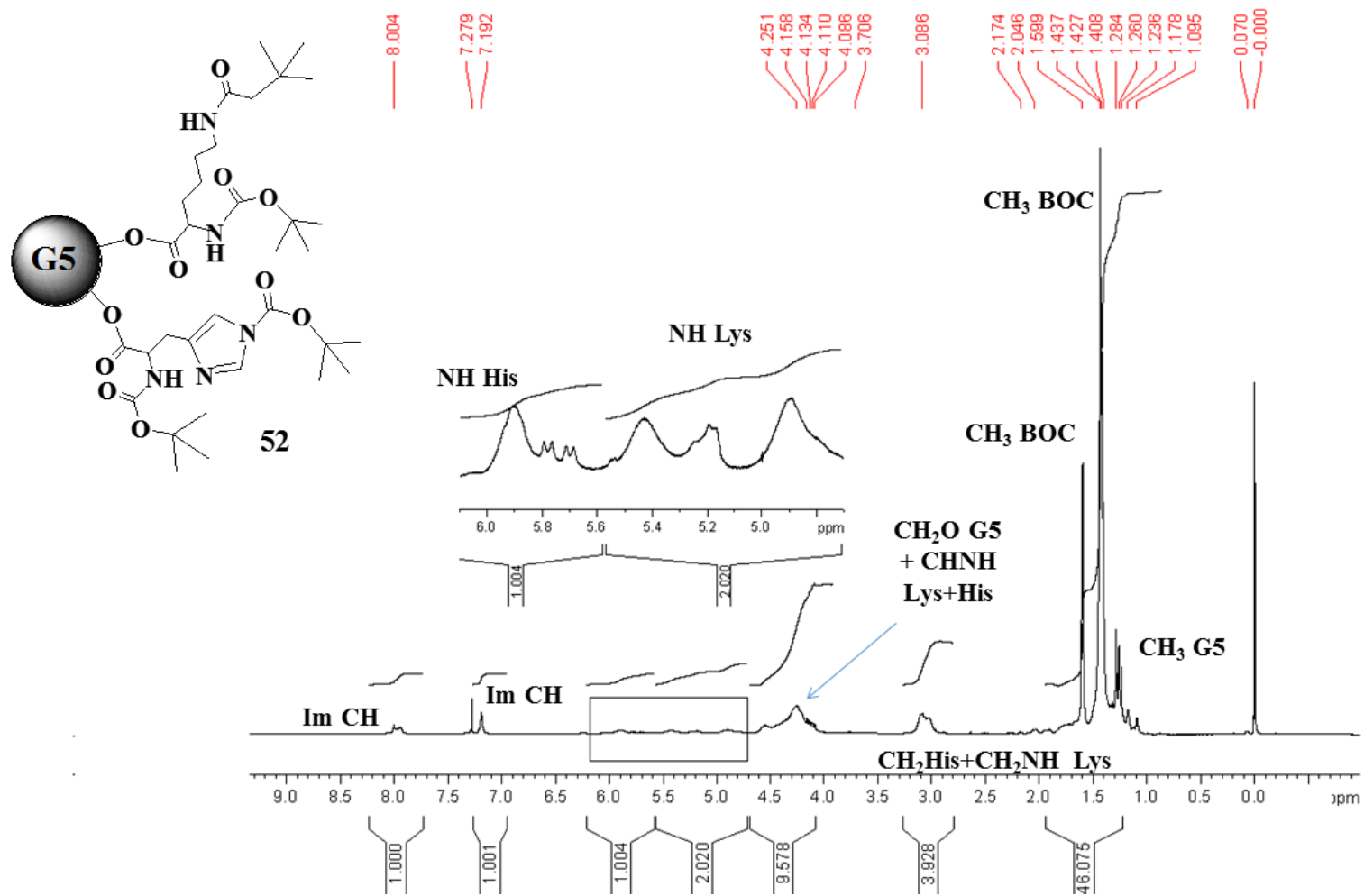


Figure S53. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz) spectrum of compound **52**

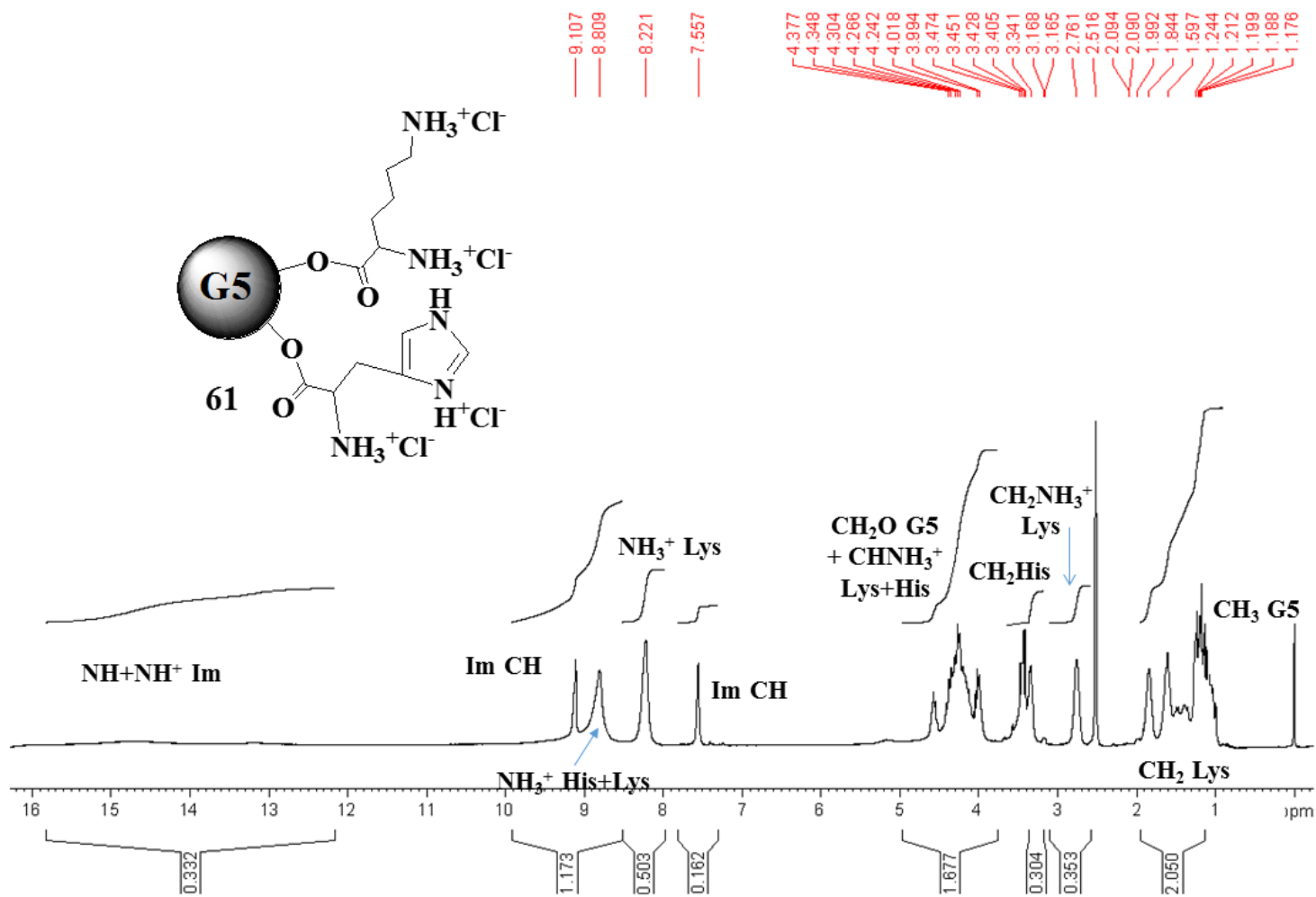


Figure S55. ¹H NMR (DMSO-*d*₆, 300 MHz) spectrum of compound **61**

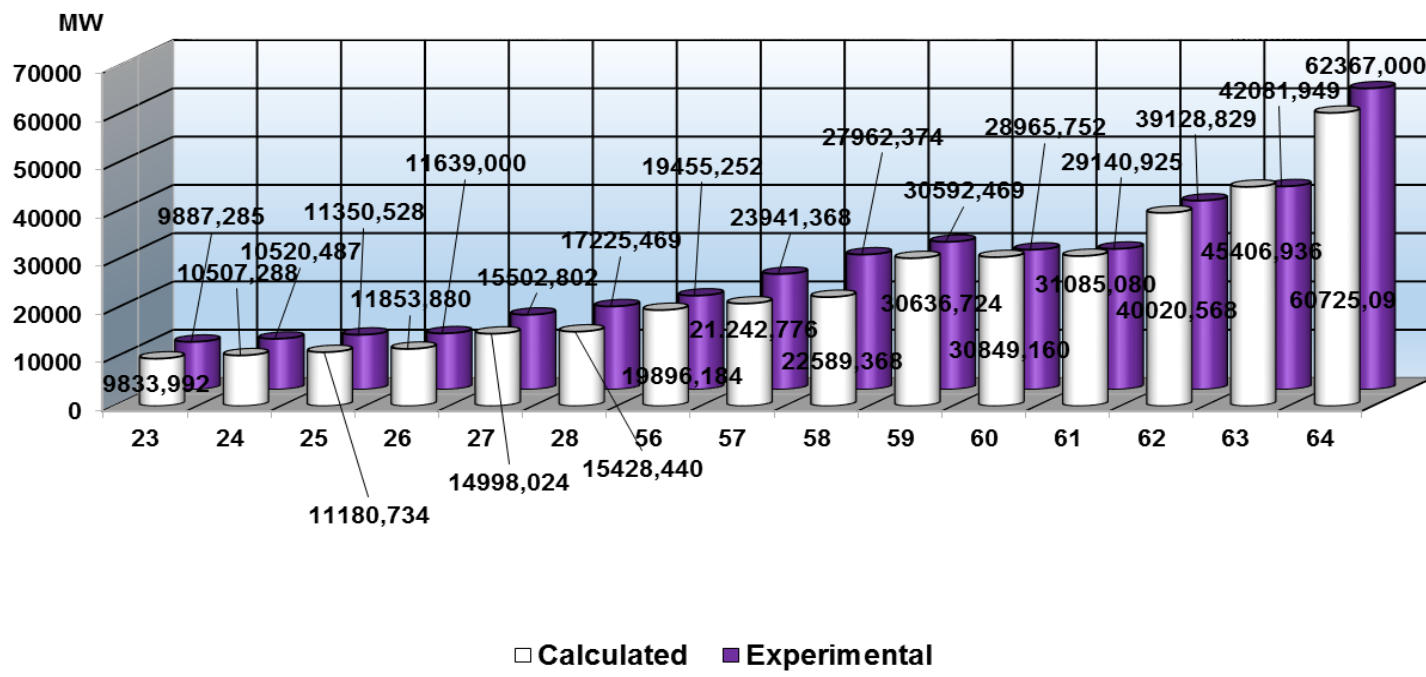


Figure S57. Comparison between computed and experimental molecular weights of all prepared dendrimers

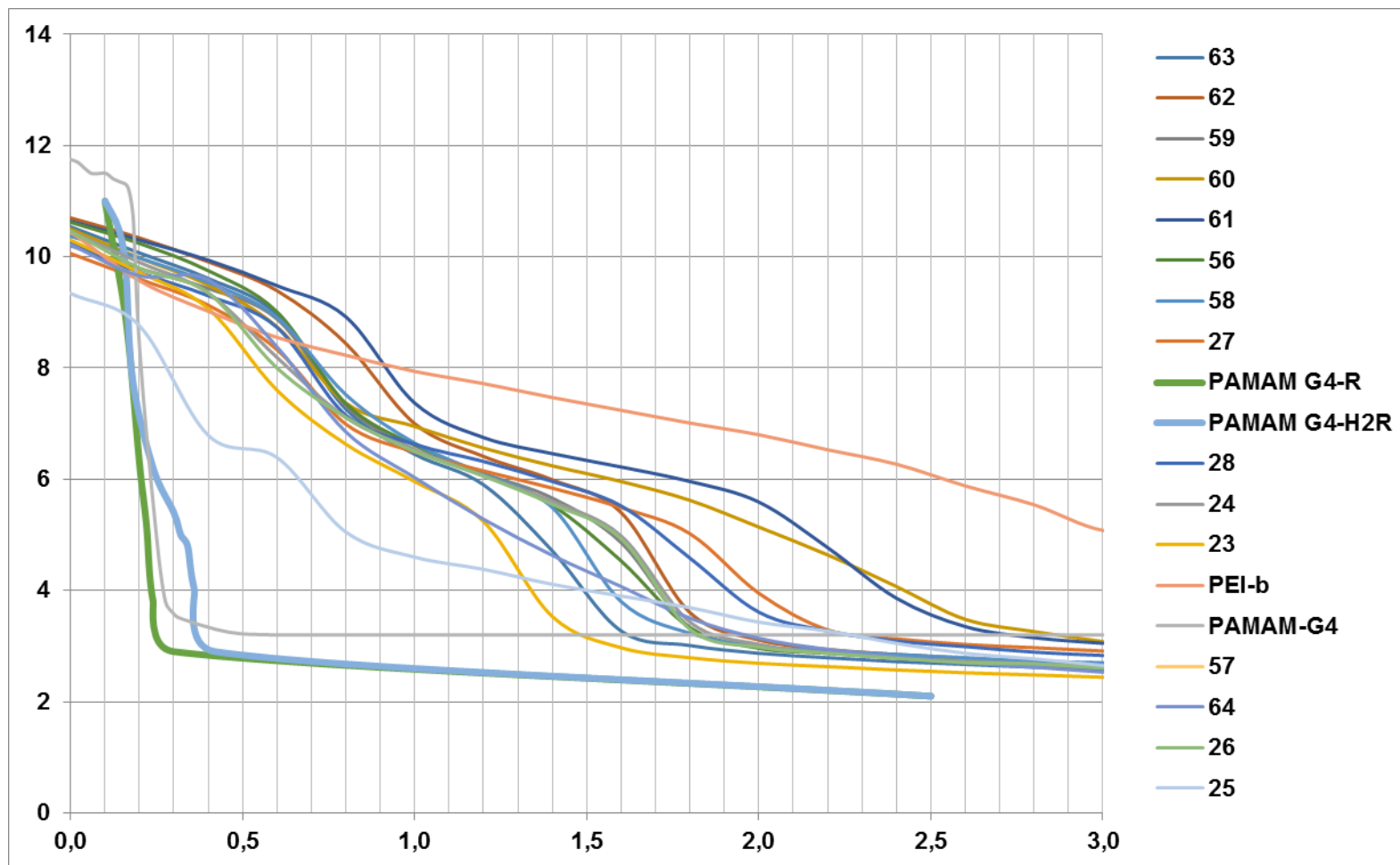


Figure S58. Potentiometric titration curves of all prepared dendrimers compared with PEI-b and G4-PAMAMs

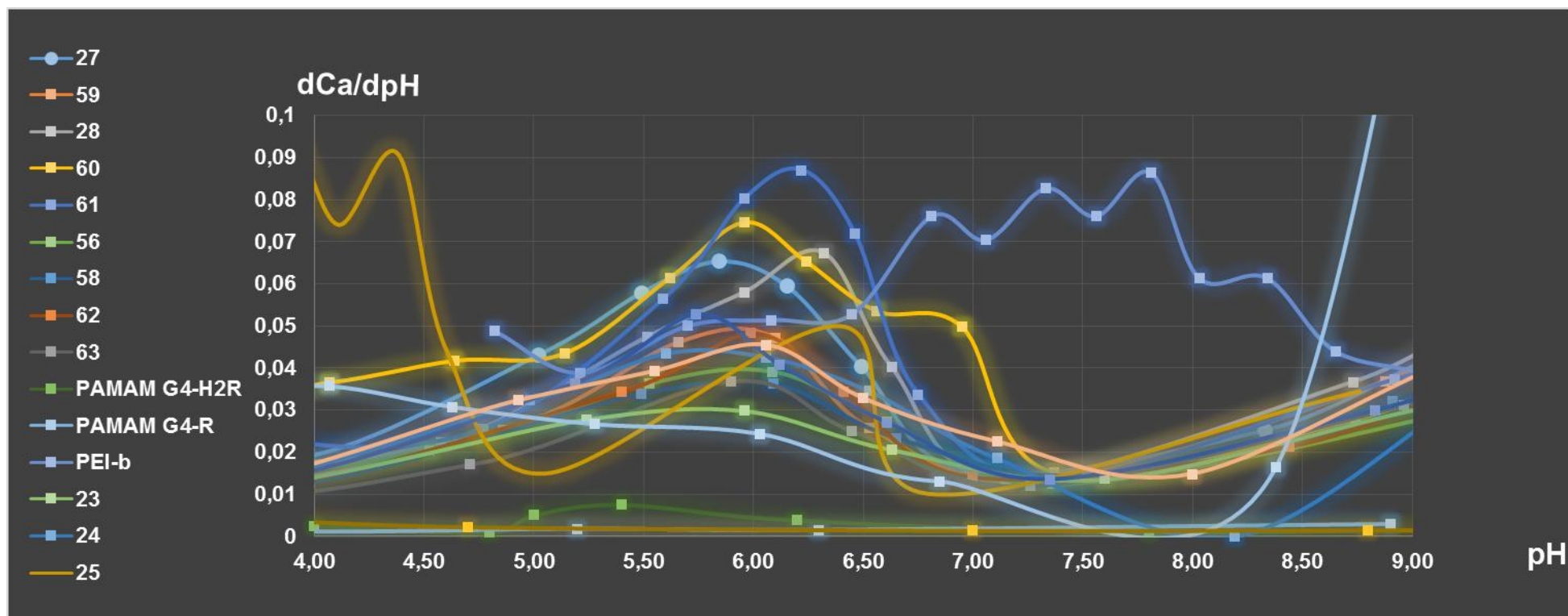


Figure S59. Buffer capacity (β) of all prepared dendrimers compared with PEI-b and G4-PAMAMs

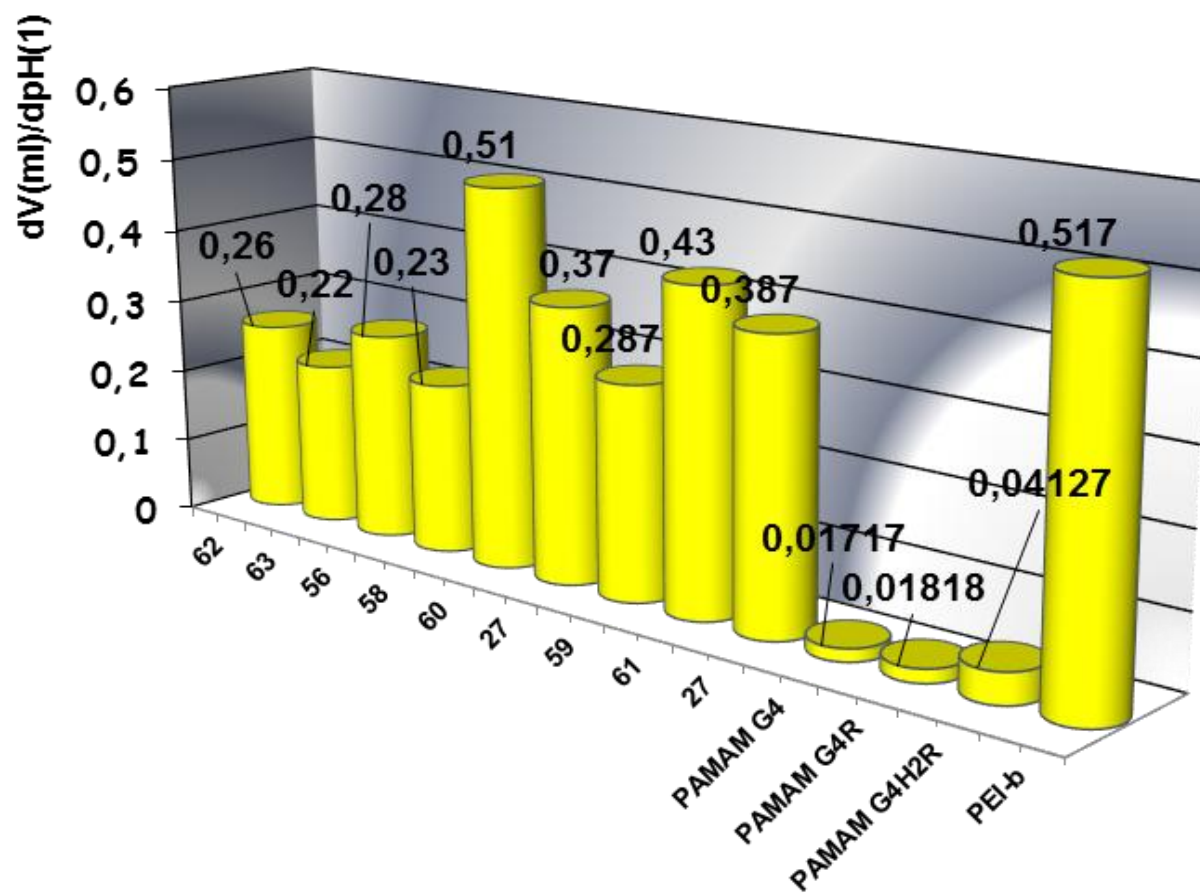


Figure S60. Average buffer capacity ($\bar{\beta}$) of all prepared dendrimers compared with PEI-b and G4-PAMAMs

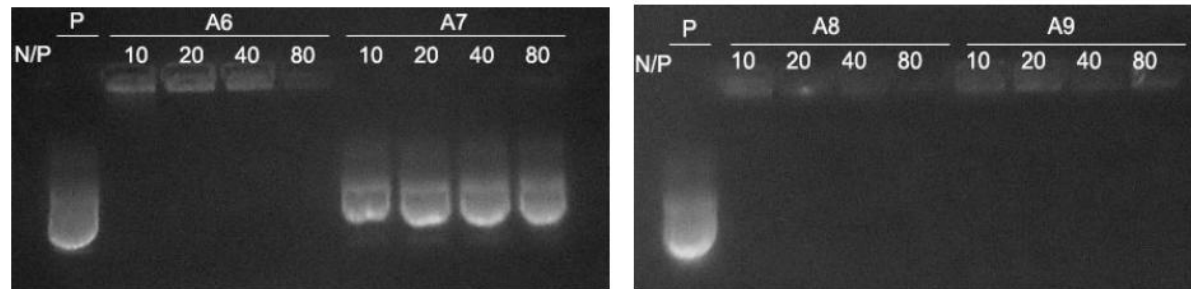


Figure S61. *pDNA* binding assay. P = *pDNA*, A6 = **61**, A7 = **60**, A8 = **59**, A9 = **27**

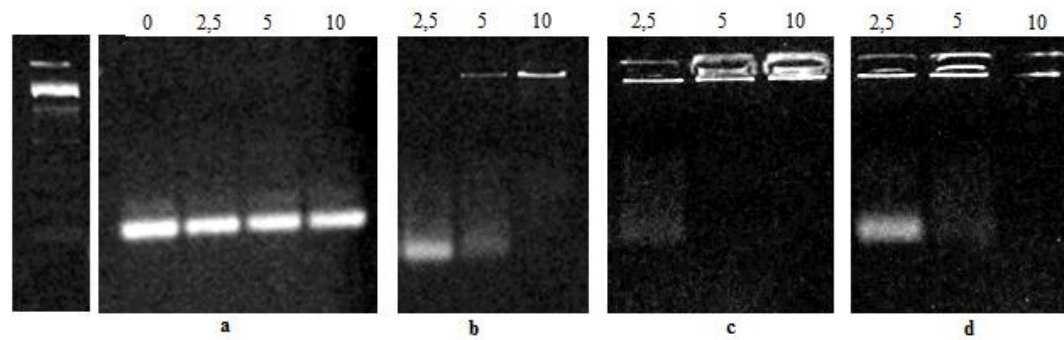


Figure S62. *siRNA* adhesion assay: **60** (a), **27** (b), **61** (c), **59** (d).

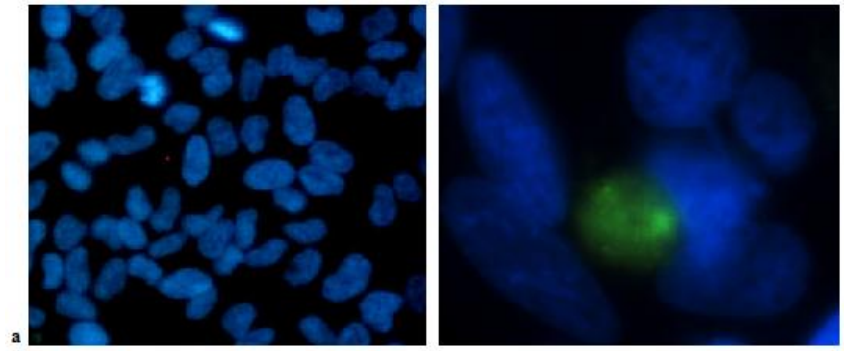


Figure S63. Images obtained with a double fluorescence microscope on transfected cells in incomplete culture medium (a) and in complete medium (b).

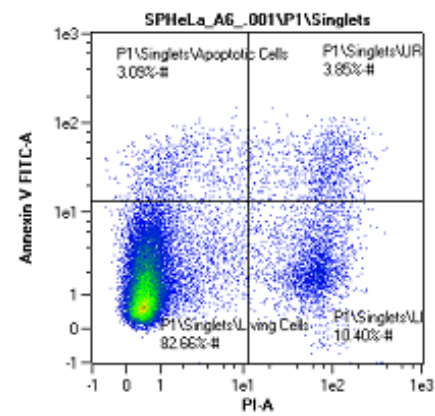


Figure S64. Cytofluorometric analysis of compound 27.

TEMPLATE SUPPORTING