

**STATEMENT OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION  
DATED DECEMBER 29, 2025**

<u>FUND</u>	<u>PRINCIPAL U.S. LISTING EXCHANGE</u>	<u>TICKER SYMBOL</u>
<b>GOLDMAN SACHS DYNAMIC CALIFORNIA MUNICIPAL INCOME ETF</b>	NYSE Arca, Inc.	GCAL
<b>GOLDMAN SACHS DYNAMIC NEW YORK MUNICIPAL INCOME ETF</b>	NYSE Arca, Inc.	GMNY
<b>GOLDMAN SACHS MUNICIPAL INCOME ETF</b>	NYSE Arca, Inc.	GMUB
<b>GOLDMAN SACHS ULTRA SHORT MUNICIPAL INCOME ETF</b>	NYSE Arca, Inc.	GUMI

**(Portfolios of Goldman Sachs ETF Trust)**

Goldman Sachs ETF Trust  
200 West Street  
New York, New York 10282

This Statement of Additional Information (the “SAI”) is not a prospectus. This SAI should be read in conjunction with the Prospectus for the Goldman Sachs Dynamic California Municipal Income ETF, Goldman Sachs Dynamic New York Municipal Income ETF, Goldman Sachs Municipal Income ETF, and Goldman Sachs Ultra Short Municipal Income ETF (each the “Fund”, together the “Funds”), dated December 29, 2025, as it may be further amended and/or supplemented from time to time (the “Prospectus”). The Prospectus may be obtained without charge from Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC by calling 1-800-621-2550 or writing to Goldman Sachs Funds, 71 South Wacker Drive, Suite 1200, Chicago, Illinois 60606.

The audited financial statements and related report of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, independent registered public accounting firm for the Goldman Sachs Dynamic California Municipal Income ETF, Goldman Sachs Dynamic New York Municipal Income ETF, Goldman Sachs Municipal Income ETF, and Goldman Sachs Ultra Short Municipal Income ETF contained in the applicable Fund’s Form N-CSR for the most recent fiscal year end, are incorporated herein by reference in the section “FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.” No other portions of the applicable Fund’s Form N-CSR are incorporated by reference herein. Each Fund’s financial information may be obtained upon request and without charge by calling Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC toll free at 1-800-621-2550.

GSAM<sup>®</sup> is a registered service mark of Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES</u>	B-5
<u>DESCRIPTION OF INVESTMENT SECURITIES AND PRACTICES</u>	B-7
<u>INVESTMENT RESTRICTIONS</u>	B-52
<u>TRUSTEES AND OFFICERS</u>	B-54
<u>MANAGEMENT SERVICES</u>	B-70
<u>POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST</u>	B-75
<u>CREATIONS AND REDEMPTIONS</u>	B-94
<u>BOOK ENTRY ONLY SYSTEM</u>	B-101
<u>DISTRIBUTION AND SERVICE PLAN</u>	B-102
<u>PORTFOLIO TRANSACTIONS AND BROKERAGE</u>	B-102
<u>DETERMINATION OF NET ASSET VALUE</u>	B-105
<u>SHARES OF THE TRUST</u>	B-107
<u>TAXATION</u>	B-109
<u>FINANCIAL STATEMENTS</u>	B-116
<u>PROXY VOTING</u>	B-116
<u>PAYMENTS TO OTHERS (INCLUDING INTERMEDIARIES)</u>	B-117
<u>OTHER INFORMATION</u>	B-119
<u>CONTROL PERSONS AND PRINCIPAL HOLDERS OF SECURITIES</u>	B-121
<u>APPENDIX A DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES RATINGS</u>	1-A
<u>APPENDIX B GOLDMAN SACHS ASSET MANAGEMENT'S PROXY VOTING GUIDELINES SUMMARY</u>	1-B

**GOLDMAN SACHS ASSET MANAGEMENT, L.P.**

Investment Adviser  
200 West Street  
New York, New York 10282

**THE BANK OF NEW YORK**

Transfer Agent  
240 Greenwich Street  
New York, New York 10286

**ALPS DISTRIBUTORS, INC.**

Distributor  
1290 Broadway, Suite 1000  
Denver, Colorado 80203

**Toll-free (in U.S.) 1-800-621-2550 (for Shareholders/Authorized Participants) or 1-800-292-4726 (for Financial Advisors).**

## INTRODUCTION

Goldman Sachs ETF Trust (the “Trust”) is an open-end management investment company. The Trust is organized as a Delaware statutory trust and was established by an Agreement and Declaration of Trust dated December 16, 2009. The following series of the Trust are described in this SAI: Goldman Sachs Dynamic California Municipal Income ETF, Goldman Sachs Dynamic New York Municipal Income ETF, Goldman Sachs Municipal Income ETF, and Goldman Sachs Ultra Short Municipal Income ETF. The Funds are actively-managed and do not seek to track a specified index.

The Trustees of the Trust have authority under the Declaration of Trust to create and classify Shares of the Trust into separate series. Pursuant thereto, the Trustees have created the Funds and other series. Additional series may be added in the future from time to time. See “Shares of the Trust.”

Goldman Sachs Asset Management, L.P. (“GSAM” or the “Investment Adviser”), an affiliate of Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC (“Goldman Sachs”), serves as the Investment Adviser to the Funds. In addition, ALPS Distributors, Inc. (“ALPS” or the “Distributor”) serves as the Funds’ distributor, and The Bank of New York (“BNY” or the “Transfer Agent”) serves as the Funds’ transfer agent. The Funds’ custodian is BNY, which also provides administrative services to the Funds.

The following information relates to and supplements the description of each Fund’s investment policies contained in the Prospectus. See the Prospectus for a more complete description of the Funds’ investment objectives and policies. Investing in a Fund entails certain risks, and there is no assurance that a Fund will achieve its investment objective. Capitalized terms used but not defined herein have the same meaning as in the Prospectus.

## EXCHANGE LISTING AND TRADING

A discussion of exchange listing and trading matters associated with an investment in the Funds is contained in the “Shareholder Guide” section of the Prospectus. The discussion below supplements, and should be read in conjunction with, such section of the Prospectus.

The Shares of the Funds are anticipated to be approved for listing and trading on NYSE Arca, Inc. (the “Exchange”), subject to notice of issuance. The Shares trade on the Exchange at prices that may differ from their net asset value (“NAV”). There can be no assurance that the Funds will continue to meet the requirements of the Exchange necessary to maintain the listing of Shares.

The Exchange may, but is not required to, remove the Shares of a Fund from listing if: (1) following the initial twelve-month period beginning upon the commencement of trading of the Fund, there are fewer than 50 beneficial holders of the Shares; (2) the Exchange becomes aware that the Fund is no longer eligible to operate in reliance on Rule 6c-11 under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (the “Investment Company Act” or the “Act”); (3) the Fund no longer complies with certain listing exchange rules; or (4) such other event shall occur or condition exists that, in the opinion of the Exchange, makes further dealings on the Exchange inadvisable. In addition, the Exchange will remove the Shares of the Fund from listing and trading upon termination of the Trust or a Fund.

As in the case of other publicly-traded securities, when you buy or sell shares through a broker, you will incur a brokerage commission determined by that broker.

In order to provide additional information regarding the indicative value of Shares of each Fund, the Exchange or a market data vendor may disseminate through the facilities of the Consolidated Tape Association, or through other widely disseminated means an “intra-day indicative value” (“IIV”) for each Fund as calculated by an information provider or market data vendor. The Trust, GSAM, and their affiliates, are not responsible for any aspect of the calculation or dissemination of the IIVs and make no representation or warranty as to the accuracy of the IIVs.

The IIV does not necessarily reflect the precise composition of the current portfolio of securities held by a Fund at a particular point in time or the best possible valuation of the current portfolio. Therefore, the IIV should not be viewed as a “real-time” update of a Fund’s NAV, which is computed only once a day. The IIV is generally determined by using both current market quotations and/or price quotations obtained from broker-dealers that may trade in the portfolio securities held by a Fund. The quotations of certain Fund holdings may not be updated during U.S. trading hours if such holdings do not trade in the United States.

The Trust reserves the right to adjust the Share prices of a Fund in the future to maintain convenient trading ranges for investors. Any adjustments would be accomplished through stock splits or reverse stock splits, which would have no effect on the net assets of a Fund or an investor’s equity interest in a Fund.

The base and trading currencies of the Funds are the U.S. dollar. The base currency is the currency in which a Fund’s NAV per Share is calculated and the trading currency is the currency in which Shares of the Fund are listed and traded on the Exchange.

## INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Each Fund has a distinct investment objective and policies. The investment objective of the Goldman Sachs Dynamic California Municipal Income ETF is to seek a high level of current income that is exempt from regular federal income tax and California personal income tax. The investment objective of the Goldman Sachs Dynamic New York Municipal Income ETF is to seek a high level of current income that is exempt from regular federal income tax and New York State and City personal income taxes. The investment objective Goldman Sachs Municipal Income ETF is to seek a high level of current income that is exempt from regular federal income tax. The investment objective of the Goldman Sachs Ultra Short Municipal Income ETF is to seek a high level of current income, consistent with relatively low volatility of principal, that is exempt from regular federal income tax. There can be no assurance that a Fund’s investment objective will be achieved. Each Fund is a non-diversified series of an open-end management company as defined in the Investment Company Act. The investment objective and policies of a Fund, and the associated risks of a Fund, are discussed in the Prospectus, which should be read carefully before an investment is made. All investment objectives and

investment policies not specifically designated as fundamental may be changed without shareholder approval. Each Fund's policy to invest at least 80% of its net assets plus any borrowings for investment purposes (measured at the time of purchase) ("Net Assets") in certain municipal securities, as specified in the Prospectus, is a fundamental policy that may not be changed without shareholder approval.

The Funds offer and issue Shares at its NAV per Share only in aggregations of a specified number of shares ("Creation Units"), generally in exchange for a basket of securities and/or instruments (the "Deposit Securities") together with a deposit of a specified cash payment (the "Cash Component"), if any. Shares are redeemable by a Fund only in Creation Units and generally in exchange for securities and/or instruments together with a specified cash payment. Shares trade in the secondary market and elsewhere at market prices that may be at, above or below NAV. Creation Units typically are a specified number of Shares.

Each Fund is an ETF, which is a fund that trades like other publicly-traded securities. The Funds are not index funds; the Funds are actively managed and do not seek to replicate the performance of a specified index.

The investment objective and policies of each Fund are similar to other funds advised by the adviser or its affiliates. However, the investment results of each Fund may be higher or lower than other similar funds, and there is no guarantee that the investment results of each Fund will be comparable to, any other of these funds. A new fund or a fund with fewer assets under management may be more significantly affected by purchases and redemptions of its Creation Units than a fund with relatively greater assets under management would be affected by purchases and redemptions of its shares. As compared to a larger fund, a new or smaller fund is more likely to sell a comparatively large portion of its portfolio to meet significant Creation Unit redemptions, or invest a comparatively large amount of cash to facilitate Creation Unit purchases, in each case when the fund otherwise would not seek to do so. Such transactions may cause funds to make investment decisions at inopportune times or prices or miss attractive investment opportunities. Such transactions may also accelerate the realization of taxable income if sales of securities resulted in gains and the fund redeems Creation Units for cash, or otherwise cause a fund to perform differently than intended. While such risks may apply to funds of any size, such risks are heightened in funds with fewer assets under management. In addition, new funds may not be able to fully implement their investment strategy immediately upon commencing investment operations, which could reduce investment performance.

A Fund may charge creation/redemption transaction fees for each creation and redemption. In all cases, transaction fees will be limited in accordance with the requirements of the SEC applicable to management investment companies offering redeemable securities. See the "CREATIONS AND REDEMPTIONS" section below.

To the extent a Fund invests in commodity interests, it intends to do so in reliance on an exclusion from the definition of the term "commodity pool operator" ("CPO") under the Commodity Exchange Act ("CEA") and therefore would not be subject to registration or regulation as a CPO under the CEA.

## DESCRIPTION OF INVESTMENT SECURITIES AND PRACTICES

The investment securities and practices and related risks applicable to the Fund (which, for the remainder of this section, refers to one or more of the Funds offered in this SAI) are presented below in alphabetical order, and not in the order of importance or potential exposure.

### **Asset-Backed Securities**

Asset-backed securities represent participations in, or are secured by and payable from, assets such as motor vehicle installment sales, installment loan contracts, leases of various types of real and personal property, receivables from revolving credit (credit card) agreements and other categories of receivables. Such assets are securitized through the use of trusts and special purpose corporations. Payments or distributions of principal and interest may be guaranteed up to certain amounts and for a certain time period by a letter of credit or a pool insurance policy issued by a financial institution unaffiliated with the trust or corporation, or other credit enhancements may be present.

The Fund may invest in asset-backed securities. Such securities are often subject to more rapid repayment than their stated maturity date would indicate as a result of the pass-through of prepayments of principal on the underlying loans. During periods of declining interest rates, prepayment of loans underlying asset-backed securities can be expected to accelerate. Accordingly, the Fund's ability to maintain positions in such securities will be affected by reductions in the principal amount of such securities resulting from prepayments, and its ability to reinvest the returns of principal at comparable yields is subject to generally prevailing interest rates at that time. To the extent that the Fund invests in asset-backed securities, the values of the Fund's portfolio securities will vary with changes in market interest rates generally and the differentials in yields among various kinds of asset-backed securities.

Asset-backed securities present certain additional risks because asset-backed securities generally do not have the benefit of a security interest in collateral that is comparable to mortgage assets. Credit card receivables are generally unsecured and the debtors on such receivables are entitled to the protection of a number of state and federal consumer credit laws, many of which give such debtors the right to set-off certain amounts owed on the credit cards, thereby reducing the balance due. Automobile receivables generally are secured, but by automobiles rather than residential real property. Most issuers of automobile receivables permit the loan servicers to retain possession of the underlying obligations. If the servicer were to sell these obligations to another party, there is a risk that the purchaser would acquire an interest superior to that of the holders of the asset-backed securities. In addition, because of the large number of vehicles involved in a typical issuance and technical requirements under state laws, the trustee for the holders of the automobile receivables may not have a proper security interest in the underlying automobiles. Therefore, if the issuer of an asset-backed security defaults on its payment obligations, there is the possibility that, in some cases, the Fund will be unable to possess and sell the underlying collateral and that the Fund's recoveries on repossessed collateral may not be available to support payments on these securities.

### **Bank Obligations**

The Fund may invest in obligations issued or guaranteed by U.S. or foreign banks. Bank obligations, including without limitation, time deposits, bankers' acceptances and certificates of deposit, may be general obligations of the parent bank or may be limited to the issuing branch by the terms of the specific obligations or by government regulation. Banks are subject to extensive but different governmental regulations which may limit both the amount and types of loans which may be made and interest rates which may be charged. Foreign banks are subject to different regulations and are generally permitted to engage in a wider variety of activities than U.S. banks. In addition, the profitability of the banking industry is largely dependent upon the availability and cost of funds for the purpose of financing lending operations under prevailing money market conditions. General economic conditions as well as exposure to credit losses arising from possible financial difficulties of borrowers play an important part in the operation of this industry.

Certificates of deposit are certificates evidencing the obligation of a bank to repay funds deposited with it for a specified period of time at a specified rate. Certificates of deposit are negotiable instruments and are similar to saving deposits but have a definite maturity and are evidenced by a certificate instead of a passbook entry. Banks are required to keep reserves against all certificates of deposit. Fixed time deposits are bank obligations payable at a stated maturity date and bearing interest at a fixed rate. Fixed time

deposits may be withdrawn on demand by the investor, but may be subject to early withdrawal penalties which vary depending upon market conditions and the remaining maturity of the obligation. The Fund may invest in deposits in U.S. and European banks.

### **Commercial Paper and Other Short-Term Corporate Obligations**

The Fund may invest in commercial paper and other short-term obligations issued or guaranteed by U.S. corporations, non-U.S. corporations or other entities. Commercial paper represents short-term unsecured promissory notes issued in bearer form by banks or bank holding companies, corporations and finance companies.

### **Convertible Securities**

The Fund may invest in convertible securities. Convertible securities are bonds, debentures, notes, preferred stocks or other securities that may be converted into or exchanged for a specified amount of common stock (or other securities) of the same or different issuer within a particular period of time at a specified price or formula. A convertible security entitles the holder to receive interest that is generally paid or accrued on debt or a dividend that is paid or accrued on preferred stock until the convertible security matures or is redeemed, converted or exchanged. Convertible securities have unique investment characteristics, in that they generally (i) have higher yields than common stocks, but lower yields than comparable non-convertible securities, (ii) are less subject to fluctuation in value than the underlying common stock due to their fixed income characteristics and (iii) provide the potential for capital appreciation if the market price of the underlying common stock increases.

The value of a convertible security is a function of its “investment value” (determined by its yield in comparison with the yields of other securities of comparable maturity and quality that do not have a conversion privilege) and its “conversion value” (the security’s worth, at market value, if converted into the underlying common stock). The investment value of a convertible security is influenced by changes in interest rates, with investment value normally declining as interest rates increase and increasing as interest rates decline. The credit standing of the issuer and other factors may also have an effect on the convertible security’s investment value. The conversion value of a convertible security is determined by the market price of the underlying common stock. If the conversion value is low relative to the investment value, the price of the convertible security is governed principally by its investment value. To the extent the market price of the underlying common stock approaches or exceeds the conversion price, the price of the convertible security will be increasingly influenced by its conversion value. A convertible security generally will sell at a premium over its conversion value by the extent to which investors place value on the right to acquire the underlying common stock while holding a fixed income security.

A convertible security may be subject to redemption at the option of the issuer at a price established in the convertible security’s governing instrument. If a convertible security held by the Fund is called for redemption, the Fund will be required to convert the security into the underlying common stock, sell it to a third party, or permit the issuer to redeem the security. Any of these actions could have an adverse effect on the Fund’s ability to achieve its investment objective, which, in turn, could result in losses to the Fund. To the extent that the Fund holds a convertible security, or a security that is otherwise converted or exchanged for common stock (e.g., as a result of a restructuring), the Fund may, consistent with its investment objective, hold such common stock in its portfolio.

### **Corporate Debt Obligations**

The Fund may invest in corporate debt obligations, including obligations of industrial, utility and financial issuers. Corporate debt obligations include bonds, notes, debentures and other obligations of corporations to pay interest and repay principal. Corporate debt obligations are subject to the risk of an issuer’s inability to meet principal and interest payments on the obligations and may also be subject to price volatility due to such factors as market interest rates, market perception of the creditworthiness of the issuer and general market liquidity.

Corporate debt obligations rated BBB or Baa are considered medium-grade obligations with speculative characteristics, and adverse economic conditions or changing circumstances may weaken their issuers’ capacity to pay interest and repay principal. Medium to lower rated and comparable non-rated securities tend to offer higher yields than higher rated securities with the same maturities because the historical financial condition of the issuers of such securities may not have been as strong as that of other issuers. The price of corporate debt obligations will generally fluctuate in response to fluctuations in supply and demand for similarly

rated securities. In addition, the price of corporate debt obligations will generally fluctuate in response to interest rate levels. Fluctuations in the prices of portfolio securities subsequent to their acquisition will not affect cash income from such securities but will be reflected in the Fund's NAV. Because medium to lower rated securities generally involve greater risks of loss of income and principal than higher rated securities, investors should consider carefully the relative risks associated with investment in securities which carry medium to lower ratings and in comparable unrated securities. In addition to the risk of default, there are the related costs of recovery on defaulted issues.

### **Custodial Receipts and Trust Certificates**

The Fund may invest in custodial receipts and trust certificates, which may be underwritten by securities dealers or banks, representing interests in securities held by a custodian or trustee. The securities so held may include obligations issued or guaranteed by the U.S. Government, its agencies, instrumentalities or sponsored enterprises ("U.S. Government Securities"), municipal securities or other types of securities in which the Fund may invest. The custodial receipts or trust certificates are underwritten by securities dealers or banks and may evidence ownership of future interest payments, principal payments or both on the underlying securities, or, in some cases, the payment obligation of a third party that has entered into an interest rate swap or other arrangement with the custodian or trustee. For purposes of certain securities laws, custodial receipts and trust certificates may not be considered obligations of the U.S. Government or other issuer of the securities held by the custodian or trustee. As a holder of custodial receipts and trust certificates, the Fund will bear its proportionate share of the fees and expenses charged to the custodial account or trust. The Fund may also invest in separately issued interests in custodial receipts and trust certificates.

Although under the terms of a custodial receipt or trust certificate the Fund would typically be authorized to assert its rights directly against the issuer of the underlying obligation, the Fund could be required to assert through the custodian bank or trustee those rights as may exist against the underlying issuers. Thus, in the event an underlying issuer fails to pay principal and/or interest when due, the Fund may be subject to delays, expenses and risks that are greater than those that would have been involved if the Fund had purchased a direct obligation of the issuer. In addition, in the event that the trust or custodial account in which the underlying securities have been deposited is determined to be an association taxable as a corporation, instead of a non-taxable entity, the yield on the underlying securities would be reduced in recognition of any taxes paid.

Certain custodial receipts and trust certificates may be synthetic or derivative instruments that have interest rates that reset inversely to changing short-term rates and/or have embedded interest rate floors and caps that require the issuer to pay an adjusted interest rate if market rates fall below or rise above a specified rate. Because some of these instruments represent relatively recent innovations, and the trading market for these instruments is less developed than the markets for traditional types of instruments, it is uncertain how these instruments will perform under different economic and interest-rate scenarios. Also, because these instruments may be leveraged, their market values may be more volatile than other types of fixed income instruments and may present greater potential for capital gain or loss. The possibility of default by an issuer or the issuer's credit provider may be greater for these derivative instruments than for other types of instruments. In some cases, it may be difficult to determine the fair value of a derivative instrument because of a lack of reliable objective information and an established secondary market for some instruments may not exist. In many cases, the Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") has not ruled on the tax treatment of the interest or payments received on the derivative instruments and, accordingly, purchases of such instruments are based on the opinion of counsel to the sponsors of the instruments.

### **Derivatives and Similar Instruments**

The Fund may invest in derivatives and similar instruments discussed elsewhere in this SAI. The use of derivatives and similar instruments may pose risks in addition to and greater than those associated with investing directly in securities, currencies or other assets and instruments and may result in losses due to adverse market movements. Pursuant to Rule 18f-4 under the Act, a Fund's use of derivatives and other transactions that create future payment or delivery obligations is subject to a value-at-risk ("VaR") leverage limit and reporting and certain other requirements if the Fund is a fund that does not qualify as a "limited derivatives user" under Rule 18f-4 ("Full Compliance Fund"). The Trust has also adopted and implemented a derivatives risk management program (the "DRMP") to, among other things, manage the risks associated with the use of derivatives and these other transactions for series of the Trust that are Full Compliance Funds. The Board of Trustees has approved the designation of personnel from GSAM to administer the DRMP for the Full Compliance Funds. With respect to series of the Trust that qualify as "limited derivatives users" under

Rule 18f-4 (each, an “LDU Fund”), the Trust has adopted and implemented policies and procedures to manage an LDU Fund’s derivatives risks. An LDU Fund is also subject to the derivatives exposure threshold set forth in Rule 18f-4.

Similar to bank borrowings, derivatives and similar instruments may result in leverage. Borrowing and the use of derivatives and similar instruments may magnify the potential for gains and losses in excess of the initial amount invested. Mutual funds can borrow money from banks and other financial institutions, subject to certain asset coverage limits. The amount of indebtedness from bank borrowings may not exceed one-third of a Fund’s total assets (including the amount borrowed). If a Fund uses reverse repurchase agreements or similar financing transactions, including certain tender option bonds, the Fund must either aggregate the amount of indebtedness associated with the reverse repurchase agreements or similar financing transactions with the aggregate amount of indebtedness associated with any bank borrowings, if applicable, when calculating a Fund’s asset coverage ratio or treat all such transactions as derivatives transactions subject to the leverage limits under Rule 18f-4.

In addition, under Rule 18f-4, a Fund is permitted to invest in a security on a when-issued or forward-settling basis, or with a non-standard settlement cycle, and the transaction will be deemed not to involve a “senior security,” provided that (i) the Fund intends to physically settle the transaction and (ii) the transaction will settle within 35 days of its trade date). A Fund may otherwise engage in such transactions that do not meet these conditions so long as the Fund treats any such transaction as a “derivatives transaction” for purposes of compliance with Rule 18f-4. Furthermore, under Rule 18f-4, a Fund will be permitted to enter into an unfunded commitment agreement, and such unfunded commitment agreement will not be subject to the limits on borrowings as described above, if the Fund reasonably believes, at the time it enters into such agreement, that it will have sufficient cash and cash equivalents to meet its obligations with respect to all such agreements as they come due.

These requirements may limit the ability of a Fund to use derivatives, short sales, reverse repurchase agreements and similar financing transactions, delayed-settlement securities and unfunded commitment agreements as part of its investment strategies.

From time to time, a Fund may enter into derivatives or other similar transactions that require the Fund to pledge margin or collateral to a counterparty or clearing member through a margin/collateral account for and on behalf of the counterparty or clearing member. For operational, cost, regulatory or other reasons, when setting up these arrangements, a Fund may be required to use a margin/collateral account model or naming convention that may not be the most protective option available in the case of a default or bankruptcy by a counterparty or clearing member or that may delay or impair the Fund from fully exercising its rights under the arrangement. In the event of default or bankruptcy by a counterparty or clearing member, the margin or collateral may be subject to legal proceedings and a Fund may be delayed in taking possession of any margin or collateral to which the Fund is legally entitled.

## **Distressed Debt**

The may invest in the securities and other obligations of financially troubled companies, including stressed, distressed and bankrupt issuers and debt obligations that are in covenant or payment default. In addition, investments of the Fund may become distressed or bankrupt following the Fund’s initial acquisition of the security. Historically, economic downturns or increases in interest rates have, under certain circumstances, resulted in a higher occurrence of default by the issuers of these instruments. Such investments generally trade significantly below par and are considered speculative. The repayment of defaulted obligations is subject to significant uncertainties. Defaulted obligations might be repaid only after lengthy workout or bankruptcy proceedings, during which the issuer might not make any interest or other payments. Typically, such workout or bankruptcy proceedings result in only partial recovery of cash payments or an exchange of the defaulted obligation for other debt or equity securities of the issuer or its affiliates, which may in turn be speculative.

In any investment involving stressed and distressed debt obligations, there exists the risk that the transaction involving such debt obligations will be unsuccessful, take considerable time or will result in a distribution of cash or a new security or obligation in exchange for the stressed and distressed debt obligations, the value of which may be less than the Fund’s purchase price of such debt obligations. Furthermore, if an anticipated transaction does not occur, the Fund may be required to sell its investment at a loss.

Distressed investments may require active participation by the Investment Adviser in the restructuring of the Fund’s investment or other actions intended to protect the Fund’s investment; however, there may be situations where the Investment Adviser may determine to not so participate due to regulatory, tax or other considerations. In addition, the Fund may participate on creditors’

committees to negotiate with the management of financially troubled issuers of securities held by the Fund. Such participation may subject the Fund to additional expenses (including legal fees) and may make the Fund an “insider” of the issuer for purposes of the federal securities laws. This may result in increased litigation risks to the Fund or may restrict the Investment Adviser’s ability to dispose of the security.

There are a number of significant risks inherent in the bankruptcy process. Many events in a bankruptcy are the product of contested matters and adversary proceedings and are beyond the control of the creditors. A bankruptcy filing by an issuer may adversely and permanently affect the issuer, and if the proceeding is converted to a liquidation, the value of the issuer may not equal the liquidation value that was believed to exist at the time of the investment. The duration of a bankruptcy proceeding is difficult to predict, and a creditor’s return on investment can be adversely affected by delays until the plan of reorganization ultimately becomes effective. The administrative costs in connection with a bankruptcy proceeding are frequently high and would be paid out of the debtor’s estate prior to any return to creditors. Because the standards for classification of claims under bankruptcy law are vague, there exists the risk that the Fund’s influence with respect to the class of securities or other obligations it owns can be lost by increases in the number and amount of claims in the same class or by different classification and treatment. In the early stages of the bankruptcy process it is often difficult to estimate the extent of, or even to identify, any contingent claims that might be made. In addition, certain claims that have priority by law (for example, claims for taxes) may be substantial.

These and other factors discussed in the section below, titled “Illiquid Investments,” may impact the liquidity of investments in securities and other obligations of financially troubled companies.

### **Floating Rate Loans and Other Variable and Floating Rate Securities**

The interest rates payable on certain securities in which the Fund may invest are not fixed and may fluctuate based upon changes in market rates. Variable and floating rate obligations are debt instruments issued by companies or other entities with interest rates that reset periodically (typically, daily, monthly, quarterly, or semi-annually) in response to changes in the market rate of interest on which the interest rate is based. Moreover, such obligations may fluctuate in value in response to interest rate changes if there is a delay between changes in market interest rates and the interest reset date for the obligation. The value of these obligations is generally more stable than that of a fixed rate obligation in response to changes in interest rate levels, but they may decline in value if their interest rates do not rise as much, or as quickly, as interest rates in general. Conversely, floating rate securities will not generally increase in value if interest rates decline.

Floating rate loans consist generally of obligations of companies or other entities (e.g., a U.S. or foreign bank, insurance company or finance company)(collectively, “borrowers”) incurred for a variety of purposes. Floating rate loans may be acquired by direct investment as a lender or as an assignment of the portion of a floating rate loan previously attributable to a different lender.

Floating rate loans may be obligations of borrowers who are highly leveraged. Floating rate loans may be structured to include both term loans, which are generally fully funded at the time of the making of the loan, and revolving credit facilities, which would require additional investments upon the borrower’s demand. A revolving credit facility may require a purchaser to increase its investment in a floating rate loan at a time when it would not otherwise have done so, even if the borrower’s condition makes it unlikely that the amount will ever be repaid.

A floating rate loan offered as part of the original lending syndicate typically is purchased at par value. As part of the original lending syndicate, a purchaser generally earns a yield equal to the stated interest rate. In addition, members of the original syndicate typically are paid a commitment fee. In secondary market trading, floating rate loans may be purchased or sold above, at, or below par, which can result in a yield that is below, equal to, or above the stated interest rate, respectively. At certain times when reduced opportunities exist for investing in new syndicated floating rate loans, floating rate loans may be available only through the secondary market. There can be no assurance that an adequate supply of floating rate loans will be available for purchase.

Historically, floating rate loans have not been registered with the SEC or any state securities commission or listed on any securities exchange. As a result, the amount of public information available about a specific floating rate loan historically has been less extensive than if the floating rate loan were registered or exchange-traded. As a result, no active market may exist for some floating rate loans.

Purchasers of floating rate loans and other forms of debt obligations depend primarily upon the creditworthiness of the borrower for payment of interest and repayment of principal. If scheduled interest or principal payments are not made, the value of the obligation may be adversely affected. Floating rate loans and other debt obligations that are fully secured provide more protections than unsecured obligations in the event of failure to make scheduled interest or principal payments. Indebtedness of borrowers whose creditworthiness is poor involves substantially greater risks and may be highly speculative. Borrowers that are in bankruptcy or restructuring may never pay off their indebtedness, or may pay only a small fraction of the amount owed. Some floating rate loans and other debt obligations are not rated by any nationally recognized statistical rating organization. In connection with the restructuring of a floating rate loan or other debt obligation outside of bankruptcy court in a negotiated work-out or in the context of bankruptcy proceedings, equity securities or junior debt obligations may be received in exchange for all or a portion of an interest in the obligation.

From time to time, Goldman Sachs and its affiliates may borrow money from various banks in connection with their business activities. These banks also may sell floating rate loans to the Fund or acquire floating rate loans from the Fund, or may be intermediate participants with respect to floating rate loans owned by the Fund. These banks also may act as agents for floating rate loans that the Fund owns.

*Agents.* Floating rate loans typically are originated, negotiated, and structured by a bank, insurance company, finance company, or other financial institution (the “agent”) for a lending syndicate of financial institutions. The borrower and the lender or lending syndicate enter into a loan agreement. In addition, an institution (typically, but not always, the agent) holds any collateral on behalf of the lenders.

In a typical floating rate loan, the agent administers the terms of the loan agreement and is responsible for the collection of principal and interest and fee payments from the borrower and the apportionment of these payments to all lenders that are parties to the loan agreement. Purchasers will rely on the agent to use appropriate creditor remedies against the borrower. Typically, under loan agreements, the agent is given broad discretion in monitoring the borrower’s performance and is obligated to use the same care it would use in the management of its own property. Upon an event of default, the agent typically will enforce the loan agreement after instruction from the lenders. The borrower compensates the agent for these services. This compensation may include special fees paid on structuring and funding the floating rate loan and other fees paid on a continuing basis. The typical practice of an agent or a lender in relying exclusively or primarily on reports from the borrower may involve a risk of fraud by the borrower.

If an agent becomes insolvent, or has a receiver, conservator, or similar official appointed for it by the appropriate bank or other regulatory authority, or becomes a debtor in a bankruptcy proceeding, the agent’s appointment may be terminated, and a successor agent would be appointed. If an appropriate regulator or court determines that assets held by the agent for the benefit of the purchasers of floating rate loans are subject to the claims of the agent’s general or secured creditors, the purchasers might incur certain costs and delays in realizing payment on a floating rate loan or suffer a loss of principal and/or interest. Furthermore, in the event of the borrower’s bankruptcy or insolvency, the borrower’s obligation to repay a floating rate loan may be subject to certain defenses that the borrower can assert as a result of improper conduct by the agent.

*Liquidity.* Floating rate loans may be transferable among financial institutions, but may not have the liquidity of conventional debt securities and are often subject to legal or contractual restrictions on resale. Floating rate loans are not currently listed on any securities exchange or automatic quotation system. As a result, no active market may exist for some floating rate loans. To the extent a secondary market exists for other floating rate loans, such market may be subject to irregular trading activity, wide bid/ask spreads, and extended trade settlement periods. The lack of a highly liquid secondary market for floating rate loans may have an adverse effect on the value of such loans and may make it more difficult to value the loans for purposes of calculating their respective NAV. These and other factors discussed in the section below, titled “Illiquid Investments,” may impact the liquidity of investments in floating rate loans and other variable and floating rate securities.

*Extended Trade Settlement Periods.* Because transactions in many floating rate loans are subject to extended trade settlement periods, the Fund may not receive the proceeds from the sale of a loan for a period after the sale. As a result, sale proceeds related to the sale of floating rate loans may not be available to make additional investments or to meet the Fund’s redemption obligations for a period after the sale of the loans, and, as a result, the Fund may have to sell other investments or engage in borrowing transactions, if necessary to raise cash to meet its obligations.

*Collateral.* Most floating rate loans are secured by specific collateral of the borrower and are senior to most other securities or obligations of the borrower. The collateral typically has a market value, at the time the floating rate loan is made, that equals or exceeds the principal amount of the floating rate loan. The value of the collateral may decline, be insufficient to meet the obligations of the borrower, or be difficult to liquidate. As a result, a floating rate loan may not be fully collateralized and can decline significantly in value.

Floating rate loan collateral may consist of various types of assets or interests, including working capital assets, such as accounts receivable or inventory; tangible or intangible assets; or assets or other types of guarantees of affiliates of the borrower.

Generally, floating rate loans are secured unless (i) the purchaser's security interest in the collateral is invalidated for any reason by a court, or (ii) the collateral is fully released with the consent of the agent bank and lenders or under the terms of a loan agreement as the creditworthiness of the borrower improves. Collateral impairment is the risk that the value of the collateral for a floating rate loan will be insufficient in the event that a borrower defaults. Although the terms of a floating rate loan generally require that the collateral at issuance have a value at least equal to 100% of the amount of such floating rate loan, the value of the collateral may decline subsequent to the purchase of a floating rate loan. In most loan agreements there is no formal requirement to pledge additional collateral. There is no guarantee that the sale of collateral would allow a borrower to meet its obligations should the borrower be unable to repay principal or pay interest or that the collateral could be sold quickly or easily.

In addition, most borrowers pay their debts from the cash flow they generate. If the borrower's cash flow is insufficient to pay its debts as they come due, the borrower may seek to restructure its debts rather than sell collateral.

Borrowers may try to restructure their debts by filing for protection under the federal bankruptcy laws or negotiating a work-out. If a borrower becomes involved in bankruptcy proceedings, access to the collateral may be limited by bankruptcy and other laws. In the event that a court decides that access to the collateral is limited or void, it is unlikely that purchasers could recover the full amount of the principal and interest due.

There may be temporary periods when the principal asset held by a borrower is the stock of a related company, which may not legally be pledged to secure a floating rate loan. On occasions when such stock cannot be pledged, the floating rate loan will be temporarily unsecured until the stock can be pledged or is exchanged for, or replaced by, other assets.

Some floating rate loans are unsecured. The claims of holders under unsecured loans are subordinated to claims of creditors holding secured indebtedness and possibly also to claims of other creditors holding unsecured debt. Unsecured loans have a greater risk of default than secured loans, particularly during periods of deteriorating economic conditions. If the borrower defaults on an unsecured floating rate loan, there is no specific collateral on which the purchaser can foreclose.

*Floating Interest Rates.* The rate of interest payable on floating rate loans and other floating or variable rate obligations is the sum of a base lending rate plus a specified spread. Base lending rates are generally the Secured Overnight Financing Rate ("SOFR"), a term SOFR rate published by CME Group Benchmark Administration Limited (CBA) calculated using certain derivatives markets ("Term SOFR") or another rate determined using SOFR, the Prime Rate of a designated U.S. bank, the Federal Funds Rate, or another base lending rate used by commercial lenders. A borrower usually has the right to select the base lending rate and to change the base lending rate at specified intervals. The applicable spread may be fixed at time of issuance or may adjust upward or downward to reflect changes in credit quality of the borrower.

The interest rate on SOFR- and Term SOFR-based floating rate loans/obligations is reset periodically at intervals ranging from 30 to 180 days, while the interest rate on Prime Rate- or Federal Funds Rate-based floating rate loans/obligations floats daily as those rates change. Investment in floating rate loans/obligations with longer interest rate reset periods can increase fluctuations in the floating rate loans' values when interest rates change.

The yield on a floating rate loan/obligation will primarily depend on the terms of the underlying floating rate loan/obligation and the base lending rate chosen by the borrower. The relationship between SOFR, Term SOFR, the Prime Rate, and the Federal Funds Rate will vary as market conditions change.

*Maturity.* Floating rate loans typically will have a stated term of five to nine years. However, because floating rate loans are frequently prepaid, their average maturity is expected to be two to three years. The degree to which borrowers prepay floating rate loans, whether as a contractual requirement or at their election, may be affected by general business conditions, the borrower's financial condition, and competitive conditions among lenders. Prepayments cannot be predicted with accuracy. Prepayments of principal to the purchaser of a floating rate loan may result in the principal's being reinvested in floating rate loans with lower yields.

*Supply of Floating Rate Loans.* The legislation of state or federal regulators that regulate certain financial institutions may impose additional requirements or restrictions on the ability of such institutions to make loans, particularly with respect to highly leveraged transactions. The supply of floating rate loans may be limited from time to time due to a lack of sellers in the market for existing floating rate loans or the number of new floating rate loans currently being issued. As a result, the floating rate loans available for purchase may be lower quality or higher priced.

*Restrictive Covenants.* A borrower must comply with various restrictive covenants contained in the loan agreement. In addition to requiring the scheduled payment of interest and principal, these covenants may include restrictions on dividend payments and other distributions to stockholders, provisions requiring the borrower to maintain specific financial ratios, and limits on total debt. The loan agreement may also contain a covenant requiring the borrower to prepay the floating rate loan with any free cash flow. A breach of a covenant that is not waived by the agent (or by the lenders directly) is normally an event of default, which provides the agent or the lenders the right to call the outstanding floating rate loan.

*Fees.* Purchasers of floating rate loans may receive and/or pay certain fees. These fees are in addition to interest payments received and may include facility fees, commitment fees, commissions, and prepayment penalty fees. When a purchaser buys a floating rate loan, it may receive a facility fee; and when it sells a floating rate loan, it may pay a facility fee. A purchaser may receive a commitment fee based on the undrawn portion of the underlying line of credit portion of a floating rate loan or a prepayment penalty fee on the prepayment of a floating rate loan. A purchaser may also receive other fees, including covenant waiver fees and covenant modification fees.

*Other Types of Floating Rate Debt Obligations.* Floating rate debt obligations include other forms of indebtedness of borrowers such as notes and bonds, obligations with fixed rate interest payments in conjunction with a right to receive floating rate interest payments, and shares of other investment companies. These instruments are generally subject to the same risks as floating rate loans but are often more widely issued and traded.

## **Futures Contracts and Options on Futures Contracts**

The Fund may purchase and sell futures contracts and may also purchase and write call and put options on futures contracts. The Fund may purchase and sell futures contracts based on various securities, securities indices, foreign currencies and other financial instruments and indices. Financial futures contracts used by the Fund may include interest rate futures contracts. The Fund may engage in futures and related options transactions in order to seek to increase total return or to hedge against changes in interest rates, securities prices or, to the extent the Fund invests in foreign securities, currency exchange rates, or to otherwise manage its term structure, sector selection and duration in accordance with its investment objective and policies. The Fund may also enter into closing purchase and sale transactions with respect to such contracts and options.

Futures contracts utilized by funds have historically been traded on U.S. exchanges or boards of trade that are licensed and regulated by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission ("CFTC") or, with respect to certain funds, on foreign exchanges. More recently, certain futures may also be traded either over-the-counter or on trading facilities such as derivatives transaction execution facilities, exempt boards of trade or electronic trading facilities that are licensed and/or regulated to varying degrees by the CFTC. Also, certain single stock futures and narrow based security index futures may be traded either over-the-counter or on trading facilities such as contract markets, derivatives transaction execution facilities and electronic trading facilities that are licensed and/or regulated to varying degrees by both the CFTC and the SEC, or on foreign exchanges.

Neither the CFTC, National Futures Association ("NFA"), SEC nor any domestic exchange regulates activities of any foreign exchange or boards of trade, including the execution, delivery and clearing of transactions, or has the power to compel enforcement of the rules of a foreign exchange or board of trade or any applicable foreign law. This is true even if the exchange is formally linked to a

domestic market so that a position taken on the market may be liquidated by a transaction on another market. Moreover, such laws or regulations will vary depending on the foreign country in which the foreign futures or foreign options transaction occurs. For these reasons, the Fund's investments in foreign futures or foreign options transactions may not be provided the same protections in respect of transactions on United States exchanges. In particular, persons who trade foreign futures or foreign options contracts may not be afforded certain of the protective measures provided by the CEA, the CFTC's regulations and the rules of the NFA and any domestic exchange, including the right to use reparations proceedings before the CFTC and arbitration proceedings provided by the NFA or any domestic futures exchange. Similarly, those persons may not have the protection of the U.S. securities laws.

*Futures Contracts.* A futures contract may generally be described as an agreement between two parties to buy and sell particular financial instruments or currencies for an agreed price during a designated month (or to deliver the final cash settlement price, in the case of a contract relating to an index or otherwise not calling for physical delivery at the end of trading in the contract).

When interest rates are rising or securities prices are falling, the Fund can seek through the sale of futures contracts to offset a decline in the value of its current portfolio securities. When interest rates are falling or securities prices are rising, the Fund, through the purchase of futures contracts, can attempt to secure better rates or prices than might later be available in the market when it effects anticipated purchases. Similarly, the Fund can purchase and sell futures contracts on a specified currency in order to seek to increase total return or to protect against changes in currency exchange rates. For example, the Fund may seek to offset anticipated changes in the value of a currency in which its portfolio securities, or securities that it intends to purchase, are quoted or denominated by purchasing and selling futures contracts on such currencies. As another example, the Fund may enter into futures transactions to seek a closer correlation between the Fund's overall currency exposures and the currency exposures of the Fund's performance benchmark.

Positions taken in the futures market are not normally held to maturity, but are instead liquidated through offsetting transactions which may result in a profit or a loss. While the Fund will usually liquidate futures contracts on securities or currency in this manner, the Fund may instead make or take delivery of the underlying securities or currency whenever it appears economically advantageous for the Fund to do so. A clearing corporation associated with the exchange on which futures on securities or currency are traded guarantees that, if still open, the sale or purchase will be performed on the settlement date.

*Hedging Strategies Using Futures Contracts.* When the Fund uses futures contracts for hedging purposes, the Fund often seeks to establish with more certainty than would otherwise be possible the effective price or rate of return on portfolio securities (or securities that the Fund proposes to acquire) or the exchange rate of currencies in which portfolio securities are quoted or denominated. The Fund may, for example, take a "short" position in the futures market by selling futures contracts to seek to hedge against an anticipated rise in interest rates or a decline in market prices or foreign currency rates that would adversely affect the dollar value of such Fund's portfolio securities. Similarly, the Fund may sell futures contracts on a currency in which its portfolio securities are quoted or denominated, or sell futures contracts on one currency to seek to hedge against fluctuations in the value of securities quoted or denominated in a different currency if there is an established historical pattern of correlation between the two currencies. If, in the opinion of the Investment Adviser, there is a sufficient degree of correlation between price trends for the Fund's portfolio securities and futures contracts based on other financial instruments, securities indices or other indices, the Fund may also enter into such futures contracts as part of a hedging strategy. Although under some circumstances prices of securities in the Fund's portfolio may be more or less volatile than prices of such futures contracts, the Investment Adviser will attempt to estimate the extent of this volatility difference based on historical patterns and compensate for any such differential by having the Fund enter into a greater or lesser number of futures contracts or by attempting to achieve only a partial hedge against price changes affecting the Fund's portfolio securities. When hedging of this character is successful, any depreciation in the value of portfolio securities will be substantially offset by appreciation in the value of the futures position. On the other hand, any unanticipated appreciation in the value of the Fund's portfolio securities would be substantially offset by a decline in the value of the futures position.

On other occasions, the Fund may take a "long" position by purchasing such futures contracts. This may be done, for example, when the Fund anticipates the subsequent purchase of particular securities when it has the necessary cash, but expects the prices or currency exchange rates then available in the applicable market to be less favorable than prices or rates that are currently available.

*Options on Futures Contracts.* The acquisition of put and call options on futures contracts will give the Fund the right (but not the obligation), for a specified price, to sell or to purchase, respectively, the underlying futures contract at any time during the option

period. As the purchaser of an option on a futures contract, the Fund obtains the benefit of the futures position if prices move in a favorable direction but limits its risk of loss in the event of an unfavorable price movement to the loss of the premium and transaction costs.

The writing of a call option on a futures contract generates a premium which may partially offset a decline in the value of the Fund's assets. By writing a call option, the Fund becomes obligated, in exchange for the premium, to sell a futures contract if the option is exercised, which may have a value higher than the exercise price. The writing of a put option on a futures contract generates a premium, which may partially offset an increase in the price of securities that the Fund intends to purchase. However, the Fund becomes obligated (upon the exercise of the option) to purchase a futures contract if the option is exercised, which may have a value lower than the exercise price. Thus, the loss incurred by the Fund in writing options on futures is potentially unlimited and may exceed the amount of the premium received. The Fund will incur transaction costs in connection with the writing of options on futures.

The holder or writer of an option on a futures contract may terminate its position by selling or purchasing an offsetting option on the same financial instrument. There is no guarantee that such closing transactions can be effected. The Fund's ability to establish and close out positions on such options will be subject to the development and maintenance of a liquid market.

*Other Considerations.* The Fund will engage in transactions in futures contracts and related options transactions only to the extent such transactions are consistent with the requirements of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code") for maintaining its qualification as a regulated investment company for federal income tax purposes. Transactions in futures contracts and options on futures involve brokerage costs and require posting margin.

While transactions in futures contracts and options on futures may reduce certain risks, such transactions themselves entail certain other risks. Thus, unanticipated changes in interest rates, securities prices or currency exchange rates may result in a poorer overall performance for the Fund than if it had not entered into any futures contracts or options transactions. When futures contracts and options are used for hedging purposes, perfect correlation between the Fund's futures positions and portfolio positions may be impossible to achieve, particularly where futures contracts based on individual equity or corporate fixed income securities are currently not available. In the event of an imperfect correlation between a futures position and a portfolio position which is intended to be protected, the desired protection may not be obtained and the Fund may be exposed to risk of loss.

In addition, it is not possible for the Fund to hedge fully or perfectly against currency fluctuations affecting the value of securities quoted or denominated in foreign currencies because the value of such securities is likely to fluctuate as a result of independent factors unrelated to currency fluctuations. The profitability of the Fund's trading in futures depends upon the ability of the Investment Adviser to analyze correctly the futures markets.

## **High Yield Securities**

The Fund may invest in bonds rated BB+ or below by S&P Global Ratings or Ba1 or below by Moody's Investors Service, Inc. ("Moody's") (or comparable rated and unrated securities). These bonds are commonly referred to as "junk bonds" and are considered speculative. The ability of issuers of high yield securities to make principal and interest payments may be questionable because such issuers are often less creditworthy or are highly leveraged and are generally less able than more established or less leveraged entities to make scheduled payments of principal and interest. High yield securities are also issued by governmental issuers that may have difficulty in making all scheduled interest and principal payments. In some cases, high yield securities may be highly speculative, have poor prospects for reaching investment grade standing and be in default. As a result, investment in such bonds will entail greater risks than those associated with investments in investment grade bonds (i.e., bonds rated AAA, AA, A or BBB by S&P Global Ratings or Aaa, Aa, A or Baa by Moody's). Analysis of the creditworthiness of issuers of high yield securities may be more complex than for issuers of higher quality debt securities, and the ability of the Fund to achieve its investment objective may, to the extent of its investments in high yield securities, be more dependent upon such creditworthiness analysis than would be the case if the Fund were investing in higher quality securities. See Appendix A for a description of the corporate bond and preferred stock ratings by S&P Global Ratings, Moody's, Fitch Ratings, Inc. and DBRS, Inc.

The market values of high yield securities tend to reflect individual corporate or municipal developments to a greater extent than do those of higher rated securities, which react primarily to fluctuations in the general level of interest rates. Issuers of high yield securities that are highly leveraged may not be able to make use of more traditional methods of financing. Their ability to service debt obligations may be more adversely affected by economic downturns or their inability to meet specific projected business forecasts than would be the case for issuers of higher-rated securities. Negative publicity about the junk bond market and investor perceptions regarding lower-rated securities, whether or not based on fundamental analysis, may depress the prices for such high yield securities. In the lower quality segments of the fixed income securities market, changes in perceptions of issuers' creditworthiness tend to occur more frequently and in a more pronounced manner than do changes in higher quality segments of the fixed income securities market, resulting in greater yield and price volatility. Another factor which causes fluctuations in the prices of high yield securities is the supply and demand for similarly rated securities. In addition, the prices of investments fluctuate in response to the general level of interest rates. Fluctuations in the prices of portfolio securities subsequent to their acquisition will not affect cash income from such securities but will be reflected in the NAV of the Fund.

The risk of loss from default for the holders of high yield securities is significantly greater than is the case for holders of other debt securities because such high yield securities are generally unsecured and are often subordinated to the rights of other creditors of the issuers of such securities. Investment by the Fund in already defaulted securities poses an additional risk of loss should nonpayment of principal and interest continue in respect of such securities. Even if such securities are held to maturity, recovery by the Fund of its initial investment and any anticipated income or appreciation is uncertain. In addition, the Fund may incur additional expenses to the extent that it is required to seek recovery relating to the default in the payment of principal or interest on such securities or otherwise protect its interests. The Fund may be required to liquidate other portfolio securities to satisfy annual distribution obligations of the Fund in respect of accrued interest income on securities which are subsequently written off, even though the Fund has not received any cash payments of such interest.

The secondary market for high yield securities is concentrated in relatively few markets and is dominated by institutional investors, including mutual funds, insurance companies and other financial institutions. Accordingly, the secondary market for such securities may not be as liquid as and may be more volatile than the secondary market for higher-rated securities. In addition, the trading volume for high yield securities is generally lower than that of higher rated securities. The secondary market for high yield securities could contract under adverse market or economic conditions independent of any specific adverse changes in the condition of a particular issuer. These factors may have an adverse effect on the ability of the Fund to dispose of particular portfolio investments when needed to meet its redemption requests or other liquidity needs. The Investment Adviser could find it difficult to sell these investments or may be able to sell the investments only at prices lower than if such investments were widely traded. Prices realized upon the sale of such lower rated or unrated securities, under these circumstances, may be less than the prices used in calculating the NAVs of the Fund. A less liquid secondary market also may make it more difficult for the Fund to obtain precise valuations of the high yield securities in its portfolio.

The adoption of new legislation could adversely affect the secondary market for high yield securities and the financial condition of issuers of these securities. The form of any future legislation, and the probability of such legislation being enacted, is uncertain.

Non-investment grade or high yield securities also present risks based on payment expectations. High yield securities frequently contain "call" or buy-back features which permit the issuer to call or repurchase the security from its holder. If an issuer exercises such a "call option" and redeems the security, the Fund may have to replace such security with a lower-yielding security, resulting in a decreased return for investors. In addition, if the Fund experiences net redemptions of its shares and redeems shares in cash it may be forced to sell its higher-rated securities, resulting in a decline in the overall credit quality of its portfolio and increasing its exposure to the risks of high yield securities.

Credit ratings issued by credit rating agencies are designed to evaluate the safety of principal and interest payments of rated securities. They do not, however, evaluate the market value risk of high yield securities and, therefore, may not fully reflect the true risks of an investment. In addition, credit rating agencies may or may not make timely changes in a rating to reflect changes in the economy or in the conditions of the issuer that affect the market value of the security. Consequently, credit ratings may not accurately reflect credit quality.

An economic downturn could severely affect the ability of highly leveraged issuers of junk bond investments to service their debt obligations or to repay their obligations upon maturity. Factors having an adverse impact on the market value of junk bonds will have an adverse effect on the Fund's NAV to the extent it invests in such investments. In addition, the Fund may incur additional expenses to the extent it is required to seek recovery upon a default in payment of principal or interest on its portfolio holdings.

These and other factors discussed in the section below, titled "Illiquid Investments," may impact the liquidity of investments in high yield securities.

### **Illiquid Investments**

Pursuant to Rule 22e-4 under the Investment Company Act, the Fund may not acquire any "illiquid investment" if, immediately after the acquisition, the Fund would have invested more than 15% of its net assets in illiquid investments that are assets. An "illiquid investment" is any investment that the Fund reasonably expects cannot be sold or disposed of in current market conditions in seven calendar days or less without the sale or disposition significantly changing the market value of the investment. Illiquid investments include repurchase agreements with a notice or demand period of more than seven days, certain stripped mortgage-backed securities, certain municipal leases, certain over-the-counter derivative instruments, securities and other financial instruments that are not readily marketable, and Restricted Securities unless, based upon a review of the relevant market, trading and investment-specific considerations, those investments are determined not to be illiquid. The Trust has implemented a liquidity risk management program and related procedures to identify illiquid investments pursuant to Rule 22e-4, and the Trustees have approved the designation of the Investment Adviser to administer the Trust's liquidity risk management program and related procedures. In determining whether an investment is an illiquid investment, the Investment Adviser will take into account actual or estimated daily transaction volume of an investment, group of related investments or asset class and other relevant market, trading, and investment-specific considerations. In addition, in determining the liquidity of an investment, the Investment Adviser must determine whether trading varying portions of a position in a particular portfolio investment or asset class, in sizes that the Fund would reasonably anticipate trading, is reasonably expected to significantly affect its liquidity, and if so, the Fund must take this determination into account when classifying the liquidity of that investment or asset class.

In addition to actual or estimated daily transaction volume of an investment, group of related investments or asset class and other relevant market, trading, and investment-specific considerations, the following factors, among others, will generally impact the classification of an investment as an "illiquid investment": (i) any investment that is placed on the Investment Adviser's restricted trading list; and (ii) any investment that is delisted or for which there is a trading halt at the close of the trading day on the primary listing exchange at the time of classification (and in respect of which no active secondary market exists). Investments purchased by the Fund that are liquid at the time of purchase may subsequently become illiquid due to these and other events and circumstances. If one or more investments in the Fund's portfolio become illiquid, the Fund may exceed the 15% limitation in illiquid investments. In the event that changes in the portfolio or other external events cause the Fund to exceed this limit, the Fund must take steps to bring its illiquid investments that are assets to or below 15% of its net assets within a reasonable period of time. This requirement would not force the Fund to liquidate any portfolio instrument where the Fund would suffer a loss on the sale of that instrument.

### **Index Swaps, Interest Rate Swaps, Mortgage Swaps, Credit Swaps, Currency Swaps, Total Return Swaps, Equity Swaps, Volatility and Variance Swaps, Inflation and Inflation Asset Swaps, Correlation Swaps, Options on Swaps and Interest Rate Caps, Floors and Collars**

The Fund may enter into interest rate, credit, total return, equity, mortgage and currency swaps. The Fund may also enter into interest rate caps, floors and collars. The Fund may also purchase and write (sell) options contracts on swaps, commonly referred to as swaptions. The Fund may enter into index swaps, volatility and variance swaps, inflation and inflation asset swaps and correlation swaps.

The Fund may enter into swap transactions for hedging purposes or to seek to increase total return. As examples, the Fund may enter into swap transactions for the purpose of attempting to obtain or preserve a particular return or spread at a lower cost than obtaining a return or spread through purchases and/or sales of instruments in other markets, to protect against currency fluctuations, as a duration management technique, to protect against any increase in the price of securities the Fund anticipates purchasing at a later date, or to gain exposure to certain markets in an economical way.

In a standard “swap” transaction, two parties agree to exchange the returns, differentials in rates of return or some other amount earned or realized on particular predetermined investments or instruments, which may be adjusted for an interest factor. The gross returns to be exchanged or “swapped” between the parties are generally calculated with respect to a “notional amount,” i.e., the return on or increase in value of a particular dollar amount invested at a particular interest rate, in a particular foreign currency or security, or in a “basket” of securities representing a particular index. Bilateral swap agreements are two party contracts entered into primarily by institutional investors. Cleared swaps are transacted through futures commission merchants (“FCMs”) that are members of central clearinghouses with the clearinghouse serving as a central counterparty similar to transactions in futures contracts. The Fund posts initial and variation margin by making payments to their clearing member FCMs.

Index swaps involve the exchange by the Fund with another party of payments based on a notional principal amount of a specified index or indices. Interest rate swaps involve the exchange by the Fund with another party of their respective commitments to pay or receive payments for floating rate payments based on interest rates at specified intervals in the future. Two types of interest rate swaps include “fixed-for-floating rate swaps” and “basis swaps.” Fixed-for-floating rate swaps involve the exchange of payments based on a fixed interest rate for payments based on a floating interest rate index. By contrast, basis swaps involve the exchange of payments based on two different floating interest rate indices. Mortgage swaps are similar to interest rate swaps in that they represent commitments to pay and receive interest. The notional principal amount, however, is tied to a reference pool or pools of mortgages.

Credit swaps (also referred to as credit default swaps) involve the exchange of a floating or fixed rate payment in return for assuming potential credit losses of an underlying security or pool of securities. Loan credit default swaps are similar to credit default swaps on bonds, except that the underlying protection is sold on secured loans of a reference entity rather than a broader category of bonds or loans. Loan credit default swaps may be on single names or on baskets of loans, both tranching and untranching. Currency swaps involve the exchange of the parties’ respective rights to make or receive payments in specified currencies. Total return swaps are contracts that obligate a party to pay or receive interest in exchange for payment by the other party of the total return generated by a security, a basket of securities, an index, or an index component. Equity swap contracts may be structured in different ways. For example, as a total return swap where a counterparty may agree to pay the Fund the amount, if any, by which the notional amount of the equity swap contract would have increased in value had it been invested in the particular stocks (or a group of stocks), plus the dividends that would have been received on those stocks. In other cases, the counterparty and the Fund may each agree to pay the difference between the relative investment performances that would have been achieved if the notional amount of the equity swap contract had been invested in different stocks (or a group of stocks).

A volatility swap is an agreement between two parties to make payments based on changes in the volatility of a reference instrument over a stated period of time. Volatility swaps can be used to adjust the volatility profile of the Fund. For example, the Fund may buy a volatility swap to take the position that the reference instrument’s volatility will increase over a stated period of time. If this occurs, the Fund will receive a payment based upon the amount by which the realized volatility level of the reference instrument exceeds an agreed upon volatility level. If volatility is less than the agreed upon volatility level, then the Fund will make a payment to the counterparty calculated in the same manner. A variance swap is an agreement between two parties to exchange cash payments based on changes in the variance of a reference instrument over a stated period of time. Volatility is the mathematical square root of variance, and variance swaps are used for similar purposes as volatility swaps.

An inflation swap is an agreement between two parties in which one party agrees to pay the cumulative percentage increase in a reference inflation index (e.g., the Consumer Price Index) and the other party agrees to pay a compounded fixed rate over a stated period of time. In an inflation asset swap, the reference instrument is a bond with a value that is tied to inflation (e.g., Treasury Inflation-Protected Security) and one party pays the cash flows from the reference instrument in exchange for a payment based on a fixed rate from the other party. The Fund may enter into inflation swaps and inflation asset swaps to protect the Fund against changes in the rate of inflation.

A correlation swap is an agreement in which two parties agree to exchange cash payments based on the correlation between specified reference instruments over a set period of time. Two assets would be considered closely correlated if, for example, their daily returns vary in similar proportions or along similar trajectories. For example, the Fund may enter into correlation swaps to change its exposure to increases or decreases in the correlation between prices or returns of different Fund holdings.

A swaption is an option to enter into a swap agreement. Like other types of options, the buyer of a swaption pays a non-refundable premium for the option and obtains the right, but not the obligation, to enter into or modify an underlying swap or to modify the terms of an existing swap on agreed-upon terms. The seller of a swaption, in exchange for the premium, becomes obligated (if the option is exercised) to enter into or modify an underlying swap on agreed-upon terms, which generally entails a greater risk of loss than incurred in buying a swaption. The purchase of an interest rate cap entitles the purchaser, to the extent that a specified index exceeds a predetermined interest rate, to receive payment of interest on a notional principal amount from the party selling such interest rate cap. The purchase of an interest rate floor entitles the purchaser, to the extent that a specified index falls below a predetermined interest rate, to receive payments of interest on a notional principal amount from the party selling the interest rate floor. An interest rate collar is the combination of a cap and a floor that preserves a certain return within a predetermined range of interest rates.

A great deal of flexibility may be possible in the way swap transactions are structured. However, generally the Fund will enter into interest rate, total return, credit, mortgage and equity swaps on a net basis, which means that the two payment streams are netted out, with the Fund receiving or paying, as the case may be, only the net amount of the two payments. Interest rate, total return, credit, mortgage and equity swaps do not normally involve the delivery of securities, other underlying assets or principal. Accordingly, the risk of loss with respect to interest rate, total return, credit, mortgage and equity swaps is normally limited to the net amount of payments that the Fund is contractually obligated to make. If the other party to an interest rate, total return, credit, mortgage or equity swap defaults, the Fund's risk of loss consists of the net amount of interest payments that the Fund is contractually entitled to receive, if any.

In contrast, currency swaps usually involve the delivery of a gross payment stream in one designated currency in exchange for a gross payment stream in another designated currency. Therefore, the entire payment stream under a currency swap is subject to the risk that the other party to the swap will default on its contractual delivery obligations. A credit swap may have as reference obligations one or more securities that may, or may not, be currently held by the Fund. The protection "buyer" in a credit swap is generally obligated to pay the protection "seller" an upfront or a periodic stream of payments over the term of the swap provided that no credit event, such as a default, on a reference obligation has occurred. If a credit event occurs, the seller generally must pay the buyer the "par value" (full notional value) of the swap in exchange for an equal face amount of deliverable obligations of the reference entity described in the swap, or the seller may be required to deliver the related net cash amount, if the swap is cash settled. The Fund may be either the protection buyer or seller in the transaction. If the Fund is a buyer and no credit event occurs, the Fund may recover nothing if the swap is held through its termination date. However, if a credit event occurs, the buyer generally may elect to receive the full notional value of the swap in exchange for an equal face amount of deliverable obligations of the reference entity whose value may have significantly decreased. As a seller, the Fund generally receives an upfront payment or a rate of income throughout the term of the swap provided that there is no credit event. As the seller, the Fund would effectively add leverage to its portfolio because, in addition to its total net assets, the Fund would be subject to investment exposure on the notional amount of the swap. If a credit event occurs, the value of any deliverable obligation received by the Fund as seller, coupled with the upfront or periodic payments previously received, may be less than the full notional value it pays to the buyer, resulting in a loss of value to the Fund.

As a result of recent regulatory developments, certain standardized swaps are currently subject to mandatory central clearing and some of these cleared swaps must be traded on an exchange or swap execution facility ("SEF"). A SEF is a trading platform in which multiple market participants can execute swap transactions by accepting bids and offers made by multiple other participants on the platform. Transactions executed on a SEF may increase market transparency and liquidity but may cause the Fund to incur increased expenses to execute swaps. Central clearing should decrease counterparty risk and increase liquidity compared to bilateral swaps because central clearing interposes the central clearinghouse as the counterparty to each participant's swap. However, central clearing does not eliminate counterparty risk or liquidity risk entirely. In addition, depending on the size of the Fund and other factors, the margin required under the rules of a clearinghouse and by a clearing member may be in excess of the collateral required to be posted by the Fund to support its obligations under a similar bilateral swap. However, the CFTC and other applicable regulators have adopted rules imposing certain margin requirements, including minimums, on uncleared swaps which may result in the Fund and its counterparties posting higher margin amounts for uncleared swaps. Requiring margin on uncleared swaps may reduce, but not eliminate, counterparty credit risk.

The use of swaps and swaptions, as well as interest rate caps, floors and collars, is a highly specialized activity which involves investment techniques and risks different from those associated with ordinary portfolio securities transactions. The use of a swap requires an understanding not only of the referenced asset, reference rate, or index but also of the swap itself, without the benefit of observing the performance of the swap under all possible market conditions.

In addition, these transactions can involve greater risks than if the Fund had invested in the reference obligation directly because, in addition to general market risks, swaps are subject to liquidity risk, counterparty risk, credit risk and pricing risk. Regulators also may impose limits on an entity's or group of entities' positions in certain swaps. However, certain risks are reduced (but not eliminated) if the Fund invests in cleared swaps. Bilateral swap agreements are two party contracts that may have terms of greater than seven days. Moreover, the Fund bears the risk of loss of the amount expected to be received under a swap agreement in the event of the default or bankruptcy of a swap counterparty. Many swaps are complex and often valued subjectively. Swaps and other derivatives may also be subject to pricing or "basis" risk, which exists when the price of a particular derivative diverges from the price of corresponding cash market instruments. Under certain market conditions it may not be economically feasible to imitate a transaction or liquidate a position in time to avoid a loss or take advantage of an opportunity. If a swap transaction is particularly large or if the relevant market is illiquid, it may not be possible to initiate a transaction or liquidate a position at an advantageous time or price, which may result in significant losses.

Certain rules also require centralized reporting of detailed information about many types of cleared and uncleared swaps. This information is available to regulators and, to a more limited extent and on an anonymous basis, to the public. Reporting of swap data may result in greater market transparency, which may be beneficial to funds that use swaps to implement trading strategies. However, these rules place potential additional administrative obligations on these funds, and the safeguards established to protect anonymity may not function as expected.

The swap market has grown substantially in recent years with a large number of banks and investment banking firms acting both as principals and as agents utilizing standardized swap documentation. As a result, the swap market has become relatively liquid in comparison with the markets for other similar instruments which are traded in the interbank market. These and other factors discussed in the section above, titled "Illiquid Investments," may impact the liquidity of investments in swaps.

### **Mortgage Dollar Rolls**

The Fund may enter into mortgage dollar rolls, in which the Fund sells securities for delivery in the current month and simultaneously contracts with the same counterparty to repurchase similar, but not identical securities on a specified future date. During the roll period, the Fund loses the right to receive principal and interest paid on the securities sold. However, the Fund would benefit to the extent of any difference between the price received for the securities sold and the lower forward price for the future purchase or fee income plus the interest earned on the cash proceeds of the securities sold until the settlement date of the forward purchase. All cash proceeds will be invested in instruments that are permissible investments for the applicable Fund.

For financial reporting and tax purposes, the Fund treats mortgage dollar rolls as two separate transactions; one involving the purchase of a security and a separate transaction involving a sale. The Fund does not currently intend to enter into mortgage dollar rolls for financing and do not treat them as borrowings.

Mortgage dollar rolls involve certain risks including the following: if the broker-dealer to whom the Fund sells the security becomes insolvent, the Fund's right to purchase or repurchase the mortgage-related securities subject to the mortgage dollar roll may be restricted. Also, the instrument which the Fund is required to repurchase may be worth less than an instrument which the Fund originally held. Successful use of mortgage dollar rolls will depend upon the Investment Adviser's ability to manage the Fund's interest rate and mortgage prepayments exposure. For these reasons, there is no assurance that mortgage dollar rolls can be successfully employed. The use of this technique may diminish the investment performance of the Fund compared with what such performance would have been without the use of mortgage dollar rolls.

## **Mortgage Loans and Mortgage-Backed Securities**

The Fund may invest in mortgage loans, mortgage pass-through securities and other securities representing an interest in or collateralized by adjustable and fixed-rate mortgage loans including collateralized mortgage obligations, real estate mortgage investment conduits (“REMICs”) and stripped mortgage-backed securities, as described below (“Mortgage-Backed Securities”).

Mortgage-Backed Securities are subject to both call risk and extension risk. Because of these risks, these securities can have significantly greater price and yield volatility than traditional fixed income securities.

### **General Characteristics of Mortgage Backed Securities**

In general, each mortgage pool underlying Mortgage-Backed Securities consists of mortgage loans evidenced by promissory notes secured by first mortgages or first deeds of trust or other similar security instruments creating a first lien on owner occupied and non-owner occupied one-unit to four-unit residential properties, multi-family (i.e., five-units or more) properties, agricultural properties, commercial properties and mixed use properties (the “Mortgaged Properties”). The Mortgaged Properties may consist of detached individual dwelling units, multi-family dwelling units, individual condominiums, townhouses, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, row houses, individual units in planned unit developments, other attached dwelling units (“Residential Mortgaged Properties”) or commercial properties, such as office properties, retail properties, hospitality properties, industrial properties, healthcare related properties or other types of income producing real property (“Commercial Mortgaged Properties”). Residential Mortgaged Properties may also include residential investment properties and second homes. In addition, the Mortgage-Backed Securities which are residential mortgage-backed securities may also consist of mortgage loans evidenced by promissory notes secured entirely or in part by second priority mortgage liens on Residential Mortgaged Properties.

The investment characteristics of adjustable and fixed rate Mortgage-Backed Securities differ from those of traditional fixed income securities. The major differences include the payment of interest and principal on Mortgage-Backed Securities on a more frequent (usually monthly) schedule, and the possibility that principal may be prepaid at any time due to prepayments on the underlying mortgage loans or other assets. These differences can result in significantly greater price and yield volatility than is the case with traditional fixed income securities. As a result, if the Fund purchases Mortgage-Backed Securities at a premium, a faster than expected prepayment rate will reduce both the market value and the yield to maturity from their anticipated levels. A prepayment rate that is slower than expected will have the opposite effect, increasing yield to maturity and market value. Conversely, if the Fund purchases Mortgage-Backed Securities at a discount, faster than expected prepayments will increase, while slower than expected prepayments will reduce yield to maturity and market value. To the extent that the Fund invests in Mortgage-Backed Securities, the Investment Adviser may seek to manage these potential risks by investing in a variety of Mortgage-Backed Securities and by using certain hedging techniques.

Prepayments on a pool of mortgage loans are influenced by changes in current interest rates and a variety of economic, geographic, social and other factors (such as changes in mortgagor housing needs, job transfers, unemployment, mortgagor equity in the mortgage properties and servicing decisions). The timing and level of prepayments cannot be predicted. A predominant factor affecting the prepayment rate on a pool of mortgage loans is the difference between the interest rates on outstanding mortgage loans and prevailing mortgage loan interest rates (giving consideration to the cost of any refinancing). Generally, prepayments on mortgage loans will increase during a period of falling mortgage interest rates and decrease during a period of rising mortgage interest rates. Accordingly, the amounts of prepayments available for reinvestment by the Fund are likely to be greater during a period of declining mortgage interest rates. If general interest rates decline, such prepayments are likely to be reinvested at lower interest rates than the Fund was earning on the Mortgage-Backed Securities that were prepaid. Due to these factors, Mortgage-Backed Securities may be less effective than U.S. Treasury and other types of debt securities of similar maturity at maintaining yields during periods of declining interest rates. Because the Fund’s investments in Mortgage-Backed Securities are interest-rate sensitive, the Fund’s performance will depend in part upon the ability of the Fund to anticipate and respond to fluctuations in market interest rates and to utilize appropriate strategies to maximize returns to the Fund while attempting to minimize the associated risks to its investment capital. Prepayments may have a disproportionate effect on certain Mortgage-Backed Securities and other multiple class pass-through securities, which are discussed below.

The rate of interest paid on Mortgage-Backed Securities is normally lower than the rate of interest paid on the mortgages included in the underlying pool due to (among other things) the fees paid to any servicer, special servicer and trustee for the trust fund which holds the mortgage pool, other costs and expenses of such trust fund, fees paid to any guarantor, such as Ginnie Mae (as defined below) or to any credit enhancers, mortgage pool insurers, bond insurers and/or hedge providers, and due to any yield retained by the issuer. Actual yield to the holder may vary from the coupon rate, even if adjustable, if the Mortgage-Backed Securities are purchased or traded in the secondary market at a premium or discount. In addition, there is normally some delay between the time the issuer receives mortgage payments from the servicer and the time the issuer (or the trustee of the trust fund which holds the mortgage pool) makes the payments on the Mortgage-Backed Securities, and this delay reduces the effective yield to the holder of such securities.

The issuers of certain mortgage-backed obligations may elect to have the pool of mortgage loans (or indirect interests in mortgage loans) underlying the securities treated as a REMIC, which is subject to special federal income tax rules. A description of the types of mortgage loans and Mortgage-Backed Securities in which the Fund may invest is provided below. The descriptions are general and summary in nature, and do not detail every possible variation of the types of securities that are permissible investments for the Fund.

Delinquencies, defaults and losses on residential mortgage loans may increase substantially over certain periods, which may affect the performance of the Mortgage-Backed Securities in which the Fund may invest. Mortgage loans backing non-agency Mortgage-Backed Securities are more sensitive to economic factors that could affect the ability of borrowers to pay their obligations under the mortgage loans backing these securities. In addition, housing prices and appraisal values in many states and localities over certain periods have declined or stopped appreciating. A sustained decline or an extended flattening of those values may result in additional increases in delinquencies and losses on Mortgage-Backed Securities generally.

Adverse changes in market conditions and regulatory climate may reduce the cash flow which the Fund, to the extent it invests in Mortgage-Backed Securities or other asset-backed securities, receives from such securities and increase the incidence and severity of credit events and losses in respect of such securities. In the event that interest rate spreads for Mortgage-Backed Securities and other asset-backed securities widen following the purchase of such assets by the Fund, the market value of such securities is likely to decline and, in the case of a substantial spread widening, could decline by a substantial amount. Furthermore, adverse changes in market conditions may result in reduced liquidity in the market for Mortgage-Backed Securities and other asset-backed securities (including the Mortgage-Backed Securities and other asset-backed securities in which the Fund may invest) and an unwillingness by banks, financial institutions and investors to extend credit to servicers, originators and other participants in the market for Mortgage-Backed and other asset-backed securities. As a result, the liquidity and/or the market value of any Mortgage-Backed or asset-backed securities that are owned by the Fund may experience declines after they are purchased by the Fund.

### **General Regulatory Considerations of Mortgage-Backed Securities**

The unprecedented disruption in the mortgage- and asset-backed securities markets in 2008-2009 resulted in significant downward price pressures as well as foreclosures and defaults in residential and commercial real estate. As a result of these events, the liquidity of the mortgage- and asset-backed securities markets was negatively impacted during that time. Following the market dislocation, the U.S. Congress passed the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (the “Dodd-Frank Act”), which imposed a new regulatory framework over the U.S. financial services industry and the consumer credit markets in general. Among its other provisions, the Dodd-Frank Act creates a liquidation framework under which the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (“FDIC”), may be appointed as receiver following a “systemic risk determination” by the Secretary of Treasury (in consultation with the President) for the resolution of certain nonbank financial companies and other entities, defined as “covered financial companies”, and commonly referred to as “systemically important entities”, in the event such a company is in default or in danger of default and the resolution of such a company under other applicable law would have serious adverse effects on financial stability in the United States, and also for the resolution of certain of their subsidiaries. No assurances can be given that this new liquidation framework would not apply to the originators of asset-backed securities, including Mortgage-Backed Securities, or their respective subsidiaries, including the issuers and depositors of such securities, although the expectation embedded in the Dodd-Frank Act is that the framework will be invoked only very rarely. Guidance from the FDIC indicates that such new framework will largely be exercised in a manner consistent with the existing bankruptcy laws, which is the insolvency regime that would otherwise apply to the sponsors, depositors and issuing entities with respect to asset-backed securities, including Mortgage-Backed Securities. The

application of such liquidation framework to such entities could result in decreases or delays in amounts paid on, and hence the market value of, the Mortgage-Backed or asset-backed securities that may be owned by the Fund.

### **Certain General Characteristics of Mortgage Loans**

Adjustable Rate Mortgage Loans (“ARMs”). The Fund may invest in ARMs. ARMs generally provide for a fixed initial mortgage interest rate for a specified period of time. Thereafter, the interest rates (the “Mortgage Interest Rates”) may be subject to periodic adjustment based on changes in the applicable index rate (the “Index Rate”). The adjusted rate would be equal to the Index Rate plus a fixed percentage spread over the Index Rate established for each ARM at the time of its origination. ARMs allow the Fund to participate in increases in interest rates through periodic increases in the securities coupon rates. During periods of declining interest rates, coupon rates may readjust downward resulting in lower yields to the Fund.

Adjustable interest rates can cause payment increases that some mortgagors may find difficult to make. However, certain ARMs may provide that the Mortgage Interest Rate may not be adjusted to a rate above an applicable lifetime maximum rate or below an applicable lifetime minimum rate for such ARM. Certain ARMs may also be subject to limitations on the maximum amount by which the Mortgage Interest Rate may adjust for any single adjustment period (the “Maximum Adjustment”). Other ARMs (“Negatively Amortizing ARMs”) may provide instead or as well for limitations on changes in the monthly payment on such ARMs. Limitations on monthly payments can result in monthly payments which are greater or less than the amount necessary to amortize a Negatively Amortizing ARM by its maturity at the Mortgage Interest Rate in effect in any particular month. In the event that a monthly payment is not sufficient to pay the interest accruing on a Negatively Amortizing ARM, any such excess interest is added to the principal balance of the loan, causing negative amortization, and will be repaid through future monthly payments. It may take borrowers under Negatively Amortizing ARMs longer periods of time to build up equity and may increase the likelihood of default by such borrowers. In the event that a monthly payment exceeds the sum of the interest accrued at the applicable Mortgage Interest Rate and the principal payment which would have been necessary to amortize the outstanding principal balance over the remaining term of the loan, the excess (or “accelerated amortization”) further reduces the principal balance of the ARM. Negatively Amortizing ARMs do not provide for the extension of their original maturity to accommodate changes in their Mortgage Interest Rate. As a result, unless there is a periodic recalculation of the payment amount (which there generally is), the final payment may be substantially larger than the other payments. After the expiration of the initial fixed rate period and upon the periodic recalculation of the payment to cause timely amortization of the related mortgage loan, the monthly payment on such mortgage loan may increase substantially which may, in turn, increase the risk of the borrower defaulting in respect of such mortgage loan. These limitations on periodic increases in interest rates and on changes in monthly payments protect borrowers from unlimited interest rate and payment increases, but may result in increased credit exposure and prepayment risks for lenders. When interest due on a mortgage loan is added to the principal balance of such mortgage loan, the related mortgaged property provides proportionately less security for the repayment of such mortgage loan. Therefore, if the related borrower defaults on such mortgage loan, there is a greater likelihood that a loss will be incurred upon any liquidation of the mortgaged property which secures such mortgage loan.

ARMs also have the risk of prepayment. The rate of principal prepayments with respect to ARMs has fluctuated in recent years. The value of Mortgage-Backed Securities collateralized by ARMs is less likely to rise during periods of declining interest rates than the value of fixed-rate securities during such periods. Accordingly, ARMs may be subject to a greater rate of principal repayments in a declining interest rate environment resulting in lower yields to the Fund. For example, if prevailing interest rates fall significantly, ARMs could be subject to higher prepayment rates (than if prevailing interest rates remain constant or increase) because the availability of low fixed-rate mortgages may encourage mortgagors to refinance their ARMs to “lock-in” a fixed-rate mortgage. On the other hand, during periods of rising interest rates, the value of ARMs will lag behind changes in the market rate. ARMs are also typically subject to maximum increases and decreases in the interest rate adjustment which can be made on any one adjustment date, in any one year, or during the life of the security. In the event of dramatic increases or decreases in prevailing market interest rates, the value of the Fund’s investment in ARMs may fluctuate more substantially because these limits may prevent the security from fully adjusting its interest rate to the prevailing market rates. As with fixed-rate mortgages, ARM prepayment rates vary in both stable and changing interest rate environments. There are two main categories of indices which provide the basis for rate adjustments on ARMs: those based on U.S. Treasury securities and those derived from a calculated measure, such as a cost of funds index or a moving average of mortgage rates. Indices commonly used for this purpose include the one-year, three-year and five-year constant maturity Treasury rates, the three-month Treasury bill rate, the 180-day Treasury bill rate, rates on longer-term Treasury securities, the 11th District Federal Home Loan Bank Cost of Funds, the National Median Cost of Funds, the one-month, three-month,

six-month or one-year SOFR or another rate determined using SOFR, the prime rate of a specific bank, or commercial paper rates. Some indices, such as the one-year constant maturity Treasury rate, closely mirror changes in market interest rate levels. Others, such as the 11th District Federal Home Loan Bank Cost of Funds index, tend to lag behind changes in market rate levels and tend to be somewhat less volatile. The degree of volatility in the market value of ARMs in the Fund's portfolio and, therefore, in the NAV of the Fund's shares, will be a function of the length of the interest rate reset periods and the degree of volatility in the applicable indices.

Fixed-Rate Mortgage Loans. Generally, fixed-rate mortgage loans included in mortgage pools (the "Fixed-Rate Mortgage Loans") will bear simple interest at fixed annual rates and have original terms to maturity ranging from 5 to 40 years. Fixed-Rate Mortgage Loans generally provide for monthly payments of principal and interest in substantially equal installments for the term of the mortgage note in sufficient amounts to fully amortize principal by maturity, although certain Fixed-Rate Mortgage Loans provide for a large final "balloon" payment upon maturity.

Certain Legal Considerations of Mortgage Loans. The following is a discussion of certain legal and regulatory aspects of the mortgage loans in which the Fund may invest. This discussion is not exhaustive, and does not address all of the legal or regulatory aspects affecting mortgage loans. These regulations may impair the ability of a mortgage lender to enforce its rights under the mortgage documents. These regulations may also adversely affect the Fund's investments in Mortgage-Backed Securities (including those issued or guaranteed by the U.S. Government, its agencies or instrumentalities) by delaying the Fund's receipt of payments derived from principal or interest on mortgage loans affected by such regulations.

1. Foreclosure. A foreclosure of a defaulted mortgage loan may be delayed due to compliance with statutory notice or service of process provisions, difficulties in locating necessary parties or legal challenges to the mortgagee's right to foreclose. Depending upon market conditions, the ultimate proceeds of the sale of foreclosed property may not equal the amounts owed on the Mortgage-Backed Securities. Furthermore, courts in some cases have imposed general equitable principles upon foreclosure generally designed to relieve the borrower from the legal effect of default and have required lenders to undertake affirmative and expensive actions to determine the causes for the default and the likelihood of loan reinstatement.

2. Rights of Redemption. In some states, after foreclosure of a mortgage loan, the borrower and foreclosed junior lienors are given a statutory period in which to redeem the property, which right may diminish the mortgagee's ability to sell the property.

3. Legislative Limitations. In addition to anti-deficiency and related legislation, numerous other federal and state statutory provisions, including the federal bankruptcy laws and state laws affording relief to debtors, may interfere with or affect the ability of a secured mortgage lender to enforce its security interest. For example, a bankruptcy court may grant the debtor a reasonable time to cure a default on a mortgage loan, including a payment default. The court in certain instances may also reduce the monthly payments due under such mortgage loan, change the rate of interest, reduce the principal balance of the loan to the then-current appraised value of the related mortgaged property, alter the mortgage loan repayment schedule and grant priority of certain liens over the lien of the mortgage loan. If a court relieves a borrower's obligation to repay amounts otherwise due on a mortgage loan, the mortgage loan servicer will not be required to advance such amounts, and any loss may be borne by the holders of securities backed by such loans. In addition, numerous federal and state consumer protection laws impose penalties for failure to comply with specific requirements in connection with origination and servicing of mortgage loans.

4. "Due-on-Sale" Provisions. Fixed-rate mortgage loans may contain a so-called "due-on-sale" clause permitting acceleration of the maturity of the mortgage loan if the borrower transfers the property. The Garn-St. Germain Depository Institutions Act of 1982 sets forth nine specific instances in which no mortgage lender covered by that Act may exercise a "due-on-sale" clause upon a transfer of property. The inability to enforce a "due-on-sale" clause or the lack of such a clause in mortgage loan documents may result in a mortgage loan being assumed by a purchaser of the property that bears an interest rate below the current market rate.

5. Usury Laws. Some states prohibit charging interest on mortgage loans in excess of statutory limits. If such limits are exceeded, substantial penalties may be incurred and, in some cases, enforceability of the obligation to pay principal and interest may be affected.

6. Governmental Action, Legislation and Regulation. Legislative, regulatory and enforcement actions seeking to prevent or restrict foreclosures or providing forbearance relief to borrowers of residential mortgage loans may adversely affect the value of

Mortgage-Backed Securities (e.g., the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act). Legislative or regulatory initiatives by federal, state or local legislative bodies or administrative agencies, if enacted or adopted, could delay foreclosure or the exercise of other remedies, provide new defenses to foreclosure, or otherwise impair the ability of the loan servicer to foreclose or realize on a defaulted residential mortgage loan included in a pool of residential mortgage loans backing such residential Mortgage-Backed Securities. While the nature or extent of limitations on foreclosure or exercise of other remedies that may be enacted cannot be predicted, any such governmental actions that interfere with the foreclosure process or are designed to protect customers could increase the costs of such foreclosures or exercise of other remedies in respect of residential mortgage loans which collateralize Mortgage-Backed Securities held by the Fund, delay the timing or reduce the amount of recoveries on defaulted residential mortgage loans which collateralize Mortgage-Backed Securities held by the Fund, and consequently, could adversely impact the yields and distributions the Fund may receive in respect of its ownership of Mortgage-Backed Securities collateralized by residential mortgage loans.

Government Guaranteed Mortgage-Backed Securities. There are several types of government guaranteed Mortgage-Backed Securities currently available, including guaranteed mortgage pass-through certificates and multiple class securities, which include guaranteed Real Estate Mortgage Investment Conduit Certificates (“REMIC Certificates”), other collateralized mortgage obligations and stripped Mortgage-Backed Securities. The Fund is permitted to invest in other types of Mortgage-Backed Securities that may be available in the future, to the extent consistent with its investment policies and objective.

The Fund’s investments in Mortgage-Backed Securities may include securities issued or guaranteed by the U.S. Government or one of its agencies, authorities, instrumentalities or sponsored enterprises, such as the Government National Mortgage Association (“Ginnie Mae”), Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Ginnie Mae securities are backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. Government, which means that the U.S. Government guarantees that the interest and principal will be paid when due. Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac securities are not backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. Government. Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac have the ability to borrow from the U.S. Treasury, and as a result, they have historically been viewed by the market as high quality securities with low credit risks. From time to time, proposals have been introduced before Congress for the purpose of restricting or eliminating federal sponsorship of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. The Trust cannot predict what legislation, if any, may be proposed in the future in Congress as regards such sponsorship or which proposals, if any, might be enacted. Such proposals, if enacted, might materially and adversely affect the availability of government guaranteed Mortgage-Backed Securities and the liquidity and value of the Fund’s portfolio.

There is risk that the U.S. Government will not provide financial support to its agencies, authorities, instrumentalities or sponsored enterprises. The Fund may purchase U.S. Government Securities that are not backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. Government, such as those issued by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. The maximum potential liability of the issuers of some U.S. Government Securities held by the Fund may greatly exceed such issuers’ current resources, including such issuers’ legal right to support from the U.S. Treasury. It is possible that these issuers will not have the funds to meet their payment obligations in the future.

Below is a general discussion of certain types of guaranteed Mortgage-Backed Securities in which the Fund may invest.

- Ginnie Mae Certificates. Ginnie Mae is a wholly-owned corporate instrumentality of the United States. Ginnie Mae is authorized to guarantee the timely payment of the principal of and interest on certificates that are based on and backed by a pool of mortgage loans insured by the Federal Housing Administration (“FHA”), or guaranteed by the Veterans Administration (“VA”), or by pools of other eligible mortgage loans. In order to meet its obligations under any guaranty, Ginnie Mae is authorized to borrow from the U.S. Treasury in an unlimited amount. The National Housing Act provides that the full faith and credit of the U.S. Government is pledged to the timely payment of principal and interest by Ginnie Mae of amounts due on Ginnie Mae certificates. Fannie Mae Certificates. Fannie Mae is a stockholder-owned corporation chartered under an act of the U.S. Congress. Generally, Fannie Mae Certificates are issued and guaranteed by Fannie Mae and represent an undivided interest in a pool of mortgage loans (a “Pool”) formed by Fannie Mae. A Pool consists of residential mortgage loans either previously owned by Fannie Mae or purchased by it in connection with the formation of the Pool. The mortgage loans may be either conventional mortgage loans (i.e., not insured or guaranteed by any U.S. Government agency) or mortgage loans that are either insured by the FHA or guaranteed by the VA. However, the mortgage loans in Fannie Mae Pools are primarily conventional mortgage loans. The lenders originating and servicing the mortgage loans are subject to certain eligibility requirements established by Fannie Mae. Fannie Mae has certain contractual responsibilities. With respect to each Pool, Fannie Mae is obligated to distribute scheduled installments of principal and interest after

Fannie Mae's servicing and guaranty fee, whether or not received, to Certificate holders. Fannie Mae also is obligated to distribute to holders of Certificates an amount equal to the full principal balance of any foreclosed mortgage loan, whether or not such principal balance is actually recovered. The obligations of Fannie Mae under its guaranty of the Fannie Mae Certificates are obligations solely of Fannie Mae. See "Certain Additional Information with Respect to Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae" below.

- Freddie Mac Certificates. Freddie Mac is a publicly held U.S. Government sponsored enterprise. A principal activity of Freddie Mac currently is the purchase of first lien, conventional, residential and multifamily mortgage loans and participation interests in such mortgage loans and their resale in the form of mortgage securities, primarily Freddie Mac Certificates. A Freddie Mac Certificate represents a pro rata interest in a group of mortgage loans or participations in mortgage loans (a "Freddie Mac Certificate group") purchased by Freddie Mac. Freddie Mac guarantees to each registered holder of a Freddie Mac Certificate the timely payment of interest at the rate provided for by such Freddie Mac Certificate (whether or not received on the underlying loans). Freddie Mac also guarantees to each registered Certificate holder ultimate collection of all principal of the related mortgage loans, without any offset or deduction, but does not, generally, guarantee the timely payment of scheduled principal. The obligations of Freddie Mac under its guaranty of Freddie Mac Certificates are obligations solely of Freddie Mac. See "Certain Additional Information with Respect to Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae" below.

Under the direction of FHFA (as defined below), Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac have entered into a joint initiative to develop a common securitization platform ("CSP") for the issuance of a uniform Mortgage-Backed Security ("UMBS") (the "Single Security Initiative"), which would generally align the characteristics of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac Certificates. The Single Security Initiative is intended to maximize liquidity for both Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac Mortgage-Backed Securities in the "to-be-announced" market. The CSP began issuing UMBS in June 2019. While the initial effects of the issuance of UMBS on the market for mortgage-related securities have been relatively minimal, the long-term effects are still uncertain.

The mortgage loans underlying the Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae Certificates consist of adjustable rate or fixed-rate mortgage loans with original terms to maturity of up to forty years. These mortgage loans are usually secured by first liens on one-to-four-family residential properties or multi-family projects. Each mortgage loan must meet the applicable standards set forth in the law creating Freddie Mac or Fannie Mae. A Freddie Mac Certificate group may include whole loans, participation interests in whole loans, undivided interests in whole loans and participations comprising another Freddie Mac Certificate group.

Conventional Mortgage Loans. The conventional mortgage loans underlying the Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae Certificates consist of adjustable rate or fixed-rate mortgage loans normally with original terms to maturity of between five and thirty years. Substantially all of these mortgage loans are secured by first liens on one- to four-family residential properties or multi-family projects. Each mortgage loan must meet the applicable standards set forth in the law creating Freddie Mac or Fannie Mae. A Freddie Mac Certificate group may include whole loans, participation interests in whole loans, undivided interests in whole loans and participations comprising another Freddie Mac Certificate group.

Certain Additional Information with Respect to Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae. The volatility and disruption that impacted the capital and credit markets during late 2008 and into 2009 have led to increased market concerns about Freddie Mac's and Fannie Mae's ability to withstand future credit losses associated with securities held in their investment portfolios, and on which they provide guarantees, without the direct support of the federal government. On September 6, 2008, both Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae were placed under the conservatorship of the Federal Housing Finance Agency ("FHFA"). Under the plan of conservatorship, the FHFA has assumed control of, and generally has the power to direct, the operations of Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae, and is empowered to exercise all powers collectively held by their respective shareholders, directors and officers, including the power to (1) take over the assets of and operate Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae with all the powers of the shareholders, the directors, and the officers of Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae and conduct all business of Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae; (2) collect all obligations and money due to Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae; (3) perform all functions of Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae which are consistent with the conservator's appointment; (4) preserve and conserve the assets and property of Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae; and (5) contract for assistance in fulfilling any function, activity, action or duty of the conservator. In addition, in connection with the actions taken by the FHFA, the U.S. Treasury Department (the "Treasury") entered into certain preferred stock purchase agreements with each of Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae which established the Treasury as the holder of a new class of senior preferred stock in each of Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae, which stock was issued in connection with financial contributions from the Treasury to Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae. The conditions attached to the financial contribution made by the Treasury to Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae and the issuance of this senior

preferred stock placed significant restrictions on the activities of Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae. Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae must obtain the consent of the Treasury to, among other things, (i) make any payment to purchase or redeem its capital stock or pay any dividend other than in respect of the senior preferred stock issued to the Treasury, (ii) issue capital stock of any kind, (iii) terminate the conservatorship of the FHFA except in connection with a receivership, or (iv) increase its debt beyond certain specified levels. In addition, significant restrictions were placed on the maximum size of each of Freddie Mac's and Fannie Mae's respective portfolios of mortgages and Mortgage-Backed Securities, and the purchase agreements entered into by Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae provide that the maximum size of their portfolios of these assets must decrease by a specified percentage each year. On June 16, 2010, FHFA ordered Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac's stock de-listed from the New York Stock Exchange ("NYSE") after the price of common stock in Fannie Mae fell below the NYSE minimum average closing price of \$1 for more than 30 days.

The FHFA and the White House have made public statements regarding plans to consider ending the conservatorships of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. In the event that Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac are taken out of conservatorship, it is unclear how the capital structure of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac would be constructed and what effects, if any, there may be on Fannie Mae's and Freddie Mac's creditworthiness and guarantees of certain Mortgage-Backed Securities. It is also unclear whether the Treasury would continue to enforce its rights or perform its obligations under the senior preferred stock programs. Should Fannie Mae's and Freddie Mac's conservatorship end, there could be an adverse impact on the value of their securities, which could cause losses to the Fund.

Privately Issued Mortgage-Backed Securities. The Fund may invest in privately issued Mortgage-Backed Securities. Privately issued Mortgage-Backed Securities are generally backed by pools of conventional (i.e., non-government guaranteed or insured) mortgage loans. The seller or servicer of the underlying mortgage obligations will generally make representations and warranties to certificate-holders as to certain characteristics of the mortgage loans and as to the accuracy of certain information furnished to the trustee in respect of each such mortgage loan. Upon a breach of any representation or warranty that materially and adversely affects the interests of the related certificate-holders in a mortgage loan, the seller or servicer generally will be obligated either to cure the breach in all material respects, to repurchase the mortgage loan or, if the related agreement so provides, to substitute in its place a mortgage loan pursuant to the conditions set forth therein. Such a repurchase or substitution obligation may constitute the sole remedy available to the related certificate-holders or the trustee for the material breach of any such representation or warranty by the seller or servicer.

### **Mortgage Pass-Through Securities**

The Fund may invest in both government guaranteed and privately issued mortgage pass-through securities ("Mortgage Pass-Throughs") that are fixed or adjustable rate Mortgage-Backed Securities which provide for monthly payments that are a "pass-through" of the monthly interest and principal payments (including any prepayments) made by the individual borrowers on the pooled mortgage loans, net of any fees or other amounts paid to any guarantor, administrator and/or servicer of the underlying mortgage loans. The seller or servicer of the underlying mortgage obligations will generally make representations and warranties to certificate-holders as to certain characteristics of the mortgage loans and as to the accuracy of certain information furnished to the trustee in respect of each such mortgage loan. Upon a breach of any representation or warranty that materially and adversely affects the interests of the related certificate-holders in a mortgage loan, the seller or servicer generally may be obligated either to cure the breach in all material respects, to repurchase the mortgage loan or, if the related agreement so provides, to substitute in its place a mortgage loan pursuant to the conditions set forth therein. Such a repurchase or substitution obligation may constitute the sole remedy available to the related certificate-holders or the trustee for the material breach of any such representation or warranty by the seller or servicer. The following discussion describes certain aspects of only a few of the wide variety of structures of Mortgage Pass-Throughs that are available or may be issued.

General Description of Certificates. Mortgage Pass-Throughs may be issued in one or more classes of senior certificates and one or more classes of subordinate certificates. Each such class may bear a different pass-through rate. Generally, each certificate will evidence the specified interest of the holder thereof in the payments of principal or interest or both in respect of the mortgage pool comprising part of the trust fund for such certificates.

Any class of certificates may also be divided into subclasses entitled to varying amounts of principal and interest. If a REMIC election has been made, certificates of such subclasses may be entitled to payments on the basis of a stated principal balance and stated interest rate, and payments among different subclasses may be made on a sequential, concurrent, pro rata or disproportionate

basis, or any combination thereof. The stated interest rate on any such subclass of certificates may be a fixed rate or one which varies in direct or inverse relationship to an objective interest index.

Generally, each registered holder of a certificate will be entitled to receive its pro rata share of monthly distributions of all or a portion of principal of the underlying mortgage loans or of interest on the principal balances thereof, which accrues at the applicable mortgage pass-through rate, or both. The difference between the mortgage interest rate and the related mortgage pass-through rate (less the amount, if any, of retained yield) with respect to each mortgage loan will generally be paid to the servicer as a servicing fee. Because certain adjustable rate mortgage loans included in a mortgage pool may provide for deferred interest (i.e., negative amortization), the amount of interest actually paid by a mortgagor in any month may be less than the amount of interest accrued on the outstanding principal balance of the related mortgage loan during the relevant period at the applicable mortgage interest rate. In such event, the amount of interest that is treated as deferred interest will generally be added to the principal balance of the related mortgage loan and will be distributed pro rata to certificate-holders as principal of such mortgage loan when paid by the mortgagor in subsequent monthly payments or at maturity.

Ratings. The ratings assigned by a rating organization to Mortgage Pass-Throughs generally address the likelihood of the receipt of distributions on the underlying mortgage loans by the related certificate-holders under the agreements pursuant to which such certificates are issued. A rating organization's ratings normally take into consideration the credit quality of the related mortgage pool, including any credit support providers, structural and legal aspects associated with such certificates, and the extent to which the payment stream on such mortgage pool is adequate to make payments required by such certificates. A rating organization's ratings on such certificates do not, however, constitute a statement regarding frequency of prepayments on the related mortgage loans. In addition, the rating assigned by a rating organization to a certificate may not address the possibility that, in the event of the insolvency of the issuer of certificates where a subordinated interest was retained, the issuance and sale of the senior certificates may be recharacterized as a financing and, as a result of such recharacterization, payments on such certificates may be affected. A rating organization may downgrade or withdraw a rating assigned by it to any Mortgage Pass-Through at any time, and no assurance can be made that any ratings on any Mortgage Pass-Throughs included in the Fund will be maintained, or that if such ratings are assigned, they will not be downgraded or withdrawn by the assigning rating organization.

In the past, rating agencies have placed on credit watch or downgraded the ratings previously assigned to a large number of mortgage-backed securities (which may include certain of the Mortgage-Backed Securities in which the Fund may have invested or may in the future be invested), and may continue to do so in the future. In the event that any Mortgage-Backed Security held by the Fund is placed on credit watch or downgraded, the value of such Mortgage-Backed Security may decline and the Fund may consequently experience losses in respect of such Mortgage-Backed Security.

Credit Enhancement. Mortgage pools created by non-governmental issuers generally offer a higher yield than government and government-related pools because of the absence of direct or indirect government or agency payment guarantees. To lessen the effect of failures by obligors on underlying assets to make payments, Mortgage Pass-Throughs may contain elements of credit support. Credit support falls generally into two categories: (i) liquidity protection and (ii) protection against losses resulting from default by an obligor on the underlying assets. Liquidity protection refers to the provision of advances, generally by the entity administering the pools of mortgages, the provision of a reserve fund, or a combination thereof, to ensure, subject to certain limitations, that scheduled payments on the underlying pool are made in a timely fashion. Protection against losses resulting from default ensures ultimate payment of the obligations on at least a portion of the assets in the pool. Such credit support can be provided by, among other things, payment guarantees, letters of credit, pool insurance, subordination, or any combination thereof.

Subordination; Shifting of Interest; Reserve Fund. In order to achieve ratings on one or more classes of Mortgage Pass-Throughs, one or more classes of certificates may be subordinate certificates which provide that the rights of the subordinate certificate-holders to receive any or a specified portion of distributions with respect to the underlying mortgage loans may be subordinated to the rights of the senior certificate holders. If so structured, the subordination feature may be enhanced by distributing to the senior certificate-holders on certain distribution dates, as payment of principal, a specified percentage (which generally declines over time) of all principal payments received during the preceding prepayment period ("shifting interest credit enhancement"). This will have the effect of accelerating the amortization of the senior certificates while increasing the interest in the trust fund evidenced by the subordinate certificates. Increasing the interest of the subordinate certificates relative to that of the senior certificates is intended to preserve the availability of the subordination provided by the subordinate certificates. In addition, because

the senior certificate-holders in a shifting interest credit enhancement structure are entitled to receive a percentage of principal prepayments which is greater than their proportionate interest in the trust fund, the rate of principal prepayments on the mortgage loans may have an even greater effect on the rate of principal payments and the amount of interest payments on, and the yield to maturity of, the senior certificates.

In addition to providing for a preferential right of the senior certificate-holders to receive current distributions from the mortgage pool, a reserve fund may be established relating to such certificates (the "Reserve Fund"). The Reserve Fund may be created with an initial cash deposit by the originator or servicer and augmented by the retention of distributions otherwise available to the subordinate certificate-holders or by excess servicing fees until the Reserve Fund reaches a specified amount.

The subordination feature, and any Reserve Fund, are intended to enhance the likelihood of timely receipt by senior certificate-holders of the full amount of scheduled monthly payments of principal and interest due to them and will protect the senior certificate-holders against certain losses; however, in certain circumstances the Reserve Fund could be depleted and temporary shortfalls could result. In the event that the Reserve Fund is depleted before the subordinated amount is reduced to zero, senior certificate-holders will nevertheless have a preferential right to receive current distributions from the mortgage pool to the extent of the then outstanding subordinated amount. Unless otherwise specified, until the subordinated amount is reduced to zero, on any distribution date any amount otherwise distributable to the subordinate certificates or, to the extent specified, in the Reserve Fund will generally be used to offset the amount of any losses realized with respect to the mortgage loans ("Realized Losses"). Realized Losses remaining after application of such amounts will generally be applied to reduce the ownership interest of the subordinate certificates in the mortgage pool. If the subordinated amount has been reduced to zero, Realized Losses generally will be allocated pro rata among all certificate-holders in proportion to their respective outstanding interests in the mortgage pool.

Alternative Credit Enhancement. As an alternative, or in addition to the credit enhancement afforded by subordination, credit enhancement for Mortgage Pass-Throughs may be provided through bond insurers, or at the mortgage loan-level through mortgage insurance, hazard insurance, or through the deposit of cash, certificates of deposit, letters of credit, a limited guaranty or by such other methods as are acceptable to a rating agency. In certain circumstances, such as where credit enhancement is provided by bond insurers, guarantees or letters of credit, the security is subject to credit risk because of its exposure to the credit risk of an external credit enhancement provider.

Voluntary Advances. Generally, in the event of delinquencies in payments on the mortgage loans underlying the Mortgage Pass-Throughs, the servicer may agree to make advances of cash for the benefit of certificate-holders, but generally will do so only to the extent that it determines such voluntary advances will be recoverable from future payments and collections on the mortgage loans or otherwise.

Optional Termination. Generally, the servicer may, at its option with respect to any certificates, repurchase all of the underlying mortgage loans remaining outstanding at such time if the aggregate outstanding principal balance of such mortgage loans is less than a specified percentage (generally 5-10%) of the aggregate outstanding principal balance of the mortgage loans as of the cut-off date specified with respect to such series.

Multiple Class Mortgage-Backed Securities and Collateralized Mortgage Obligations. The Fund may invest in multiple class securities including collateralized mortgage obligations ("CMOs") and REMIC Certificates. These securities may be issued by U.S. Government agencies, instrumentalities or sponsored enterprises such as Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac or by trusts formed by private originators of, or investors in, mortgage loans, including savings and loan associations, mortgage bankers, commercial banks, insurance companies, investment banks and special purpose subsidiaries of the foregoing. In general, CMOs are debt obligations of a legal entity that are collateralized by, and multiple class Mortgage-Backed Securities represent direct ownership interests in, a pool of mortgage loans or Mortgage-Backed Securities the payments on which are used to make payments on the CMOs or multiple class Mortgage-Backed Securities.

Fannie Mae REMIC Certificates are issued and guaranteed as to timely distribution of principal and interest by Fannie Mae. In addition, Fannie Mae will be obligated to distribute the principal balance of each class of REMIC Certificates in full, whether or not sufficient funds are otherwise available.

Freddie Mac guarantees the timely payment of interest on Freddie Mac REMIC Certificates and also guarantees the payment of principal as payments are required to be made on the underlying mortgage participation certificates (“PCs”). PCs represent undivided interests in specified level payment, residential mortgages or participations therein purchased by Freddie Mac and placed in a PC pool. With respect to principal payments on PCs, Freddie Mac generally guarantees ultimate collection of all principal of the related mortgage loans without offset or deduction but the receipt of the required payments may be delayed. Freddie Mac also guarantees timely payment of principal of certain PCs.

CMOs and guaranteed REMIC Certificates issued by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac are types of multiple class Mortgage-Backed Securities. The REMIC Certificates represent beneficial ownership interests in a REMIC trust, generally consisting of mortgage loans or Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac or Ginnie Mae guaranteed Mortgage-Backed Securities (the “Mortgage Assets”). The obligations of Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac under their respective guaranty of the REMIC Certificates are obligations solely of Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac, respectively. See “Certain Additional Information with Respect to Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae.”

CMOs and REMIC Certificates are issued in multiple classes. Each class of CMOs or REMIC Certificates, often referred to as a “tranche,” is issued at a specific adjustable or fixed interest rate and must be fully retired no later than its final distribution date. Principal prepayments on the mortgage loans or the Mortgage Assets underlying the CMOs or REMIC Certificates may cause some or all of the classes of CMOs or REMIC Certificates to be retired substantially earlier than their final distribution dates. Generally, interest is paid or accrues on all classes of CMOs or REMIC Certificates on a monthly basis.

The principal of and interest on the Mortgage Assets may be allocated among the several classes of CMOs or REMIC Certificates in various ways. In certain structures (known as “sequential pay” CMOs or REMIC Certificates), payments of principal, including any principal prepayments, on the Mortgage Assets generally are applied to the classes of CMOs or REMIC Certificates in the order of their respective final distribution dates. Thus, no payment of principal will be made on any class of sequential pay CMOs or REMIC Certificates until all other classes having an earlier final distribution date have been paid in full.

Additional structures of CMOs and REMIC Certificates include, among others, “parallel pay” CMOs and REMIC Certificates. Parallel pay CMOs or REMIC Certificates are those which are structured to apply principal payments and prepayments of the Mortgage Assets to two or more classes concurrently on a proportionate or disproportionate basis. These simultaneous payments are taken into account in calculating the final distribution date of each class.

A wide variety of REMIC Certificates may be issued in parallel pay or sequential pay structures. These securities include accrual certificates (also known as “Z-Bonds”), which only accrue interest at a specified rate until all other certificates having an earlier final distribution date have been retired and are converted thereafter to an interest-paying security, and planned amortization class (“PAC”) certificates, which are parallel pay REMIC Certificates that generally require that specified amounts of principal be applied on each payment date to one or more classes or REMIC Certificates (the “PAC Certificates”), even though all other principal payments and prepayments of the Mortgage Assets are then required to be applied to one or more other classes of the PAC Certificates. The scheduled principal payments for the PAC Certificates generally have the highest priority on each payment date after interest due has been paid to all classes entitled to receive interest currently. Shortfalls, if any, are added to the amount payable on the next payment date. The PAC Certificate payment schedule is taken into account in calculating the final distribution date of each class of PAC. In order to create PAC tranches, one or more tranches generally must be created that absorb most of the volatility in the underlying mortgage assets. These tranches tend to have market prices and yields that are much more volatile than other PAC classes.

Commercial Mortgage-Backed Securities. Commercial mortgage-backed securities (“CMBS”) are a type of Mortgage Pass-Through that are primarily backed by a pool of commercial mortgage loans. The commercial mortgage loans are, in turn, generally secured by commercial mortgaged properties (such as office properties, retail properties, hospitality properties, industrial properties, healthcare related properties or other types of income producing real property). CMBS generally entitle the holders thereof to receive payments that depend primarily on the cash flow from a specified pool of commercial or multifamily mortgage loans. CMBS will be affected by payments, defaults, delinquencies and losses on the underlying mortgage loans. The underlying mortgage loans generally are secured by income producing properties such as office properties, retail properties, multifamily properties, manufactured housing, hospitality properties, industrial properties and self-storage properties. Because issuers of CMBS have no significant assets other than the underlying commercial real estate loans and because of the significant credit risks inherent in

the underlying collateral, credit risk is a correspondingly important consideration with respect to the related CMBS. Certain of the mortgage loans underlying CMBS constituting part of the collateral interests may be delinquent, in default or in foreclosure.

Commercial real estate lending may expose a lender (and the related Mortgage-Backed Security) to a greater risk of loss than certain other forms of lending because it typically involves making larger loans to single borrowers or groups of related borrowers. In addition, in the case of certain commercial mortgage loans, repayment of loans secured by commercial and multifamily properties depends upon the ability of the related real estate project to generate income sufficient to pay debt service, operating expenses and leasing commissions and to make necessary repairs, tenant improvements and capital improvements, and in the case of loans that do not fully amortize over their terms, to retain sufficient value to permit the borrower to pay off the loan at maturity through a sale or refinancing of the mortgaged property. The net operating income from and value of any commercial property is subject to various risks, including changes in general or local economic conditions and/or specific industry segments; declines in real estate values; declines in rental or occupancy rates; increases in interest rates, real estate tax rates and other operating expenses; changes in governmental rules, regulations and fiscal policies; acts of God; terrorist threats and attacks and social unrest and civil disturbances. In addition, certain of the mortgaged properties securing the pools of commercial mortgage loans underlying CMBS may have a higher degree of geographic concentration in a few states or regions. The values of, and income generated by, CMBS may be adversely affected by changing interest rates and other developments impacting the commercial real estate market, such as population shifts and other demographic changes, increasing vacancies (potentially for extended periods) and reduced demand for commercial and office space as well as maintenance or tenant improvement costs and costs to convert properties for other uses. These developments could result from, among other things, changing tastes and preferences (such as for remote work arrangements) as well as cultural, technological, global or local economic and market developments. In addition, changing interest rate environments and associated changes in lending standards and higher refinancing rates may adversely affect the commercial real estate and CMBS markets. The occurrence of any of the foregoing developments would likely increase default risk for the properties and loans underlying these investments as well as impact the value of, and income generated by, these investments. Furthermore, any deterioration in the real estate market or economy or adverse events in such states or regions, may increase the rate of delinquency and default experience (and as a consequence, losses) with respect to mortgage loans related to properties in such state or region. Pools of mortgaged properties securing the commercial mortgage loans underlying CMBS may also have a higher degree of concentration in certain types of commercial properties. Accordingly, such pools of mortgage loans represent higher exposure to risks particular to those types of commercial properties. Certain pools of commercial mortgage loans underlying CMBS consist of a fewer number of mortgage loans with outstanding balances that are larger than average. If a mortgage pool includes mortgage loans with larger than average balances, any realized losses on such mortgage loans could be more severe, relative to the size of the pool, than would be the case if the aggregate balance of the pool were distributed among a larger number of mortgage loans. Certain borrowers or affiliates thereof relating to certain of the commercial mortgage loans underlying CMBS may have had a history of bankruptcy. Certain mortgaged properties securing the commercial mortgage loans underlying CMBS may have been exposed to environmental conditions or circumstances. The ratings in respect of certain of the CMBS comprising the Mortgage-Backed Securities may have been withdrawn, reduced or placed on credit watch since issuance. In addition, losses and/or appraisal reductions may be allocated to certain of such CMBS and certain of the collateral or the assets underlying such collateral may be delinquent and/or may default from time to time. These developments could also result in reduced liquidity for CMBS and other real estate-related investments.

CMBS held by the Fund may be subordinated to one or more other classes of securities of the same series for purposes of, among other things, establishing payment priorities and offsetting losses and other shortfalls with respect to the related underlying mortgage loans. Realized losses in respect of the mortgage loans included in the CMBS pool and trust expenses generally will be allocated to the most subordinated class of securities of the related series. Accordingly, to the extent any CMBS is or becomes the most subordinated class of securities of the related series, any delinquency or default on any underlying mortgage loan may result in shortfalls, realized loss allocations or extensions of its weighted average life and will have a more immediate and disproportionate effect on the related CMBS than on a related more senior class of CMBS of the same series. Further, even if a class is not the most subordinate class of securities, there can be no assurance that the subordination offered to such class will be sufficient on any date to offset all losses or expenses incurred by the underlying trust. CMBS are typically not guaranteed or insured, and distributions on such CMBS generally will depend solely upon the amount and timing of payments and other collections on the related underlying commercial mortgage loans.

Stripped Mortgage-Backed Securities. The Fund may invest in stripped mortgage-backed securities (“SMBS”), which are derivative multiclass mortgage securities, issued or guaranteed by the U.S. Government, its agencies or instrumentalities or

non-governmental originators. SMBS are usually structured with two different classes: one that receives substantially all of the interest payments (the interest-only, or “IO” and/or the high coupon rate with relatively low principal amount, or “IOette”), and the other that receives substantially all of the principal payments (the principal-only, or “PO”), from a pool of mortgage loans.

Certain SMBS may not be readily marketable. The market value of POs generally is unusually volatile in response to changes in interest rates. The yields on IOs and IOettes are generally higher than prevailing market yields on other Mortgage-Backed Securities because their cash flow patterns are more volatile and there is a greater risk that the initial investment will not be fully recouped. The Fund’s investments in SMBS may require the Fund to sell certain of its portfolio securities to generate sufficient cash to satisfy certain income distribution requirements. These and other factors discussed in the section above, titled “Illiquid Investments,” may impact the liquidity of investments in SMBS.

## **Municipal Obligations**

The Fund may invest in municipal obligations. Municipal obligations are issued by or on behalf of states, territories and possessions of the United States and their political subdivisions, agencies, authorities and instrumentalities and the District of Columbia to obtain funds for various public purposes. The interest on most of these obligations is generally exempt from regular federal income tax (i.e., excluded from gross income for federal income tax purposes but not necessarily exempt from the federal alternative minimum tax or from the income taxes of any state or local government). In addition, municipal obligations include participation interests in such securities the interest on which is, in the opinion of bond counsel or counsel selected by the Investment Adviser, excluded from gross income for federal income tax purposes. The Fund may revise its definition of municipal obligations in the future to include other types of securities that currently exist, the interest on which is or will be, in the opinion of such counsel, excluded from gross income for federal income tax purposes, provided that investing in such securities is consistent with the Fund’s investment objective and policies. The Fund may also invest in taxable municipal obligations. Two principal classifications of municipal obligations are “notes” and “bonds.” The Fund may invest in municipal obligations when yields on such securities are attractive compared to those of other taxable investments.

While the Fund, under normal circumstances, invest substantially all of its assets in municipal obligations, the recognition of certain accrued market discount income (if the Fund acquires municipal obligations or other obligations at a market discount), income from investments other than municipal obligations and any capital gains generated from the disposition of investments, will result in taxable income. In addition to federal income tax, shareholders may be subject to state, local or foreign taxes on distributions of such income received from the Fund.

From time to time, proposals have been introduced before Congress for the purpose of restricting or eliminating the federal income tax exemption for interest on municipal obligations. For example, under the Tax Reform Act of 1986, interest on certain private activity bonds must be included in an investor’s federal alternative minimum taxable income. The Trust cannot predict what legislation, if any, may be proposed in the future in Congress as regards the federal income tax status of interest on municipal obligations or which proposals, if any, might be enacted. Such proposals, if enacted, might materially and adversely affect the tax treatment of municipal obligations and the availability of municipal obligations for investment by the Fund and the Fund’s liquidity and value. In such an event the Board of Trustees would reevaluate the Fund’s investment objectives and policies.

Notes. Municipal notes are generally used to provide for short-term capital needs and generally have maturities of one year or less. Municipal notes include tax anticipation notes, revenue anticipation notes, bond anticipation notes, tax and revenue anticipation notes, construction loan notes, tax-exempt commercial paper and certain receipts for municipal obligations.

Tax anticipation notes are sold to finance working capital needs of municipalities. They are generally payable from specific tax revenues expected to be received at a future date. They are frequently general obligations of the issuer, secured by the taxing power for payment of principal and interest. Revenue anticipation notes are issued in expectation of receipt of other types of revenue such as federal or state aid. Tax anticipation notes and revenue anticipation notes are generally issued in anticipation of various seasonal revenues such as income, sales, use, and business taxes. Bond anticipation notes are sold to provide interim financing in anticipation of long-term financing in the market. In most cases, these monies provide for the repayment of the notes. Tax-exempt commercial paper consists of short-term unsecured promissory notes issued by a state or local government or an authority or agency thereof. The Fund may also acquire securities in the form of custodial receipts which evidence ownership of future interest payments,

principal payments or both on certain state and local governmental and authority obligations when, in the opinion of bond counsel, if any, interest payments with respect to such custodial receipts are excluded from gross income for federal income tax purposes. Such obligations are held in custody by a bank on behalf of the holders of the receipts. These custodial receipts are known by various names, including “Municipal Receipts” (“MRs”) and “Municipal Certificates of Accrual on Tax-Exempt Securities” (“MCATS”). There are a number of other types of notes issued for different purposes and secured differently from those described above.

Bonds. Municipal bonds, which generally meet longer term capital needs and have maturities of more than one year when issued, have two principal classifications, “general obligation” bonds and “revenue” bonds.

General obligation bonds are issued by entities such as states, counties, cities, towns and regional districts and are used to fund a wide range of public projects including the construction or improvement of schools, highways and roads, water and sewer systems and a variety of other public purposes. The basic security of general obligation bonds is the issuer’s pledge of its faith, credit, and taxing power for the payment of principal and interest. The taxes that can be levied for the payment of debt service may be limited or unlimited as to rate or amount or special assessments.

Revenue bonds have been issued to fund a wide variety of capital projects including: electric, gas, water and sewer systems; highways, bridges and tunnels; port and airport facilities; colleges and universities; and hospitals. The principal security for a revenue bond is generally the net revenues derived from a particular facility or group of facilities or, in some cases, from the proceeds of a special excise or other specific revenue source. Although the principal security behind these bonds varies widely, many provide additional security in the form of a debt service reserve fund whose monies may also be used to make principal and interest payments on the issuer’s obligations. Housing finance authorities have a wide range of security including partially or fully insured, rent subsidized and/or collateralized mortgages, and/or the net revenues from housing or other public projects. In addition to a debt service reserve fund, some authorities provide further security in the form of a state’s ability (without obligation) to make up deficiencies in the debt service reserve fund. Lease rental revenue bonds issued by a state or local authority for capital projects are secured by annual lease rental payments from the state or locality to the authority sufficient to cover debt service on the authority’s obligations.

The Fund may also invest in private activity bonds. Private activity bonds (a term that includes certain types of bonds the proceeds of which are used to a specified extent for the benefit of persons other than governmental units), although nominally issued by municipal authorities, are generally not secured by the taxing power of the municipality but are secured by the revenues of the authority derived from payments by the industrial user. The Fund’s distributions of its interest income from private activity bonds may subject certain investors to the federal alternative minimum tax.

Municipal bonds with a series of maturity dates are called serial bonds. The serial bonds that the Fund may purchase are limited to short-term serial bonds—those with original or remaining maturities of two years or less (or three years or less with respect to floating rate or variable rate securities). The Fund may purchase long-term bonds provided that have a remaining maturity of two years or less (or three years or less with respect to floating rate or variable rate securities), or, in the case of bonds called for redemption, the date on which the redemption payment must be made is within two years or three years, as applicable. The Fund may also purchase long-term bonds (sometimes referred to as “Put Bonds”), which are subject to the Fund’s commitment to put the bond back to the issuer at par at a designated time within two years (or three years with respect to floating rate or variable rate securities), and the issuer’s commitment to so purchase the bond at such price and time.

The Fund may invest in municipal leases, certificates of participation and “moral obligation” bonds. A municipal lease is an obligation issued by a state or local government to acquire equipment or facilities.

Certificates of participation represent interests in municipal leases or other instruments, such as installment contracts. Moral obligations bonds are supported by the moral commitment but not the legal obligation of a state or municipality. In particular, these instruments permit governmental issuers to acquire property and equipment without meeting constitutional and statutory requirements for the issuance of debt. If, however, the governmental issuer does not periodically appropriate money to enable it to meet its payment obligations under these instruments, it cannot be legally compelled to do so. If a default occurs, it is likely that the Fund would be unable to obtain another acceptable source of payment. Some municipal leases, certificates of participation and moral obligation bonds may be illiquid.

The Fund may also invest in tender option bonds. A tender option bond is a municipal obligation (generally held pursuant to a custodial arrangement) having a relatively long maturity and bearing interest at a fixed rate substantially higher than prevailing short-term tax-exempt rates. The bond is typically issued in conjunction with the agreement of a third party, such as a bank, broker-dealer or other financial institution, pursuant to which such institution grants the security holder the option, at periodic intervals, to tender its securities to the institution and receive the face value thereof. As consideration for providing the option, the financial institution receives periodic fees equal to the difference between the bond's fixed coupon rate and the rate, as determined by a remarketing or similar agent at or near the commencement of such period, that would cause the bond, coupled with the tender option, to trade at par on the date of such determination. Thus, after payment of this fee, the security holder effectively holds a demand obligation that bears interest at the prevailing short-term, tax-exempt rate. However, an institution will not be obligated to accept tendered bonds in the event of certain defaults by, or a significant downgrading in the credit rating assigned to, the issuer of the bond. The Fund intends to invest in tender option bonds the interest on which will, in the opinion of bond counsel, counsel for the issuer of interests therein or counsel selected by the Investment Adviser, be exempt from regular federal income tax. However, because there can be no assurance that the IRS will agree with such counsel's opinion in any particular case, there is a risk that the Fund will not be considered the owner of such tender option bonds and thus will not be entitled to treat such interest as exempt from such tax. Additionally, the federal income tax treatment of certain other aspects of these investments, including the proper tax treatment of tender option bonds and the associated fees in relation to various regulated investment company tax provisions is unclear. The Fund intends to manage its portfolios in a manner designed to eliminate or minimize any adverse impact from the tax rules applicable to these investments.

The tender option will be taken into consideration in determining the maturity of tender option bonds and the average portfolio maturity and the average portfolio life of the Fund. The liquidity of a tender option bond is a function of, among other things, the credit quality of both the bond issuer and the financial institution providing liquidity.

In addition to general obligation bonds, revenue bonds and serial bonds, there are a variety of hybrid and special types of municipal obligations as well as numerous differences in the security of municipal obligations both within and between the two principal classifications above.

The Fund may purchase municipal instruments that are backed by letters of credit issued by foreign banks that have a branch, agency or subsidiary in the United States. Such letters of credit, like other obligations of foreign banks, may involve credit risks in addition to those of domestic obligations, including risks relating to future political and economic developments, nationalization, foreign governmental restrictions such as exchange controls and difficulties in obtaining or enforcing a judgment against a foreign bank (including branches).

For the purpose of investment restrictions of the Fund, the identification of the "issuer" of municipal obligations that are not general obligation bonds is made by the Investment Adviser on the basis of the characteristics of the obligations as described above, the most significant of which is the source of funds for the payment of principal of and interest on such obligations.

An entire issue of municipal obligations may be purchased by one or a small number of institutional investors such as the Fund. Thus, the issue may not be said to be publicly offered. Unlike securities which must be registered under the 1933 Act prior to offer and sale, municipal obligations that are not publicly offered may nevertheless be readily marketable. A secondary market may exist for municipal obligations that were not publicly offered initially.

Municipal obligations purchased for the Fund may be subject to the Fund's policy on holdings of illiquid investments. The Investment Adviser determines whether a municipal obligation is illiquid in accordance with the fund's liquidity risk management program (discussed below). The Investment Adviser believes that the quality standards applicable to the Fund's investments enhance liquidity. In addition, stand-by commitments and demand obligations also enhance liquidity.

Yields on municipal obligations depend on a variety of factors, including money market conditions, municipal bond market conditions, the size of a particular offering, the maturity of the obligation and the quality of the issue. High quality municipal obligations tend to have a lower yield than lower rated obligations. Municipal obligations are subject to the provisions of bankruptcy, insolvency and other laws affecting the rights and remedies of creditors, such as the Federal Bankruptcy Code, and laws, if any, which may be enacted by Congress or state legislatures extending the time for payment of principal or interest, or both, or imposing other

constraints upon enforcement of such obligations or municipalities to levy taxes. There is also the possibility that as a result of litigation or other conditions the power or ability of any one or more issuers to pay when due principal of and interest on its or their municipal obligations may be materially affected.

## **Municipal Securities**

The Fund invests in Municipal Securities, the interest on which is exempt from regular federal income tax (i.e., excluded from gross income for federal income tax purposes but not necessarily exempt from the federal alternative minimum tax or from the income taxes of any state or local government). In addition, Municipal Securities include participation interests in such securities the interest on which is, in the opinion of bond counsel or counsel selected by the Investment Adviser, excluded from gross income for federal income tax purposes. The Fund may revise their definition of Municipal Securities in the future to include other types of securities that currently exist, the interest on which is or will be, in the opinion of such counsel, excluded from gross income for federal income tax purposes, provided that investing in such securities is consistent with the Fund's investment objective and policies. The Fund may also invest in taxable Municipal Securities.

The yields and market values of municipal securities are determined primarily by the general level of interest rates, the creditworthiness of the issuers of municipal securities and economic and political conditions affecting such issuers. The yields and market prices of municipal securities may be adversely affected by changes in tax rates and policies, which may have less effect on the market for taxable fixed income securities. Moreover, certain types of municipal securities, such as housing revenue bonds, involve prepayment risks which could affect the yield on such securities. The credit rating assigned to municipal securities may reflect the existence of guarantees, letters of credit or other credit enhancement features available to the issuers or holders of such municipal securities.

Dividends paid by the Fund that are derived from interest paid on both tax exempt and taxable Municipal Securities will be taxable to the Fund's shareholders.

Municipal Securities are often issued to obtain funds for various public purposes including refunding outstanding obligations, obtaining funds for general operating expenses, and obtaining funds to lend to other public institutions and facilities. Municipal Securities also include certain "private activity bonds" or industrial development bonds, which are issued by or on behalf of public authorities to provide financing aid to acquire sites or construct or equip facilities within a municipality for privately or publicly owned corporations.

Investments in Municipal Securities are subject to the risk that the issuer could default on its obligations. Such a default could result from the inadequacy of the sources or revenues from which interest and principal payments are to be made, including property tax collections, sales tax revenue, income tax revenue and local, state and federal government funding, or the assets collateralizing such obligations. Municipal Securities and issuers of Municipal Securities may be more susceptible to downgrade, default, and bankruptcy as a result of recent periods of economic stress. Revenue bonds, including private activity bonds, are backed only by specific assets or revenue sources and not by the full faith and credit of the governmental issuer.

The two principal classifications of Municipal Securities are "general obligations" and "revenue obligations." General obligations are secured by the issuer's pledge of its full faith and credit for the payment of principal and interest, although the characteristics and enforcement of general obligations may vary according to the law applicable to the particular issuer. Revenue obligations, which include, but are not limited to, private activity bonds, resource recovery bonds, certificates of participation and certain municipal notes, are not backed by the credit and taxing authority of the issuer, and are payable solely from the revenues derived from a particular facility or class of facilities or, in some cases, from the proceeds of a special excise or other specific revenue source. Nevertheless, the obligations of the issuer of a revenue obligation may be backed by a letter of credit, guarantee or insurance. General obligations and revenue obligations may be issued in a variety of forms, including commercial paper, fixed, variable and floating rate securities, tender option bonds, auction rate bonds, zero coupon bonds, deferred interest bonds and capital appreciation bonds. In addition to general obligations and revenue obligations, there is a variety of hybrid and special types of Municipal Securities. There are also numerous differences in the security of Municipal Securities both within and between these two principal classifications.

The Fund may invest a significant portion of their total assets in securities of issuers within the same state, geographic region or economic sector, and an adverse economic, business, political, environmental or other development affecting that state, region or sector may affect the value of the Fund's investments more than if its investments were not so focused.

For the purpose of applying the Fund's investment restrictions, the identification of the issuer of a Municipal Security which is not a general obligation is made by the Investment Adviser based on the characteristics of the Municipal Security, the most important of which is the source of funds for the payment of principal and interest on such securities.

An entire issue of Municipal Securities may be purchased by one or a small number of institutional investors, including the Fund. Thus, the issue may not be said to be publicly offered. Unlike some securities that are not publicly offered, a secondary market exists for many Municipal Securities that were not publicly offered initially and such securities may be readily marketable.

The obligations of the issuer to pay the principal of and interest on a Municipal Security are subject to the provisions of bankruptcy, insolvency and other laws affecting the rights and remedies of creditors, such as the Federal Bankruptcy Code, and laws, if any, that may be enacted by Congress or state legislatures extending the time for payment of principal or interest or imposing other constraints upon the enforcement of such obligations. There is also the possibility that, as a result of litigation or other conditions, the power or ability of the issuer to pay when due principal of or interest on a Municipal Security may be materially affected.

While the Fund, under normal circumstances, invest substantially all of their assets in Municipal Securities, the recognition of certain accrued market discount income (if the Funds acquire Municipal Securities or other obligations at a market discount), income from investments other than Municipal Securities and any capital gains generated from the disposition of investments, will result in taxable income. In addition to federal income tax, shareholders may be subject to state, local or foreign taxes on distributions of such income received from the Funds.

From time to time, proposals have been introduced before Congress for the purpose of restricting or eliminating the federal income tax exemption for interest on Municipal Securities. For example, under the Tax Reform Act of 1986, interest on certain private activity bonds must be included in an investor's federal alternative minimum taxable income. The Trust cannot predict what legislation, if any, may be proposed in the future in Congress as regards the federal income tax status of interest on Municipal Securities or which proposals, if any, might be enacted. Such proposals, if enacted, might materially and adversely affect the tax treatment of Municipal Securities and the availability of Municipal Securities for investment by the Fund's liquidity and value. In such an event the Board of Trustees would reevaluate the Tax Exempt Funds' investment objectives and policies

### **Non-Diversified Status**

Because the Fund is "non-diversified" under the Act, the Fund is subject only to certain federal tax diversification requirements. Pursuant to such requirements, the Fund must diversify its holdings so that, in general, at the close of each quarter of its taxable year, (a) at least 50% of the fair market value of the Fund's total (gross) assets is comprised of cash, cash items, U.S. Government Securities, securities of other regulated investment companies and other securities limited in respect of any one issuer to an amount not greater in value than 5% of the value of the Fund's total assets and to not more than 10% of the outstanding voting securities of such issuer, and (b) not more than 25% of the value of the Fund's total (gross) assets is invested in the securities of any one issuer (other than U.S. Government Securities and securities of other regulated investment companies), two or more issuers controlled by the Fund and engaged in the same, similar or related trades or businesses, or certain publicly traded partnerships.

### **Options on Securities, Securities Indices and Foreign Currencies**

Writing and Purchasing Call and Put Options on Securities and Securities Indices. The Fund may write (sell) call and put options on any securities in which it may invest or any securities index consisting of securities in which it may invest. The Fund may write such options on securities that are listed on national domestic securities exchanges or foreign securities exchanges or traded in the over-the-counter market. A call option written by the Fund obligates the Fund to sell specified securities to the holder of the option at a specified price if the option is exercised on or before the expiration date. Depending upon the type of call option, the purchaser of a call option either (i) has the right to any appreciation in the value of the security over a fixed price (the "exercise price") on a certain

date in the future (the “expiration date”) or (ii) has the right to any appreciation in the value of the security over the exercise price at any time prior to the expiration of the option.

If the purchaser exercises the option, the Fund pays the purchaser the difference between the price of the security and the exercise price of the option. The premium, the exercise price and the market value of the security determine the gain or loss realized by the Fund as the seller of the call option. The Fund can also repurchase the call option prior to the expiration date, ending its obligation. In this case, the cost of entering into closing purchase transactions will determine the gain or loss realized by the Fund. The Fund’s purpose in writing call options is to realize greater income than would be realized on portfolio securities transactions alone. However, the Fund may forego the opportunity to profit from an increase in the market price of the underlying security.

A put option written by the Fund obligates the Fund to purchase specified securities from the option holder at a specified price if the option is exercised on or before the expiration date.

The purpose of writing such options is to generate additional income for the Fund. However, in return for the option premium, the Fund accepts the risk that it may be required to purchase the underlying securities at a price in excess of the securities’ market value at the time of purchase.

The Fund may also write (sell) call and put options on any securities index consisting of securities in which it may invest. Options on securities indices are similar to options on securities, except that the exercise of securities index options requires cash settlement payments and does not involve the actual purchase or sale of securities. In addition, securities index options are designed to reflect price fluctuations in a group of securities or segment of the securities market rather than price fluctuations in a single security.

The Fund may terminate its obligations under an exchange-traded call or put option by purchasing an option identical to the one it has written. Obligations under over-the-counter options may be terminated only by entering into an offsetting transaction with the counterparty to such option. Such purchases are referred to as “closing purchase transactions.”

The Fund may also purchase put and call options on any securities in which it may invest or any securities index consisting of securities in which it may invest. In addition, the Fund may enter into closing sale transactions in order to realize gains or minimize losses on options it had purchased.

The Fund may purchase call options in anticipation of an increase, or put options in anticipation of a decrease (“protective puts”), in the market value of securities or other instruments of the type in which it may invest. The purchase of a call option would entitle the Fund, in return for the premium paid, to purchase specified securities or other instruments at a specified price during the option period. The Fund would ordinarily realize a gain on the purchase of a call option if, during the option period, the value of such securities exceeded the sum of the exercise price, the premium paid and transaction costs; otherwise the Fund would realize either no gain or a loss on the purchase of the call option. The purchase of a put option would entitle the Fund, in exchange for the premium paid, to sell specified securities or other instruments at a specified price during the option period. The purchase of protective puts is designed to offset or hedge against a decline in the market value of the Fund’s securities or other instruments. Put options may also be purchased by the Fund for the purpose of affirmatively benefiting from a decline in the price of securities or other instruments which it does not own. The Fund would ordinarily realize a gain if, during the option period, the value of the underlying securities or other instruments decreased below the exercise price sufficiently to cover the premium and transaction costs; otherwise the Fund would realize either no gain or a loss on the purchase of the put option. Gains and losses on the purchase of put options may be offset by countervailing changes in the value of the underlying portfolio securities or other instruments.

The purchase of a put option would entitle the Fund, in exchange for the premium paid, to sell specified securities or other instruments at a specified price during the option period. The purchase of protective puts is designed to offset or hedge against a decline in the market value of the Fund’s securities or other instruments. Put options may also be purchased by the Fund for the purpose of affirmatively benefiting from a decline in the price of securities or other instruments which it does not own. The Fund would ordinarily realize a gain if, during the option period, the value of the underlying securities or other instruments decreased below the exercise price sufficiently to cover the premium and transaction costs; otherwise the Fund would realize either no gain or a

loss on the purchase of the put option. Gains and losses on the purchase of put options may be offset by countervailing changes in the value of the underlying portfolio securities or other instruments.

The Fund may purchase put and call options on securities indices for the same purposes as it may purchase options on securities. Options on securities indices are similar to options on securities, except that the exercise of securities index options requires cash payments and does not involve the actual purchase or sale of securities. In addition, securities index options are designed to reflect price fluctuations in a group of securities or segment of the securities market rather than price fluctuations in a single security.

Writing and Purchasing Call and Put Options on Currency. The Fund may write put and call options and purchase put and call options on foreign currencies in an attempt to protect against declines in the U.S. dollar value of foreign portfolio securities and against increases in the U.S. dollar cost of foreign securities to be acquired. The Fund may also use options on currency to cross-hedge, which involves writing or purchasing options on one currency to seek to hedge against changes in exchange rates for a different currency with a pattern of correlation. As with other kinds of option transactions, however, the writing of an option on foreign currency will constitute only a partial hedge, up to the amount of the premium received. If an option that the Fund has written is exercised, the Fund could be required to purchase or sell foreign currencies at disadvantageous exchange rates, thereby incurring losses. The purchase of an option on foreign currency may constitute an effective hedge against exchange rate fluctuations; however, in the event of exchange rate movements adverse to the Fund's position, the Fund may forfeit the entire amount of the premium plus related transaction costs. Options on foreign currencies may be traded on U.S. and foreign exchanges or over-the-counter. In addition, the Fund may purchase call options on currency to seek to increase total return.

A currency call option written by the Fund obligates the Fund to sell specified currency to the holder of the option at a specified price if the option is exercised at any time before the expiration date. A currency put option written by the Fund obligates the Fund to purchase specified currency from the option holder at a specified price if the option is exercised at any time before the expiration date. The writing of currency options involves a risk that the Fund will, upon exercise of the option, be required to sell currency subject to a call at a price that is less than the currency's market value or be required to purchase currency subject to a put at a price that exceeds the currency's market value.

The Fund may terminate its obligations under a written call or put option by purchasing an option identical to the one written. Such purchases are referred to as "closing purchase transactions." The Fund may enter into closing sale transactions in order to realize gains or minimize losses on purchased options.

The Fund may purchase call options on foreign currency in anticipation of an increase in the U.S. dollar value of currency in which securities to be acquired by the Fund are denominated or quoted. The purchase of a call option would entitle the Fund, in return for the premium paid, to purchase specified currency at a specified price during the option period. The Fund would ordinarily realize a gain if, during the option period, the value of such currency exceeded the sum of the exercise price, the premium paid and transaction costs; otherwise, the Fund would realize either no gain or a loss on the purchase of the call option.

The Fund may purchase put options in anticipation of a decline in the U.S. dollar value of currency in which securities in its portfolio are denominated or quoted ("protective puts"). The purchase of a put option would entitle the Fund, in exchange for the premium paid, to sell specified currency at a specified price during the option period. The purchase of protective puts is usually designed to offset or hedge against a decline in the U.S. dollar value of the Fund's portfolio securities due to currency exchange rate fluctuations. The Fund would ordinarily realize a gain if, during the option period, the value of the underlying currency decreased below the exercise price sufficiently to more than cover the premium and transaction costs; otherwise, the Fund would realize either no gain or a loss on the purchase of the put option. Gains and losses on the purchase of protective put options would tend to be offset by countervailing changes in the value of the underlying currency.

In addition to using options for the hedging purposes described above, the Fund may use options on currency to seek to increase total return. The Fund may write (sell) put and call options on any currency in an attempt to realize greater income than would be realized on portfolio securities transactions alone. However, in writing call options for additional income, the Fund may forego the opportunity to profit from an increase in the market value of the underlying currency. Also, when writing put options, the Fund accepts, in return for the option premium, the risk that it may be required to purchase the underlying currency at a price in excess of the currency's market value at the time of purchase.

The Fund may purchase call options to seek to increase total return in anticipation of an increase in the market value of a currency. The Fund would ordinarily realize a gain if, during the option period, the value of such currency exceeded the sum of the exercise price, the premium paid and transaction costs. Otherwise the Fund would realize either no gain or a loss on the purchase of the call option. Put options may be purchased by the Fund for the purpose of benefiting from a decline in the value of currencies which it does not own. The Fund would ordinarily realize a gain if, during the option period, the value of the underlying currency decreased below the exercise price sufficiently to more than cover the premium and transaction costs. Otherwise, the Fund would realize either no gain or a loss on the purchase of the put option.

Special Risks Associated with Options on Currency. An exchange-traded option position may be closed out only on an options exchange that provides a secondary market for an option of the same series. Although the Fund will generally purchase or write only those options for which there appears to be an active secondary market, there is no assurance that a liquid secondary market on an exchange will exist for any particular option or at any particular time. For some options no secondary market on an exchange may exist. In such event, it might not be possible to effect closing transactions in particular options, with the result that the Fund would have to exercise its options in order to realize any profit and would incur transaction costs upon the sale of underlying securities pursuant to the exercise of its options. If the Fund as an option writer is unable to effect a closing purchase transaction in a secondary market, it must sell the underlying currency (or security quoted or denominated in that currency) to the purchaser of the option if the option is exercised.

There is no assurance that higher-than-anticipated trading activity or other unforeseen events might not, at times, render certain of the facilities of the relevant clearinghouse inadequate, and thereby result in the institution by an exchange of special procedures which may interfere with the timely execution of customers' orders.

The Fund may purchase and write over-the-counter options. Trading in over-the-counter options is subject to the risk that the other party will be unable or unwilling to close out options purchased or written by the Fund.

The amount of the premiums that the Fund may pay or receive, may be adversely affected as new or existing institutions, including other investment companies, engage in or increase their option purchasing and writing activities.

Yield Curve Options. The Fund may enter into options on the yield "spread" or differential between two securities. Such transactions are referred to as "yield curve" options. In contrast to other types of options, a yield curve option is based on the difference between the yields of designated securities, rather than the prices of the individual securities, and is settled through cash payments. Accordingly, a yield curve option is profitable to the holder if this differential widens (in the case of a call) or narrows (in the case of a put), regardless of whether the yields of the underlying securities increase or decrease.

The Fund may purchase or write yield curve options for the same purposes as other options on securities. For example, the Fund may purchase a call option on the yield spread between two securities if the Fund owns one of the securities and anticipates purchasing the other security and wants to hedge against an adverse change in the yield spread between the two securities. The Fund may also purchase or write yield curve options in an effort to increase current income if, in the judgment of the Investment Adviser, the Fund will be able to profit from movements in the spread between the yields of the underlying securities. The trading of yield curve options is subject to all of the risks associated with the trading of other types of options. In addition, however, such options present a risk of loss even if the yield of one of the underlying securities remains constant, or if the spread moves in a direction or to an extent which was not anticipated.

Yield curve options are traded over-the-counter, and established trading markets for these options may not exist.

Risks Associated with Options Transactions. There is no assurance that a liquid secondary market on a domestic or foreign options exchange will exist for any particular exchange-traded option or at any particular time. If the Fund is unable to effect a closing purchase transaction with respect to covered options it has written, the Fund must sell the underlying securities to the purchasers of the options if the options are exercised. Similarly, if the Fund is unable to effect a closing sale transaction with respect to options it has purchased, it will have to exercise the options in order to realize any profit and will incur transaction costs upon the purchase or sale of underlying securities.

Reasons for the absence of a liquid secondary market on an exchange include, but are not limited to, the following: (i) there may be insufficient trading interest in certain options; (ii) restrictions may be imposed by an exchange on opening or closing transactions or both; (iii) trading halts, suspensions or other restrictions may be imposed with respect to particular classes or series of options; (iv) unusual or unforeseen circumstances may interrupt normal operations on an exchange; (v) the facilities of an exchange or the Options Clearing Corporation may not at all times be adequate to handle current trading volume; or (vi) one or more exchanges could, for economic or other reasons, decide or be compelled at some future date to discontinue the trading of options (or a particular class or series of options), in which event the secondary market on that exchange (or in that class or series of options) would cease to exist although outstanding options on that exchange that had been issued by the Options Clearing Corporation as a result of trades on that exchange would continue to be exercisable in accordance with their terms.

There can be no assurance that higher trading activity, order flow or other unforeseen events will not, at times, render certain of the facilities of the Options Clearing Corporation or various exchanges inadequate. Such events have, in the past, resulted in the institution by an exchange of special procedures, such as trading rotations, restrictions on certain types of order or trading halts or suspensions with respect to one or more options. These special procedures may limit liquidity.

The Fund may purchase and sell both options that are traded on U.S. and foreign exchanges and options traded over-the-counter with broker-dealers and other types of institutions that make markets in these options. The ability to terminate over-the-counter options is more limited than with exchange-traded options and may involve the risk that the broker-dealers or financial institutions participating in such transactions will not fulfill their obligations.

Transactions by the Fund in options will be subject to limitations established by each of the exchanges, boards of trade or other trading facilities on which such options are traded governing the maximum number of options in each class which may be written or purchased by a single investor or group of investors acting in concert regardless of whether the options are written or purchased on the same or different exchanges, boards of trade or other trading facilities or are held in one or more accounts or through one or more brokers. Thus, the number of options which the Fund may write or purchase may be affected by options written or purchased by other investment advisory clients of the Investment Adviser. An exchange, board of trade or other trading facility may order the liquidation of positions found to be in excess of these limits, and it may impose certain other sanctions.

The writing and purchase of options is a highly specialized activity which involves investment techniques and risks different from those associated with ordinary portfolio securities transactions. The use of options to seek to increase total return involves the risk of loss if the Investment Adviser is incorrect in its expectation of fluctuations in securities prices or interest rates. The successful use of options for hedging purposes also depends in part on the ability of the Investment Adviser to manage future price fluctuations and the degree of correlation between the options and securities (or currency) markets. If the Investment Adviser is incorrect in its expectation of changes in securities prices or determination of the correlation between the securities or securities indices on which options are written and purchased and the securities in the Fund's investment portfolio, the Fund may incur losses that it would not otherwise incur. The writing of options could increase the Fund's portfolio turnover rate and, therefore, associated brokerage commissions or spreads.

### **Pooled Investment Vehicles**

The Fund may invest in securities of pooled investment vehicles including ETFs. The Fund will indirectly bear its proportionate share of any management fees and other expenses paid by pooled investment vehicles in which it invests, in addition to the management fees (and other expenses) of the Fund. The Fund's investments in pooled investment vehicles are subject to statutory limitations prescribed by the Act, including in certain circumstances a prohibition on the Fund acquiring more than 3% of the voting shares of any other investment company, and a prohibition on investing more than 5% of the Fund's total assets in securities of any one investment company or more than 10% of its total assets in the securities of all investment companies.

Subject to applicable law and/or pursuant to an exemptive rule adopted by the SEC or an exemptive order obtained from the SEC, the Fund may invest in other investment companies, including ETFs and money market funds, beyond the statutory limits described above or otherwise provided that certain conditions are met. Some of those other investment companies may be funds for which the Investment Adviser, or any of its affiliates, serve as investment adviser, administrator and/or distributor. Although the Fund does not expect to do so in the foreseeable future, the Fund is authorized to invest substantially all of its assets in a single open-end

investment company or series thereof that has substantially the same investment objective policies and fundamental restrictions as the Fund. Additionally, if the Fund serves as an “acquired fund” of another Goldman Sachs Fund or unaffiliated investment company, the Fund’s ability to invest in other investment companies and private funds may be limited and, under these circumstances, the Fund’s investments in other investment companies and private funds will be consistent with applicable law and/or exemptive rules adopted by or exemptive orders obtained from the SEC. For example, to the extent the Fund serves as an acquired fund in a fund of funds arrangement in reliance on Rule 12d1-4 under the Act, the Fund would be prohibited from purchasing or otherwise acquiring the securities of an investment company or private fund if, after such purchase or acquisition, the aggregate value of the Fund’s investments in such investment companies and private funds would exceed 10% of the value of the Fund’s total assets, subject to limited exceptions (including for investments in money market funds).

ETFs are shares of pooled investment vehicles issuing shares which are traded like traditional equity securities on a stock exchange. An ETF generally represents a portfolio of securities or other assets, which is often designed to track a particular market segment or index. An investment in an ETF, like one in any pooled investment vehicle, carries risks of its underlying securities. An ETF may fail to accurately track the returns of the market segment or index that it is designed to track, and the price of an ETF’s shares may fluctuate or lose money. In addition, because they, unlike other pooled investment vehicles, are traded on an exchange, ETFs are subject to the following risks: (i) the market price of the ETF’s shares may trade at a premium or discount to the ETF’s NAV; (ii) an active trading market for an ETF may not develop or be maintained; and (iii) there is no assurance that the requirements of the exchange necessary to maintain the listing of the ETF will continue to be met or remain unchanged. In the event substantial market or other disruptions affecting ETFs should occur in the future, the liquidity and value of the Portfolio’s shares could also be substantially and adversely affected.

### **Restricted Securities**

The Fund may purchase securities and other financial instruments that are not registered or that are offered in an exempt non-public offering (“Restricted Securities”) under the Securities Act of 1933 (the “1933 Act”), including securities eligible for resale to “qualified institutional buyers” pursuant to Rule 144A under the 1933 Act. The purchase price and subsequent valuation of Restricted Securities may reflect a discount from the price at which such securities trade when they are not restricted, because the restriction makes them less liquid. The amount of the discount from the prevailing market price is expected to vary depending upon the type of security, the character of the issuer, the party who will bear the expenses of registering the Restricted Securities and prevailing supply and demand conditions. These and other factors discussed in the section above, titled “Illiquid Investments,” may impact the liquidity of investments in Restricted Securities.

### **Repurchase Agreements**

The Fund may enter into repurchase agreements with counterparties that furnish collateral at least equal in value or market price to the amount of the repurchase obligation. The Fund may also enter into repurchase agreements involving obligations other than U.S. Government Securities, which may be subject to additional risks. A repurchase agreement is an arrangement under which the Fund purchases securities and the seller agrees to repurchase the securities within a particular time and at a specified price. Custody of the securities is maintained by the Fund’s custodian (or subcustodian). The repurchase price may be higher than the purchase price, the difference being income to the Fund, or the purchase and repurchase prices may be the same, with interest at a stated rate due to the Fund together with the repurchase price on repurchase. In either case, the income to the Fund is unrelated to the interest rate on the security subject to the repurchase agreement.

For purposes of the Act and generally for tax purposes, a repurchase agreement is deemed to be a loan from the Fund to the seller of the security. For other purposes, it is not always clear whether a court would consider the security purchased by the Fund subject to a repurchase agreement as being owned by the Fund or as being collateral for a loan by the Fund to the seller. In the event of commencement of bankruptcy or insolvency proceedings with respect to the seller of the security before repurchase of the security under a repurchase agreement, the Fund may encounter delay and incur costs before being able to sell the security. Such a delay may involve loss of interest or a decline in value of the security. If the court characterizes the transaction as a loan and the Fund has not perfected a security interest in the security, the Fund may be required to return the security to the seller’s estate and be treated as an unsecured creditor of the seller. As an unsecured creditor, the Fund would be at risk of losing some or all of the principal and interest involved in the transaction.

Apart from the risk of bankruptcy or insolvency proceedings, there is also the risk that the seller may fail to repurchase the security. However, if the market value of the security subject to the repurchase agreement becomes less than the repurchase price (including accrued interest), the Fund will direct the seller of the security to deliver additional securities so that the market value of all securities subject to the repurchase agreement equals or exceeds the repurchase price. Certain repurchase agreements which provide for settlement in more than seven days can be liquidated before the nominal fixed term on seven days or less notice.

The Fund, together with other registered investment companies having management agreements with the Investment Adviser or its affiliates, may transfer uninvested cash balances into a single joint account, the daily aggregate balance of which will be invested in one or more repurchase agreements.

### **Reverse Repurchase Agreements**

The Fund may borrow money by entering into transactions called reverse repurchase agreements. Under these arrangements, the Fund may sell portfolio securities to dealers in U.S. Government Securities or members of the Federal Reserve System, with an agreement to repurchase the security on an agreed date, price and interest payment. Reverse repurchase agreements involve the possible risk that the value of portfolio securities the Fund relinquishes may decline below the price the Fund must pay when the transaction closes. Borrowings may magnify the potential for gain or loss on amounts invested resulting in an increase in the speculative character of the Fund's outstanding shares.

### **Risks of Qualified Financial Contracts**

Regulations adopted by federal banking regulators under the Dodd-Frank Act, which took effect throughout 2019, require that certain qualified financial contracts ("QFCs") with counterparties that are part of U.S. or foreign global systemically important banking organizations be amended to include contractual restrictions on close-out and cross-default rights. QFCs include, but are not limited to, securities contracts, commodities contracts, forward contracts, repurchase agreements, securities lending agreements and swaps agreements, as well as related master agreements, security agreements, credit enhancements, and reimbursement obligations. If a covered counterparty of the Fund or certain of the covered counterparty's affiliates were to become subject to certain insolvency proceedings, the Fund may be temporarily unable to exercise certain default rights, and the QFC may be transferred to another entity. These requirements may impact the Fund's credit and counterparty risks.

### **Special Risk Considerations Relating to California Municipal Obligations**

The Funds may invest in municipal obligations of the State of California ("California" or, as used in this section, the "State"), its public authorities and local governments ("California Municipal Obligations"), and consequently may be affected by political, social, economic, environmental, public health, or other developments within California and by the financial condition of California's political subdivisions, agencies, instrumentalities and public authorities. Provisions of the California Constitution and State statutes that limit the taxing and spending authority of California governmental entities may impair the ability of California governmental issuers to maintain debt service on their obligations. Future federal and California political and economic developments, constitutional amendments, legislative measures, executive orders, administrative regulations, litigation and voter initiatives as well as environmental or public health emergencies could have an adverse effect on the debt obligations of California issuers. Some of the significant financial considerations relating to investments in California Municipal Obligations are summarized below. The following section provides only a brief summary of the complex factors affecting the financial condition of California that could, in turn, adversely affect a Fund's investments in California Municipal Obligations. This information is based on information publicly available from State authorities and other sources available prior to November 3, 2025, and has not been independently verified. It should be noted that the creditworthiness of obligations issued by local issuers may be unrelated to the creditworthiness of obligations issued by the State, and that there is no obligation on the part of California to make payment on such local obligations in the event of default in the absence of a specific guarantee or pledge provided by California. Furthermore, obligations of issuers of California Municipal Obligations are subject to the provisions of bankruptcy, insolvency and other laws affecting the rights and remedies of creditors. Accordingly, an insolvent municipality may file for bankruptcy, as allowed by Chapter 9 of the Bankruptcy Code. This section provides a financially distressed municipality protection from its creditors while it develops and negotiates a plan for reorganizing its debts. The reorganization of a municipality's debts may be accomplished by extending debt maturities, reducing the amount of principal or interest, refinancing the debt or other measures which may significantly affect the rights of creditors and the

value of the securities issued by the municipality and the value of a Fund's investments. As a result of continuing financial and economic difficulties, several California municipalities have filed for bankruptcy protection under Chapter 9 or have indicated that they may seek such bankruptcy protection in the future. Additional municipal bankruptcy filings may occur in the future. Any such action could negatively impact the value of a Fund's investments in the securities of those issuers or other issuers in California.

Certain California Municipal Obligations held by a Fund may be obligations of issuers that rely in whole or in substantial part on California state government revenues for the continuance of their operations and payment of their obligations. Whether and to what extent the California Legislature will continue to appropriate a portion of the State's General Fund to counties, cities and their various entities, which depend upon State government appropriations, is not entirely certain. To the extent local entities do not receive money from the State government to pay for their operations and services, their ability to pay debt service on obligations held by a Fund may be impaired.

California Municipal Obligations, including certain tax-exempt securities, in which a Fund may invest may be obligations payable solely from the revenues of specific institutions, or may be secured by specific properties, which are subject to provisions of California law that could adversely affect the holders of such obligations.

California's economy has major components in high technology, trade, entertainment, manufacturing, tourism, construction and services. Economic developments that affect such industries may have an impact on the State economy.

California's General Fund was adversely impacted by the health-related and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Efforts to respond to and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 impacted the California and national economies and contributed to volatility in the markets. Prolonged inflationary pressures and changing interest rates could also adversely affect California's economy. It is not possible to predict the long-term economic environment as it relates to California. Additionally, California has faced an operating deficit in fiscal year 2024-2025, and it is projected that California will face an operating deficit in each subsequent fiscal year through 2028-29.

A failure by California to meet its debt obligations could lead to a significant decline in the value, liquidity and marketability of fund investments.

Figures from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics show that California's unemployment rate was 5.5% as of July 2025.

In March 2004, voters approved Proposition 58, which amended the California State Constitution to require balanced budgets in the future, yet this has not prevented the State from enacting budgets that rely on borrowing. Proposition 58 also created the Budget Stabilization Account ("BSA") as a secondary budgetary reserve and established the process for transferring General Fund revenues into the BSA.

Beginning with fiscal year 2015-16, the BSA provisions of Proposition 58 were superseded by Proposition 2. Proposition 2 provides for both paying down debt and other long-term liabilities, and saving for a rainy day by making specified deposits into the BSA. Proposition 2 takes into account California's heavy dependence on the performance of the stock market and the resulting capital gains. Since fiscal year 2015-16, California must calculate capital gains revenues in excess of 8% of General Fund tax revenues and add such amount to 1.5% of the General Fund tax revenues; half of this amount is used to service long-term debt, and the other half of this amount is deposited into the BSA. Proposition 2 also only allows withdrawals from the BSA for a disaster or if spending remains commensurate or below the highest level of spending in the preceding three years.

Revenue bonds represent both obligations payable from State revenue-producing enterprises and projects and conduit obligations payable from revenues paid by private users or local governments of facilities financed by such revenue bonds. Such enterprises and projects include transportation projects, various public works projects, public and private educational facilities (including the California State University and University of California systems), housing, health facilities, and pollution control facilities.

As of November 3, 2025, California's general obligation bonds were assigned ratings of Aa2, AA- and AA by Moody's, S&P and Fitch respectively. It should be recognized that these ratings are not an absolute standard of quality, but rather general indicators. Such

ratings reflect only the view of the originating rating agencies, from which an explanation of the significance of such ratings may be obtained. There is no assurance that a particular rating will continue for any given period of time or that any such rating will not be revised downward or withdrawn entirely if, in the judgment of the agency establishing the rating, circumstances so warrant. A downward revision or withdrawal of such ratings, or either of them, may affect the market price of the State municipal obligations in which a Fund invests. As of July 1, 2025, California had outstanding approximately \$71.9 billion in long-term general obligation bonds primarily payable from the General Fund.

In June 2025, the Governor signed the budget for fiscal year 2025-2026 (“Enacted Budget”). The Enacted Budget projects that General Fund revenues and transfers will total \$215.7 billion and expenditures will total \$228.4 billion. The Enacted Budget includes withdrawals from the BSA of \$7.1 billion while at the same time maintaining a combined reserve balance of \$15.7 billion, including \$11.2 billion in the BSA and an additional \$4.5 billion in the state’s discretionary reserve account.

The State is a party to numerous legal proceedings, many of which normally occur in governmental operations and which, if decided against the State, might require the State to make significant future expenditures or impair future revenue sources. Because of the prospective nature of these proceedings, it is not presently possible to predict the ultimate outcome of such proceedings, estimate the potential impact on the ability of the State to make debt service payments, or determine what impact, if any, such proceedings may have on a Fund’s investments in California Municipal Obligations.

Constitutional and statutory amendments as well as budget developments may affect the ability of California issuers to pay interest and principal on their obligations. The overall effect may depend upon whether a particular California tax-exempt security is a general or limited obligation bond and on the type of security provided for the bond. It is possible that measures affecting the taxing or spending authority of California or its political subdivisions may be approved or enacted in the future.

### **Special Risk Considerations Relating to New York Municipal Obligations**

The following section provides only a brief summary of the complex factors affecting the financial condition of New York that could, in turn, adversely affect a Fund’s investments in New York’s municipal obligations. The economic and financial condition of New York may be affected by various financial, social, economic, public health, environmental and political factors. For example, the securities industry is more central to New York’s economy than to the national economy, therefore any significant decline in stock market performance could adversely affect New York’s income and employment levels. Furthermore, such financial, social, economic, public health, environmental and political factors can be very complex, may vary from year to year and can be the result of actions taken not only by New York and its agencies and instrumentalities, but also by entities, such as the federal government, that are not under the control of New York. Fund performance is directly tied to the ability of issuers in New York to continue to make principal and interest payments on their securities, which in turn depends on economic and other conditions within New York. In addition, economic and other conditions within New York may affect New York’s localities, and their political subdivisions, instrumentalities, or authorities to the extent that such issuers are reliant upon appropriations from New York. There can be no assurances that New York will not face economic stress or that the economic environment will not worsen, which could adversely impact New York’s financial condition and the ability of issuers of New York municipal securities to satisfy the obligations on their outstanding debt.

New York was adversely impacted by the health-related and economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Efforts to respond to and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 impacted the New York and national economies and contributed to volatility in the markets. Prolonged inflationary pressures and changing interest rates could adversely affect New York’s economy. It is not possible to predict the long-term economic environment as it relates to New York. A failure by New York to meet its debt obligations could lead to a significant decline in the value, liquidity and marketability of fund investments.

New York’s unemployment rate was 4.0% as of July 2025.

The budget for fiscal year 2025-26 (“2025-26 Enacted Budget”) was adopted in June 2025. The 2025-26 Enacted Budget estimates total General Fund revenues of approximately \$103.9 billion. Against these revenues, the 2025-26 Enacted Budget provides for approximately \$125.5 billion in General Fund expenditures, representing an increase of \$16.8 billion from fiscal year 2024-25 due primarily to increased funding for Foundation Aid, Medicaid and extraordinary transfers to the Federal Unemployment Account.

The 2025-26 Enacted Budget estimates that the closing balance of the General Fund at the end of fiscal year 2025-26 will be approximately \$44.9 billion, nearly \$12 billion below the 2024-2025 closing balance.

The State is a party to numerous legal proceedings, many of which normally occur in governmental operations and which, if decided against the State, might require the State to make significant future expenditures or impair future revenue sources. Because of the prospective nature of these proceedings, it is not presently possible to predict the ultimate outcome of such proceedings, estimate the potential impact on the ability of the State to make debt service payments, or determine what impact, if any, such proceedings may have on a Fund's investments in New York municipal obligations.

As of October 2025, the State had approximately \$63.3 billion in state-related debt, outstanding.

New York City accounts for a significant portion of New York's population and personal income, and New York City's financial health could have a substantial impact on New York in many ways. New York City continues to require substantial assistance from New York and depends, in part, on state aid to be able to balance its budget and meet its obligations. If New York City is unable to generate revenues sufficient to fund its operations, New York City may seek to obtain additional resources from the state of New York, which may cause the state of New York to adjust its current or future funding priorities. New York could be negatively affected by adverse economic circumstances in New York City.

The ratings assigned to New York's general obligation bonds by Moody's, S&P and Fitch as of November 3, 2025 were Aa1, AA+, and AA+, respectively. It should be recognized that these ratings are not an absolute standard of quality, but rather general indicators. Such ratings reflect only the view of the originating rating agencies, from which an explanation of the significance of such ratings may be obtained. There is no assurance that these ratings will continue for any given period of time or that they will not be revised or withdrawn entirely by the rating agency if, in the judgment of such rating agency, circumstances so warrant. A downward revision or withdrawal of any such rating may have an adverse effect on the market prices of the securities issued by New York, which would in turn negatively impact the performance of a Fund.

### **Taxable Investments**

The Fund may invest in the taxable securities described in the foregoing sections. When the Fund's assets are invested in such instruments, the Fund may not be achieving its investment objective of providing income exempt from federal and/or applicable state or local taxes.

### **Temporary Investments**

The Fund may, for temporary defensive purposes, invest a certain amount of its total assets in: U.S. Government Securities; commercial paper rated at least A-2 by S&P Global Ratings, P-2 by Moody's or having a comparable credit rating by another nationally recognized statistical rating organization ("NRSRO") (or if unrated, determined by the Investment Adviser to be of comparable credit quality); certificates of deposit; bankers' acceptances; repurchase agreements; non-convertible preferred stocks and non-convertible corporate bonds with a remaining maturity of less than one year; ETFs and other investment companies; and cash items. When the Fund's assets are invested in such instruments, the Fund may not be achieving its investment objective.

### **U.S. Government Securities**

The Fund may invest in U.S. Government Securities. Some U.S. Government Securities (such as Treasury bills, notes and bonds, which differ only in their interest rates, maturities and times of issuance) are supported by the full faith and credit of the United States. Others, such as obligations issued or guaranteed by U.S. Government agencies, instrumentalities or sponsored enterprises, are supported either by (i) the right of the issuer to borrow from the the Treasury, (ii) the discretionary authority of the U.S. Government to purchase certain obligations of the issuer or (iii) only the credit of the issuer. The U.S. Government is under no legal obligation, in general, to purchase the obligations of its agencies, instrumentalities or sponsored enterprises. No assurance can be given that the U.S. Government will provide financial support to U.S. Government agencies, instrumentalities or sponsored enterprises in the future, and the U.S. Government may be unable to pay debts when due.

U.S. Government Securities include (to the extent consistent with the Act) securities for which the payment of principal and interest is backed by an irrevocable letter of credit issued by the U.S. Government, or its agencies, instrumentalities or sponsored enterprises. U.S. Government Securities may also include (to the extent consistent with the Act) participations in loans made to foreign governments or their agencies that are guaranteed as to principal and interest by the U.S. Government or its agencies, instrumentalities or sponsored enterprises. The secondary market for certain of these participations is extremely limited. These and other factors discussed in the section above, titled “Illiquid Investments,” may impact the liquidity of investments in these participations.

The Fund may also purchase U.S. Government Securities in private placements and may also invest in separately traded principal and interest components of securities guaranteed or issued by the U.S. Treasury that are traded independently under the separate trading of registered interest and principal of securities program (“STRIPS”). The Fund may also invest in zero coupon U.S. Treasury securities and in zero coupon securities issued by financial institutions which represent a proportionate interest in underlying U.S. Treasury securities.

The high and rising national debt may adversely impact the U.S. economy and securities in which the Funds may invest. Moreover, the total amount of debt the Treasury is authorized to incur is subject to a statutory limit. Once the Treasury reaches the debt limit, Congress must raise, extend or otherwise modify the limit to enable the Treasury to incur additional debt to pay the obligations of the U.S. government, including principal and interest payments on certain U.S. Government Securities (such as Treasury bills, notes and bonds). Failure to, or potential failure to, increase the statutory debt limit could: increase the risk that the U.S. government defaults on payments on certain U.S. Government Securities; cause the credit rating of the U.S. government to be downgraded or increase volatility in both stock and bond markets; result in higher debt servicing payments by the U.S. government; reduce prices of Treasury securities; and/or increase the costs of certain kinds of debt.

U.S. Treasury Inflation Protected Securities (“TIPS”). The Fund may invest in U.S. treasury inflation protected securities of varying maturities issued by the U.S. Treasury, which are securities whose principal value is periodically adjusted according to the rate of inflation. The interest rate on TIPS is fixed at issuance, but over the life of the bond this interest may be paid on an increasing or decreasing principal value that has been adjusted for inflation. Although repayment of the greater of the adjusted or original bond principal upon maturity is guaranteed, the market value of TIPS is not guaranteed, and will fluctuate.

The values of TIPS generally fluctuate in response to changes in real interest rates, which are in turn tied to the relationship between nominal interest rates and the rate of inflation. If inflation were to rise at a faster rate than nominal interest rates, real interest rates will decline, leading to an increase in the value of TIPS. In contrast, if nominal interest rates were to increase at a faster rate than inflation, real interest rates will rise, leading to a decrease in the value of TIPS. If inflation is lower than expected during the period the Fund holds TIPS, the Fund may earn less on the TIPS than on a conventional bond. If interest rates rise due to reasons other than inflation (for example, due to changes in the currency exchange rates), investors in TIPS may not be protected to the extent that the increase is not reflected in the bonds’ inflation measure. There can be no assurance that the inflation index for TIPS will accurately measure the real rate of inflation in the prices of goods and services.

Any increase in principal value of TIPS caused by an increase in the consumer price index is taxable in the year the increase occurs, even though the Fund holding TIPS will not receive cash representing the increase at that time. As a result, the Fund could be required at times to liquidate other investments, including when it is not advantageous to do so, in order to satisfy its distribution requirements as a regulated investment company.

If the Fund invests in TIPS, it will be required to treat as original issue discount any increase in the principal amount of the securities that occurs during the course of its taxable year. If the Fund purchases such TIPS that are issued in stripped form, either as stripped bonds or coupons, it will be treated as if it had purchased a newly issued debt instrument having original issue discount.

Because the Fund is required to distribute substantially all of its net investment income (including accrued original issue discount), the Fund’s investment in either zero coupon bonds or TIPS may require it to distribute to shareholders an amount greater than the total cash income it actually receives. Accordingly, in order to make the required distributions, the Fund may be required to borrow or liquidate securities.

## **When-Issued Securities and Forward Commitments**

The Fund may purchase securities on a when-issued basis or purchase or sell securities on a forward commitment basis beyond the customary settlement time. These transactions involve a commitment by the Fund to purchase or sell securities at a future date beyond the customary settlement time. The price of the underlying securities (usually expressed in terms of yield) and the date when the securities will be delivered and paid for (the settlement date) are fixed at the time the transaction is negotiated. In addition, rules of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (“FINRA”) include mandatory margin requirements that require the Fund to post collateral in connection with its to-be-announced (“TBA”) transactions. There is no similar requirement applicable to the Fund’s TBA counterparties. The required collateralization of TBA trades could increase the cost of TBA transactions to the Fund and impose added operational complexity. When-issued purchases and forward commitment transactions are negotiated directly with the other party, and such commitments are not traded on exchanges. The Fund will generally purchase securities on a when-issued basis or purchase or sell securities on a forward commitment basis only with the intention of completing the transaction and actually purchasing or selling the securities. If deemed advisable as a matter of investment strategy, however, the Fund may dispose of or negotiate a commitment after entering into it. The Fund may also sell securities it has committed to purchase before those securities are delivered to the Fund on the settlement date. The Fund may realize capital gains or losses in connection with these transactions. For purposes of determining the Fund’s duration, the maturity of when-issued or forward commitment securities for fixed rate obligations will be calculated from the commitment date. Securities purchased or sold on a when-issued or forward commitment basis involve a risk of loss if the value of the security to be purchased declines prior to the settlement date or if the value of the security to be sold increases prior to the settlement date.

## **Zero Coupon, Deferred Interest, Pay-In-Kind and Capital Appreciation Bonds**

The Fund may invest in zero coupon, deferred interest, pay-in-kind (“PIK”) and capital appreciation bonds. Zero coupon, deferred interest and capital appreciation bonds are debt securities issued or sold at a discount from their face value and which do not entitle the holder to any periodic payment of interest prior to maturity or a specified date. The original issue discount varies depending on the time remaining until maturity or cash payment date, prevailing interest rates, the liquidity of the security and the perceived credit quality of the issuer. These securities also may take the form of debt securities that have been stripped of their unmatured interest coupons, the coupons themselves or receipts or certificates representing interests in such stripped debt obligations or coupons.

PIK securities may be debt obligations or preferred shares that provide the issuer with the option of paying interest or dividends on such obligations in cash or in the form of additional securities rather than cash. Similar to zero coupon bonds and deferred interest bonds, PIK securities are designed to give an issuer flexibility in managing cash flow. PIK securities that are debt securities can be either senior or subordinated debt and generally trade flat (i.e., without accrued interest). The trading price of PIK debt securities generally reflects the market value of the underlying debt plus an amount representing accrued interest since the last interest payment.

The market prices of zero coupon, deferred interest, capital appreciation bonds and PIK securities generally are more volatile than the market prices of interest bearing securities and are likely to respond to a greater degree to changes in interest rates than interest bearing securities having similar maturities and credit quality. Moreover, zero coupon, deferred interest, capital appreciation and PIK securities involve the additional risk that, unlike securities that periodically pay interest to maturity, the Fund will realize no cash until a specified future payment date unless a portion of such securities is sold and, if the issuer of such securities defaults, the Fund may obtain no return at all on its investment. The valuation of such investments requires judgment regarding the collection of future payments. In addition, even though such securities do not provide for the payment of current interest in cash, the Fund is nonetheless required to accrue income on such investments for each taxable year and generally is required to distribute such accrued amounts (net of deductible expenses, if any) to avoid being subject to tax. Because no cash is generally received at the time of the accrual, the Fund may be required to liquidate other portfolio securities to obtain sufficient cash to satisfy federal tax distribution requirements applicable to the Fund. A portion of the discount with respect to stripped tax exempt securities or their coupons may be taxable. See “TAXATION.”

*Special Note Regarding Regulatory Changes and Other Market Events*

Federal, state, and foreign governments, regulatory agencies, and self-regulatory organizations may take actions that affect the regulation of the Fund or the instruments in which the Fund invests, or the issuers of such instruments, in ways that are unforeseeable. Future legislation or regulation or other governmental actions could limit or preclude the Fund's ability to achieve its investment objective or otherwise adversely impact an investment in the Fund. Furthermore, worsened market conditions, including as a result of U.S. government shutdowns or the perceived creditworthiness of the United States, could have a negative impact on securities markets.

The Fund's investments, payment obligations and financing terms may be based on floating rates, such as EURIBOR, SOFR, Term SOFR and other similar types of reference rates (each, a "Reference Rate"). All settings of LIBOR have ceased to be published and the Fund has transitioned to successor or alternative reference rates as necessary. The termination of LIBOR and any additional regulatory or market changes may have an adverse impact on the Fund's investments, performance or financial condition. To identify a successor rate for US dollar LIBOR, the Alternative Reference Rates Committee ("ARRC"), a U.S.-based group convened by the Federal Reserve Board and the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, was formed. The ARRC has identified SOFR as its preferred alternative rate for LIBOR. SOFR is a measure of the cost of borrowing cash overnight, collateralized by the U.S. Treasury securities, and is based on directly observable U.S. Treasury-backed repurchase transactions. On July 29, 2021, the ARRC also formally recommended the use of forward-looking Term SOFR rates published by CME Group Benchmark Administration Limited ("CBA"). It is expected that a substantial portion of future floating rate investments will be linked to SOFR, Term SOFR or another rate determined using SOFR. At this time, it is not possible to predict the effect of the transition to any of these reference rates.

Regulators and market participants have worked to identify or develop successor Reference Rates (e.g., SOFR, Term SOFR and other such rates) and spreads (if any) to be utilized in existing contracts or instruments as part of the transition away from LIBOR. Spreads (if any) to be utilized in existing contracts or instruments may be amended through market-wide protocols, fallback contractual provisions, bespoke negotiations, amendments, statutory replacement mechanisms or otherwise. Nonetheless, the termination of certain Reference Rates presents risks to the Fund. It is not possible to exhaustively identify or predict the effect of any such changes, any establishment of alternative Reference Rates or any other reforms to Reference Rates that may be enacted in the United Kingdom, the United States or elsewhere. The elimination of a Reference Rate or any other changes or reforms to the determination or supervision of Reference Rates may affect the value, liquidity or return on certain Fund investments and may result in costs incurred in connection with closing out positions and entering into new trades, adversely impacting the Fund's overall financial condition or results of operations. The impact of any successor or substitute Reference Rate, if any, will vary on an investment-by-investment basis, and any differences may be material and/or create material economic mismatches, especially if investments are used for hedging or similar purposes. In addition, although certain Fund investments may provide for a successor or substitute Reference Rate (or terms governing how to determine a successor or substitute Reference Rate) if the Reference Rate becomes unavailable, certain Fund investments may not provide such a successor or substitute Reference Rate (or terms governing how to determine a successor or substitute Reference Rate). Accordingly, there may be disputes as to: (i) any successor or substitute Reference Rate; or (ii) the enforceability of any Fund investment that does not provide such a successor or substitute Reference Rate (or terms governing how to determine a successor or substitute Reference Rate). The Investment Adviser, Goldman Sachs and/or their affiliates may have discretion to determine a successor or substitute Reference Rate, including any price or other adjustments to account for differences between the successor or substitute Reference Rate and the previous rate. The successor or substitute Reference Rate and any adjustments selected may negatively impact the Fund's investments, performance or financial condition, including in ways unforeseen by the Investment Adviser, Goldman Sachs and/or their affiliates. In addition, any successor or substitute Reference Rate and any pricing adjustments imposed by a regulator or by counterparties or otherwise may adversely affect the Fund's performance and/or NAV, and may expose the Fund to additional tax, accounting and regulatory risks.

In the aftermath of the 2007-2008 financial crisis, the financial sector experienced reduced liquidity in credit and other fixed income markets, and an unusually high degree of volatility, both domestically and internationally. While entire markets were impacted, issuers that had exposure to the real estate, mortgage and credit markets were particularly affected. The instability in the financial markets led the U.S. government to take a number of unprecedented actions designed to support certain financial institutions and certain segments of the financial markets. For example, the Dodd-Frank Act, which was enacted in 2010, provides for broad regulation of financial institutions, consumer financial products and services, broker-dealers, over-the-counter derivatives, investment advisers, credit rating agencies and mortgage lending.

Governments or their agencies may also acquire distressed assets from financial institutions and acquire ownership interests in those institutions. The implications of government ownership and disposition of these assets are unclear, and such ownership or disposition may have positive or negative effects on the liquidity, valuation and performance of the Fund's portfolio holdings.

In addition, global economies and financial markets are becoming increasingly interconnected, and political, economic and other conditions and events (including, but not limited to, natural disasters, pandemics, epidemics, and social unrest) in one country, region, or financial market may adversely impact issuers in a different country, region or financial market. Furthermore, the occurrence of, among other events, natural or man-made disasters, severe weather or geological events, fires, floods, earthquakes, outbreaks of disease (such as COVID-19, avian influenza or H1N1/09), epidemics, pandemics, malicious acts, cyber-attacks, terrorist acts or the occurrence of climate change, may also adversely impact the performance of the Fund. Such events may result in, among other things, closing borders, exchange closures, health screenings, healthcare service delays, quarantines, cancellations, supply chain disruptions, lower consumer demand, market volatility and general uncertainty. In addition, international trade tensions may give rise to concerns about economic and geopolitical stability and have had and likely will continue to have an adverse impact on global economic conditions. Trade disputes between the United States and other countries may be an ongoing source of instability, potentially resulting in significant currency fluctuations, or have other adverse effects on international markets, international trade agreements, or other existing cross-border cooperation arrangements. Tariffs, trade restrictions, economic sanctions, export controls, or retaliatory measures, or the threat or potential of one or more such events and developments, may result in material adverse effects on the global economy and the Fund. Such events could adversely impact issuers, markets and economies over the short- and long-term, including in ways that cannot necessarily be foreseen. The Fund could be negatively impacted if the value of a portfolio holding were harmed by such political or economic conditions or events. Moreover, such negative political and economic conditions and events could disrupt the processes necessary for the Fund's operations. See "Special Note Regarding Operational, Cyber Security and Litigation Risks" for additional information on operational risks.

U.S. and global markets recently have experienced increased volatility, including as a result of the recent failures of certain U.S. and non-U.S. banks, which could be harmful to the Fund and issuers in which they invest. For example, if a bank in which the Fund or issuer has an account fails, any cash or other assets in bank accounts may be temporarily inaccessible or permanently lost by the Fund or issuer. If a bank that provides a subscription line credit facility, asset-based facility, other credit facility and/or other services to an issuer fails, the issuer could be unable to draw funds under its credit facilities or obtain replacement credit facilities or other services from other lending institutions with similar terms. Even if banks used by issuers in which the Fund invests remain solvent, continued volatility in the banking sector could cause or intensify an economic recession, increase the costs of banking services or result in the issuers being unable to obtain or refinance indebtedness at all or on as favorable terms as could otherwise have been obtained. Conditions in the banking sector are evolving, and the scope of any potential impacts to the Fund and issuers, both from market conditions and also potential legislative or regulatory responses, are uncertain. Continued market volatility and uncertainty and/or a downturn in market and economic and financial conditions, as a result of developments in the banking industry or otherwise (including as a result of delayed access to cash or credit facilities), could have an adverse impact on the Fund and issuers in which they invest.

Pursuant to regulatory changes effective May 28, 2024, many U.S. securities transitioned to a "T+1" (trade date plus one day) settlement cycle. Securities trading in many non-U.S. markets (among other securities) are not impacted by these regulatory changes and typically have longer settlement cycles. As a result, there can be potential operational, settlement and other risks for a Fund with a significant portion of its assets invested in securities not subject to T+1 settlement. These risks include, but are not limited to, the need to maintain more cash and liquid securities (thereby creating cash drag on the portfolio) and a potential increase in custodial overdraft charges, in each case to facilitate settlement of Fund share redemptions on a T+1 basis.

#### *Special Note Regarding Operational, and Cyber Security and Litigation Risks*

An investment in the Fund may be negatively impacted because of the operational risks arising from factors such as processing errors and human errors, inadequate or failed internal or external processes, failures in systems and technology, changes in personnel, and errors caused by third-party service providers or trading counterparties. The use of certain investment strategies that involve manual or additional processing, such as over-the-counter derivatives, increases these risks. Although the Fund attempts to minimize such failures through controls and oversight, it is not possible to identify all of the operational risks that may affect the Fund or to

develop processes and controls that completely eliminate or mitigate the occurrence of such failures. The Fund and its shareholders could be negatively impacted as a result.

The Fund is also susceptible to operational and information security risks resulting from cyber-attacks. In general, cyber-attacks result from deliberate attacks, but other events may have effects similar to those caused by cyber-attacks. Cyber-attacks include, among others, stealing or corrupting confidential information and other data that is maintained online or digitally for financial gain, denial-of-service attacks on websites causing operational disruption, and the unauthorized release of confidential information and other data. Cyber-attacks affecting the Fund or its investment adviser, sub-adviser, custodian, transfer agent, intermediary or other third-party service provider may adversely impact the Fund and its shareholders. These cyber-attacks have the ability to cause significant disruptions and impact business operations; to result in financial losses; to prevent shareholders from transacting business; to interfere with the Fund's calculation of NAV and to lead to violations of applicable privacy and other laws, regulatory fines, penalties, reputational damage, reimbursement or other compensation costs and/or additional compliance costs. Similar to operational risk in general, the Fund and its service providers, including GSAM, have instituted risk management systems designed to minimize the risks associated with cyber security. However, there is a risk that these systems will not succeed (or that any remediation efforts will not be successful), especially because the Fund does not directly control the risk management systems of the service providers to the Fund, its trading counterparties or the issuers in which the Fund may invest. Moreover, there is a risk that cyber-attacks will not be detected.

The Fund may be subject to third-party litigation, which could give rise to legal liability. These matters involving the Fund may arise from its activities and investments and could have a materially adverse effect on the Fund, including the expense of defending against claims and paying any amounts pursuant to settlements or judgments. There can be no guarantee that these matters will not arise in the normal course of business. If the Fund was to be found liable in any suit or proceeding, any associated damages and/or penalties could have a materially adverse effect on the Fund's finances, in addition to being materially damaging to its reputation.

## INVESTMENT RESTRICTIONS

The investment restrictions set forth below have been adopted by the Trust as fundamental policies that cannot be changed with respect to the Fund without the affirmative vote of the holders of a majority of the outstanding voting securities (as defined in the Act) of the Fund. In addition, each Fund's policy to invest at least 80% of its net assets plus any borrowings for investment purposes (measured at the time of purchase) in certain municipal securities, as specified in each Fund's Prospectus, is a fundamental policy that may not be changed without shareholder approval. The investment objective of each Fund and all other investment policies or practices of the Funds are considered by the Trust not to be fundamental and accordingly may be changed without shareholder approval. For purposes of the Act, a "majority" of the outstanding voting securities means the lesser of (i) 67% or more of the shares of the Trust or a Fund present at a meeting, if the holders of more than 50% of the outstanding shares of the Trust or a Fund are present or represented by proxy, or (ii) more than 50% of the outstanding shares of the Trust or a Fund.

For purposes of the following limitations (except for the asset coverage requirement with respect to borrowings, which is subject to different requirements under the Act), any limitation which involves a maximum percentage shall not be considered violated unless an excess over the percentage occurs immediately after, and is caused by, an acquisition or encumbrance of securities or assets of, or borrowings by, the Fund. In applying fundamental investment restriction number (1) below to derivative transactions or instruments, including, but not limited to, futures, swaps, forwards, options and structured notes, the Fund will look to the industry of the reference asset(s) and not to the counterparty or issuer. With respect to the Fund's fundamental investment restriction number (2) below, in the event that asset coverage (as defined in the Act) at any time falls below 300%, the Fund, within three days thereafter (not including Sundays and holidays) or such longer period as the SEC may prescribe by rules and regulations, will reduce the amount of its borrowings to the extent required so that the asset coverage of such borrowings will be at least 300%.

### Fundamental Investment Restrictions

As a matter of fundamental policy, the Fund may not:

- (1) Invest more than 25% of its total assets in the securities of one or more issuers conducting their principal business activities in the same industry (excluding the U.S. Government or its agencies or instrumentalities). (For the purposes of this restriction, state and municipal governments and their agencies, authorities and instrumentalities are not deemed to be industries; telephone companies are considered to be a separate industry from water, gas or electric utilities; personal credit finance companies and business credit finance companies are deemed to be separate industries; and wholly-owned finance companies are considered to be in the industry of their parents if their activities are primarily related to financing the activities of their parents.) This restriction does not apply to investments in Municipal Securities which have been pre-refunded by the use of obligations of the U.S. Government or any of its agencies or instrumentalities. The Fund may invest more than 25% of the value of its total assets in Municipal Securities which are related in such a way that an economic, business or political development or change affecting one Municipal Security would also affect the other Municipal Securities. These Municipal Securities include (a) Municipal Securities, the interest on which is paid solely from revenues of similar projects such as hospitals, electric utility systems, multi-family housing, nursing homes, commercial facilities (including hotels), steel companies or life care facilities; (b) Municipal Securities whose issuers are in the same state; and (c) industrial development obligations;
- (2) Borrow money, except as permitted by the Act, or interpretations or modifications by the SEC, SEC staff or other authority with appropriate jurisdiction;

The following interpretation applies to, but is not part of, this fundamental policy: In determining whether a particular investment in portfolio instruments or participation in portfolio transactions is subject to this borrowing policy, the accounting treatment of such instrument or participation shall be considered, but shall not by itself be determinative. Whether a particular instrument or transaction constitutes a borrowing shall be determined by the Board, after consideration of all of the relevant circumstances;

- (3) Make loans, except through (a) the purchase of debt obligations, loan interests and other interests or obligations in accordance with the Fund's investment objective and policies; (b) repurchase agreements with banks, brokers, dealers and other financial institutions; (c) loans of securities as permitted by applicable law or pursuant to an exemptive order granted under the Act; and (d) loans to affiliates of the Fund to the extent permitted by law;
- (4) Underwrite securities issued by others, except to the extent that the sale of portfolio securities by the Fund may be deemed to be an underwriting;
- (5) Purchase, hold or deal in real estate, although the Fund may purchase and sell securities that are secured by real estate or interests therein or that reflect the return of an index of real estate values, securities of issuers which invest or deal in real estate, securities of real estate investment trusts and mortgage-related securities and may hold and sell real estate it has acquired as a result of the ownership of securities;
- (6) Invest in physical commodities, except that the Fund may invest in currency and financial instruments and contracts in accordance with its investment objective and policies, including, without limitation, structured notes, futures contracts, swaps, options on commodities, currencies, swaps and futures, ETFs, investment pools and other instruments, regardless of whether such instrument is considered to be a commodity; and
- (7) Issue senior securities to the extent such issuance would violate applicable law.

The Fund may, notwithstanding any other fundamental investment restriction or policy, invest some or all of its assets in a single open-end investment company or series thereof with substantially the same fundamental investment restrictions and policies as the Fund.

## TRUSTEES AND OFFICERS

### **The Trust's Leadership Structure**

The business and affairs of the Funds is managed under the direction of the Board of Trustees (the "Board"), subject to the laws of the State of Delaware and the Trust's Declaration of Trust. The Trustees are responsible for deciding matters of overall policy and reviewing the actions of the Trust's service providers. The officers of the Trust conduct and supervise the Funds' daily business operations. Trustees who are not deemed to be "interested persons" of the Trust as defined in the Act are referred to as "Independent Trustees." Trustees who are deemed to be "interested persons" of the Trust are referred to as "Interested Trustees." The Board is currently composed of twelve Independent Trustees and one Interested Trustee. The Board has selected an Independent Trustee to act as Chair, whose duties include presiding at meetings of the Board and acting as a focal point to address significant issues that may arise between regularly scheduled Board and Committee meetings. In the performance of the Chair's duties, the Chair will consult with the other Independent Trustees and the Funds' officers and legal counsel, as appropriate. The Chair may perform other functions as requested by the Board from time to time.

The Board meets as often as necessary to discharge its responsibilities. Currently, the Board conducts regular meetings at least four times a year, and holds special in-person or telephonic meetings as necessary to address specific issues that require attention prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting. In addition, the Independent Trustees meet at least annually to review, among other things, investment management agreements, distribution and/or service plans and related agreements, transfer agency agreements and certain other agreements providing for the compensation of Goldman Sachs and/or its affiliates by the Funds, and to consider such other matters as they deem appropriate.

The Board has established four standing committees — Audit, Governance and Nominating, Compliance and Risk Oversight, and Contract Review Committees. The Board may establish other committees, or nominate one or more Trustees to examine particular issues related to the Board's oversight responsibilities, from time to time. Each Committee meets periodically to perform its delegated oversight functions and reports its findings and recommendations to the Board. For more information on the Committees, see the section "Standing Board Committees," below.

The Trustees have determined that the Trust's leadership structure is appropriate because it allows the Trustees to effectively perform their oversight responsibilities.

### **Trustees of the Trust**

Information pertaining to the Trustees of the Trust as of December 29, 2025 is set forth below.

## Independent Trustees

Name, Address and Year of Birth <sup>1</sup>	Position(s) Held with the Trust	Term of Office and Length of Time Served <sup>2</sup>	Principal Occupation(s) During Past 5 Years	Number of Portfolios in Fund Complex Overseen by Trustee <sup>3</sup>	Other Directorships Held by Trustee <sup>4</sup>
Gregory G. Weaver 1951	Chair of the Board of Trustees	Since 2024	<p>Mr. Weaver is retired. Formerly, he was Director, Verizon Communications Inc. (2015–2024); Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Deloitte &amp; Touche LLP (a professional services firm) (2001–2005 and 2012–2014); and Member of the Board of Directors, Deloitte &amp; Touche LLP (2006–2012).</p> <p>Chair of the Board of Trustees—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.</p>	163	None
Cheryl K. Beebe 1955	Trustee	Since 2021	<p>Ms. Beebe is retired. She is Director, Packaging Corporation of America (2008–Present); Director, The Mosaic Company (2019–Present); and was formerly Director, HanesBrands Inc. (a multinational clothing company) (2020–2023); Director, Convergys Corporation (a global leader in customer experience outsourcing) (2015–2018); and formerly held the position of Executive Vice President, (2010–2014); and Chief Financial Officer, Ingredion, Inc. (a leading global ingredient solutions company) (2004–2014).</p> <p>Trustee—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.</p>	163	Packaging Corporation of America (producer of container board); The Mosaic Company (producer of phosphate and potash fertilizer)

Name, Address and Year of Birth <sup>1</sup>	Position(s) Held with the Trust	Term of Office and Length of Time Served <sup>2</sup>	Principal Occupation(s) During Past 5 Years	Number of Portfolios in Fund Complex Overseen by Trustee <sup>3</sup>	Other Directorships Held by Trustee <sup>4</sup>
Dwight L. Bush 1957	Trustee	Since 2024	<p>The Honorable Dwight Bush is President and CEO of D.L. Bush &amp; Associates (a financial advisory and private investment firm) (2002–2014 and 2017–Present); and was formerly U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Morocco (2014–2017); a Member of the Board of Directors of Santander Bank, N.A. (2018–2019); and a Director of MoneyLion, Inc. (an operator of a data-driven, digital financial platform) (2021–2025). Previously, he served as an Advisory Board Member of Goldman Sachs Trust and Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust (October 2019–January 2020).</p> <p>Trustee—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.</p>	163	None
Kathryn A. Cassidy 1954	Trustee	Since 2024	<p>Ms. Cassidy is retired. Formerly, she was Director, Vertical Aerospace Ltd. (an aerospace and technology company) (2021–2025). Ms. Cassidy was also Advisor to the Chairman (May 2014–December 2014); and Senior Vice President and Treasurer (2008–2014), General Electric Company &amp; General Electric Capital Corporation (technology and financial services companies).</p> <p>Trustee—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.</p>	163	None
John G. Chou 1956	Trustee	Since 2024	<p>Mr. Chou is retired. Formerly, he was Executive Vice President and Special Advisor to the Chairman and CEO (2021–2022); Executive Vice President and Chief Legal Officer (2019–2021); Executive Vice President and Chief Legal &amp; Business Officer (2017–2019); and Executive Vice President and General Counsel (2011–2017) of Cencora, Inc. (a pharmaceutical and healthcare company).</p> <p>Trustee—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.</p>	163	None

Name, Address and Year of Birth <sup>1</sup>	Position(s) Held with the Trust	Term of Office and Length of Time Served <sup>2</sup>	Principal Occupation(s) During Past 5 Years	Number of Portfolios in Fund Complex Overseen by Trustee <sup>3</sup>	Other Directorships Held by Trustee <sup>4</sup>
Joaquin Delgado 1960	Trustee	Since 2024	<p>Dr. Delgado is retired. He is Director, Stepan Company (a specialty chemical manufacturer) (2011–Present); and was formerly Director, Hexion Inc. (a specialty chemical manufacturer) (2019–2022); Executive Vice President, Consumer Business Group of 3M Company (July 2016–July 2019); and Executive Vice President, Health Care Business Group of 3M Company (October 2012–July 2016). Previously, Dr. Delgado served as an Advisory Board Member of Goldman Sachs Trust and Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust (October 2019– January 2020).</p> <p>Trustee—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.</p>	163	Stepan Company (a specialty chemical manufacturer)
Eileen H. Dowling 1962	Trustee	Since 2024	<p>Ms. Dowling is retired. Formerly, she was Senior Advisor (April 2021–September 2021); and Managing Director (2013–2021), BlackRock, Inc. (a financial services firm). As Managing Director, she held senior management positions, including Global Head of Global Consultant Relations (2017–2021), Multinational Corporations (2019–2021), the Institutional Product Group (2015–2019) and Institutional Marketing (2013–2016). Ms. Dowling was a member of the Global Operating Committee and Product Executive Committee of BlackRock.</p> <p>Trustee—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.</p>	163	None

Name, Address and Year of Birth <sup>1</sup>	Position(s) Held with the Trust	Term of Office and Length of Time Served <sup>2</sup>	Principal Occupation(s) During Past 5 Years	Number of Portfolios in Fund Complex Overseen by Trustee <sup>3</sup>	Other Directorships Held by Trustee <sup>4</sup>
Lawrence Hughes 1958	Trustee	Since 2021	<p>Mr. Hughes is retired. Formerly, he held senior management positions with BNY Mellon Wealth Management, a division of The Bank of New York Mellon Corporation (a financial services company) (1991–2015), most recently as Chief Executive Officer (2010–2015). Previously, Mr. Hughes served as an Advisory Board Member of Goldman Sachs Trust II (February 2016 – April 2016).</p> <p>Trustee—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.</p>	163	None
John F. Killian 1954	Trustee	Since 2021	<p>Mr. Killian is retired. He is Director, Consolidated Edison, Inc. (2007–Present); and was formerly Director, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company (2011–2022). Previously, he held senior management positions with Verizon Communications, Inc., including Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer (2009–2010); and President, Verizon Business, Verizon Communications, Inc. (2005–2009).</p> <p>Trustee—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.</p>	163	Consolidated Edison, Inc. (a utility holding company)
Steven D. Krichmar 1958	Trustee	Since 2021	<p>Mr. Krichmar is retired. Formerly, he held senior management and governance positions with Putnam Investments, LLC, a financial services company (2001–2016). He was most recently Chief of Operations and a member of the Operating Committee of Putnam Investments, LLC and Principal Financial Officer of The Putnam Funds. Previously, Mr. Krichmar served as an Audit Partner with PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP and its predecessor company (1990 – 2001).</p> <p>Trustee—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.</p>	163	None

Name, Address and Year of Birth <sup>1</sup>	Position(s) Held with the Trust	Term of Office and Length of Time Served <sup>2</sup>	Principal Occupation(s) During Past 5 Years	Number of Portfolios in Fund Complex Overseen by Trustee <sup>3</sup>	Other Directorships Held by Trustee <sup>4</sup>
Michael Latham 1965	Trustee	Since 2015	<p>Mr. Latham is retired. Formerly, he held senior management positions with the iShares exchange-traded fund business owned by BlackRock, Inc., including Chairman (2011–2014); Global Head (2010–2011); U.S. Head (2007–2010); and Chief Operating Officer (2003–2007).</p> <p>Trustee—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.</p>	163	None
Lawrence W. Stranghoener 1954	Trustee	Since 2015	<p>Mr. Stranghoener is retired. Formerly, he was Chairman, Kennametal, Inc. (a global manufacturer and distributor of tooling and industrial materials) (2003–2024); Director, Aleris Corporation and Aleris International, Inc. (a producer of aluminum rolled products) (2011–2020); and Interim Chief Executive Officer (2014), Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer (2004–2014), Mosaic Company (a fertilizer manufacturing company).</p> <p>Trustee—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.</p>	163	None

## Interested Trustee

Name, Address and Year of Birth <sup>1</sup>	Position(s) Held with the Trust	Term of Office and Length of Time Served <sup>2</sup>	Principal Occupation(s) During Past 5 Years	Number of Portfolios in Fund Complex Overseen by Trustee <sup>3</sup>	Other Directorships Held by Trustee <sup>4</sup>
James A. McNamara* 1962	President, Principal Executive Officer and Trustee	Since 2014	Advisory Director, Goldman Sachs (January 2018–Present); Managing Director, Goldman Sachs (January 2000–December 2017); Director of Institutional Fund Sales, GSAM (April 1998–December 2000); and Senior Vice President and Manager, Dreyfus Institutional Service Corporation (a financial services firm) (January 1993–April 1998).  President, Principal Executive Officer and Trustee—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.	163	None

\* Mr. McNamara is considered to be an “Interested Trustee” of the Trust because he holds positions with Goldman Sachs and owns securities issued by The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. Mr. McNamara holds comparable positions with certain other companies of which Goldman Sachs, GSAM or an affiliate thereof is the investment adviser, administrator and/or distributor.

<sup>1</sup> Each Trustee may be contacted by writing to the Trustee, c/o Goldman Sachs, 200 West Street, New York, New York, 10282, Attn: Robert Griffith.

<sup>2</sup> Subject to such policies as may be adopted by the Board from time-to-time, each Trustee holds office for an indefinite term, until the earliest of: (a) the election of his or her successor; (b) the date the Trustee resigns or is removed by the Board or shareholders, in accordance with the Trust’s Declaration of Trust; or (c) the termination of the Trust. The Board has adopted policies which provide that each Independent Trustee shall retire as of June 30<sup>th</sup> following (a) his or her 75<sup>th</sup> birthday or (b) the 15th anniversary of the date he or she became a Trustee, whichever is earlier, unless a waiver of such requirements shall have been adopted by a majority of the other Trustees. These policies may be changed by the Trustees without shareholder vote.

<sup>3</sup> The Goldman Sachs Fund Complex includes certain other companies listed above for each respective Trustee. As of December 29, 2025, Goldman Sachs ETF Trust consisted of 53 portfolios (49 of which offered shares to the public); Goldman Sachs Trust consisted of 84 portfolios (80 of which offered shares to the public); Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust consisted of 15 portfolios (13 of which offered shares to the public); Goldman Sachs Trust II consisted of 8 portfolios; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II consisted of 2 portfolios; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund consisted of one portfolio.

<sup>4</sup> This column includes only directorships of companies required to report to the SEC under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (i.e., “public companies”) or other investment companies registered under the Act.

The significance or relevance of a Trustee’s particular experience, qualifications, attributes and/or skills is considered by the Board on an individual basis. Experience, qualifications, attributes and/or skills common to all Trustees include the ability to critically review, evaluate and discuss information provided to them and to interact effectively with the other Trustees and with representatives of the Investment Adviser and its affiliates, other service providers, legal counsel and the Funds’ independent registered public accounting firm, the capacity to address financial and legal issues and exercise reasonable business judgment, and a commitment to the representation of the interests of the Funds and their shareholders. The Governance and Nominating Committee’s charter contains certain other factors that are considered by the Governance and Nominating Committee in identifying and evaluating potential nominees to serve as Independent Trustees. Based on each Trustee’s experience, qualifications, attributes and/or skills, considered individually and with respect to the experience, qualifications, attributes and/or skills of other Trustees, the Board has concluded that each Trustee should serve as a Trustee. Below is a brief discussion of the experience, qualifications, attributes and/or skills of each individual Trustee as of December 29, 2025 that led the Board to conclude that such individual should serve as a Trustee.

**Gregory G. Weaver.** Mr. Weaver has served as a Trustee and Chair of the Board since 2024. He serves as a member of the Governing Council of the Independent Directors Council. Previously, Mr. Weaver served as a Director of Verizon Communications Inc., where he served as Chair of the Audit Committee (2015–2024). Mr. Weaver was also a partner with Deloitte & Touche LLP for 30 years. He was the firm’s first chairman and chief executive officer from 2001–2005, and was elected to serve a second term (2012–2014). While serving as chairman at Deloitte & Touche LLP, Mr. Weaver led the audit and enterprise risk services practice, overseeing all operations, strategic positioning, audit quality, and talent matters. Mr. Weaver also served as a member of the firm’s Board of Directors for six years where he served on the Governance Committee and Partner Earnings and Benefits Committee and was chairman of the Elected Leaders Committee and Strategic Investment Committee. Mr. Weaver is also a Board member and Audit Committee chair of the YMCA of Westfield, New Jersey. Mr. Weaver has also served as President of the Council of Boy Scouts of America in Long Rivers, Connecticut, President of A Better Chance in Glastonbury, Connecticut, as a member of the Financial Accounting Standards Advisory Council and as a board member of the Stan Ross Department of Accountancy, Baruch College. Based on the foregoing, Mr. Weaver is experienced with accounting, financial and investment matters.

**Cheryl K. Beebe.** Ms. Beebe has served as a Trustee of the Trust since 2021 and was formerly Chair of the Board of Trustees from 2022 to 2024. Ms. Beebe is retired. She is a member of the Board of Directors of Packaging Corporation of America, a producer of container board, where she serves as Chair of the Audit Committee. She is also a member of the Board of Directors of The Mosaic Company, a producer of phosphate and potash fertilizer, and serves as Chair of the Audit Committee. Ms. Beebe was a member of the Board of Directors of HanesBrands Inc., a multinational clothing company, and a member of the Board of Directors of Convergys Corporation, a global leader in customer experience outsourcing, where she also served as Chair of the Audit Committee. Previously, she held several senior management positions at Ingredion, Inc. (formerly Corn Products International, Inc.), a leading global ingredient solutions company. Ms. Beebe also worked at Ingredion, Inc. and predecessor companies for 34 years, most recently as Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer. In that capacity, she was responsible for overseeing the company’s controller, treasury, tax, investor relations, internal audit, financial planning, corporate communications, global supply chain functions and information technology. Further, she served on the Board of Trustees of Fairleigh Dickinson University, where she served as Chair of the Governance Committee. Based on the foregoing, Ms. Beebe is experienced with financial, accounting and investment matters.

**Dwight L. Bush.** The Honorable Dwight Bush has served as a Trustee since 2024. He also serves as President and CEO of D.L. Bush & Associates, a financial advisory and private investment firm. From 2014 to 2017, The Honorable Dwight Bush served as U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Morocco. Prior to his service as U.S. Ambassador, he established and served as CEO of Urban Trust Bank and UTB Education Finance, LLC, an integrated provider of education credit services. The Honorable Dwight Bush was previously Vice President of Corporate Development for SLM Corporation (commonly known as Sallie Mae). Formerly, he served as a member of the Board of Directors of Santander Bank, N.A., JER Investors Trust, a specialty real estate finance company, as Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of CASI Pharmaceuticals (formerly Entremed, Inc.) where he was Chairman of the Audit Committee, and as Director of MoneyLion, Inc., an operator of a data-driven, digital financial platform. The Honorable Dwight Bush also serves as a member of the Board of Directors for several philanthropic organizations, including the Middle East Investment Initiative and the Meridian International Center, and has served on the executive committee of Cornell University. He previously served on the Trust’s Advisory Board. Based on the foregoing, The Honorable Dwight Bush is experienced with financial and investment matters.

**Kathryn A. Cassidy.** Ms. Cassidy has served as a Trustee since 2024. Previously, she was a member of the Board of Directors for Vertical Aerospace Ltd., a publicly traded aerospace and technology company (2021–2025), where she served as Chair of the Audit Committee. Ms. Cassidy also held several senior management positions at General Electric Company (“GE”) and General Electric Capital Corporation (“GECapital”) and its subsidiaries, where she worked for 35 years, most recently as Advisor to the Chairman of GECapital and Senior Vice President and Treasurer of GE and GECapital. As Senior Vice President and Treasurer, Ms. Cassidy led capital markets and treasury matters of multiple initial public offerings. Ms. Cassidy was responsible for managing global treasury operations, including global funding, hedging, derivative accounting and execution, cash and liquidity management, cash operations and treasury services, and global regulatory compliance and reporting for liquidity, derivatives, market risk and counterparty credit risk. Formerly, Ms. Cassidy served as a Director of buildOn, a not-for-profit organization, where she served as Chair of the Finance Committee. Based on the foregoing, Ms. Cassidy is experienced with financial and investment matters.

**John G. Chou.** Mr. Chou has served as a Trustee since 2024. Mr. Chou is retired. Formerly, he held several executive and senior management positions at Cencora, Inc. (“Cencora”) (formerly AmerisourceBergen Corporation) from 2002–2022, including

Executive Vice President and Special Advisor to the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Executive Vice President and Chief Legal Officer, Executive Vice President and Chief Legal & Business Officer, and Executive Vice President and General Counsel. As Executive Vice President and Chief Legal Officer, Mr. Chou was responsible for managing Cencora's legal, regulatory, quality, privacy, global business resilience and enterprise risk management functions, among others. In addition, he previously held senior legal positions at Cigna Corporation, ARCO Chemical Europe, and Arco Chemical Company, and also practiced law at various law firms, including most recently as a member of Eckert Seamens Cherin & Mellott, LLC. Mr. Chou currently serves as the President of the Board of Trustees of Episcopal Community Services and as a member of the Board of Directors of the Committee of Seventy. Based on the foregoing, Mr. Chou is experienced with financial and investment matters.

**Joaquin Delgado.** Dr. Delgado has served as a Trustee since 2024. Dr. Delgado is a member of the Board of Directors for Stepan Company, a publicly traded specialty chemical manufacturer. Previously, Dr. Delgado was a member of the Board of Directors for Hexion Inc., a privately held specialty chemical manufacturer, and held several senior management positions at 3M Company, where he worked for over 30 years, most recently as Executive Vice President of 3M Company's Consumer Business Group. As Executive Vice President, Vice President, and General Manager at 3M Company, Dr. Delgado directed mergers and acquisitions worldwide, and was responsible for managing global operations in specialized markets such as semiconductors, consumer electronics, communications, medical and office supplies and software. Dr. Delgado also serves as a member of the Board of Directors of Ballet Austin, a not-for-profit organization. Additionally, he formerly served as a member of the Board of Directors of MacPhail Center for Music, a not-for-profit organization. Dr. Delgado previously served on the Trust's Advisory Board. Based on the foregoing, Dr. Delgado is experienced with financial and investment matters.

**Eileen H. Dowling.** Ms. Dowling has served as a Trustee since 2024. Ms. Dowling worked at BlackRock for over 10 years, where she was a Managing Director and, most recently, a Senior Advisor. While at BlackRock, Ms. Dowling held several senior management positions responsible for clients, investment products and marketing, including Global Head of Consultant Relations, Global Head of Multinationals, Global Head of the Institutional Product Group and Global Head of Institutional Marketing. She also was a member of BlackRock's Global Operating Committee and Product Executive Committee. From 2007–2011, Ms. Dowling was a Managing Director and Global Head of Marketing at Credit Suisse Asset Management. Prior to that, over an 18-year period at Merrill Lynch, Ms. Dowling served in several roles in Investment Banking, Capital Markets and Research. Ms. Dowling currently serves as a Member of the Advisory Board and Finance Committee of New York University's Glucksman Ireland House. Based on the foregoing, Ms. Dowling is experienced with investment, financial and accounting matters.

**Lawrence Hughes.** Mr. Hughes has served as a Trustee of the Trust since 2021. Mr. Hughes is retired. Previously, he held several senior management positions at BNY Mellon Wealth Management, a division of The Bank of New York Mellon Corporation that provides wealth planning, investment management and banking services to individuals, families, family offices and charitable gift programs through a nationwide network of offices. Mr. Hughes worked at BNY Mellon Wealth Management for 24 years, most recently as Chief Executive Officer. In that capacity, he was ultimately responsible for the division's operations and played an active role in multiple acquisitions. Based on the foregoing, Mr. Hughes is experienced with financial and investment matters.

**John F. Killian.** Mr. Killian has served as a Trustee of the Trust since 2021. Mr. Killian is retired. Mr. Killian is a member of the Board of Directors of Consolidated Edison, Inc., a utility holding company, where he serves as Chair of the Audit Committee and as a member of the Corporate Governance and Nominating, and Management Development and Compensation Committees. Formerly, he was a member of the Board of Directors of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, where he served as Chair of the Audit Committee and a member of the Compensation Committee. Previously, Mr. Killian worked for 31 years at Verizon Communications, Inc. and predecessor companies, most recently as Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer. Based on the foregoing, Mr. Killian is experienced with accounting, financial and investment matters.

**Steven D. Krichmar.** Mr. Krichmar has served as a Trustee of the Trust since 2021. Mr. Krichmar is retired. He previously worked for fifteen years at Putnam Investments, LLC, a financial services company. Most recently, he served as Chief of Operations and a member of the Operating Committee of Putnam Investments, LLC. He was also involved in the governance of The Putnam Funds, serving as Principal Financial Officer. Before joining Putnam, Mr. Krichmar worked for PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP and its predecessor company for 20 years, most recently as Audit Partner and Investment Management Industry Leader (Assurance) for the northeast U.S. region. Currently, Mr. Krichmar is a member of the Board of Trustees of Boston Children's Hospital, where he serves as Chairman of the Audit & Compliance Committee, the Co-Chairman of the Finance Committee, a

member of the Executive Committee and the Technology and Innovation Committee, and a member of the Physicians' Organization Board. He is also a member of the Board of Directors of Controlled Risk Insurance Company of Vermont, Inc. (CRICO, A Risk Retention Group) and a member of the Audit and Finance Committees of the CRICO related entities, and a member of the University of North Carolina Kenan-Flagler Business School Board. Based on the foregoing, Mr. Krichmar is experienced with accounting, financial and investment matters.

**Michael Latham.** Mr. Latham has served as a Trustee of the Trust since 2015. Mr. Latham is retired. Mr. Latham has been designated as the Board's "audit committee financial expert" given his extensive accounting and finance experience. Previously, Mr. Latham held several senior management positions for 15 years with the iShares exchange-traded fund business owned by BlackRock, Inc. and previously owned by Barclays Global Investors, most recently as Chairman and Global Head of the business. In that capacity he was one of the lead executives responsible for the growth of the business. He was also involved in governance of the iShares funds, serving initially as Principal Financial Officer and later as President and Principal Executive Officer and a member of the Board of Directors. Mr. Latham is a certified public accountant, and before joining Barclays Global Investors, he worked at Ernst and Young for over five years. Based on the foregoing, Mr. Latham is experienced with accounting, financial and investment matters.

**Lawrence W. Stranghoener.** Mr. Stranghoener has served as a Trustee of the Trust since 2015 and was formerly Chairman of the Board of Trustees from 2017 to 2022. Mr. Stranghoener is retired. Previously, he was Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kennametal, Inc., a global manufacturer and distributor of tooling and industrial materials, and a member of the Board of Directors of Aleris Corporation and Aleris International, Inc., which provided aluminum rolled products and extrusions, aluminum recycling, and specification alloy production, where he also served as Chair of the Audit Committee and as a member of the Compensation Committee. Mr. Stranghoener also held several senior management positions at Mosaic Company, a fertilizer manufacturing company, where he worked for 10 years, most recently as Interim Chief Executive Officer, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer. As Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer at Mosaic Company, Mr. Stranghoener implemented public company processes, policies and performance standards to transition the company from private to public ownership and oversaw the company's controller, treasury, tax, investor relations, strategy and business development, and internal audit functions. He also led the integration of Mosaic Company with IMC Global, Inc. during their merger. Previously, Mr. Stranghoener served for three years as Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer for Thrivent Financial, a non-profit, financial services organization and Techies.com, an internet-based professional services company. Mr. Stranghoener also held several senior management positions at Honeywell, Inc. where he worked for 17 years, most recently as Vice President and Chief Financial Officer. Based on the foregoing, Mr. Stranghoener is experienced with financial and investment matters.

**James A. McNamara.** Mr. McNamara has served as a Trustee, President and Principal Executive Officer of the Trust since 2014. Mr. McNamara is an Advisory Director to Goldman Sachs. Prior to retiring as Managing Director at Goldman Sachs in 2017, Mr. McNamara was head of Global Third Party Distribution at GSAM and was previously head of U.S. Third Party Distribution. Prior to that role, Mr. McNamara served as Director of Institutional Fund Sales. Prior to joining Goldman Sachs, Mr. McNamara was Vice President and Manager at Dreyfus Institutional Service Corporation. Based on the foregoing, Mr. McNamara is experienced with financial and investment matters.

## Officers of the Trust

Information pertaining to the officers of the Trust as of December 29, 2025 is set forth below.

Name, Address and Year of Birth	Position(s) Held with the Trust(s)	Term of Office and Length of Time Served <sup>1</sup>	Principal Occupation(s) During Past 5 Years
James A. McNamara 200 West Street New York, NY 10282 1962	President, Principal Executive Officer and Trustee	Since 2014	Advisory Director, Goldman Sachs (January 2018–Present); Managing Director, Goldman Sachs (January 2000–December 2017); Director of Institutional Fund Sales, GSAM (April 1998–December 2000); and Senior Vice President and Manager, Dreyfus Institutional Service Corporation (a financial services firm) (January 1993–April 1998).  President, Principal Executive Officer and Trustee—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.
Joseph F. DiMaria 30 Hudson Street Jersey City, NJ 07302 1968	Treasurer, Principal Financial Officer and Principal Accounting Officer	Since 2017 (Treasurer and Principal Financial Officer since 2019)	Managing Director, Goldman Sachs (November 2015–Present) and Vice President – Mutual Fund Administration, Columbia Management Investment Advisers, LLC (May 2010–October 2015).  Treasurer, Principal Financial Officer and Principal Accounting Officer—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust (previously Assistant Treasurer (2017)); Goldman Sachs Trust (previously Assistant Treasurer (2016)); Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust (previously Assistant Treasurer (2016)); Goldman Sachs Trust II (previously Assistant Treasurer (2017)); Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.
Jessica Moran 200 West Street New York, NY 10282 1984	Chief Compliance Officer	Since 2023	Vice President, Goldman Sachs (April 2017–Present).  Chief Compliance Officer—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.
Allison Fracchiolla 30 Hudson Street Jersey City, NJ 07302 1983	Assistant Treasurer	Since 2014	Vice President, Goldman Sachs (January 2013–Present).  Assistant Treasurer—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.
Kirsten Frivold Imohiosen 200 West Street New York, NY 10282 1970	Assistant Treasurer	Since 2019	Managing Director, Goldman Sachs (January 2018–Present); and Vice President, Goldman Sachs (May 1999–December 2017).  Assistant Treasurer—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; Goldman Sachs BDC, Inc.; Goldman Sachs Private Middle Market Credit LLC; Goldman Sachs Private Middle Market Credit II LLC; Goldman Sachs Middle Market Lending Corp.; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.

<u>Name, Address and Year of Birth</u>	<u>Position(s) Held with the Trust(s)</u>	<u>Term of Office and Length of Time Served<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>Principal Occupation(s) During Past 5 Years</u>
Steven Z. Indich 30 Hudson Street Jersey City, NJ 07302 1969	Assistant Treasurer	Since 2019	Vice President, Goldman Sachs (February 2010–Present).  Assistant Treasurer—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; Goldman Sachs BDC, Inc.; Goldman Sachs Private Middle Market Credit LLC; Goldman Sachs Private Middle Market Credit II LLC; Goldman Sachs Middle Market Lending Corp.; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.
Elaine Leung 30 Hudson Street Jersey City, NJ 07302 1974	Assistant Treasurer	Since 2023	Vice President, Goldman Sachs (January 2021–Present); and Associate, Goldman Sachs (March 2014–December 2020).  Assistant Treasurer—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.
Carol Liu 30 Hudson Street Jersey City, NJ 07302 1975	Assistant Treasurer	Since 2019	Vice President, Goldman Sachs (October 2017–Present); Tax Director, The Raine Group LLC (August 2015–October 2017); and Tax Director, Icon Investments LLC (January 2012–August 2015).  Assistant Treasurer—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; Goldman Sachs BDC, Inc.; Goldman Sachs Private Middle Market Credit LLC; Goldman Sachs Private Middle Market Credit II LLC; Goldman Sachs Middle Market Lending Corp.; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.
Anney Chi 200 West Street New York, NY 10282 1973	Vice President	Since 2022	Vice President, Goldman Sachs (2014–Present).  Vice President—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.
Ryan Seber 200 West Street New York, NY 10282 1989	Vice President	Since 2025	Vice President, Goldman Sachs (2017–Present).  Vice President—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.
Alyson Shupe 200 West Street New York, NY 10282 1986	Vice President	Since 2024	Managing Director, Goldman Sachs (December 2023–Present); Head of Product Strategy (U.S. Advisor & Latin America), J.P. Morgan Asset Management (August 2018–December 2023). Vice President—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.

<u>Name, Address and Year of Birth</u>	<u>Position(s) Held with the Trust(s)</u>	<u>Term of Office and Length of Time Served<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>Principal Occupation(s) During Past 5 Years</u>
Michael Twohig 200 West Street New York, NY 10282 1965	Vice President	Since 2019	Vice President, Goldman Sachs (2014–Present).  Vice President—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; Goldman Sachs Trust II; and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund.
Caroline L. Kraus 200 West Street New York, NY 10282 1977	Chief Legal Officer	Since 2014	Managing Director, Goldman Sachs (January 2016–Present); Vice President, Goldman Sachs (August 2006–December 2015); Senior Counsel, Goldman Sachs (January 2020–Present); Associate General Counsel, Goldman Sachs (2012–December 2019); Assistant General Counsel, Goldman Sachs (August 2006–December 2011); and Associate, Weil, Gotshal & Manges, LLP (2002–2006).  Chief Legal Officer—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust; Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust; Goldman Sachs Trust II; Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II; Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund; Goldman Sachs BDC, Inc.; Goldman Sachs Private Middle Market Credit LLC; Goldman Sachs Private Middle Market Credit II LLC; Goldman Sachs Private Credit Corp.; Phillip Street Middle Market Lending Fund LLC; and Goldman Sachs Middle Market Lending Corp. II.  Secretary—Goldman Sachs BDC, Inc.; Goldman Sachs Private Middle Market Credit LLC; Goldman Sachs Private Middle Market Credit II LLC; Goldman Sachs Private Credit Corp.; Phillip Street Middle Market Lending Fund LLC; and Goldman Sachs Middle Market Lending Corp. II.
Robert Griffith 200 West Street New York, NY 10282 1974	Secretary	Since 2022	Managing Director, Goldman Sachs (September 2022–Present); General Counsel, Exchange Traded Concepts, LLC (October 2021–September 2022); Vice President, Goldman Sachs (August 2011–October 2021); Associate General Counsel, Goldman Sachs (December 2014–Present); Assistant General Counsel, Goldman Sachs (August 2011–December 2014); Vice President and Counsel, Nomura Holding America, Inc. (2010–2011); and Associate, Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP (2005–2010).  Secretary—Goldman Sachs ETF Trust (previously Assistant Secretary (2022)); Goldman Sachs Trust (previously Assistant Secretary (2022)); Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust (previously Assistant Secretary (2022)); Goldman Sachs Trust II (previously Assistant Secretary (2022)); Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II (previously Assistant Secretary (2022)); and Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund (previously Assistant Secretary (2022)).

<sup>1</sup> Officers hold office at the pleasure of the Board of Trustees or until their successors are duly elected and qualified. Each officer holds comparable positions with certain other companies of which Goldman Sachs, GSAM or an affiliate thereof is the investment adviser, administrator and/or distributor.

## **Standing Board Committees**

The Audit Committee oversees the audit process and provides assistance to the Board with respect to fund accounting, tax compliance and financial statement matters. In performing its responsibilities, the Audit Committee selects and recommends annually to the Board an independent registered public accounting firm to audit the books and records of the Trust for the ensuing year, and reviews with the firm the scope and results of each audit. All of the Independent Trustees serve on the Audit Committee, and Mr. Latham serves as the Chair of the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee met four times during the fiscal year ended August 31, 2025.

The Governance and Nominating Committee has been established to: (i) assist the Board in matters involving fund governance, which includes making recommendations to the Board with respect to the effectiveness of the Board in carrying out its responsibilities in governing the Funds and overseeing its management; (ii) select and nominate candidates for appointment or election to serve as Independent Trustees; and (iii) advise the Board on ways to improve its effectiveness. All of the Independent Trustees serve on the Governance and Nominating Committee. As stated above, each Trustee holds office for an indefinite term until the occurrence of certain events. In filling Board vacancies, the Governance and Nominating Committee will consider nominees recommended by shareholders. Nominee recommendations should be submitted to the Trust at its mailing address stated in the Fund's Prospectus and should be directed to the attention of the Governance and Nominating Committee. The Governance and Nominating Committee met twice during the fiscal year ended August 31, 2025.

The Compliance and Risk Oversight Committee has been established for the purpose of overseeing the compliance and risk processes: (i) of the Funds; and (ii) insofar as they relate to services provided to the Funds, of the Fund's Investment Adviser, Distributor, administrator (if any), and Transfer Agent, except that compliance processes relating to the accounting and financial reporting processes, and certain related matters, are overseen by the Audit Committee. In addition, the Compliance and Risk Oversight Committee provides assistance to the full Board with respect to compliance and risk oversight matters. All of the Independent Trustees serve on the Compliance and Risk Oversight Committee. The Compliance Committee met five times during the fiscal year ended August 31, 2025.

The Contract Review Committee has been established for the purpose of overseeing the processes of the Board for reviewing and monitoring performance under the Fund's investment management, distribution, transfer agency, and certain other agreements with the Fund's Investment Adviser and its affiliates. The Contract Review Committee is also responsible for overseeing the Board's processes for considering and reviewing performance under the operation of the Fund's distribution, service, shareholder administration and other plans, and any agreements related to the plans. The Contract Review Committee also provides appropriate assistance to the Board in connection with the Board's approval, oversight and review of the Fund's other service providers including, without limitation, the Fund's custodian/accounting agent, sub-transfer agents, professional (legal and accounting) firms and printing firms. All of the Independent Trustees serve on the Contract Review Committee. The Contract Review Committee met six times during the fiscal year ended August 31, 2025.

## **Risk Oversight**

The Board is responsible for the oversight of the activities of the Funds, including oversight of risk management. Day-to-day risk management with respect to the Funds is the responsibility of GSAM or other service providers (depending on the nature of the risk), subject to supervision by GSAM. The risks of the Funds include, but are not limited to, liquidity risk, investment risk, derivatives risk, compliance risk, manager selection risk, operational risk, reputational risk, credit risk and counterparty risk. Each of GSAM and the other service providers have their own independent interest in risk management and their policies and methods of risk management may differ from the Funds and each other's in the setting of priorities, the resources available or the effectiveness of relevant controls. As a result, the Board recognizes that it is not possible to identify all of the risks that may affect the Funds or to develop processes and controls to eliminate or mitigate their occurrence or effects, and that some risks are simply beyond the control of the Funds or GSAM, their respective affiliates or other service providers.

The Board effectuates its oversight role primarily through regular and special meetings of the Board and Board committees. In certain cases, risk management issues are specifically addressed in reports, presentations and discussions. For example, on an annual basis, GSAM (or personnel from GSAM) will provide the Board with written reports that address the operation, adequacy and

effectiveness of the Trust’s liquidity risk management and derivatives risk management programs, which are generally designed to assess and manage liquidity risk and, for Full Compliance Funds, derivatives risk. GSAM also has a risk management team that assists GSAM in managing investment risk. Representatives from the risk management team meet regularly with the Board to discuss their analysis and methodologies. In addition, investment risk is discussed in the context of regular presentations to the Board on Fund strategy. Other types of risk are addressed as part of presentations on related topics (e.g. compliance policies) or in the context of presentations focused specifically on one or more risks. The Board also receives reports from GSAM management on operational risks, reputational risks and counterparty risks relating to the Funds.

Board oversight of risk management is also performed by various Board committees. For example, the Audit Committee meets with both the Funds’ independent registered public accounting firm and GSAM’s internal audit group to review risk controls in place that support the Funds as well as test results, and the Compliance and Risk Oversight Committee meets with the CCO and representatives of GSAM’s compliance and risk oversight groups to review testing results of the Funds’ compliance policies and procedures and other compliance and risk issues. Board oversight of risk is also performed as needed between meetings through communications between GSAM and the Board. The Board may, at any time and in its discretion, change the manner in which it conducts risk oversight. The Board’s oversight role does not make the Board a guarantor of the Funds’ investments or activities.

### Trustee Ownership of Fund Shares

The following table shows the dollar range of shares beneficially owned by each Trustee in the Funds and other portfolios of the Goldman Sachs Fund Complex as of December 31, 2024.

Name of Trustee	Dollar Range of Equity Securities in the Funds <sup>(1)</sup>	Aggregate Dollar Range of Equity Securities in All Portfolios in Fund Complex Overseen By Trustee
Gregory G. Weaver	None	Over \$100,000
Cheryl K. Beebe	None	Over \$100,000
Dwight L. Bush	None	Over \$100,000
Kathryn A. Cassidy	None	Over \$100,000
John G. Chou	None	Over \$100,000
Joaquin Delgado	None	Over \$100,000
Eileen H. Dowling	None	Over \$100,000
Lawrence Hughes	None	Over \$100,000
John F. Killian	None	Over \$100,000
Steven D. Krichmar	None	Over \$100,000
Michael Latham	None	Over \$100,000
Lawrence W. Stranghoener	None	Over \$100,000
James A. McNamara	None	Over \$100,000

<sup>(1)</sup> Includes the value of shares beneficially owned by each Trustee in the Funds.

As of December 1, 2025, the Trustees and Officers of the Trust as a group owned less than 1% of the outstanding shares of beneficial interest of each Fund.

### Board Compensation

Each Independent Trustee is compensated with a unitary annual fee for his or her services as a Trustee of the Trust and as a member of the Audit Committee, Compliance and Risk Oversight Committee, Contract Review Committee, and Governance and Nominating Committee. The Chair and Trustees designated as an “audit committee financial expert” receive additional compensation for their services in such capacities. The Independent Trustees are also reimbursed for reasonable travel expenses incurred in connection with attending meetings. The Trust may also pay the reasonable incidental costs of a Trustee to attend training or other types of conferences relating to the investment company industry.

The following tables set forth certain information with respect to the compensation of each Trustee of the Trust for the fiscal year August 31, 2025:

### Trustee Compensation

Name of Trustee	Goldman Sachs Dynamic California Municipal Income ETF	Goldman Sachs Dynamic New York Municipal Income ETF	Goldman Sachs Municipal Income ETF	Goldman Sachs Ultra Short Municipal Income ETF
Gregory G. Weaver <sup>(1)</sup>	\$2,224.81	\$2,224.01	\$2,226.26	\$2,224.53
Cheryl K. Beebe	\$1,558.95	\$1,558.39	\$1,559.95	\$1,558.75
Dwight L. Bush	\$1,533.77	\$1,533.21	\$1,534.77	\$1,533.57
Kathryn A. Cassidy <sup>(2)</sup>	\$1,615.60	\$1,615.04	\$1,615.62	\$1,615.40
John G. Chou	\$1,533.77	\$1,533.21	\$1,534.77	\$1,533.57
Joaquin Delgado	\$1,533.77	\$1,533.21	\$1,534.77	\$1,533.57
Eileen H. Dowling	\$1,533.77	\$1,533.21	\$1,534.77	\$1,533.57
Lawrence Hughes	\$1,533.77	\$1,533.21	\$1,534.77	\$1,533.57
John F. Killian	\$1,533.77	\$1,533.21	\$1,534.77	\$1,533.57
Steven D. Krichmar	\$1,533.77	\$1,533.21	\$1,534.77	\$1,533.57
Michael Latham <sup>(2)</sup>	\$1,783.31	\$1,782.66	\$1,784.48	\$1,783.08
Lawrence W. Stranghoener	\$1,533.77	\$1,533.21	\$1,534.77	\$1,533.57
James A. McNamara <sup>(3)</sup>	—	—	—	—

Name of Trustee	Pension or Retirement Benefits Accrued as Part Of the Trust's Expenses	Total Compensation From the Fund Complex (including the Funds) <sup>(4)</sup>
Gregory G. Weaver <sup>(1)</sup>	—	\$574,000
Cheryl K. Beebe	—	\$404,000
Dwight L. Bush	—	\$394,000
Kathryn A. Cassidy <sup>(2)</sup>	—	\$426,500
John G. Chou	—	\$394,000
Joaquin Delgado	—	\$394,000
Eileen H. Dowling	—	\$394,000
Lawrence Hughes	—	\$394,000
John F. Killian	—	\$394,000
Steven D. Krichmar	—	\$394,000
Michael Latham <sup>(2)</sup>	—	\$459,000
Lawrence W. Stranghoener	—	\$394,000
James A. McNamara <sup>(3)</sup>	—	—

(1) Includes compensation as Board Chair.

(2) Includes compensation as “audit committee financial expert,” as defined in Item 3 of Form N-CSR.

(3) Mr. McNamara is an Interested Trustee due to the positions he holds with Goldman Sachs, and as such, receives no compensation from the Funds or the Goldman Sachs Fund Complex.

(4) Represents fees paid to each Trustee during the fiscal year ended August 31, 2025 from the Goldman Sachs Fund Complex, which consists of Goldman Sachs Trust, Goldman Sachs Variable Insurance Trust, Goldman Sachs Real Estate Diversified Income Fund, Goldman Sachs Trust II, Goldman Sachs ETF Trust and Goldman Sachs ETF Trust II.

## Miscellaneous

The Trust, its Investment Adviser and the Distributor have adopted codes of ethics under Rule 17j-1 of the Act that permit personnel subject to their particular codes of ethics to invest in securities, including securities that may be purchased or held by the Funds.

## MANAGEMENT SERVICES

As stated in the Fund's Prospectus, GSAM, 200 West Street, New York, New York 10282, serves as Investment Adviser to the Fund. GSAM is an indirect, wholly-owned subsidiary of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. and an affiliate of Goldman Sachs. See "Service Providers" in the Fund's Prospectus for a description of the Investment Adviser's duties to the Fund.

Founded in 1869, The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. is a publicly-held financial holding company and a leading global investment banking, securities and investment management firm. Goldman Sachs is a leader in developing portfolio strategies and in many fields of investing and financing, participating in financial markets worldwide and serving individuals, institutions, corporations and governments. Goldman Sachs is also among the principal market sources for current and thorough information on companies, industrial sectors, markets, economies and currencies, and trades and makes markets in a wide range of equity and debt securities 24 hours a day. The firm is headquartered in New York with offices in countries throughout the world. It has trading professionals throughout the United States, as well as in London, Frankfurt, Tokyo, Seoul, Sao Paulo and other major financial centers around the world. The active participation of Goldman Sachs in the world's financial markets enhances its ability to identify attractive investments. Goldman Sachs has agreed to permit the Fund to use the name "Goldman Sachs" or a derivative thereof as part of the Fund's name for as long as the Fund's management agreement (the "Management Agreement") is in effect.

Each Management Agreement provides that GSAM, in its capacity as Investment Adviser, may render similar services to others so long as the services under the Management Agreement are not impaired thereby. The Funds' Management Agreement was most recently approved by the Trustees of the Trust, including a majority of the Trustees of the Trust who are not parties to such agreement or "interested persons" (as such term is defined in the Act) of any party thereto (the "non-interested Trustees"), on June 17-18, 2025. A discussion regarding the Board of Trustees' basis for approving the Management Agreement with respect to each Fund is available in the Fund's Form N-CSR dated August 31, 2025.

The Management Agreement will remain in effect for an initial two-year period and will continue in effect with respect to the Fund from year to year thereafter provided such continuance is specifically approved at least annually as set forth in the Management Agreement.

The Management Agreement will terminate automatically if assigned (as defined in the Act). A Management Agreement is also terminable at any time without penalty by the Trustees of the Trust or by vote of a majority of the outstanding voting securities of the Fund on 60 days' written notice to the Investment Adviser or by the Investment Adviser on 60 days' written notice to the Trust.

Pursuant to the Management Agreement, the Investment Adviser is entitled to receive the fee set forth below, payable monthly based on the Fund's average daily net assets. Under the Management Agreement, the Investment Adviser is responsible for substantially all the expenses of the Fund, excluding payments under the Fund's 12b-1 plan (if any), interest, expenses, taxes, acquired fund fees and expenses, brokerage fees, costs of holding shareholder meetings and litigation, indemnification and extraordinary expenses.

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Contractual Rate</u>	<u>Actual Rate for the Fiscal Year Ended August 31, 2025</u>
Goldman Sachs Dynamic California Municipal Income ETF	0.35%	0.33%
Goldman Sachs Dynamic New York Municipal Income ETF	0.35%	0.34%

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Contractual Rate</u>	<u>Actual Rate for the Fiscal Year Ended August 31, 2025</u>
Goldman Sachs Municipal Income ETF	0.18%	0.18%
Goldman Sachs Ultra Short Municipal Income ETF	0.16%	0.16%

<sup>1</sup> The Investment Adviser has agreed to waive a portion of its management fee in order to achieve an effective net management fee rate of 0.30% as an annual percentage of average daily net assets of the Goldman Sachs Dynamic California Municipal Income ETF and Goldman Sachs Dynamic California Municipal Income ETF; through at least December 29, 2026, and prior to such date the Investment Adviser may not terminate the arrangement without the approval of the Board of Trustees.

For the fiscal years ended August 31, 2025 and August 31, 2024, the amounts of fees incurred by each of the Funds under the Management Agreement were as follows (with and without the fee limitations that were then in effect):

<u>Fund</u>	<u>2025</u>	
	<u>With Fee Limitations</u>	<u>Without Fee Limitations</u>
Goldman Sachs Dynamic California Municipal Income ETF	\$56,857	\$61,430
Goldman Sachs Dynamic New York Municipal Income ETF	\$20,268	\$21,098
Goldman Sachs Municipal Income ETF	\$32,930	\$32,938
Goldman Sachs Ultra Short Municipal Income ETF	\$10,765	\$10,765
<u>Fund</u>	<u>2024</u>	
	<u>With Fee Limitations<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>Without Fee Limitations</u>
Goldman Sachs Dynamic California Municipal Income ETF	\$1,928	\$1,928
Goldman Sachs Dynamic New York Municipal Income ETF	\$1,926	\$1,926
Goldman Sachs Municipal Income ETF	\$1,114	\$1,114
Goldman Sachs Ultra Short Municipal Income ETF	\$ 876	\$ 876

<sup>1</sup> The Funds each commenced operations on July 23, 2024.

The Fund directly pays the fees and expenses of the Independent Trustees. The management fee collected by the Investment Adviser is reduced by the amount equal to the fees and expenses paid by the Fund to the Independent Trustees. The amounts in the tables above reflect the management fee amounts after such reduction.

The imposition of the Investment Adviser's fees will have the effect of reducing the total return to investors. From time to time, the Investment Adviser may waive receipt of its fees, which would have the effect of lowering the Fund's overall expense ratio and increasing total return to investors at the time such amounts are waived.

The Investment Adviser may waive an additional portion of its management fee, including fees earned as the Investment Adviser to the any of affiliated funds in which the Fund invests, from time to time, and may discontinue or modify any such waiver in the future, consistent with the terms of any fee waiver arrangements in place. The Investment Adviser may decide to waive a portion of its management fee to the extent necessary to avoid a negative yield on a given day. Any such waiver would be voluntary and may be terminated at any time.

In addition to providing advisory services, under its Management Agreement, the Investment Adviser also, to the extent such services are not required to be performed by others pursuant to the fund administration and accounting agreement, the custodian agreement, the transfer agency agreement, distribution agreement or such other agreements with service providers to the Fund that the Board has approved: (i) supervises all non-advisory operations of each Fund that it advises; (ii) provides personnel to perform such executive, administrative and clerical services as are reasonably necessary to provide effective administration of the Fund; (iii) arranges for: (a) the preparation of all required tax returns, (b) the preparation and submission of reports to existing shareholders, (c) the periodic updating of prospectuses and statements of additional information and (d) the preparation of reports to be filed with

the SEC and other regulatory authorities; (iv) maintains the Fund’s records; and (v) provides office space and all necessary office equipment and services.

### Portfolio Managers — Other Accounts Managed by the Portfolio Managers

The following table discloses accounts within each type of category listed below for which the portfolio managers are jointly and primarily responsible for day to day portfolio management as of August 31, 2025, unless otherwise noted.

For each portfolio manager listed below, the total number of accounts managed is a reflection of accounts within the strategy they oversee or manage. There are multiple portfolio managers involved with each account.

Name of Portfolio Manager	Number of Other Accounts Managed and Total Assets by Account Type†						Number of Accounts and Total Assets for Which Advisory Fee is Performance Based†					
	Registered Investment Companies		Other Pooled Investment Vehicles		Other Accounts		Registered Investment Companies		Other Pooled Investment Vehicles		Other Accounts	
	Number of Accounts	Asset Managed	Number of Accounts	Asset Managed	Number of Accounts	Assets Managed	Number of Accounts	Asset Managed	Number of Accounts	Asset Managed	Number of Accounts	Asset Managed
Portfolio Management Team												
Scott Diamond	96	\$459,955	480	\$429,698	55,112	\$762,986	-	-	24	\$2,289	13	\$6,022
Todd Henry	10	\$ 11,439	11	\$ 14,026	2,225	\$114,947	-	-	2	\$ 244	1	\$ 365
Andrew Lontai	23	\$412,046	246	\$358,300	2,275	\$115,555	-	-	2	\$ 244	1	\$ 365
Joseph Wenzel	72	\$451,666	279	\$371,883	44,578	\$487,205	-	-	8	\$ 542	3	\$2,770
David Westbrook	10	\$ 11,439	11	\$ 14,026	2,225	\$114,947	-	-	2	\$ 244	1	\$ 365
Sylvia Yeh	72	\$451,666	279	\$371,883	44,578	\$487,205	-	-	8	\$ 542	3	\$2,770

† Footnotes:

1. Asset information is in USD millions unless otherwise specified.
2. “Other Pooled Investment Vehicles” includes private investment funds and SICAVs (a type of open-end investment company organized outside the U.S.).
3. “Other Accounts” includes a separately managed account platform, advisory mutual fund platform, advisory relationships and others. For purposes of the above, a platform is included as a single account.

**Conflicts of Interest.** The Investment Adviser’s portfolio managers are often responsible for managing the Fund as well as other registered funds, accounts, including proprietary accounts, separate accounts and other pooled investment vehicles, such as unregistered private funds. A portfolio manager may manage a separate account or other pooled investment vehicle which may have materially higher fee arrangements than the Fund and may also have a performance-based fee. The side-by-side management of these funds may raise potential conflicts of interest relating to cross trading, the allocation of investment opportunities and the aggregation and allocation of trades.

The Investment Adviser has a fiduciary responsibility to manage all client accounts in a fair and equitable manner. To this end, the Investment Adviser has developed policies and procedures designed to mitigate and manage the potential conflicts of interest that may arise from side-by-side management. In addition, the Investment Adviser and the Fund have adopted policies limiting the circumstances under which cross-trades may be effected between the Fund and another client account. The Investment Adviser conducts periodic reviews of trades for consistency with these policies. For more information about conflicts of interests that may arise in connection with a portfolio manager’s management of the Fund’s investments and the investments of other accounts, see “Potential Conflicts of Interest.”

### Portfolio Managers — Compensation

Compensation for portfolio managers of the Investment Adviser is comprised of a base salary and year-end discretionary variable compensation. The base salary is fixed from year to year. Year-end discretionary variable compensation is primarily a

function of each portfolio manager’s individual performance and his or her contribution to overall team performance; the performance of the Investment Adviser and Goldman Sachs; the team’s net revenues for the past year which is primarily derived from advisory fees; and anticipated compensation levels among competitor firms. Portfolio managers are rewarded, in part, for their delivery of investment performance, which is reasonably expected to meet or exceed the expectations of clients and fund shareholders in terms of: excess return over an applicable benchmark, peer group ranking, risk management and factors specific to certain funds such as yield or regional focus. Performance is judged over 1-, 3- and 5-year time horizons.

For compensation purposes, the benchmarks for these Funds are:

Dynamic California Municipal Income ETF: Bloomberg Municipal Bond Quality Intermediate – California Index

Dynamic New York Municipal Income ETF: Bloomberg Municipal Bond Quality Intermediate - New York Index

Municipal Income ETF: Bloomberg 1-15 Year Blend (1-17) Municipal Bond Index

Ultra-Short Municipal Income ETF: Bloomberg Municipal Short-Term Index

The discretionary variable compensation for portfolio managers is also significantly influenced by various factors, including: (1) effective participation in team discussions and process; and (2) management of risk in alignment with the targeted risk parameter and investment objective of the applicable Fund. Other factors may also be considered including: (1) general client/shareholder orientation and (2) teamwork and leadership.

As part of their year-end discretionary variable compensation and subject to certain eligibility requirements, portfolio managers of the Fund may receive deferred equity-based and similar awards, in the form of: (1) shares of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. (restricted stock units); and, (2) for certain portfolio managers, performance-tracking (or “phantom”) shares of the Fund or multiple Funds. Performance-tracking shares are designed to provide a rate of return (net of fees) equal to that of the Fund(s) that a portfolio manager manages, or one or more other eligible Funds, as determined by senior management, thereby aligning portfolio manager compensation with fund shareholder interests. The awards are subject to vesting requirements, deferred payment and clawback and forfeiture provisions. GSAM, Goldman Sachs or their affiliates expect, but are not required to, hedge the exposure of the performance-tracking shares of a Fund by, among other things, purchasing shares of the relevant Fund(s).

Other Compensation—In addition to base salary and year-end discretionary variable compensation, the Investment Adviser has a number of additional benefits in place including (1) a 401(k) program that enables employees to direct a percentage of their base salary and bonus income into a tax-qualified retirement plan; and (2) investment opportunity programs in which certain professionals may participate subject to certain eligibility requirements.

**Portfolio Managers — Portfolio Managers’ Ownership of Securities in the Fund**

The following table shows the portfolio managers’ ownership of shares, including those beneficially owned as well as those owned pursuant to the deferred compensation plan discussed above, of the Funds they manage as of August 31, 2025.

<u>Name of Portfolio Manager</u>	<u>Dollar Range of Equity Securities Beneficially Owned by Portfolio Manager</u>
<b>Goldman Sachs Dynamic California Municipal Income ETF</b>	
Sylvia Yeh	None
Scott Diamond	None
Joseph Wenzel	None
Todd Henry	None
David Westbrook	None
<b>Goldman Sachs Dynamic New York Municipal Income ETF</b>	
Sylvia Yeh	None
Scott Diamond	None

<u>Name of Portfolio Manager</u>	<u>Dollar Range of Equity Securities Beneficially Owned by Portfolio Manager</u>
Joseph Wenzel	None
Todd Henry	None
David Westbrook	None
<b>Goldman Sachs Municipal Income ETF</b>	
Sylvia Yeh	None
Scott Diamond	None
Joseph Wenzel	None
Todd Henry	None
David Westbrook	None
<b>Goldman Sachs Ultra Short Municipal Income ETF</b>	
Andrew Lontai	None
Joseph Wenzel	None
Todd Henry	None
David Westbrook	None

### **Distributor and Transfer Agent**

*Distributor:* ALPS Distributors, Inc., 1290 Broadway, Suite 1000, Denver, Colorado 80203, serves as the exclusive distributor of Creation Units of shares of the Fund pursuant to a “best efforts” arrangement as provided by a distribution agreement with the Trust on behalf of the Fund. Shares of the Fund are offered and sold on a continuous basis by ALPS, acting as agent. The Distributor does not maintain a secondary market in the Fund’s Shares.

*Transfer Agent:* The Bank of New York, 240 Greenwich Street, New York, New York 10286, serves as the Trust’s transfer and dividend disbursing agent. Under its transfer agency agreement with the Trust, BNY has undertaken with the Trust to provide the following services with respect to the Fund: (i) perform and facilitate the performance of purchases and redemptions of Creation Units, (ii) prepare and transmit by means of Depository Trust Company’s (“DTC”) book-entry system payments for dividends and distributions on or with respect to the Shares declared by the Trust on behalf of the Fund, (iii) prepare and deliver reports, information and documents as specified in the transfer agency agreement, (iv) perform the customary services of a transfer agent and dividend disbursing agent, and (v) render certain other miscellaneous services as specified in the transfer agency agreement or as otherwise agreed upon.

The Trust’s distribution and transfer agency agreements each provide that BNY may render similar services to others so long as the services BNY provides thereunder are not impaired thereby. Such agreements also provide that the Trust will indemnify BNY against certain liabilities.

### **Expenses**

The Board of Trustees of the Trust has approved a unitary management fee structure for the Fund. Under the unitary fee structure, the Investment Adviser is responsible for paying substantially all the expenses of the Fund, excluding payments under the Fund’s 12b-1 plan (if any), interest expenses, taxes, acquired fund fees and expenses, brokerage fees, costs of holding shareholder meetings and litigation, indemnification and extraordinary expenses.

The imposition of the Investment Adviser’s fees, as well as any other operating expenses not borne by the Investment Adviser as described above, will have the effect of reducing the total return to investors. From time to time, the Investment Adviser may waive receipt of its fees, which would have the effect of lowering the Fund’s overall expense ratio and increasing total return to investors at the time such amounts are waived or assumed, as the case may be.

## **Custodian, Sub-Custodians and Provider of Administrative Services**

BNY is the custodian of the Trust's portfolio securities and cash. The custodian of the Trust may change from time to time. BNY also maintains the Trust's accounting records. BNY may appoint domestic and foreign sub-custodians and use depositories from time to time to hold securities and other instruments purchased by the Trust in foreign countries and to hold cash and currencies for the Trust.

BNY provides administrative services pursuant to the fund administration agreement with the Trust (the "Fund Administration and Accounting Agreement") pursuant to which BNY provides certain services, including, among others, (i) preparation of certain shareholder reports and communications; (ii) preparation of certain reports and filings with the SEC; (iii) certain net asset value computation services; and (iv) such other services for the Trust as may be mutually agreed upon between the Trust and BNY. For its services under the Fund Administration and Accounting Agreement, BNY receives such fees based on a stated percentage of net assets as are agreed upon from time to time between the parties. In addition, BNY is reimbursed by the Fund for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred in connection with the Fund Administration and Accounting Agreement. In addition, an affiliate of BNY will also provide certain other services for the Trust, including, (i) providing foreign exchange transaction services and (ii) executing trades in connection with certain creation and redemption transactions effected partially in cash. For these services, the BNY affiliate will receive compensation based on levels that are negotiated with the Trust and/or the Investment Adviser. BNY also provides certain middle office services to GSAM pursuant to a service agreement.

## **Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm**

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, 101 Seaport Boulevard, Suite 500, Boston, Massachusetts 02210, is the Fund's independent registered public accounting firm. The Fund's independent registered public accounting firm may change from time to time. In addition to audit services, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP provides assistance on certain non-audit matters.

## **POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

### **General Categories of Conflicts Associated with the Funds**

Goldman Sachs (which, for purposes of this "POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST" section, shall mean, collectively, The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., the Investment Adviser and their affiliates, directors, partners, trustees, managers, members, officers and employees) is a worldwide, full-service investment banking, broker-dealer, asset management and financial services organization and a major participant in global financial markets. As such, it provides a wide range of financial services to a substantial and diversified client base that includes corporations, financial institutions, governments and individuals. Goldman Sachs acts as broker-dealer, investment adviser, investment banker, underwriter, research provider, administrator, financier, adviser, market maker, trader, prime broker, derivatives dealer, clearing agent, lender, custodian, counterparty, agent, principal, distributor, investor or in other commercial capacities for accounts or companies (including Fund portfolio companies) or affiliated or unaffiliated investment funds (including pooled investment vehicles and private funds). In those and other capacities, Goldman Sachs advises and deals with clients and third parties in all markets and transactions and purchases, sells, holds and recommends a broad array of investments, including securities, derivatives, loans, commodities, currencies, credit default swaps, indices, baskets and other financial instruments and products, for its own account and for the accounts of clients and of its personnel. In addition, Goldman Sachs has direct and indirect interests in the global fixed income, currency, commodity, equities, bank loan and other markets. In certain cases, the Investment Adviser causes the Funds to invest in products and strategies sponsored, managed or advised by Goldman Sachs or in which Goldman Sachs has an interest, either directly or indirectly, or otherwise restricts the Funds from making such investments, as further described herein. In this regard, there are instances when Goldman Sachs' activities and dealings with other clients and third parties affect the Funds in ways that disadvantage the Funds and/or benefit Goldman Sachs or other Accounts.

In addition, the Investment Adviser's activities on behalf of certain other entities that are not investment advisory clients of the Investment Adviser create conflicts of interest between such entities, on the one hand, and Accounts (including the Funds), on the other hand, that are the same as or similar to the conflicts that arise between the Funds and other Accounts, as described herein. In managing conflicts of interest that arise as a result of the foregoing, the Investment Adviser generally will be subject to fiduciary requirements. For purposes of this "POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST" section, "Funds" shall mean, collectively, the Funds

and any of the other Goldman Sachs Funds, “Indexes” shall mean, collectively, stock market and other indexes that the Investment Adviser and/or its affiliates develop, own or operate, and “Accounts” shall mean Goldman Sachs’ own accounts, accounts in which personnel of Goldman Sachs have an interest, accounts of Goldman Sachs’ clients, including separately managed accounts (or separate accounts), and investment vehicles that Goldman Sachs sponsors, manages or advises, including the Funds.

The conflicts herein do not purport to be a complete list or explanation of the conflicts associated with the financial or other interests the Investment Adviser or Goldman Sachs may have now or in the future. Additional information about potential conflicts of interest regarding the Investment Adviser and Goldman Sachs is set forth in the Investment Adviser’s Form ADV. A copy of Part 1 and Part 2A of the Investment Adviser’s Form ADV is available on the SEC’s website ([www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov)).

## **The Sale of Fund Shares and the Allocation of Investment Opportunities**

### ***Sales Incentives and Related Conflicts Arising from Goldman Sachs’ Financial and Other Relationships with Intermediaries***

Goldman Sachs and its personnel, including employees of the Investment Adviser, receive benefits and earn fees and compensation for services provided to Accounts (including the Funds) and in connection with the distribution of the Funds. Any such fees and compensation are generally paid directly or indirectly out of the fees payable to the Investment Adviser in connection with the management of such Accounts (including the Funds). Moreover, Goldman Sachs and its personnel, including employees of the Investment Adviser, have relationships (both involving and not involving the Funds, and including without limitation placement, brokerage, advisory and board relationships) with distributors, consultants and others who recommend, or engage in transactions with or for, the Funds. Such distributors, consultants and other parties may receive compensation from Goldman Sachs or the Funds in connection with such relationships. As a result of these relationships, distributors, consultants and other parties have conflicts that create incentives for them to promote the Funds.

To the extent permitted by applicable law, Goldman Sachs and the Funds have in the past made, and may in the future make, payments to authorized dealers and other financial intermediaries and to salespersons to promote the Funds. These payments may be made out of Goldman Sachs’ assets or amounts payable to Goldman Sachs. These payments create an incentive for such persons to highlight, feature or recommend the Funds.

### ***Allocation of Investment Opportunities Among the Funds and Other Accounts***

The Investment Adviser manages or advises multiple Accounts (including Accounts in which Goldman Sachs and its personnel have an interest) that have investment objectives that are the same or similar to the Funds and that seek to make or sell investments in the same securities or other instruments, sectors or strategies as the Funds. This creates potential conflicts, particularly in circumstances where the availability or liquidity of such investment opportunities is limited (e.g., in local and emerging markets, high yield securities, fixed income securities, direct loan originations, regulated industries, small capitalization, direct or indirect investments in private investment funds, investments in master limited partnerships in the oil and gas industry, initial public offerings/new issues and privately-issued debt securities).

Accounts (including the Funds) may invest in other Accounts (including the Funds) at or near the establishment of such Accounts, which may facilitate the Accounts achieving a specified size or scale. Conversely, Accounts (including the Funds) may also invest in other Accounts (including the Funds) that are near the end of their life and investment by Accounts (including the Funds) may allow such products to continue in operation.

The Investment Adviser does not receive performance-based compensation in respect of its investment management activities on behalf of the Funds, but may simultaneously manage Accounts for which the Investment Adviser receives greater fees or other compensation (including performance-based fees or allocations) than it receives in respect of the Funds. The simultaneous management of Accounts that pay greater fees or other compensation and the Funds creates a conflict of interest as the Investment Adviser has an incentive to favor Accounts with the potential to receive greater fees when allocating resources, services, functions or investment opportunities among Accounts. For instance, the Investment Adviser will be faced with a conflict of interest when allocating scarce investment opportunities given the possibly greater fees from Accounts that pay performance-based fees.

To address these potential conflicts, the Investment Adviser has developed allocation policies and procedures that provide that the Investment Adviser's personnel making portfolio decisions for Accounts will make investment decisions for, and allocate investment opportunities among, such Accounts consistent with the Investment Adviser's fiduciary obligations. However, the availability, amount, timing, structuring or terms of an investment available to the Funds differ from, and performance may be lower than, the investments and performance of other Accounts in certain cases. In addition, these policies and procedures may result in the pro rata allocation (on a basis determined by the Investment Adviser) of limited opportunities across eligible Accounts managed by a particular portfolio management team, but in other cases such allocation may not be pro rata. Furthermore, certain investment opportunities sourced by the Investment Adviser, or Goldman Sachs businesses or divisions outside of the Investment Adviser, may be allocated to Goldman Sachs for its own account or investment vehicles organized to facilitate investment by its current or former directors, partners, trustees, managers, members, officers, employees, and their families and related entities, including employee benefit plans in which they participate, and current consultants, and not to Accounts. See Item 11 ("Code of Ethics, Participation or Interest in Client Transactions and Personal Trading—Participation or Interest in Client Transactions—Certain Effects of the Activities of Goldman Sachs and Advisory Accounts") of the Investment Adviser's Form ADV.

Allocation-related decisions for the Funds and other Accounts are made by reference to one or more factors. Factors may include: the date of inception of the Account; the Account's portfolio and its investment horizons and objectives (including with respect to portfolio construction and target returns); the risk profile of the investment; guidelines and restrictions (including legal and regulatory restrictions affecting certain Accounts or affecting holdings across Accounts); client instructions; adverse effects of timing on other Accounts or the Investment Adviser potentially participating in the investment opportunity; strategic fit and other portfolio management considerations, including different desired levels of exposure to certain strategies; the expected future capacity of the Funds and the applicable Accounts; limits on the Investment Adviser's brokerage discretion; cash and liquidity needs and other considerations; anticipated magnitude of the overall investment program for the then current year and any changes in the rate at which the program is carried out; the availability (or lack thereof) of other appropriate or substantially similar investment opportunities; the opportunity to invest in different layers in the capital structure of a company; differences in benchmark factors and hedging strategies among Accounts; the Investment Adviser's perception of a potential co-investment party's interest; and the source of the investment opportunity. Suitability considerations, reputational matters and other considerations may also be considered.

In a case in which one or more Accounts are intended to be the Investment Adviser's primary investment vehicles focused on, or to receive priority with respect to, a particular trading strategy ("Primary Vehicles") (as determined in the Investment Adviser's discretion, and including investments sourced by or available from the Investment Adviser or affiliates of the Investment Adviser), other Accounts (including the Funds) may not have access to such strategy or may have more limited access than would otherwise be the case. For example, access to such strategies may only be available to certain Accounts through an investment in a Primary Vehicle, which investment would result in additional management fees and/or performance-based compensation payable to the Investment Adviser. To the extent that such Accounts are managed by areas of Goldman Sachs other than the Investment Adviser, such Accounts will not be subject to the Investment Adviser's allocation policies. Investments by such Accounts may reduce or eliminate the availability of investment opportunities to, or otherwise adversely affect, the Fund. Furthermore, in cases in which one or more Accounts are intended to be the Investment Adviser's primary investment vehicles focused on, or receive priority with respect to, a particular trading strategy or type of investment, such Accounts have specific policies or guidelines with respect to Accounts or other persons receiving the opportunity to invest alongside such Accounts with respect to one or more investments ("Co-Investment Opportunities"). As a result, certain Accounts or other persons will receive allocations to, or rights to invest in, Co-Investment Opportunities that are not available generally to the Funds.

In addition, in some cases the Investment Adviser makes investment recommendations to Accounts that make investment decisions independently of the Investment Adviser. In circumstances in which there is limited availability of an investment opportunity, if such Accounts invest in the investment opportunity at the same time as, or prior to, a Fund, the availability of the investment opportunity for the Fund will be reduced irrespective of the Investment Adviser's policies regarding allocations of investments.

The Investment Adviser, from time to time, develops and implements new trading strategies or seeks to participate in new trading strategies and investment opportunities. These strategies and opportunities are not employed in all Accounts or employed pro rata among Accounts where they are used, even if the strategy or opportunity is consistent with the objectives of such Accounts. Further, a trading strategy employed for a Fund that is similar to, or the same as, that of another Account may be implemented

differently, sometimes to a material extent. For example, a Fund may invest in different securities or other assets, or invest in the same securities and other assets but in different proportions, than another Account with the same or similar trading strategy. The implementation of the Fund's trading strategy depends on a variety of factors, including the portfolio managers involved in managing the trading strategy for the Account, the time difference associated with the location of different portfolio management teams, and the factors described above and in Item 6 ("PERFORMANCE-BASED FEES AND SIDE-BY-SIDE MANAGEMENT—Side-by-Side Management of Advisory Accounts; Allocation of Opportunities") of the Investment Adviser's Form ADV.

During periods of unusual market conditions, the Investment Adviser may deviate from its normal trade allocation practices. For example, this may occur with respect to the management of unlevered and/or long-only Accounts that are typically managed on a side-by-side basis with levered and/or long-short Accounts.

The Investment Adviser and the Funds may receive notice of, or offers to participate in, investment opportunities from third parties for various reasons. The Investment Adviser in its sole discretion will determine whether a Fund will participate in any such investment opportunities and investors should not expect that the Fund will participate in any such investment opportunities unless the opportunities are received pursuant to contractual requirements, such as preemptive rights or rights offerings, under the terms of the Fund's investments. Some or all Funds may, from time to time, be offered investment opportunities that are made available through Goldman Sachs businesses outside of the Investment Adviser, including, for example, interests in real estate and other private investments. In this regard, a conflict of interest exists to the extent that Goldman Sachs controls or otherwise influences the terms and pricing of such investments and/or retains other benefits in connection therewith. However, Goldman Sachs businesses outside of the Investment Adviser are under no general or other obligation or duty to provide investment opportunities to the Funds, and generally are not expected to do so. Further, opportunities sourced within particular portfolio management teams within the Investment Adviser may not be allocated to Accounts (including the Funds) managed by such teams or by other teams. Opportunities not allocated (or not fully allocated) to the Funds or other Accounts managed by the Investment Adviser may be undertaken by Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser), including for Accounts, or made available to other Accounts or third parties, and the Funds will not receive any compensation related to such opportunities. Even in the case of an opportunity received by a Fund pursuant to contractual requirements, the Investment Adviser may decide in its discretion that the Fund will not participate in such opportunity for portfolio construction reasons, due to the investment objective and strategies of such Fund, or because the Investment Adviser determines that participation would not be appropriate for such Fund for other reasons, in which case the Investment Adviser may allocate such opportunity to another Account. Additional information about the Investment Adviser's allocation policies is set forth in Item 6 ("PERFORMANCE-BASED FEES AND SIDE-BY-SIDE MANAGEMENT—Side-by-Side Management of Advisory Accounts; Allocation of Opportunities") of the Investment Adviser's Form ADV.

As a result of the various considerations above, there will be cases in which certain Accounts (including Accounts in which Goldman Sachs and personnel of Goldman Sachs have an interest) receive an allocation of an investment opportunity (including an investment opportunity sourced by or available from the Investment Adviser or affiliates of the Investment Adviser) at times that the Funds do not, or when the Funds receive an allocation of such opportunities but on different terms than other Accounts (which may be less favorable). In addition, due to regulatory or other considerations, the receipt of an investment opportunity by certain Funds may restrict or limit the ability of other Funds to receive an allocation of the same opportunity. The application of these considerations may cause differences in the performance of different Accounts that employ strategies the same or similar to those of the Funds.

Certain Accounts may be unable to participate directly in particular types of investment opportunities (including those sourced by or available from the Investment Adviser or affiliates of the Investment Adviser), such as certain types of loans, due to the nature and/or size of the Accounts or limitations or prohibitions in applicable loan or transaction documentation. In addition, certain Accounts may be limited due to the timing or specific nature of the particular investment opportunity.

Multiple Accounts (including the Funds) may participate in a particular investment or incur expenses applicable in connection with the operation or management of the Accounts, or otherwise may be subject to costs or expenses that are allocable to more than one Account (which may include, without limitation, research expenses, technology expenses, valuation agent expenses, expenses relating to participation in bondholder groups, restructurings, class actions and other litigation, and insurance premiums). The Investment Adviser may allocate investment-related and other expenses on a pro rata or different basis. Certain Accounts are, by their terms or by determination of the Investment Adviser, on a case-by-case basis, not responsible for their share of such expenses, and, in addition, the Investment Adviser has agreed with certain Accounts to cap the amount of expenses (or the amount of certain types of

expenses) borne by such Accounts, which results in such Accounts not bearing the full share of expenses they would otherwise have borne as described above. As a result, certain Accounts are responsible for bearing a different or greater amount of expenses, while other Accounts do not bear any, or do not bear their full share, of such expenses. The Investment Adviser may bear any such expenses on behalf of certain Accounts and not for others, as it determines in its sole discretion. If the Investment Adviser bears expenses on behalf of an Account and the Account subsequently receives reimbursement for such expenses, the Investment Adviser will generally be entitled to receive all or a portion of the amount of such reimbursement, up to the amount that was borne by the Investment Adviser on behalf of such Account.

### ***Goldman Sachs' Financial and Other Interests May Incentivize Goldman Sachs to Promote the Sale of Fund Shares***

Goldman Sachs and its personnel have interests in promoting sales of Fund shares, and the compensation from such sales may be greater than the compensation relating to sales of interests in other Accounts. Therefore, Goldman Sachs and its personnel may have a financial interest in promoting Fund shares over interests in other Accounts.

### **Management of the Funds by the Investment Adviser**

#### ***Considerations Relating to Information Held by Goldman Sachs***

Goldman Sachs has established certain information barriers and other policies designed to address the sharing of information between different businesses within Goldman Sachs. As a result of information barriers, the Investment Adviser generally will not have access, or will have limited access, to certain information and personnel, including senior personnel, in other areas of Goldman Sachs, and generally will not manage the Funds with the benefit of information held by such other areas. Goldman Sachs, due to its access to and knowledge of funds, markets and securities based on its prime brokerage and other businesses, will from time to time make decisions based on information or take (or refrain from taking) actions with respect to interests in investments of the kind held (directly or indirectly) by the Funds in a manner that is adverse to the Funds, and will not have any obligation or other duty to share information with the Investment Adviser.

In limited circumstances, however, including for purposes of managing business and reputational risk, and subject to policies and procedures, personnel on one side of an information barrier may have access to information and personnel on the other side of the information barrier through "wall crossings." The Investment Adviser faces conflicts of interest in determining whether to engage in such wall crossings. In addition, Goldman Sachs or the Investment Adviser may determine to move certain personnel, businesses, or business units from one side of an information barrier to the other side of the information barrier. In connection therewith, Goldman Sachs personnel, businesses, and business units that were moved will no longer have access to the personnel, businesses and business units on the side of the information barrier from which they were moved.

Information obtained in connection with such wall crossings and changes to information barriers may limit or restrict the ability of the Investment Adviser to engage in or otherwise effect transactions on behalf of the Funds (including purchasing or selling securities that the Investment Adviser may otherwise have purchased or sold for an Account in the absence of a wall crossing or change to an information barrier). In managing conflicts of interest that arise as a result of the foregoing, the Investment Adviser generally will be subject to fiduciary requirements. Information barriers also exist between certain businesses within the Investment Adviser. The conflicts described herein with respect to information barriers and otherwise with respect to Goldman Sachs and the Investment Adviser also apply to the asset management business of Goldman Sachs Asset & Wealth Management (of which the Investment Adviser is a part), as well as to the other businesses within Goldman Sachs Asset & Wealth Management (including the Investment Adviser). In addition, there may also be circumstances in which, as a result of information held by certain portfolio management teams in the Investment Adviser, the Investment Adviser limits an activity or transaction for a Fund, including if the Fund is managed by a portfolio management team other than the team holding such information.

In addition, regardless of the existence of information barriers, Goldman Sachs will not have any obligation or other duty to make available for the benefit of the Funds any information regarding Goldman Sachs' trading activities, strategies or views, or the activities, strategies or views used for other Accounts. Furthermore, to the extent that the Investment Adviser has developed fundamental analysis and proprietary technical models or other information, Goldman Sachs and its personnel, or other parts of the Investment Adviser, will not be under any obligation or other duty to share certain information with the Investment Adviser or

personnel involved in decision-making for Accounts (including the Funds), and the Funds may make investment decisions that differ from those they would have made if Goldman Sachs had provided such information, and be disadvantaged as a result thereof.

Different areas of the Investment Adviser and Goldman Sachs take views, and make decisions or recommendations, that are different than those of other areas of the Investment Adviser and Goldman Sachs. Different portfolio management teams within the Investment Adviser make decisions based on information or take (or refrain from taking) actions with respect to Accounts they advise in a manner different than or adverse to the Funds. Such teams do not share information with the Funds' portfolio management teams, including as a result of certain information barriers and other policies, and will not have any obligation or other duty to do so.

Goldman Sachs operates a business known as Prime Services, which provides prime brokerage, administrative and other services to clients that from time to time involve investment funds (including pooled investment vehicles and private funds) in which one or more Accounts invest ("Underlying Funds") or markets and securities in which Accounts invest. Prime Services and other parts of Goldman Sachs have broad access to information regarding the current status of certain markets, investments and funds and detailed information about fund operators that is not available to the Investment Adviser. In addition, Goldman Sachs from time to time acts as a prime broker to one or more Underlying Funds, in which case Goldman Sachs will have information concerning the investments and transactions of such Underlying Funds that is not available to the Investment Adviser. As a result of these and other activities, parts of Goldman Sachs will possess information in respect of markets, investments, investment advisers that are affiliated or unaffiliated with Goldman Sachs and Underlying Funds, which, if known to the Investment Adviser, might cause the Investment Adviser to seek to dispose of, retain or increase interests in investments held by Accounts or acquire certain positions on behalf of Accounts, or take other actions. Goldman Sachs will be under no obligation or other duty to make any such information available to the Investment Adviser or personnel involved in decision-making for Accounts (including the Funds).

### ***Valuation of the Funds' Investments***

The Investment Adviser performs certain valuation services related to securities and assets held in the Funds. The Investment Adviser performs such valuation services in accordance with its valuation policies. The Investment Adviser may value an identical asset differently than Goldman Sachs, or another division or unit within Goldman Sachs values the asset, including because Goldman Sachs, or such other division or unit, has information or uses valuation techniques and models that it does not share with, or that are different than those of, the Investment Adviser. This is particularly the case in respect of difficult-to-value assets. The Investment Adviser may also value an identical asset differently in different Accounts, including because different Accounts are subject to different valuation guidelines pursuant to their respective governing agreements (e.g., in connection with certain regulatory restrictions applicable to different Accounts). In addition, there may be significant differences in the treatment of the same asset by the Investment Adviser and Goldman Sachs, other divisions or units of Goldman Sachs, and/or among Accounts (e.g., with respect to an asset that is a loan, there can be differences when it is determined that such loan is deemed to be on non-accrual status or in default). Differences in valuation should be expected where different third-party vendors are hired to perform valuation functions for the Accounts, the Accounts are managed or advised by different portfolio management teams within the Investment Adviser that employ different valuation policies or procedures, or otherwise. The Investment Adviser will face a conflict with respect to valuations generally because of their effect on the Investment Adviser's fees and other compensation. Furthermore, the application of particular valuation policies with respect to the Funds will, under certain circumstances, result in improved performance of the Funds or enable the Investment Adviser to more easily track the performance of an Index than might have been the case had the Investment Adviser applied different valuation policies.

### ***Data and Information Sharing***

Accounts, the Investment Adviser, and/or their respective affiliates, portfolio companies and other investments (collectively, the "Data Parties") often possess data and information that they may utilize for various purposes and which they would not otherwise possess in the ordinary course of their businesses. For example, information relating to business operations, trends, budgets, customers or users, assets, funding and other metrics that the Data Parties possess or acquire through their management of Accounts and/or their own businesses and investment activities may be used by Goldman Sachs to identify and/or evaluate potential investments for Accounts and to facilitate the management of Accounts, including through operational improvements. Conversely, Goldman Sachs may use data and information that it has or acquires in connection with an Account's activities for the benefit of Goldman Sachs' own businesses and investment activities and their portfolio companies and other investments.

From time to time, Goldman Sachs may commission third-party research, at an Account's expense, in connection with the diligence of an investment opportunity or in connection with its management of a portfolio investment, and such research is expected to subsequently be available to other investment vehicles (and such persons will generally not be required to compensate an Account for the benefit they receive from such research). Such benefits could be material and Goldman Sachs will have no duty, contractual, fiduciary or otherwise, not to use such information in connection with the business and investment activities of itself, Accounts and/or their portfolio companies and other investments.

Furthermore, except for contractual obligations to third parties to maintain confidentiality of certain information, regulatory limitations on the use of material nonpublic information, and the Data Parties' information walls, Goldman Sachs is generally free to use data and information from an Account's activities to assist in the pursuit of its various other interests and activities, including to trade for the benefit of Goldman Sachs or another Account. Accounts and other sources of such data and information may not receive any financial or other benefit from having provided such data and information to Goldman Sachs. The potential ability to monetize such data and information may create incentives for Goldman Sachs to cause an Account to invest in entities and companies with a significant amount of data that it might not otherwise have invested in or on terms less favorable than it otherwise would have sought to obtain.

### ***Goldman Sachs' and the Investment Adviser's Activities on Behalf of Other Accounts***

The Investment Adviser provides advisory services to the Funds. Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser), the clients it advises, and its personnel have interests in and advise Accounts that have investment objectives or portfolios similar to, related to or opposed to those of the Funds. Goldman Sachs may receive greater fees or other compensation (including performance-based fees) from such Accounts than it does from the Funds, in which case Goldman Sachs is incentivized to favor such Accounts. In addition, Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser), the clients it advises, and its personnel may engage (or consider engaging) in commercial arrangements or transactions with Accounts, and/or compete for commercial arrangements or transactions in the same types of companies, assets securities and other instruments, as the Funds. Such arrangements, transactions or investments adversely affect such Funds by, for example, limiting their ability to engage in such activity or affecting the pricing or terms of such arrangements, transactions or investments. Moreover, a particular Fund on the one hand, and Goldman Sachs or other Accounts, on the other hand, may vote differently on or take or refrain from taking different actions with respect to the same security, which are disadvantageous to the Fund. Additionally, as described below, the Investment Adviser faces conflicts of interest arising out of Goldman Sachs' relationships and business dealings in connection with decisions to take or refrain from taking certain actions on behalf of Accounts when doing so would be adverse to Goldman Sachs' relationships or other business dealings with such parties.

Transactions by, advice to and activities of Accounts (including with respect to investment decisions, voting and the enforcement of rights) may involve the same or related companies, securities or other assets or instruments as those in which the Funds invest, and it should be expected that such Accounts engage in a strategy while a Fund is undertaking the same or a differing strategy, any of which could directly or indirectly disadvantage the Fund (including its ability to engage in a transaction or other activities).

In various circumstances, different Accounts make investments as part of a single transaction, including in situations in which multiple Accounts comprise a single "fund family" and situations in which Accounts make investments on a side-by-side basis on the same terms and conditions. In these circumstances, the participating Accounts may have different interests, such as different investment timing horizons, including, for example, when certain Accounts are closed-end vehicles or otherwise have a limited investment period, while other Accounts are open-ended or otherwise have a less limited investment period. Similarly, capital contribution and other obligations associated with an investment may extend beyond a particular Account's investment period or expected term. In such circumstances, the Investment Adviser may negotiate the terms of an investment on a collective basis and such terms may not be as favorable, from the perspective of a particular Account, than if the Account had been the sole participating Account. Terms required by one Account (for example, due to regulatory requirements) when it invests may negatively impact the ability of another Account to consummate the investment or may adversely alter its terms. Similarly, one Account may seek to dispose of an investment at a time when it would be desirable for another Account to continue to hold such investment (or vice versa). Depending on the structure of the applicable investment, disposing of a portion of the investment may be impractical or costly, or may have adverse effects on the rights of Accounts continuing to hold the investment. As a result, the Investment Adviser may be incentivized to accelerate or delay the sale, disposition or restructuring of an investment, which may have an adverse effect on certain of the Accounts participating in the transaction. Further, a particular Account that holds a minority interest in a portfolio company in

which another Account owns a majority interest could be adversely affected in the context of restructuring and/or recapitalization transactions with respect to such portfolio company. When making an investment decision with respect to an investment in which multiple Accounts are invested, Goldman Sachs may primarily take into account the specific effect such investment decision will have on the Accounts as a whole, and not based on the best interests of any particular Account. In the event the Investment Adviser makes different investment decisions (including with respect to the timing of dispositions, additional investments, and other decisions) for Funds with respect to an investment in a common portfolio company, such Funds could have different rates of return and profit and loss on the investment or otherwise be adversely affected.

In addition, Goldman Sachs may be engaged to provide advice to an Account that is considering entering into a transaction with a Fund, and Goldman Sachs may advise the Account not to pursue the transaction with the Fund, or otherwise in connection with a potential transaction provide advice to the Account that would be adverse to the Fund. Additionally, if a Fund buys a security and an Account establishes a short position in that same security or in similar securities, such short position may result in the impairment of the price of the security that the Fund holds or could be designed to profit from a decline in the price of the security. A Fund could similarly be adversely impacted if it establishes a short position, following which an Account takes a long position in the same security or in similar securities. Furthermore, Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) may make filings in connection with a shareholder class action lawsuit or similar matter involving a particular security on behalf of an Account (including a Fund), but not on behalf of a different Account (including a Fund) that holds or held the same security, or that is invested in or has extended credit to different parts of the capital structure of the same issuer. Accounts may also have different rights in respect of an investment with the same issuer, or invest in different classes of the same issuer that have different rights, including, without limitation, with respect to liquidity. The determination to exercise such rights by the Investment Adviser on behalf of such other Accounts may have an adverse effect on the Funds.

The Funds are expected to transact with a variety of counterparties. Some of these counterparties will also engage in transactions with other Accounts managed by the Investment Adviser or another Goldman Sachs entity or business unit. For example, a Fund may directly or indirectly purchase assets from a counterparty at the same time the counterparty (or an affiliate thereof) is also negotiating to purchase different assets from another Account. This creates potential conflicts of interest, particularly with respect to the terms and purchase prices of the sales. For example, Goldman Sachs may receive fees or other compensation in connection with the sale of assets by an Account to a counterparty, which creates an incentive to negotiate a higher purchase price for those assets in a separate transaction where the Fund is a purchaser.

Similarly, a particular Fund may dispose of one or more assets through a block sale that includes assets held by other Accounts or as part of a series of transactions in which assets from multiple Accounts are sold to the same purchaser. This creates potential conflicts of interest, particularly with regard to the determination of the purchase prices of the applicable assets. For example, Goldman Sachs may receive greater fees or other compensation (including performance-based fees) in connection with the sale of assets in other Accounts that participate in a block sale as compared to the compensation that Goldman Sachs receives in connection with the sale of assets by the particular Fund. There can be no assurance that the compensation received by the particular Fund as a result of participating in a block sale would be greater than the compensation that the particular Fund would receive if its assets were sold as part of a standalone transaction. Any such transaction will be effected in accordance with the Investment Adviser's fiduciary obligations.

Shareholders may be offered (or may already have) access to advisory services through several different Goldman Sachs businesses (including through Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC and the Investment Adviser). Different advisory businesses within Goldman Sachs manage Accounts according to different strategies and apply different criteria to the same or similar strategies and have differing investment views in respect of an issuer or a security or other investment. Similarly, within the Investment Adviser, certain investment teams or portfolio managers can have differing or opposite investment views in respect of an issuer or a security, and as a result some or all of the positions a Fund's investment team or portfolio managers take in respect of the Fund will be inconsistent with, or adversely affected by, the interests and activities of the Accounts advised by other investment teams or portfolio managers of the Investment Adviser. Research, analyses or viewpoints will be available to clients or potential clients at different times. Goldman Sachs will not have any obligation or other duty to make available to the Funds any research or analysis at any particular time or prior to its public dissemination. The Investment Adviser is responsible for making investment decisions on behalf of the Funds, and such investment decisions can differ from investment decisions or recommendations by Goldman Sachs on behalf of other Accounts. The timing of transactions entered into or recommended by Goldman Sachs, on behalf of itself or its clients,

including the Funds, may negatively impact the Funds or benefit certain other Accounts. For example, if Goldman Sachs, on behalf of one or more Accounts, implements an investment decision or strategy ahead of, or contemporaneously with, or behind similar investment decisions or strategies made for the Funds (whether or not the investment decisions emanate from the same research analysis or other information), it could result, due to market impact or other factors, in liquidity constraints or in certain Funds receiving less favorable investment or trading results or incurring increased costs. Similarly, if Goldman Sachs implements an investment decision or strategy that results in a purchase (or sale) of a security for one Fund, such implementation may increase the value of such security already held by another Account (or decrease the value of such security that such other Account intends to purchase), thereby benefitting such other Account.

Subject to applicable law, the Investment Adviser is incentivized to cause the Funds to invest in securities, bank loans or other obligations of companies affiliated with or advised by Goldman Sachs or in which Goldman Sachs or Accounts have an equity, debt or other interest, or to engage in investment transactions that may result in other Accounts being relieved of obligations or otherwise divested of investments, which may enhance the profitability of Goldman Sachs' or other Accounts' investment in and activities with respect to such companies. The Investment Adviser, in its discretion and in certain circumstances, recommends that certain Funds have ongoing business dealings, arrangements or agreements with persons who are (i) former employees of Goldman Sachs, (ii) affiliates or other portfolio companies of Goldman Sachs or other Accounts, (iii) Goldman Sachs' employees' family members and/or relatives and/or certain of their portfolio companies or (iv) persons otherwise associated with an investor in an Account or a portfolio company or service provider of Goldman Sachs or an Account. The Funds may bear, directly or indirectly, the costs of such dealings, arrangements or agreements. These recommendations, and recommendations relating to continuing any such dealings, arrangements or agreements, pose conflicts of interest and may be based on differing incentives due to Goldman Sachs' relationships with such persons. In particular, when acting on behalf of, and making decisions for, Accounts, the Investment Adviser may take into account Goldman Sachs' interests in maintaining its relationships and business dealings with such persons. As a result, the Investment Adviser faces conflicts of interest arising out of Goldman Sachs' relationships and business dealings in connection with decisions to take or refrain from taking certain actions on behalf of Accounts when doing so would be adverse to Goldman Sachs' relationships or other business dealings with such parties.

When the Investment Adviser wishes to place an order for different types of Accounts (including the Funds) for which aggregation is not practicable, the Investment Adviser may use a trade sequencing and rotation policy to determine which type of Account is to be traded first. Under this policy, each portfolio management team may determine the length of its trade rotation period and the sequencing schedule for different categories of clients within this period provided that the trading periods and these sequencing schedules are designed to be reasonable. Within a given trading period, the sequencing schedule establishes when and how frequently a given client category will trade first in the order of rotation. The Investment Adviser may deviate from the predetermined sequencing schedule under certain circumstances, and the Investment Adviser's trade sequencing and rotation policy may be amended, modified or supplemented at any time without prior notice to clients.

#### ***Potential Conflicts Relating to Follow-On Investments***

From time to time, the Investment Adviser provides opportunities to Accounts (including potentially the Funds) to make investments in companies in which certain Accounts have already invested. Such follow-on investments can create conflicts of interest, such as the determination of the terms of the new investment and the allocation of such opportunities among Accounts (including the Funds). Follow-on investment opportunities may be available to the Funds notwithstanding that the Funds have no existing investment in the issuer, resulting in the assets of the Funds potentially providing value to, or otherwise supporting the investments of, other Accounts. Accounts (including the Funds) may also participate in releveraging, recapitalization, and similar transactions involving companies in which other Accounts have invested or will invest. Conflicts of interest in these and other transactions arise between Accounts (including the Funds) with existing investments in a company or Accounts liquidating their investment in the company, on the one hand, and Accounts making subsequent investments in the company, on the other hand, which have opposing interests regarding pricing and other terms. In addition, the subsequent investments may dilute or otherwise adversely affect the interests of the previously-invested Accounts (including the Funds).

#### ***Diverse Interests of Shareholders***

It should be expected that the various types of investors in and beneficiaries of the Funds, including to the extent applicable the Investment Adviser and its affiliates, have conflicting investment, tax and other interests with respect to their interests in the Funds. When considering a potential investment for a Fund, the Investment Adviser will generally consider the investment objectives of the Fund, not the investment objectives of any particular investor or beneficiary. The Investment Adviser makes decisions, including with respect to tax matters, from time to time that will be more beneficial to one type of investor or beneficiary than another, or to the Investment Adviser and its affiliates than to investors or beneficiaries unaffiliated with the Investment Adviser. In addition, Goldman Sachs faces certain tax risks based on positions taken by the Funds, including as a withholding agent. Goldman Sachs reserves the right on behalf of itself and its affiliates to take actions adverse to the Funds or other Accounts in these circumstances, including withholding amounts to cover actual or potential tax liabilities.

### ***Selection of Service Providers***

The Funds expect to engage service providers (including attorneys and consultants) that in certain cases also provide services to Goldman Sachs and other Accounts. In addition, certain service providers to the Investment Adviser or Funds are also portfolio companies or other affiliates of the Investment Adviser or other Accounts (for example, a portfolio company of an Account may retain a portfolio company of another Account). To the extent it is involved in such selection, the Investment Adviser intends to select these service providers based on a number of factors, including expertise and experience, knowledge of related or similar products, quality of service, reputation in the marketplace, relationships with the Investment Adviser, Goldman Sachs or others, and price. These service providers may have business, financial, or other relationships with Goldman Sachs (including its personnel), which may influence the Investment Adviser's selection of these service providers for the Funds. In such circumstances, there is a conflict of interest between Goldman Sachs (acting on behalf of the Funds) and the Funds or between Funds if the Funds determine not to engage or continue to engage these service providers.

The Investment Adviser may, in its sole discretion, determine to provide, or engage or recommend an affiliate of the Investment Adviser to provide, certain services, including, but not limited to, services such as internal legal and accounting services, to the Funds, instead of engaging or recommending one or more third parties to provide such services. Subject to the governance requirements of a particular Fund and applicable law, the Investment Adviser or its affiliates, as applicable, will receive compensation in connection with the provision of such services. As a result, the Investment Adviser faces a conflict of interest when selecting or recommending service providers for the Funds. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the selection or recommendation of service providers for the Funds will be conducted in accordance with the Investment Adviser's fiduciary obligations to the Funds. The service providers selected or recommended by the Investment Adviser may charge different rates to different recipients based on the specific services provided, the personnel providing the services, the complexity of the services provided or other factors. As a result, the rates paid with respect to these service providers by a Fund, on the one hand, may be more or less favorable than the rates paid by Goldman Sachs, including the Investment Adviser, on the other hand. In addition, the rates paid by the Investment Adviser or the Funds, on the one hand, may be more or less favorable than the rates paid by other parts of Goldman Sachs or Accounts managed by other parts of Goldman Sachs, on the other hand. Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser), its personnel, and/or Accounts may hold investments in companies that provide services to entities in which the Funds invest generally, and, subject to applicable law, the Investment Adviser may refer or introduce such companies' services to entities that have issued securities held by the Funds.

### ***Investments in Goldman Sachs Funds***

To the extent permitted by applicable law, the Funds will, from time to time invest in money market and/or other funds sponsored, managed or advised by Goldman Sachs. In connection with any such investments, a Fund, to the extent permitted by the Act, will pay all advisory, administrative or Rule 12b-1 fees applicable to the investment. To the extent consistent with applicable law, certain Funds that invest in other funds sponsored, managed or advised by Goldman Sachs pay advisory fees to the Investment Adviser that are not reduced by any fees payable by such other funds to Goldman Sachs as manager of such other funds (i.e., there will be "double fees" involved in making any such investment, which would not arise in connection with the direct allocation of assets by investors in the Funds to such other funds). In such circumstances, as well as in all other circumstances in which Goldman Sachs receives any fees or other compensation in any form relating to the provision of services, no accounting or repayment to the Funds will be required.

The Investment Adviser, from time to time, manages Accounts (including the Funds), which may, individually or in the aggregate, own a substantial amount of the Funds. Further, the Investment Adviser, its affiliates, or another entity (i.e., a seed investor) may invest in the Funds at or near the establishment of such Funds, which may facilitate the Funds achieving a specified size or scale. The Investment Adviser and/or its affiliates may make payments to an investor that contributes seed capital to a Fund. Such payments may continue for a specified period of time and/or until a specified dollar amount is reached, and will be made from the assets of the Investment Adviser and/or such affiliates (and not the applicable Fund). Seed investors may contribute all or a majority of the assets in the Fund. There is a risk that such seed investors may redeem their investments in the Fund, particularly after payments from the Investment Adviser and/or its affiliates have ceased. Such redemptions could have a significant negative impact on the Fund, including on its liquidity and the market price of its shares.

### ***Goldman Sachs May In-Source or Outsource***

Subject to applicable law, Goldman Sachs, including the Investment Adviser, may from time to time and without notice to investors in-source or outsource certain processes or functions in connection with a variety of services that it provides to the Funds in its administrative or other capacities. Depending upon the nature of the services and subject to the governing documents of the Fund, fees associated with in-sourced or outsourced services will be borne by a Fund or by the Investment Adviser. Such in-sourcing or outsourcing may give rise to additional conflicts of interest.

### ***Distributions of Assets Other Than Cash***

With respect to redemptions from the Funds, the Funds will, in certain circumstances, have discretion to decide whether to permit or limit redemptions and whether to make distributions in connection with redemptions in the form of securities or other assets, and in such case, the composition of such distributions. In making such decisions, the Investment Adviser will sometimes have a potentially conflicting division of loyalties and responsibilities to redeeming investors and remaining investors.

### **Goldman Sachs Will Act in a Capacity Other Than Investment Adviser to the Funds**

#### ***Investments in and Advice Regarding Different Parts of an Issuer's Capital Structure***

In some cases, Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) or Accounts, on the one hand, and the Funds, on the other hand, invest in or extend credit to the same issuer, but in different parts of the issuer's capital structure. As a result, Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) or Accounts may take actions that adversely affect the Funds. In addition, in some cases, Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) advises Accounts with respect to a portion of the capital structure of an issuer at the same time that a particular Account has an investment in different classes of securities of such issuer that are subordinate or senior to the securities with respect to which Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) is providing advice. Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) is able to pursue rights, provide advice or engage in other activities, or refrain from pursuing rights, providing advice or engaging in other activities, on behalf of itself or other Accounts with respect to an issuer in which the Funds have invested, and such actions (or inaction) may have a material adverse effect on the Funds.

For example, in the event that Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) or an Account holds loans, securities or other positions in the capital structure of an issuer that rank senior in preference to the holdings of a Fund in the same issuer, and the issuer experiences financial or operational challenges, Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser), acting on behalf of itself or the Account, may seek a liquidation, reorganization or restructuring of the issuer that has an adverse effect on or otherwise conflicts with the interests of the Fund's holdings in the issuer. In determining its course of action, Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) will not consider the interests of the particular Account. For example, Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) may determine to seek a liquidation, reorganization or restructuring that causes the Fund's holdings in the issuer to be extinguished or substantially diluted, while Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) or another Account recovers some or all of the amounts due to them. In addition, in connection with any lending arrangements involving the issuer in which Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) or an Account participates, Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) or the Account may seek to exercise its rights under the applicable loan agreement or other document, in a manner detrimental to the Fund. In situations in which Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) holds positions in multiple parts of the capital structure of an

issuer across Accounts (including the Funds), the Investment Adviser may not pursue actions or remedies available to the Fund, as a result of legal and regulatory requirements or otherwise.

These potential issues are examples of conflicts that Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) will face in situations in which the Funds, and Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) or other Accounts, invest in or extend credit to different parts of the capital structure of a single issuer. Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) addresses these issues based on the circumstances of particular situations. For example, Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) relies on information barriers between different Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) business units or portfolio management teams. Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) in some circumstances relies on the actions of similarly situated holders of loans or securities rather than, or in connection with, taking such actions itself on behalf of the Funds.

As a result of the various conflicts and related issues described above and the fact that conflicts will not necessarily be resolved in favor of the interests of the Funds, the Funds could sustain losses during periods in which Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) and other Accounts (including Accounts sponsored, managed or advised by the Investment Adviser) achieve profits generally or with respect to particular holdings in the same issuer, or could achieve lower profits or higher losses than would have been the case had the conflicts described above not existed. It should be expected that the negative effects described above will be more pronounced in connection with transactions in, or the Funds' use of, small capitalization, emerging market, distressed or less liquid strategies.

#### *Principal and Cross Transactions*

When permitted by applicable law and the Investment Adviser's policies, the Investment Adviser, acting on behalf of certain Funds (for example, those employing taxable fixed income, municipal bond fixed income and structured investment strategies), may (but is under no obligation or other duty to) enter into transactions in securities and other instruments with or through Goldman Sachs or in Accounts managed by the Investment Adviser or its affiliates and cause the Funds to engage in transactions in which the Investment Adviser acts as principal on its own behalf (principal transactions), advises both sides of a transaction (cross transactions) and acts as broker for, and receives a commission from, the Funds on one side of a transaction and a brokerage account on the other side of the transaction (agency cross transactions). There are potential conflicts of interest, regulatory issues or restrictions contained in the Investment Adviser's internal policies relating to these transactions which could limit the Investment Adviser's determination and/or ability to engage in these transactions for Accounts (including the Funds). In certain circumstances such as when Goldman Sachs is the only or one of a few participants in a particular market or is one of the largest such participants, such limitations will eliminate or reduce the availability of certain investment opportunities to Accounts (including the Funds) or impact the price or terms on which transactions relating to such investment opportunities may be effected.

Goldman Sachs will have a potentially conflicting division of loyalties and responsibilities to the parties in such transactions. The Investment Adviser has developed policies and procedures in relation to such transactions and conflicts. Cross transactions may disproportionately benefit some Accounts relative to other Accounts, including the Funds, due to the relative amount of market savings obtained by the Accounts, and cross transactions may be effected at different prices for different Accounts due to differing legal and/or regulatory requirements applicable to such Accounts. Certain Accounts are also prohibited from participating in cross transactions, even if consent is obtained. Where principal, cross or agency cross transactions are not prohibited, such transactions will be effected in accordance with fiduciary requirements and applicable law (which include disclosure and consent).

#### *Goldman Sachs Acting in Multiple Commercial Capacities*

To the extent permitted by applicable law, an issuer in which a Fund has an interest (or in which the Fund acquires an interest in the future) may hire Goldman Sachs to provide underwriting, merger advisory, other financial advisory, placement agency, foreign currency or other hedging, research, asset management services, brokerage services or other services to the issuer, including issuers whose securities are components of one or more indices, such as the Indexes, that are created and operated by Goldman Sachs. Furthermore, Goldman Sachs sponsors, manages, advises or provides services to affiliated Underlying Funds (or their personnel) in which the Funds invest. Goldman Sachs may be entitled to compensation in connection with the provision of such services and the operation of the Indexes that are tracked by the Funds, and the Funds will not be entitled to any such compensation. Goldman Sachs will have an interest in obtaining fees and other compensation in connection with such services that are favorable to Goldman Sachs,

and in connection with providing such services takes commercial steps in its own interest, or advises the parties to which it is providing services, or takes other actions, any of which may have an adverse effect on a Fund. Such actions may benefit Goldman Sachs. For example, Goldman Sachs may require repayment of all or part of a loan from a company in which an Account (including a Fund) holds an interest, which could cause the company to default or be required to liquidate its assets more rapidly, which could adversely affect the value of the company and the value of the Funds invested therein. If Goldman Sachs advises a company to make changes to its capital structure, the result would be a reduction in the value or priority of a security held (directly or indirectly) by one or more Funds. In addition, underwriters, placement agents or managers of initial public offerings, including Goldman Sachs, often require the Funds who hold privately placed securities of a company to execute a lock-up agreement prior to such company's initial public offering restricting the resale of the securities for a period of time before and following the IPO. As a result, the Investment Adviser will be restricted from selling the securities in such Funds at a more favorable price. Actions taken or advised to be taken by Goldman Sachs in connection with other types of transactions may also result in adverse consequences for the Funds. Goldman Sachs faces conflicts of interest in providing and selecting services for the Funds because Goldman Sachs provides many services and has many commercial relationships with companies and affiliated and unaffiliated Underlying Funds (or their applicable personnel). Providing services to the Funds and companies (or their personnel) in which the Funds invest enhances Goldman Sachs' relationships with various parties, facilitates additional business development and enables Goldman Sachs to obtain additional business and/or generate additional revenue. Providing such services may also result in Goldman Sachs receiving substantial fees, compensation, and/or remuneration. The Funds will not be entitled to compensation related to any such benefit to businesses of Goldman Sachs. In addition, such relationships may adversely impact the Funds, including, for example, by restricting potential investment opportunities, as described below, incentivizing the Investment Adviser to take or refrain from taking certain actions on behalf of the Funds when doing so would be adverse to such business relationships, and/or influencing the Investment Adviser's selection or recommendation of certain investment products and/or strategies over others.

Certain of Goldman Sachs' activities on behalf of its clients also restrict investment opportunities that are otherwise available to the Funds. For example, Goldman Sachs is often engaged by companies as a financial advisor, or to provide financing or other services, in connection with commercial transactions that are potential investment opportunities for the Funds. There are circumstances in which the Funds are precluded from participating in such transactions as a result of Goldman Sachs' engagement by such companies. In addition, in connection with an equity offering of securities of a portfolio company for which Goldman Sachs is acting as an underwriter, Accounts may, in certain instances, be subject to regulatory restrictions (in addition to contractual restrictions) on their ability to sell equity securities of the portfolio company for a period after completion of the offering. Goldman Sachs reserves the right to act for these companies in such circumstances, notwithstanding the potential adverse effect on the Funds. Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) also represents creditor or debtor companies in proceedings under Chapter 11 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code (and equivalent non-U.S. bankruptcy laws) or prior to these filings. From time to time, Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) serves on creditor or equity committees. It should be expected that these actions, for which Goldman Sachs may be compensated, will limit or preclude the flexibility that the Funds otherwise have to buy or sell securities issued by those companies, as well as certain other assets. Please also see "—Management of the Funds by the Investment Adviser—Considerations Relating to Information Held by Goldman Sachs" above and "—Potential Limitations and Restrictions on Investment Opportunities and Activities of Goldman Sachs and the Funds" below.

Goldman Sachs is frequently engaged as a financial advisor or financing provider to corporations and other entities and their management teams, including companies in which Accounts have an equity or debt investment, in connection with the sale of those companies or some or all of their assets. Goldman Sachs' compensation in connection with these engagements may be substantial and is usually based upon sales proceeds and contingent, in substantial part, upon a sale. As a result, in situations where sellers require Goldman Sachs to act exclusively on their behalf, Accounts will be precluded in many instances from attempting to acquire securities of the business being sold or otherwise participate as a buyer in the transaction. Goldman Sachs' decision to take on seller engagements is based upon a number of factors, including the likelihood in any particular situation that the successful buyer will be a financial purchaser rather than a strategic purchaser, the likelihood that any Accounts will be involved in the financing of that transaction and the compensation Goldman Sachs might receive by representing the seller. Goldman Sachs may be given a choice by a seller of acting as its agent, as a potential purchaser of securities or assets, or as a buyer's source of financing through Accounts. Goldman Sachs reserves the right to act as the seller's agent in those circumstances, even where this choice may preclude Accounts from acquiring the relevant securities or assets. Accounts can provide financing to buyers in connection with the buyer's purchase of securities or assets where Goldman Sachs is acting as adviser to the seller.

Goldman Sachs also represents potential buyers of businesses, including private equity sponsors, and Goldman Sachs' compensation in connection with these representations may be substantial. In these cases, Goldman Sachs' compensation is usually a flat fee that is contingent, in substantial part, upon a purchase. Accordingly, Goldman Sachs may have an incentive to direct an acquisition opportunity to one of these parties rather than to Accounts or to form a consortium with one or more of these parties to bid for the acquisition opportunity, thereby eliminating or reducing the investment opportunity available to Accounts. Furthermore, Goldman Sachs may seek to provide acquisition financing to one or more other bidders in these auctions, including in situations where an Account is bidding for the asset. In addition, Accounts may seek to provide acquisition financing to the buyer or one or more other bidders, which could be in competition with Goldman Sachs providing acquisition financing. Moreover, Goldman Sachs may provide financing to an Account in situations where it is also offering financing to one or more other bidders and such other bidders could be in competition with Accounts to provide financing. Goldman Sachs' buyer and financing assignments may include representation of clients who would not permit either Goldman Sachs or affiliates thereof, potentially including Accounts, to invest in the acquired company. In this case, none of the Investment Adviser or its affiliates, including Accounts, would be allowed to participate as an investor. In some cases, a buyer represented by Goldman Sachs may invite Investment Adviser and certain Accounts to participate in the investment. Alternatively, Investment Adviser and certain Accounts may be invited to provide financing for this type of purchase. Each of these situations is likely to present difficult competing considerations involving conflicts of interest between Goldman Sachs and Accounts, including, for example, the price or terms of any Account investment in a company advised by Goldman Sachs. In addition, Goldman Sachs may accept buyer advisory assignments in respect of a company in which Accounts have an equity or debt investment. Accounts may be precluded from selling their investment during the assignment. Goldman Sachs evaluates potential buyer assignments in light of factors similar to those that will be considered in engaging in seller assignments.

Subject to applicable law, the Investment Adviser is incentivized to cause the Funds to invest in securities, bank loans or other obligations of companies affiliated with or advised by Goldman Sachs or in which Goldman Sachs or Accounts have an equity, debt or other interest, or to engage in investment transactions that may result in Goldman Sachs or other Accounts being relieved of obligations or otherwise divested of investments. For example, subject to applicable law certain Funds may acquire securities or indebtedness of a company affiliated with Goldman Sachs directly or indirectly through syndicate or secondary market purchases, or make a loan to, or purchase securities from, a company that uses the proceeds to repay loans made by Goldman Sachs. These activities by a Fund may enhance the profitability of Goldman Sachs or other Accounts with respect to their investment in and activities relating to such companies. The Fund will not be entitled to compensation as a result of this enhanced profitability.

To the extent permitted by applicable law, Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) creates, writes, sells, issues, invests in or acts as placement agent or distributor of derivative instruments related to the Funds, or with respect to underlying securities or assets of the Funds or which are otherwise based on or seek to replicate or hedge the performance of the Funds. Such derivative transactions, and any associated hedging activity, may differ from and be adverse to the interests of the Funds.

Goldman Sachs makes loans to, and enters into margin, asset-based or other credit facilities or similar transactions with, clients, companies or individuals that are secured by publicly or privately held securities or other assets, including a client's Fund shares as described above. Some of these borrowers are public or private companies, or founders, officers or shareholders in companies in which the Funds (directly or indirectly) invest, and such loans may be secured by securities of such companies, which may be the same as, *pari passu* with, or more senior or junior to, interests held (directly or indirectly) by the Funds. Other borrowers include certain Goldman Sachs clients that pledge their interests in certain Accounts to Goldman Sachs as collateral for such loans. In connection with its rights as lender, Goldman Sachs acts to protect its own commercial interest and may take actions that adversely affect the borrower, including by liquidating or causing the liquidation of securities on behalf of a borrower or foreclosing and liquidating such securities in Goldman Sachs' own name. Such actions will adversely affect the Funds (if, for example, a large position in a security is liquidated, among the other potential adverse consequences will be that the value of such security will decline rapidly and the Funds will in turn decline in value or will be unable to liquidate their positions in such security at an advantageous price or at all). In addition, any foreclosure on collateral consisting of interests in an Account could have an adverse effect on that Account and its financing arrangements. In addition, Goldman Sachs may make loans to shareholders or enter into similar transactions that are secured by a pledge of, or mortgage over, a shareholder's Fund shares, which would provide Goldman Sachs with the right to redeem such Fund shares in the event that such shareholder defaults on its obligations. These transactions and related redemptions may be significant and may be made without notice to the shareholders.

Conflicts of interest also arise in the context of a restructuring or refinancing of debt securities that are owned by both Goldman Sachs and certain Accounts. In connection with any such restructuring or refinancing, the issuer could ask for broad liability releases not only from the participants themselves, but in addition from any affiliates of the participants that also hold the debt securities being restructured or refinanced. To the extent that a particular Account does not have the authority to provide such a release and is unable to negotiate a narrower release, it would be precluded from participating in the transaction, which could disadvantage such Account.

### **Allocation of Personnel, Services and/or Resources**

Conflicts of interest may arise in allocating time, personnel and/or resources of the Investment Adviser among the investment activities of multiple Accounts. The Investment Adviser and other Goldman Sachs personnel who play key roles in managing the Accounts may spend a portion of their time on matters other than or only tangentially related to any particular Account, or may leave the Investment Adviser for another investment group of Goldman Sachs (or may leave Goldman Sachs entirely). Time may be spent on other Goldman Sachs investment activities, including without limitation, investments made on behalf of Goldman Sachs and certain other entities (including special purpose acquisition companies) that are not investment advisory clients of the Investment Adviser. As a result, the other obligations of these individuals could conflict with their responsibilities to any of the Accounts. Further, the Investment Adviser may devote less time, services or resources to sourcing for investments of insufficient size to be expected to be shared with the other Accounts, even where such investment opportunities may be in the best interest of an Account.

### **Code of Ethics and Personal Trading**

Each of the Funds and Goldman Sachs, as each Fund's Investment Adviser and Distributor, has adopted a Code of Ethics (the "Code of Ethics") in compliance with Section 17(j) of the Act designed to provide that personnel of the Investment Adviser, and certain additional Goldman Sachs personnel who support the Investment Adviser, comply with applicable federal securities laws and place the interests of clients first in conducting personal securities transactions. The Code of Ethics imposes certain restrictions on securities transactions in the personal accounts of covered persons to help avoid conflicts of interest. Subject to the limitations of the Code of Ethics, covered persons buy and sell securities or other investments for their personal accounts, including investments in the Funds, and also take positions that are the same as, different from, or made at different times than, positions taken (directly or indirectly) by the Funds. The Codes of Ethics are available on the EDGAR Database on the SEC's Internet site at <http://www.sec.gov>. Copies may also be obtained after paying a duplicating fee by electronic request to [publicinfo@sec.gov](mailto:publicinfo@sec.gov). Additionally, all Goldman Sachs personnel, including personnel of the Investment Adviser, are subject to firm-wide policies and procedures regarding confidential and proprietary information, information barriers, private investments, outside business activities and personal trading. The Investment Adviser requires pre-clearance of personal securities transactions, both public and private, by the Investment Adviser personnel and the Investment Adviser can deny any such transaction in its discretion. In order to address potential conflicts of interest with the Accounts and other legal and regulatory restrictions (such as when the Investment Adviser has confidential information about a portfolio company), Goldman Sachs maintains a list of securities in which the Investment Adviser personnel cannot trade. Additionally, the Investment Adviser generally does not allow its personnel to purchase securities of single-name public issuers.

### **Proxy Voting by the Investment Adviser**

The Investment Adviser has implemented processes designed to prevent conflicts of interest from influencing proxy voting decisions that it makes on behalf of advisory clients, including the Funds, and to help ensure that such decisions are made in accordance with its fiduciary obligations to its clients. Notwithstanding such proxy voting processes, proxy voting decisions made by the Investment Adviser in respect of securities held by the Funds may benefit the interests of Goldman Sachs and/or Accounts other than the Funds. Examples of material conflicts of interest that could arise in connection with a proxy voting decision include, without limitation, circumstances in which (i) Goldman Sachs has a business relationship with or other interests in the issuer or another interested party and (ii) Goldman Sachs personnel have a personal relationship with personnel of the issuer or another interested party. Conflicts of interest relating to proxy voting decisions also arise in situations in which Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser) or Accounts (including the Funds), on the one hand, and a particular Account, on the other hand, invest in or extend credit to the same issuer, but in different parts of the issuer's capital structure. See Item 11 ("Code of Ethics, Participation or Interest in Client Transactions and Personal Trading—Participation or Interest in Client Accounts—Investments in and Advice Regarding Different Parts of an Issuer's Capital Structure") of the Investment Adviser's Form ADV. For a more detailed discussion of these policies and procedures, see the section of this SAI titled "PROXY VOTING."

## Potential Limitations and Restrictions on Investment Opportunities and Activities of Goldman Sachs and the Funds

The Investment Adviser restricts its investment decisions and activities on behalf of the Funds in various circumstances, including as a result of applicable regulatory requirements, information held by the Investment Adviser or Goldman Sachs, Goldman Sachs' roles in connection with other clients and in the capital markets (including in connection with advice it gives to such clients or commercial arrangements or transactions that are undertaken by such clients or by Goldman Sachs), Goldman Sachs' internal policies and/or potential reputational risk in connection with Accounts (including the Funds). In certain cases, the Investment Adviser will not engage in transactions or other activities for, or enforce certain rights in favor of, one or more Funds due to Goldman Sachs' activities outside the Funds (e.g., the Investment Adviser may refrain from making investments for the Funds that would cause Goldman Sachs to exceed position limits or cause Goldman Sachs to have additional disclosure obligations and may limit purchases or sales of securities in respect of which Goldman Sachs is engaged in an underwriting or other distribution) and regulatory requirements, policies and reputational risk assessments.

In addition, in certain circumstances, the Investment Adviser restricts, limits or reduces the amount of a Fund's investment, or restricts the type of governance or voting rights it acquires or exercises, where the Fund (potentially together with Goldman Sachs and other Accounts) exceeds a certain ownership interest, or possesses certain degrees of voting or control or has other interests. For example, such limitations may exist if a position or transaction could require a filing or license or other regulatory or corporate consent, which could, among other things, result in additional costs and disclosure obligations for, or impose regulatory restrictions on, Goldman Sachs, including the Investment Adviser, or on other Accounts, or where exceeding a threshold is prohibited or results in regulatory or other restrictions. In certain cases, restrictions and limitations will be applied to avoid approaching such threshold. Circumstances in which such restrictions or limitations arise include, without limitation: (i) a prohibition against owning more than a certain percentage of an issuer's securities; (ii) a "poison pill" that has a dilutive impact on the holdings of the Fund should a threshold be exceeded; (iii) provisions that cause Goldman Sachs to be considered an "interested stockholder" of an issuer; (iv) provisions that cause Goldman Sachs to be considered an "affiliate" or "control person" of the issuer; and (v) the imposition by an issuer (through charter amendment, contract or otherwise) or governmental, regulatory or self-regulatory organization (through law, rule, regulation, interpretation or other guidance) of other restrictions or limitations. In addition, due to regulatory restrictions, certain Accounts are prohibited from, or are subject to certain restrictions when, trading with or through Goldman Sachs, engaging Goldman Sachs as a service provider or purchasing investments issued or managed by Goldman Sachs.

When faced with the foregoing limitations, Goldman Sachs will generally avoid exceeding the threshold because exceeding the threshold could have an adverse impact on the ability of the Investment Adviser or Goldman Sachs to conduct its business activities. The Investment Adviser may also reduce a Fund's interest in, or restrict a Fund from participating in, an investment opportunity that has limited availability or where Goldman Sachs has determined to cap its aggregate investment in consideration of certain regulatory or other requirements so that other Accounts that pursue similar investment strategies are able to acquire an interest in the investment opportunity. In some cases, the Investment Adviser determines not to engage in certain transactions or activities beneficial to the Funds because engaging in such transactions or activities in compliance with applicable law would result in significant cost to, or administrative burden on, the Investment Adviser or create the potential risk of trade or other errors.

The Investment Adviser generally is not permitted to use material non-public information in effecting purchases and sales in transactions for the Funds that involve public securities. The Investment Adviser may limit an activity or transaction (such as a purchase or sale transaction) which might otherwise be engaged in by the Funds, including as a result of information held by Goldman Sachs (including the Investment Adviser or its personnel). For example, directors, officers and employees of Goldman Sachs may take seats on the boards of directors of, or have board of directors observer rights with respect to, companies in which Goldman Sachs invests on behalf of the Funds. To the extent a director, officer or employee of Goldman Sachs were to take a seat on the board of directors of, or have board of directors observer rights with respect to, a public company, the Investment Adviser (or certain of its investment teams) may be limited and/or restricted in its or their ability to trade in the securities of the company. In addition, any such director, officer or employee of Goldman Sachs that is a member of the board of directors of a portfolio company may have duties in his or her capacity as a director that conflict with the Investment Adviser's duties to Accounts, and may act in a manner that disadvantages or otherwise harms a Fund and/or Goldman Sachs. In addition, the Investment Adviser may, in its sole discretion, determine to limit the information it receives in respect of an investment opportunity to avoid receiving material non-public information. As a result, other investors may be in possession of information in respect of investments, which, if known to the Investment Adviser, might cause the Investment Adviser to not make such investment, to seek to dispose of, retain or increase

interests in such investments, or take other actions. Any decision by the Investment Adviser to limit access to such information may be disadvantageous to an Account.

Different areas of Goldman Sachs come into possession of material non-public information regarding an issuer of securities held by an Underlying Fund in which an Account invests. In the absence of information barriers between such different areas of Goldman Sachs or under certain other circumstances, the Account will be prohibited, including by internal policies, from trading, redeeming from or otherwise disposing of such security or such Underlying Fund during the period such material non-public information is held by such other part of Goldman Sachs, which period may be substantial. As a result, the Account would not be permitted to redeem from an Underlying Fund in whole or in part during periods when it otherwise would have been able to do so, which could adversely affect the Account. Other investors in the Underlying Fund that are not subject to such restrictions may be able to redeem from the Underlying Fund during such periods.

In addition, the Investment Adviser's clients may partially or fully fund a new Account with in-kind securities in which the Investment Adviser is restricted. In such circumstances, the Investment Adviser will generally sell any such securities at the next available trading window, subject to operational and technological limitations (unless such securities are subject to another express arrangement), requiring such Accounts to dispose of investments at an earlier or later date and/or at a less favorable price than would otherwise have been the case had the Investment Adviser not been so restricted. Accounts will be responsible for all tax liabilities that result from any such sale transactions.

The Investment Adviser operates a program reasonably designed to ensure compliance generally with economic and trade sanctions-related obligations applicable directly to its activities (although such obligations are not necessarily the same obligations to which any particular Fund is subject). Such economic and trade sanctions may prohibit, among other things, transactions with and the provision of services to, directly or indirectly, certain countries, territories, entities and individuals. It should be expected that these economic and trade sanctions, if applicable, and the application by the Investment Adviser of its compliance program in respect thereof, will restrict or limit the Funds' investment activities, and may require the Investment Adviser to cause a Fund to sell its position in a particular investment at an inopportune time and/or when the Investment Adviser would otherwise not have done so.

The Investment Adviser may determine to limit or not engage at all in transactions and activities on behalf of the Funds for reputational, legal or other reasons. Examples of when such determinations may be made include, but are not limited to, where Goldman Sachs is providing (or may provide) advice or services to an entity involved in such activity or transaction, where Goldman Sachs or an Account is or may be engaged in the same or a related activity or transaction to that being considered on behalf of the Funds, where Goldman Sachs or an Account has an interest in an entity involved in such activity or transaction, where there are political, public relations, or other reputational considerations relating to counterparties or other participants in such activity or transaction or where such activity or transaction on behalf of or in respect of the Funds could affect in tangible or intangible ways Goldman Sachs, the Investment Adviser, an Account or their activities.

Goldman Sachs has and seeks to have long-term relationships with many significant participants in the financial markets. Goldman Sachs also has and seeks to have longstanding relationships with, and regularly provides financing, investment banking services and other services to, a significant number of corporations and private equity sponsors, leveraged buyout and hedge fund purchasers, and their respective senior managers, shareholders and partners. Some of these purchasers may directly or indirectly compete with Accounts for investment opportunities. Goldman Sachs considers these relationships, as well as client relationships and reputational considerations, in its management of Accounts. In this regard, there may be certain investment opportunities or certain investment strategies that Goldman Sachs (i) does not undertake on behalf of Accounts in view of these relationships, or (ii) refers to clients (in whole or in part) instead of retaining for Accounts. Similarly, Goldman Sachs may take the existence and development of such relationships into consideration in the management of Fund portfolios. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, there may, for example, be certain strategies involving the acquisition, management or realization of particular investments that an Account will not employ in light of these relationships, as well as investment opportunities or strategies that an Account will not pursue in light of their potential impact on other areas of Goldman Sachs or on Account investments or be unable to pursue as a result of non-competition agreements or other similar undertakings made by Goldman Sachs.

Goldman Sachs will consider its client relationships and the need to preserve its reputation in its management of Accounts and, as a result, (i) there may be certain investment opportunities or strategies that Goldman Sachs will not undertake on behalf of Funds

or will refer to one or more Funds but not others, (ii) there may be certain rights or activities that Goldman Sachs will not undertake on behalf of Funds (including in respect of director representation and recusal), or (iii) there may be certain investments that, in certain limited circumstances, are sold, disposed of or restructured earlier or later than otherwise expected.

In order to engage in certain transactions on behalf of a Fund, the Investment Adviser will also be subject to (or cause the Fund to become subject to) the rules, terms and/or conditions of any venues through which it trades securities, derivatives or other instruments. This includes, but is not limited to, where the Investment Adviser and/or the Fund are required to comply with the rules of certain exchanges, execution platforms, trading facilities, clearing houses and other venues, or are required to consent to the jurisdiction of any such venues. The rules, terms and/or conditions of any such venue often result in the Investment Adviser and/or the Fund being subject to, among other things, margin requirements, additional fees and other charges, disciplinary procedures, reporting and recordkeeping, position limits and other restrictions on trading, settlement risks and other related conditions on trading set out by such venues.

From time to time, a Fund, the Investment Adviser or its affiliates and/or their service providers or agents are required, or determine that it is advisable, to disclose certain information about the Fund, including, but not limited to, investments held by the Fund, and the names and percentage interest of beneficial owners thereof (and the underlying beneficial owners of such beneficial owners), to third parties, including local governmental authorities, regulatory organizations, taxing authorities, markets, exchanges, clearing facilities, custodians, brokers and trading counterparties of, or service providers to, the Investment Adviser or the Fund. The Investment Adviser generally expects to comply with requests to disclose such information as it so determines including through electronic delivery platforms; however, in some cases, the Investment Adviser will cause the sale of certain assets for the Fund rather than make certain required disclosures, at a time that is inopportune from a pricing or other standpoint. In addition, the Investment Adviser may provide third parties with aggregated data regarding the activities of, or certain performance or other metrics associated with the Accounts, and the Investment Adviser may receive compensation from such third parties for providing them such information.

Goldman Sachs may become subject to additional restrictions on its business activities that could have an impact on the Funds' activities. In addition, the Investment Adviser may restrict its investment decisions and activities on behalf of the Funds and not other Accounts, including Accounts sponsored, managed or advised by the Investment Adviser.

## **Brokerage Transactions**

Subject to applicable law, the Investment Adviser often selects U.S. and non-U.S. broker-dealers (including affiliates of the Investment Adviser) that furnish the Investment Adviser, the Funds, Investment Adviser affiliates and other Goldman Sachs personnel with proprietary or third-party brokerage and research services (collectively, "brokerage and research services") that provide, in the Investment Adviser's view, appropriate assistance to the Investment Adviser in the investment decision-making process. These brokerage and research services may be bundled with the trade execution, clearing or settlement services provided by a particular broker-dealer and, subject to applicable law, the Investment Adviser may pay for such brokerage and research services with client commissions (or "soft dollars"). There are instances or situations in which such practices are subject to restrictions under applicable law. For example, the EU's Markets in Financial Instruments Directive II ("MiFID II") restricts EU domiciled investment advisers from receiving research and other materials that do not qualify as "acceptable minor non-monetary benefits" from broker-dealers unless the research or materials are paid for by the investment advisers from their own resources or from research payment accounts funded by and with the agreement of their clients.

Accounts differ with regard to whether and to what extent they pay for brokerage and research services through commissions and, subject to applicable law, brokerage and research services may be used to service the Funds and any or all other Accounts throughout the Investment Adviser, including Accounts that do not pay commissions to the broker-dealer relating to the brokerage and research service arrangements. As a result, brokerage and research services (including soft dollar benefits) may disproportionately benefit other Accounts relative to the Funds based on the relative amount of commissions paid by the Funds and in particular those Accounts that do not pay for brokerage and research services or do so to a lesser extent, including in connection with the establishment of maximum budgets for research costs (and switching to execution-only pricing when maximums are met). The Investment Adviser does not attempt to allocate soft dollar benefits proportionately among clients or to track the benefits of brokerage and research services to the commissions associated with a particular Account or group of Accounts.

## **Aggregation of Orders by the Investment Adviser**

The Investment Adviser follows policies and procedures pursuant to which it may (but is not required to) combine or aggregate purchase or sale orders for the same security or other instrument for multiple Accounts (including Accounts in which Goldman Sachs or personnel of Goldman Sachs have an interest) (sometimes referred to as “bunching”), so that the orders can be executed at the same time and block trade treatment of any such orders can be elected when available. The Investment Adviser aggregates orders when the Investment Adviser considers doing so to be operationally feasible and appropriate and in the interests of its clients and may elect block trade treatment when available. In addition, under certain circumstances orders for the Funds may be aggregated with orders for Accounts that contain Goldman Sachs assets.

When a bunched order or block trade is completely filled, or if the order is only partially filled, at the end of the day, the Investment Adviser generally will allocate the securities or other instruments purchased or the proceeds of any sale pro rata among the participating Accounts, based on the Funds’ relative sizes. If an order is filled at several different prices, through multiple trades (whether at a particular broker-dealer or among multiple broker-dealers), generally all participating Accounts will receive the average price and pay the average commission, however, this may not always be the case (due to, e.g., odd lots, rounding, market practice or constraints applicable to particular Accounts).

Although it may do so in certain circumstances, the Investment Adviser does not always bunch or aggregate orders for different Funds, elect block trade treatment or net buy and sell orders for the same Fund, if portfolio management decisions relating to the orders are made by different portfolio management teams or if different portfolio management processes are used for different account types, if bunching, aggregating, electing block trade treatment or netting is not appropriate or practicable from the Investment Adviser’s operational or other perspective, or if doing so would not be appropriate in light of applicable regulatory considerations, which may differ among Accounts. For example, time zone differences, trading instructions, cash flows, separate trading desks or portfolio management processes may, among other factors, result in separate, non-aggregated, non-netted executions, with orders in the same instrument being entered for different Accounts at different times or, in the case of netting, buy and sell trades for the same instrument being entered for the same Account. The Investment Adviser may be able to negotiate a better price and lower commission rate on aggregated orders than on orders for Funds that are not aggregated, and incur lower transaction costs on netted orders than orders that are not netted. The Investment Adviser is under no obligation or other duty to aggregate or net for particular orders. Where orders for a Fund are not aggregated with other orders, or not netted against orders for the Fund or other Accounts, the Fund will not benefit from a better price and lower commission rate or lower transaction cost that might have been available had the orders been aggregated or netted. Aggregation and netting of orders may disproportionately benefit some Accounts relative to other Accounts, including a Fund, due to the relative amount of market savings obtained by the Accounts. The Investment Adviser may aggregate orders of Accounts that are subject to MiFID II (“MiFID II Advisory Accounts”) with orders of Accounts not subject to MiFID II, including those that generate soft dollar commissions (including the Funds) and those that restrict the use of soft dollars. All Accounts included in an aggregated order with MiFID II Advisory Accounts pay (or receive) the same average price for the security and the same execution costs (measured by rate). However, MiFID II Advisory Accounts included in an aggregated order may pay commissions at “execution-only” rates below the total commission rates paid by Accounts included in the aggregated order that are not subject to MiFID II.

## **Affiliated Indexes and ETFs**

The Investment Adviser and its affiliates have in the past, and may in the future, develop, own and operate Indexes based on investment and trading strategies and concepts developed by the Investment Adviser or its affiliates (“Investment Adviser Strategies”). The Investment Adviser may in the future enter into revenue sharing arrangements with third-party co-developers of an Index pursuant to which the Investment Adviser receives a portion of the fees generated from licensing the right to use the Index or components thereof to third parties. Some of the Funds seek to track the performance of the Indexes. The Investment Adviser manages Accounts which track the same Indexes used by the Funds or which are based on the same, or substantially similar, Investment Adviser Strategies that are used in the operation of the Indexes and the Funds. The operation of the Indexes, the Funds and the Accounts in this manner gives rise to potential conflicts of interest.

For example, Accounts that track the same Indexes used by the Funds may engage in purchases and sales of securities prior to when the Index and the Funds engage in similar transactions because such Accounts may be managed and rebalanced on an ongoing

basis, whereas the Funds' portfolios are only rebalanced on a periodic basis corresponding with the rebalancing of the Index. These differences may result in the Accounts having more favorable performance relative to that of the Index and the Funds or other Accounts that track the Index. Other potential conflicts include the potential for unauthorized access to Index information, allowing Index changes that benefit the Investment Adviser or other Accounts and not the investors in the Funds, and the manipulation of Index pricing to present the performance of the Funds, or tracking ability, in a preferential light.

The Investment Adviser has adopted policies and procedures that are designed to address potential conflicts that arise in connection with the Investment Adviser's operation of the Indexes, the Funds and the Accounts. The Investment Adviser has established certain information barriers and other policies designed to address the sharing of information between different businesses within the Investment Adviser, including with respect to personnel responsible for maintaining the Indexes and those involved in decision-making for the Funds. In addition, as described above in "—Code of Ethics and Personal Trading," the Investment Adviser has adopted a Code of Ethics.

To the extent it is intended that a Fund track an Index, the Fund may not match, and may vary substantially from, the Index for any period of time. A Fund that tracks an Index may purchase, hold and sell securities at times when a non-Index fund would not do so. The Investment Adviser does not guarantee that any tracking error targets will be achieved. Funds tracking an Index may be negatively impacted by any errors in the Index, either as a result of calculation errors, inaccurate data sources or otherwise. The Investment Adviser does not guarantee the availability, timeliness, accuracy and/or completeness of an Index and the Investment Adviser is not responsible for errors, omissions or interruptions in the Index (including when the Investment Adviser or an affiliate acts as the Index provider) or the calculation thereof (including when the Investment Adviser or an affiliate acts as the calculation agent).

## **CREATIONS AND REDEMPTIONS**

The Trust issues and sells shares of the Funds only in Creation Units on a continuous basis through the Distributor, without a sales load, at the NAV next determined after receipt of an order in proper form as described in the Participant Agreement (as defined below), on any Business Day (as defined below).

In its discretion, the Investment Adviser reserves the right to increase or decrease the number of a Fund's Shares that constitute a Creation Unit. The Board reserves the right to declare a split or a consolidation in the number of shares outstanding of the Fund, and to make a corresponding change in the number of shares constituting a Creation Unit, in the event that the per share price in the secondary market rises (or declines) to an amount that falls outside the range deemed desirable by the Board.

A "Business Day" with respect to the Funds is each day NYSE, the Exchange and the Trust are open, including any day that the Fund is required to be open under Section 22(e) of the Act, which excludes weekends and the following holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Juneteenth National Independence Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. Orders from large institutional investors who have entered into agreements with the Distributor to create or redeem Creation Units will only be accepted on a Business Day.

The time at which transactions and shares are priced and the time by which orders must be received may be changed in case of an emergency or if regular trading on the NYSE is stopped at a time other than its regularly scheduled closing time. The Trust reserves the right to reprocess creation and redemption transactions that were initially processed at a NAV other than the Fund's official closing NAV (as the same may be subsequently adjusted), and to recover amounts from (or distribute amounts to) Authorized Participants (as defined below) based on the official closing NAV. The Trust reserves the right to advance the time by which creation and redemption orders must be received for same business day credit as otherwise permitted by the SEC.

### **Fund Deposit**

The consideration for purchase of Creation Units generally consists of Deposit Securities and the Cash Component. Together, the Deposit Securities and Cash Component constitute the "Fund Deposit," which represents the minimum initial and subsequent investment amount for a Creation Unit of a Fund. The portfolio of securities required may be different than the portfolio of securities such Fund will deliver upon redemption of Fund shares.

The function of the Cash Component is to compensate for any differences between the NAV per Creation Unit and the Deposit Amount (as defined below). The Cash Component would be an amount equal to the difference between the NAV of the shares (per Creation Unit) and the “Deposit Amount,” which is an amount equal to the market value of the Deposit Securities. If the Cash Component is a positive number (the NAV per Creation Unit exceeds the Deposit Amount), the Authorized Participant will deliver the Cash Component. If the Cash Component is a negative number (the NAV per Creation Unit is less than the Deposit Amount), the Authorized Participant will receive the Cash Component. Computation of the Cash Component excludes any stamp duty or other similar fees and expenses payable upon transfer of beneficial ownership of the Deposit Securities, which shall be the sole responsibility of the Authorized Participant. The Cash Component may also include a “Dividend Equivalent Payment,” which enables each Fund to make a complete distribution of dividends on the next dividend payment date, and is an amount equal, on a per Creation Unit basis, to the dividends on all the securities held by the Fund with ex-dividend dates within the accumulation period for such distribution (the “Accumulation Period”), net of expenses and liabilities for such period, as if all of the securities had been held by the Trust for the entire Accumulation Period. The Accumulation Period begins on the ex-dividend date for each Fund and ends on the next ex-dividend date.

BNY, through the National Securities Clearing Corporation (“NSCC”), makes available on each Business Day, prior to the opening of business on the Exchange (currently 9:30 a.m., Eastern time), the identity and the required number or amount of each Deposit Security and the amount of the Cash Component (or cash deposit) to be included in the current Fund Deposit (based on information at the end of the previous Business Day). Such Fund Deposit is applicable, subject to any adjustments as described below, in order to effect purchases of Creation Units of that Fund until such time as the next-announced composition of the Fund Deposit is made available.

The Trust reserves the right to accept a basket of securities and/or cash that differs from a basket of Deposit Securities and/or cash published or transacted on a Business Day, or to permit or require the substitution of an amount of cash (a “cash-in-lieu” amount) to be added to the Cash Component to replace any Deposit Security.

### **Procedures for Creating Creation Units**

To be eligible to place orders with the Distributor and to create a Creation Unit of a Fund, an entity must be a member or participant of a clearing agency registered with the SEC, which has a written agreement with the Fund or one of its service providers that allows the authorized participant to place orders for the purchase and redemption of Creation Units (a “Participant Agreement,” and such participants, an “Authorized Participant”). All shares of the Funds, however created, will be entered on the records of DTC in the name of its nominee for the account of a participant of DTC (“DTC Participant”).

Except as described below, and in all cases subject to the terms of the applicable Participant Agreement, all orders to create Creation Units of a Fund must be received by the Transfer Agent no later than the closing time of the regular trading session of the Exchange (“Order Cutoff Time”) (ordinarily 4:00 p.m., Eastern time) in each case on the date such order is placed for creation of Creation Units to be effected based on the NAV of shares of such Fund as next determined after receipt of an order in proper form. A “Custom Order” may be placed by an Authorized Participant in the event that a Fund accepts (or delivers, in the case of a redemption) a basket of securities and/or cash that differs from a basket of Deposit Securities and/or cash published or transacted on a Business Day (discussed below). Custom Orders must be received by the Transfer Agent at such earlier time as provided in the Participant Agreement. On days when the Exchange closes earlier than normal (such as the day before a holiday), the Fund requires standard orders to create Creation Units to be placed by the earlier closing time and Custom Orders to create Creation Units must be received no later than one hour prior to the earlier closing time. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Trust may, but is not required to, permit Custom Orders until 4:00 p.m., Eastern time, or until the market close (in the event the Exchange closes early). The date on which an order to create Creation Units (or an order to redeem Creation Units, as discussed below) is placed is referred to as the “Transmittal Date.” Orders must be transmitted by an Authorized Participant through the Transfer Agent’s electronic order system or by telephone or other transmission method acceptable to the Transfer Agent and approved by the Distributor pursuant to procedures set forth in the Participant Agreement. Economic or market disruptions or changes, or telephone or other communication failure may impede the ability to reach the Transfer Agent, Distributor or an Authorized Participant.

All investor orders to create Creation Units shall be placed with an Authorized Participant in the form required by such Authorized Participant. In addition, an Authorized Participant may request that an investor make certain representations or enter into

agreements with respect to an order (to provide for payments of cash). Investors should be aware that their particular broker may not have executed a Participant Agreement and, therefore, orders to create Creation Units of a Fund will have to be placed by the investor's broker through an Authorized Participant. In such cases, there may be additional charges to such investor. A limited number of broker-dealers are expected to execute a Participant Agreement and only a small number of such Authorized Participants are expected to have international capabilities.

Creation Units may be created in advance of the receipt by the Trust of all or a portion of the Fund Deposit. In such cases, the Authorized Participant will remain liable for the full deposit of the missing portion(s) of the Fund Deposit and will be required to post collateral with the Trust consisting of cash at least equal to a percentage of the marked to market value of such missing portion(s) that is specified in the Participant Agreement. The Trust may use such collateral to buy the missing portion(s) of the Fund Deposit at any time and will subject such Authorized Participant to liability for any shortfall between the cost to the Trust of purchasing such securities and the value of such collateral. The Trust will have no liability for any such shortfall. The Trust will return any unused portion of the collateral to the Authorized Participant once the entire Fund Deposit has been properly received by the Transfer Agent and deposited into the Trust.

Orders for Creation Units that are effected outside the clearing process through the Continuous Net Settlement System of the NSCC (the "Clearing Process") are likely to require transmittal by the DTC Participant earlier on the Transmittal Date than orders effected using the Clearing Process. Those persons placing orders outside the Clearing Process should ascertain the deadlines applicable to DTC and the Federal Reserve Bank wire system by contacting the operations department of the broker or depository institution effectuating such transfer of Deposit Securities and Cash Component.

Orders to create Creation Units of a Fund may be placed through the Clearing Process utilizing procedures applicable to domestic funds for domestic securities ("Domestic Funds") (see "Placement of Creation Orders Using Clearing Process") or outside the Clearing Process utilizing the procedures applicable to either Domestic Funds or foreign funds for foreign securities ("Foreign Funds") (see "—Placement of Creation Orders Outside Clearing Process—Domestic Funds" and "—Placement of Creation Orders Outside Clearing Process—Foreign Funds"). In the event that a Fund includes both domestic and foreign securities, the time for submitting orders is as stated in the "Placement of Creation Orders Outside Clearing Process—Foreign Funds" and "Placement of Redemption Orders Outside Clearing Process—Domestic Funds" sections below shall operate.

#### **Placement of Creation Orders Using Clearing Process**

Fund Deposits created through the Clearing Process, if available, must be delivered through a broker-dealer or other participant in the Clearing Process ("Participating Party") that has executed a Participant Agreement.

The Participant Agreement authorizes the Transfer Agent to transmit to NSCC on behalf of the Participating Party such trade instructions as are necessary to effect the Participating Party's creation order. Pursuant to such trade instructions from the Transfer Agent to NSCC, the Participating Party agrees to transfer the requisite Deposit Securities (or contracts to purchase such Deposit Securities that are expected to be delivered in a "regular way" manner) and the Cash Component to the Trust by the prescribed settlement date. An order to create Creation Units of the Funds through the Clearing Process is deemed received by the Transfer Agent, and approved by the Distributor on the Transmittal Date if (i) such order is received by the Transfer Agent not later than the Order Cutoff Time on such Transmittal Date and (ii) all other procedures set forth in the Participant Agreement are properly followed. All orders are subject to acceptance by the Distributor.

#### **Placement of Creation Orders Outside Clearing Process—Domestic Funds**

Fund Deposits created outside the Clearing Process must be delivered through a DTC Participant that has executed a Participant Agreement. A DTC Participant who wishes to place an order creating Creation Units of the Funds to be effected outside the Clearing Process need not be a Participating Party, but such orders must state that the DTC Participant is not using the Clearing Process and that the creation of Creation Units will instead be effected through a transfer of securities and cash. The Fund Deposit transfer must be ordered by the DTC Participant in a manner so as to ensure the timely delivery of the requisite number of Deposit Securities through DTC to the account of the Trust. All questions as to the number of Deposit Securities to be delivered, and the validity, form and eligibility (including time of receipt) for the deposit of any tendered securities, will be determined by the Trust, whose

determination shall be final and binding. The cash equal to the Cash Component must be transferred directly to the Transfer Agent through the Federal Reserve wire system in a timely manner. An order to create Creation Units of a Fund outside the Clearing Process is deemed received by the Transfer Agent, and approved by the Distributor on the Transmittal Date if (i) such order is received by the Transfer Agent not later than the Order Cutoff Time on such Transmittal Date; and (ii) all other procedures set forth in the Participant Agreement are properly followed. However, if the Transfer Agent does not receive both the requisite Deposit Securities and the Cash Component in a timely fashion, such order will be cancelled. Upon written notice to the Transfer Agent, such cancelled order may be resubmitted the following Business Day using the Fund Deposit as newly constituted to reflect the current NAV of the applicable Fund. The delivery of Creation Units so created will occur by the prescribed settlement date.

Additional transaction fees may be imposed with respect to transactions effected outside the Clearing Process (through a DTC participant) and in circumstances in which any cash can be used in lieu of Deposit Securities to create Creation Units. (See “Creation Transaction Fee” section below.)

### **Placement of Creation Orders Outside Clearing Process—Foreign Funds**

The Transfer Agent will inform the Distributor, the Adviser and the Custodian upon receipt of a Creation Order. The Custodian will then provide such information to the appropriate subcustodian. For the Fund, the Custodian will cause the subcustodian of such Fund to maintain an account into which the Deposit Securities (or the cash value of all or part of such securities, in the case of a permitted or required cash purchase or “cash-in-lieu” amount) will be delivered. Deposit Securities must be delivered to an account maintained at the applicable local custodian. The Trust must also receive, on or before the prescribed settlement date, immediately available or same day funds estimated by the Custodian to be sufficient to pay the Cash Component next determined after receipt in proper form of the purchase order, together with the creation transaction fee described below.

Once the Distributor has accepted a creation order, the Transfer Agent will confirm the issuance of a Creation Unit of a Fund against receipt of payment, at such NAV as will have been calculated after receipt in proper form of such order. The Transfer Agent will then transmit a confirmation of acceptance of such order.

Creation Units will not be issued until the transfer of good title to the Trust of the Deposit Securities and the payment of the Cash Component and applicable transaction fee have been completed. When the subcustodian has confirmed to the Custodian that the required Deposit Securities (or the cash value thereof) have been delivered to the account of the relevant subcustodian, the Distributor and the Adviser will be notified of such delivery and the Transfer Agent will issue and cause the delivery of the Creation Units.

### **Acceptance of Creation Orders**

The Trust and the Distributor reserve the right to reject or revoke a purchase order for any reason, provided that such action does not result in a suspension of sales of Creation Units in contravention of Rule 6c-11 and the SEC’s positions thereunder. For example, the Trust and the Distributor may reject or revoke acceptance of a creation order, including, but not limited to, when: (i) the order is not in proper form; (ii) the investor(s), upon obtaining the Shares ordered, would own 80% or more of the currently outstanding Shares of such Fund; (iii) acceptance of the Fund Deposit would, in the opinion of the Fund, be unlawful; or (iv) in the event that circumstances outside the control of the Trust, the Transfer Agent, the Distributor or the Investment Adviser make it impracticable to process creation orders. Examples of such circumstances include acts of God; public service or utility problems such as fires, floods, extreme weather conditions and power outages resulting in telephone, facsimile and computer failures; market conditions or activities causing trading halts; systems failures involving computer or other information systems affecting the Trust, the Investment Adviser, the Distributor, DTC, the Clearing Process, Federal Reserve, the Transfer Agent or any other participant in the creation process, and other extraordinary events. The Distributor shall notify the Authorized Participant acting on behalf of the creator of a Creation Unit of its rejection of the order of such person. Neither the Trust, the Transfer Agent, the Distributor nor the Investment Adviser are under any duty, however, to give notification of any defects or irregularities in the delivery of Fund Deposits nor shall any of them incur any liability for the failure to give any such notification.

All questions as to the number of shares of Deposit Securities and the validity, form, eligibility, and acceptance for deposit of any securities to be delivered and the amount and form of the Cash Component, as applicable, shall be determined by the Trust, and the Trust’s determination shall be final and binding.

## Creation Transaction Fee

A fixed creation transaction fee payable to the Custodian is imposed on each creation transaction regardless of the number of Creation Units purchased in the transaction, in the following amounts:

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Creation Transaction Fee</u>
Goldman Sachs Dynamic California Municipal Income ETF	\$750
Goldman Sachs Dynamic New York Municipal Income ETF	\$750
Goldman Sachs Municipal Income ETF	\$750
Goldman Sachs Ultra Short Municipal Income ETF	\$750

In the case of cash creations or where the Trust permits or requires a creator to substitute cash in lieu of depositing a portion of the Deposit Securities, the creator may be assessed an additional variable charge to compensate the Funds for the costs associated with purchasing the applicable securities. (See “Fund Deposit” section above.) As a result, in order to seek to replicate the in-kind creation order process, the Trust expects to purchase, in the secondary market or otherwise gain exposure to, the portfolio securities that could have been delivered as a result of an in-kind creation order pursuant to local law or market convention, or for other reasons (“Market Purchases”). In such cases where the Trust makes Market Purchases, the Authorized Participant may be required to reimburse the Trust for, among other things, any difference between the market value at which the securities and/or financial instruments were purchased by the Trust and the cash in lieu amount (which amount, at the Investment Adviser’s discretion, may be capped), applicable registration fees, brokerage commissions and certain taxes. The Investment Adviser may adjust the transaction fee to the extent the composition of the creation securities changes or cash in lieu is added to the Cash Component to protect existing shareholders. Creators of Creation Units are responsible for the costs of transferring the securities constituting the Deposit Securities to the account of the Trust. See “Portfolio Transactions and Brokerage” for additional information regarding certain cash creation transactions. From time to time, all or a portion of a Fund’s transaction fees may be waived at the sole discretion of the Investment Adviser, including in connection with an Authorized Participant’s investment of seed capital in a Fund or where an Authorized Participant is engaged in certain customized creation and redemption basket activity that is designed to benefit a Fund by facilitating index tracking in a tax efficient manner (i.e., to minimize the realization of capital gains). To the extent a Fund does not recoup the amount of costs incurred in connection with a creation transaction, those costs will be borne by the Fund and may negatively affect the Fund’s performance.

## Redemption of Creation Units

Shares may be redeemed only in Creation Units at their NAV next determined after receipt of a redemption request in proper form on a Business Day and only through a Participating Party or DTC Participant who has executed a Participant Agreement. The Funds will not redeem Shares in amounts less than Creation Units (except each Fund may redeem Shares in amounts less than a Creation Unit in the event the Fund is being liquidated). Beneficial owners must accumulate enough Shares in the secondary market to constitute a Creation Unit in order to have such Shares redeemed by the Trust. There can be no assurance, however, that there will be sufficient liquidity in the public trading market at any time to permit assembly of a Creation Unit. Authorized Participants should expect to incur brokerage and other costs in connection with assembling a sufficient number of Shares to constitute a redeemable Creation Unit. All redemptions are subject to the procedures contained in the applicable Participant Agreement.

With respect to a Fund, BNY, through the NSCC, makes available prior to the opening of business on the Exchange (currently 9:30 a.m., Eastern time) on each Business Day, the identity and number or amount of each Fund’s securities (“Fund Securities”) and/or an amount of cash that will be applicable (subject to possible amendment or correction) to redemption requests received in proper form (as described below) on that day. All orders are subject to acceptance by the Distributor. Fund Securities received on redemption may not be identical to Deposit Securities that are applicable to creations of Creation Units.

Unless cash only redemptions are available or specified for a Fund, the redemption proceeds for a Creation Unit will generally consist of Fund Securities – as published on the Business Day of the request for a redemption order received in proper form – plus cash in an amount equal to the difference between the NAV of the Shares being redeemed, as next determined after a receipt of a request in proper form, and the value of the Fund Securities, less the redemption transaction fee and variable fees described below. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Trust reserves the right to deliver a basket of securities and/or cash that differs from a basket of Fund Securities and/or cash published or transacted on a Business Day, or to substitute an amount of cash (a “cash-in-lieu” amount) to

be added to the Cash Component to replace any Fund Security. Where “cash-in-lieu” is used, the amount of cash paid out in such cases will be equivalent to the value of the instrument listed as a Deposit Security. In the event that the Fund Securities have a value greater than the NAV of the Shares, a compensating cash payment equal to the difference is required to be made by an Authorized Participant.

Redemptions of shares for Fund Securities will be subject to compliance with applicable U.S. federal and state securities laws, and each Fund reserves the right to redeem Creation Units for cash to the extent that the Trust could not lawfully deliver specific Fund Securities upon redemptions or could not do so without first registering the Fund Securities under such laws. An Authorized Participant, or a beneficial owner of shares for which it is acting, subject to a legal restriction with respect to a particular security included in the redemption of a Creation Unit may be paid an equivalent amount of cash. This would specifically prohibit delivery of Fund Securities that are not registered in reliance upon Rule 144A under the 1933 Act to a redeeming beneficial owner of shares that is not a “qualified institutional buyer,” as such term is defined under Rule 144A of the 1933 Act. The Authorized Participant may request the redeeming beneficial owner of the shares to complete an order form or to enter into agreements with respect to such matters as compensating cash payment.

The right of redemption may be suspended or the date of payment postponed with respect to a Fund: (i) for any period during which the NYSE is closed (other than customary weekend and holiday closings); (ii) for any period during which trading on the NYSE is suspended or restricted; (iii) for any period during which an emergency exists as a result of which disposal by the Fund of securities it owns or determination of the Fund’s NAV is not reasonably practicable; or (iv) in such other circumstances as permitted by the SEC.

If the Trust determines, based on information available to the Trust when a redemption request is submitted by an Authorized Participant, that (i) the short interest of the Fund in the marketplace is greater than or equal to 100% and (ii) the orders in the aggregate from all Authorized Participants redeeming Fund Shares on a Business Day represent 25% or more of the outstanding Shares of the Fund, such Authorized Participant will be required to verify to the Trust the accuracy of its representations that are deemed to have been made by submitting a request for redemption. If, after receiving notice of the verification requirement, the Authorized Participant does not verify the accuracy of its representations that are deemed to have been made by submitting a request for redemption in accordance with this requirement, its redemption request will be considered not to have been received in proper form.

### Redemption Transaction Fee

The basic redemption transaction fee is the same no matter how many Creation Units are being redeemed pursuant to any one redemption request, in the following amounts:

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Redemption Transaction Fee</b>
Goldman Sachs Dynamic California Municipal Income ETF	\$750
Goldman Sachs Dynamic New York Municipal Income ETF	\$750
Goldman Sachs Municipal Income ETF	\$750
Goldman Sachs Ultra Short Municipal Income ETF	\$750

An additional variable charge for cash redemptions or partial cash redemptions (when cash redemptions are permitted or required for a Fund) may also be imposed to compensate each applicable Fund for the costs associated with selling the applicable securities. As a result, in order to seek to replicate the in-kind redemption order process, the Trust expects to sell, in the secondary market, the portfolio securities or settle any financial instruments that may not be permitted to be re-registered in the name of the Participating Party as a result of an in-kind redemption order pursuant to local law or market convention, or for other reasons (“Market Sales”). In such cases where the Trust makes Market Sales, the Authorized Participant may be required to reimburse the Trust for, among other things, any difference between the market value at which the securities and/or financial instruments were sold or settled by the Trust and the cash in lieu amount (which amount, at the Investment Adviser’s discretion, may be capped), applicable registration fees, brokerage commissions and certain taxes (“Transaction Costs”). The Investment Adviser may adjust the transaction fee to the extent the composition of the redemption securities changes or cash in lieu is added to the Cash Component to protect ongoing shareholders. In no event will fees charged by a Fund in connection with a redemption exceed 2% of the value of each

Creation Unit. Investors who use the services of a broker or other such intermediary may be charged a fee for such services. See “Portfolio Transactions and Brokerage” for additional information regarding certain cash redemption transactions. From time to time, all or a portion of a Fund’s transaction fees may be waived at the sole discretion of the Investment Adviser, including in connection with an Authorized Participant’s investment of seed capital in a Fund or where an Authorized Participant is engaged in certain customized creation and redemption basket activity that is designed to benefit a Fund by facilitating index tracking in a tax efficient manner (i.e., to minimize the realization of capital gains). To the extent a Fund does not recoup the amount of Transaction Costs incurred in connection with a redemption from the redeeming shareholder because of the 2% cap or otherwise, those Transaction Costs will be borne by the Fund and may negatively affect the Fund’s performance.

### **Placement of Redemption Orders Using Clearing Process**

Orders to redeem Creation Units of a Fund through the Clearing Process, if available, must be delivered through a Participating Party that has executed the Participant Agreement. An order to redeem Creation Units of a Fund using the Clearing Process is deemed received on the Transmittal Date if (i) such order is received by the Transfer Agent not later than 4:00 p.m. Eastern time on such Transmittal Date; and (ii) all other procedures set forth in the Participant Agreement are properly followed; such order will be effected based on the NAV of the Fund as next determined. An order to redeem Creation Units of the Fund using the Clearing Process made in proper form but received by the Fund after 4:00 p.m. Eastern time, will be deemed received on the next Business Day immediately following the Transmittal Date. The requisite Fund Securities (or contracts to purchase such Fund Securities which are expected to be delivered in a “regular way” manner) and the applicable cash payment will be transferred by the prescribed settlement date.

### **Placement of Redemption Orders Outside Clearing Process—Domestic Funds**

Orders to redeem Creation Units of a Fund outside the Clearing Process must be delivered through a DTC Participant that has executed the Participant Agreement. A DTC Participant who wishes to place an order for redemption of Creation Units of the Fund to be effected outside the Clearing Process need not be a Participating Party, but such orders must state that the DTC Participant is not using the Clearing Process and that redemption of Creation Units of the Fund will instead be effected through transfer of Creation Units of the Fund directly through DTC. An order to redeem Creation Units of the Fund outside the Clearing Process is deemed received by BNY on the Transmittal Date if (i) such order is received by BNY not later than 4:00 p.m. Eastern time on such Transmittal Date; (ii) such order is preceded or accompanied by the requisite number of Shares of Creation Units specified in such order; and (iii) all other procedures set forth in the Participant Agreement are properly followed.

After BNY has deemed an order for redemption outside the Clearing Process received, BNY will initiate procedures to transfer the requisite Fund Securities (or contracts to purchase such Fund Securities) and the cash redemption payment to the redeeming Beneficial Owner by the prescribed settlement date. Additional transaction fee may be imposed with respect to transactions effected outside the Clearing Process. (See “Redemption Transaction Fee” section above.)

### **Placement of Redemption Orders Outside Clearing Process—Foreign Funds**

Arrangements satisfactory to the Trust must be in place for the Participating Party to transfer the Creation Units through DTC on or before the prescribed settlement date. Redemptions of Shares for Fund Securities will be subject to compliance with applicable U.S. federal and state securities laws and a Fund (whether or not it otherwise permits or requires cash redemptions) reserves the right to redeem Creation Units for cash to the extent that a Fund could not lawfully deliver specific Fund Securities upon redemptions or could not do so without first registering the Fund Securities under such laws.

In connection with taking delivery of Shares for Fund Securities upon redemption of Creation Units, a redeeming shareholder or entity acting on behalf of a redeeming shareholder must maintain appropriate custody arrangements with a qualified broker dealer, bank or other custody providers in each jurisdiction in which any of the Fund Securities are customarily traded, to which account such Fund Securities will be delivered. If neither the redeeming shareholder nor the entity acting on behalf of a redeeming shareholder has appropriate arrangements to take delivery of the Fund Securities in the applicable foreign jurisdiction and it is not possible to make

other such arrangements, or if it is not possible to effect deliveries of the Fund Securities in such jurisdictions, the Trust may, in its discretion, exercise its option to redeem such Shares in cash, and the redeeming shareholder will be required to receive its redemption proceeds in cash.

Regular Foreign Holidays. The Funds may effect deliveries of Creation Units and portfolio securities on a basis other than the normal settlement periods in order to accommodate local holiday schedules, to account for different treatment among foreign and U.S. markets of dividend record dates and ex-dividend dates or under certain other circumstances. The ability of the Trust to effect in-kind creations and redemptions within the normal settlement periods is subject, among other things, to the condition that, within the time period from the date of the order to the date of delivery of the securities, there are no days that are holidays in the applicable foreign market. For every occurrence of one or more intervening holidays in the applicable foreign market that are not holidays observed in the U.S. equity market, the redemption settlement cycle may be extended by the number of such intervening holidays. In addition to holidays, other unforeseeable closings in a foreign market due to emergencies may also prevent the Trust from delivering securities within normal settlement periods. The securities delivery cycles currently practicable for transferring portfolio securities to redeeming Authorized Participants, coupled with foreign market holiday schedules, will require a delivery process longer than seven calendar days for the Funds, in certain circumstances. In such cases, the local market settlement procedures will not commence until the end of the local holiday periods. The timing of settlement may also be affected by the proclamation of new holidays, the treatment by market participants of certain days as “informal holidays” (e.g., days on which no or limited securities transactions occur, as a result of substantially shortened trading hours), the elimination of existing holidays or changes in local securities delivery practices. Because the portfolio securities of the Funds may trade on days that the Funds’ Exchange is closed or on days that are not Business Days for the Funds, Authorized Participants may not be able to redeem their shares of the Funds, or to purchase and sell shares of the Funds on the Exchange, on days when the NAV of the Funds could be significantly affected by events in the relevant non-U.S. markets.

### **BOOK ENTRY ONLY SYSTEM**

DTC acts as securities depository for the Shares. Shares of the Fund are represented by securities registered in the name of DTC or its nominee and deposited with, or on behalf of, DTC. Certificates will not be issued for Shares.

DTC, a limited purpose trust company, was created to hold securities of the DTC Participants and to facilitate the clearance and settlement of securities transactions among the DTC Participants in such securities through electronic book entry changes in accounts of the DTC Participants, thereby eliminating the need for physical movement of securities certificates. DTC Participants include securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies, clearing corporations and certain other organizations, some of whom (and/or their representatives) own DTC. More specifically, DTC is owned by a number of its DTC Participants and by the NYSE and FINRA. Access to the DTC system is also available to others such as banks, brokers, dealers and trust companies that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a DTC Participant, either directly or indirectly (the “Indirect Participants”).

Beneficial ownership of Shares is limited to DTC Participants, Indirect Participants and persons holding interests through DTC Participants and Indirect Participants. Ownership of beneficial interests in Shares (owners of such beneficial interests are referred to herein as “Beneficial Owners”) is shown on, and the transfer of ownership is effected only through, records maintained by DTC (with respect to DTC Participants) and on the records of DTC Participants (with respect to Indirect Participants and Beneficial Owners that are not DTC Participants). Beneficial Owners will receive from or through the DTC Participant a written confirmation relating to their purchase of Shares.

Conveyance of all notices, statements and other communications to Beneficial Owners is effected as follows. Pursuant to the Depositary Agreement between the Trust and DTC, DTC is required to make available to the Trust upon request and for a fee to be charged to the Trust a listing of the Shares holdings of each DTC Participant. The Trust shall inquire of each such DTC Participant as to the number of Beneficial Owners holding Shares, directly or indirectly, through such DTC Participant. The Trust shall provide each such DTC Participant with copies of such notice, statement or other communication, in such form, number and at such place as such DTC Participant may reasonably request, in order that such notice, statement or communication may be transmitted by such DTC Participant, directly or indirectly, to such Beneficial Owners. In addition, the Trust shall pay to each such DTC Participant a fair and reasonable amount as reimbursement for the expenses attendant to such transmittal, all subject to applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

Share distributions shall be made to DTC or its nominee, Cede & Co., as the registered holder of all Shares. DTC or its nominee, upon receipt of any such distributions, shall credit immediately DTC Participants' accounts with payments in amounts proportionate to their respective beneficial interests in Shares as shown on the records of DTC or its nominee. Payments by DTC Participants to Indirect Participants and Beneficial Owners of Shares held through such DTC Participants will be governed by standing instructions and customary practices, as is now the case with securities held for the accounts of customers in bearer form or registered in a "street name," and will be the responsibility of such DTC Participants.

The Trust has no responsibility or liability for any aspects of the records relating to or notices to Beneficial Owners, or payments made on account of beneficial ownership interests in such Shares, or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any records relating to such beneficial ownership interests or for any other aspect of the relationship between DTC and the DTC Participants or the relationship between such DTC Participants and the Indirect Participants and Beneficial Owners owning through such DTC Participants.

DTC may determine to discontinue providing its service with respect to the Shares at any time by giving reasonable notice to the Trust and discharging its responsibilities with respect thereto under applicable law. Under such circumstances, the Trust shall take action either to find a replacement for DTC to perform its functions at a comparable cost or, if such a replacement is unavailable, to issue and deliver printed certificates representing ownership of Shares, unless the Trust makes other arrangements with respect thereto satisfactory to an Exchange.

### **Request for Multiple Copies of Shareholder Documents**

To reduce expenses, it is intended that only one copy of the Fund's Prospectus and each annual and semi-annual report, when available, will be mailed to those addresses shared by two or more accounts. If you wish to receive individual copies of these documents, please contact the financial intermediary through which you hold your shares.

### **DISTRIBUTION AND SERVICE PLAN**

The Board of Trustees of the Trust has adopted a distribution and service plan ("Plan") pursuant to Rule 12b-1 under the Act. Under the Plan, the Fund is authorized to pay distribution fees in connection with the sale and distribution of its Shares and pay service fees in connection with the provision of ongoing services to shareholders of the Fund and the maintenance of shareholder accounts in an amount up to 0.25% of its average daily net assets each year.

No Rule 12b-1 fees are currently paid by the Fund, and there are no current plans to impose these fees. However, in the event Rule 12b-1 fees are charged in the future, because these fees are paid out of the Fund's assets on an ongoing basis, these fees will increase the cost of your investment in the Fund. By purchasing Shares subject to distribution fees and service fees, you may pay more over time than you would by purchasing Shares with other types of sales charge arrangements. Long-term shareholders may pay more than the economic equivalent of the maximum front-end sales charge permitted by the rules of FINRA. The net income attributable to Shares will be reduced by the amount of distribution fees and service fees and other expenses of the Fund.

### **PORTFOLIO TRANSACTIONS AND BROKERAGE**

The portfolio transactions for the Funds are generally effected at a net price without a broker's commission (i.e., a dealer is dealing with the Funds as principal and receives compensation equal to the spread between the dealer's cost for a given security and the resale price of such security). In certain foreign countries, debt securities are traded on exchanges at fixed commission rates. In connection with portfolio transactions, the Management Agreement provides that the Investment Adviser shall attempt to obtain the most favorable execution and net price available. The Management Agreement provides that, on occasions when the Investment Adviser deems the purchase or sale of a security to be in the best interests of a Fund as well as its other customers (including any other fund or other investment company or advisory account for which an Investment Adviser or an affiliate acts as Investment Adviser), the Fund, to the extent permitted by applicable laws and regulations, may aggregate the securities to be sold or purchased for the Fund with those to be sold or purchased for such other customers in order to obtain the best net price and most favorable execution. In such event, allocation of the securities so purchased or sold, as well as the expenses incurred in the transaction, will be

made by the Investment Adviser in the manner it considers to be most equitable and consistent with its fiduciary obligations to such Fund and such other customers. In some instances, this procedure may adversely affect the size and price of the position obtainable for a Fund. The Management Agreement permits the Investment Adviser, in its discretion, to purchase and sell portfolio securities to and from dealers who provide the Trust with brokerage or research services in which dealers may execute brokerage transactions at a higher cost to a Fund. Brokerage and research services furnished by firms through which a Fund effects its securities transactions may be used by the Investment Adviser in servicing other accounts and not all of these services may be used by the Investment Adviser in connection with the Fund generating the brokerage credits. Such research or other services may include research reports on companies, industries and securities; economic and financial data; financial publications; computer data bases; quotation equipment and services; and research-oriented computer hardware, software and other services. The fees received under the Management Agreement is not reduced by reason of the Investment Adviser receiving such brokerage and research services. Such services are used by the Investment Adviser in connection with all of its investment activities, and some of such services obtained in connection with the execution of transactions for the Fund may be used in managing other investment accounts. Conversely, brokers furnishing such services may be selected for the execution of transactions of such other accounts, whose aggregate assets may be larger than those of the Fund, and the services furnished by such brokers may be used by the Investment Adviser in providing management services for the Trust. The Investment Adviser may also participate in so-called “commission sharing arrangements” and “client commission arrangements” under which the Investment Adviser may execute transactions through a broker-dealer and request that the broker-dealer allocate a portion of the commissions or commission credits to another firm that provides research to the Investment Adviser. The Investment Adviser excludes from use under these arrangements those products and services that are not fully eligible under applicable law and regulatory interpretations— even as to the portion that would be eligible if accounted for separately.

The research services received as part of commission sharing and client commission arrangements will comply with Section 28(e) and may be subject to different legal requirements in the jurisdictions in which the Investment Adviser does business. Participating in commission sharing and client commission arrangements may enable the Investment Adviser to consolidate payments for research through one or more channels using accumulated client commissions or credits from transactions executed through a particular broker-dealer to obtain research provided by other firms. Such arrangements also help to ensure the continued receipt of research services while facilitating best execution in the trading process. The Investment Adviser believes such research services are useful in its investment decision-making process by, among other things, ensuring access to a variety of high quality research, access to individual analysts and availability of resources that the Investment Adviser might not be provided access to absent such arrangements.

On occasions when an Investment Adviser deems the purchase or sale of a security or other financial instruments to be in the best interest of the Fund as well as its other customers (including any other fund or other investment company or advisory account for which such Investment Adviser acts as investment adviser or sub-investment adviser), the Investment Adviser, to the extent permitted by applicable laws and regulations, may aggregate the securities to be sold or purchased for the Fund with those to be sold or purchased for such other customers in order to obtain the best net price and most favorable execution under the circumstances. In such event, allocation of the securities so purchased or sold, as well as the expenses incurred in the transaction, will be made by the Investment Adviser in the manner it considers to be equitable and consistent with its fiduciary obligations to the Fund and such other customers. In some instances, this procedure may adversely affect the price and size of the position obtainable for the Fund.

When creation or redemption transactions consist of cash, the transactions may require the Fund to contemporaneously transact with broker-dealers for purchases of Deposit Securities or sales of Fund Securities (as defined above), as applicable. Depending on the timing of the transactions and certain other factors, such transactions will generally be placed with the purchasing or redeeming Authorized Participant in its capacity as a broker-dealer or with its affiliated broker-dealer and conditioned upon an agreement with the Authorized Participant or its affiliated broker-dealer to transact at guaranteed prices in order to reduce transaction costs incurred as a consequence of settling creation or redemption baskets in cash rather than in-kind.

Specifically, following the Fund’s receipt of a creation or redemption order, to the extent such purchases or redemptions consist of a cash portion, the Fund will generally enter an order with the Authorized Participant or affiliated broker-dealer to purchase or sell the Deposit Securities or Fund Securities, as applicable. Such Authorized Participant or its affiliated broker-dealer will be required to guarantee that the Fund will achieve execution of its order at a price at least as favorable to the Fund as the Fund’s valuation of the Deposit Securities/Fund Securities used for purposes of calculating the NAV applied to the creation or redemption transaction giving

rise to the order, which will depend on the results achieved by the executing firm and will vary depending on market activity, timing and a variety of other factors.

An Authorized Participant is required to deposit an amount with the Fund in order to ensure that the execution of the order on the terms noted above will be honored on orders arising from creation transactions executed by an Authorized Participant or its affiliate as broker-dealer. If the broker-dealer executing the order achieves executions in market transactions at a price equal to or more favorable than the Fund's valuation of the Deposit Securities, the Authorized Participant generally will retain the benefit of the favorable executions and the deposit is returned to the Authorized Participant. If, however, the broker-dealer executing the order is unable to achieve a price at least equal to the Fund's valuation of the securities, the Fund retains the portion of the deposit equal to the full amount of the execution shortfall (including any taxes, brokerage commissions or other costs) and may require the Authorized Participant to deposit any additional amount required to cover the full amount of the actual execution transaction.

An Authorized Participant agrees to pay the shortfall amount in order to ensure that a guarantee on execution will be honored for brokerage orders arising from redemption transactions executed by an Authorized Participant or its affiliate as broker-dealer. If the broker-dealer executing the order achieves executions in market transactions at a price equal to or more favorable than the Fund's valuation of the Fund Securities, the Authorized Participant generally will retain the benefit of the favorable executions. If, however, the broker-dealer is unable to achieve executions in market transactions at a price at least equal to the Fund's valuation of the securities, the Fund will be entitled to the portion of the offset equal to the full amount of the execution shortfall (including any taxes, brokerage commissions or other costs).

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Investment Adviser reserves the right to place transactions associated with cash or partial cash creation or redemption transactions with a broker-dealer unaffiliated with the purchasing or redeeming Authorized Participant under certain circumstances.

Commission rates in the U.S. are established pursuant to negotiations with the broker based on the quality and quantity of execution services provided by the broker in the light of generally prevailing rates. The allocation of orders among brokers and the commission rates paid are reviewed periodically by the Trustees. The amount of brokerage commissions paid by the Fund may vary substantially from year to year because of differences in shareholder purchase and redemption activity, portfolio turnover rates and other factors.

For the fiscal year ended August 31, 2025 the Funds paid brokerage commissions as follows.

Fiscal Year Ended August 31, 2025	Total Brokerage Commissions Paid	Total Brokerage Commissions Paid to Goldman Sachs <sup>(1)</sup>	Total Amount of Transactions on which Commissions Paid <sup>(2)</sup>	Amount of Transactions Effected through Brokers Providing Proprietary Research <sup>(3)</sup>	Total Brokerage Commissions Paid for Proprietary Research <sup>(3)</sup>		
Dynamic California Municipal Income ETF	\$18	\$0	0%	\$1,084,554	0%	\$0	\$0
Dynamic New York Municipal Income ETF	\$18	\$0	0%	\$1,084,554	0%	\$0	\$0
Municipal Income ETF	\$18	\$0	0%	\$1,084,554	0%	\$0	\$0

<sup>1</sup> Percentages refer to percentage of total commissions paid to Goldman Sachs.

<sup>2</sup> Percentages refer to percentage of total amount of transactions involving the payment of commissions effected through

<sup>3</sup> Goldman Sachs. The information above reflects the full commission amounts paid to brokers that provide research to the Investment Adviser. Only a portion of such commission pays for research and the remainder of such commission is to compensate the broker for execution services, commitment of capital and other services related to the execution of brokerage transactions.

The Goldman Sachs Ultra Short Municipal Income ETF paid no brokerage commissions for the fiscal year ended August 31, 2025.

Subject to the above considerations, the Investment Adviser may use Goldman Sachs or an affiliate as a broker for the Fund. In order for Goldman Sachs or an affiliate, acting as agent, to effect securities or futures transactions for the Fund, the commissions, fees or other remuneration received by Goldman Sachs or an affiliate must be reasonable and fair compared to the commissions, fees or other remuneration received by other brokers in connection with comparable transactions involving similar securities or futures

contracts. Furthermore, the Trustees, including a majority of the Independent Trustees, have adopted procedures which are reasonably designed to provide that any commissions, fees or other remuneration paid to Goldman Sachs are consistent with the foregoing standard. Brokerage transactions with Goldman Sachs are also subject to such fiduciary standards as may be imposed upon Goldman Sachs by applicable law.

See “Custodian, Sub-Custodians and Provider of Administrative Services,” for information regarding foreign exchange transaction services and execution of trades in connection with certain creation and redemption transactions.

During the fiscal year ended August 31, 2025, the Trust’s regular “broker-dealers”, as defined in Rule 10b-1 under the Act, were BofA Securities, Inc., Citadel Securities LLC, Citigroup Global Markets Inc., Instinet, LLC, J.P. Morgan Securities LLC, Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC, RBC Capital Markets, LLC, Susquehanna Financial Group, LLP, UBS Securities LLC, and Virtu Americas LLC.

As of August 31, 2025, the Funds held no securities of its regular broker dealers.

### **DETERMINATION OF NET ASSET VALUE**

In accordance with procedures approved by the Trustees, the NAV per share of the Fund’s Shares is calculated by the Fund’s provider of administrative services by determining the value of the net assets attributed to the Fund and dividing by the number of outstanding shares of the Fund. All securities are generally valued on each Business Day as of the close of regular trading on the NYSE (normally, but not always, 4:00p.m. Eastern time), or such other times as the NYSE or the National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations System (“NASDAQ”) market may officially close.

For the purpose of calculating the NAV per share of the Fund, investments are valued under valuation procedures approved by the Trustees. With respect to the Fund’s investments that do not have readily available market quotations, the Trustees have designated the Investment Adviser as the valuation designee to perform fair valuations pursuant to Rule 2a-5 under the Investment Company Act. Portfolio securities of the Fund are generally valued as follows: (i) equity securities listed on any U.S. or foreign stock exchange or on the NASDAQ will be valued at the last sale price or the official closing price on the exchange or system in which they are principally traded on the valuation date. If there is no sale or official closing price on the valuation date, equity securities may be valued at the closing bid price for long positions or the closing ask price for short positions at the time closest to, but no later than, the NAV calculation time. If the relevant exchange or system has not closed by the above mentioned time for determining the Fund’s NAV, the securities will be valued at the last sale price or official closing price, or if not available at the bid price at the time the NAV is determined; (ii) over-the-counter equity securities not quoted on NASDAQ will be valued at the last sale price on the valuation day or, if no sale occurs, at the last bid price for long positions or the last ask price for short positions at the time closest to, but no later than, the NAV calculation time; (iii) equity securities for which no prices are obtained under sections (i) or (ii), including those for which a pricing source supplies no exchange quotation or a quotation that is believed by the Investment Adviser to not represent fair value, will be valued through the use of broker quotes, if possible; (iv) fixed income securities will be valued via electronic feeds from independent pricing services to the administrator using evaluated prices provided by a recognized pricing service and dealer-supplied quotations. Fixed income securities for which a pricing service either does not supply a quotation or supplies a quotation that is believed by the Investment Adviser to not represent fair value, will be valued through the use of broker quotes, if possible; (v) fixed income securities for which vendor pricing or broker quotes are not available will be valued by the Investment Adviser based on fair valuation policies that incorporate matrix pricing or valuation models, which utilize certain inputs and assumptions, including, but not limited to, yield or price with respect to comparable fixed income securities and various other factors; (vi) investments in open-end registered investment companies (excluding investments in ETFs) and investments in private funds are valued based on the NAV of those registered investment companies or private funds (which may use fair value pricing as discussed in their prospectus or offering memorandum); (vii) spot foreign exchange rates will be valued using a pricing service at the time closest to the time used for the index calculation of the Fund and forward foreign currency contracts will be valued by adding forward points provided by an independent pricing service to the spot foreign exchange rates and interpolating based upon maturity dates of each contract or by using outright forward rates, where available (if quotations are unavailable from a pricing service or, if the quotations by the Investment Adviser are believed to be inaccurate, the contracts will be valued by calculating the mean between the last bid and ask quotations supplied by at least one dealer in such contracts); (viii) exchange-traded futures contracts will be valued at the last published settlement price on the exchange where they are principally traded (or, if a sale occurs after the last published settlement price but before the NAV calculation time, at the last sale price at the time closest to, but no later than, the NAV calculation time);

(ix) exchange-traded options contracts with settlement prices will be valued at the last published settlement price on the exchange where they are principally traded (or, if a sale occurs after the last published settlement price but before the NAV calculation time, at the last sale price at the time closest to, but no later than, the NAV calculation time); (x) exchange-traded options contracts without settlement prices will be valued at the midpoint of the bid and ask prices on the exchange where they are principally traded (or, in the absence of two-way trading, at the last bid price for long positions and the last ask price for short positions at the time closest to, but no later than, the NAV calculation time); (xi) over-the-counter derivatives, including, but not limited to, interest rate swaps, credit default swaps, total return index swaps, put/call option combos, total return basket swaps, index volatility and foreign exchange (“FX”) variance swaps, will be valued at their fair value as determined using counterparty supplied valuations, an independent pricing service or valuation models which use market data inputs supplied by an independent pricing service; and (xii) all other instruments, including those for which a pricing service supplies no exchange quotation/price or a quotation that is believed by the Investment Adviser to be inaccurate, will be valued in accordance with the valuation procedures approved by the Board of Trustees. Securities may also be valued at fair value in accordance with procedures approved by the Board of Trustees where the Fund’s provider of administrative services is unable for other reasons to facilitate pricing of individual securities or calculate the Fund’s NAV, or if the Investment Adviser believes that such quotations do not accurately reflect fair value. Fair values determined in accordance with the valuation procedures approved by the Board of Trustees may be based on subjective judgments and it is possible that the prices resulting from such valuation procedures may differ materially from the value realized on a sale.

The value of all assets and liabilities expressed in foreign currencies will be converted into U.S. dollar values at foreign currency exchange rates generally determined as of 4:00 p.m. Greenwich Mean Time. If such quotations are not available, the rate of exchange will be determined in good faith under procedures approved by the Board of Trustees.

Generally, trading in securities on European, Asian and Far Eastern securities exchanges and on over-the-counter markets in these regions is substantially completed at various times prior to the close of business on each Business Day in New York (i.e., a day on which the NYSE is open for trading). In addition, European, Asian or Far Eastern securities trading generally or in a particular country or countries may not take place on all Business Days in New York. Furthermore, trading takes place in various foreign markets on days which are not Business Days in New York and days on which the Fund’s NAV is not calculated. Such calculation does not take place contemporaneously with the determination of the prices of the majority of the portfolio securities used in such calculation.

The Investment Adviser, consistent with its procedures and applicable regulatory guidance, may (but need not) determine to make an adjustment to the previous closing prices of either domestic or foreign securities in light of significant events, to reflect what it believes to be the fair value of the securities at the time of determining the Fund’s NAV. Significant events that could affect a large number of securities in a particular market may include, but are not limited to: situations relating to one or more single issuers in a market sector; significant fluctuations in U.S. or foreign markets; market dislocations; market disruptions or unscheduled market closings; equipment failures; natural or man-made disasters or acts of God; armed conflicts; governmental actions or other developments; as well as the same or similar events which may affect specific issuers or the securities markets even though not tied directly to the securities markets. Other significant events that could relate to a single issuer may include, but are not limited to: corporate actions such as reorganizations, mergers and buy-outs; corporate announcements, including those relating to earnings, products and regulatory news; significant litigation; ratings downgrades; bankruptcies; and trading limits or suspensions.

In general, fair value represents a good faith approximation of the current value of an asset and may be used when there is no public market or possibly no market at all for an asset. A security that is fair valued may be valued at a price higher or lower than actual market quotations or the value determined by other funds using their own fair valuation procedures or by other investors. The fair value of an asset may not be the price at which that asset is ultimately sold.

The proceeds received by the Fund and each other series of the Trust from the issue or sale of its Shares, and all net investment income, realized and unrealized gain and proceeds thereof, subject only to the rights of creditors, will be specifically allocated to the Fund or particular series and constitute the underlying assets of the Fund or series. The underlying assets of the Fund will be segregated on the books of account, and will be charged with the liabilities in respect of the Fund and with a share of the general liabilities of the Trust. Expenses of the Trust with respect to the Fund and the other series of the Trust are generally allocated in proportion to the NAVs of the respective Fund except where allocations of expenses can otherwise be fairly made.

The Fund relies on various sources to calculate its NAV. The ability of the Fund's provider of administrative services to calculate the NAV per share of the Fund is subject to operational risks associated with processing or human errors, systems or technology failures, cyber attacks and errors caused by third party service providers, data sources, or trading counterparties. Such failures may result in delays in the calculation of the Fund's NAV and/or the inability to calculate NAV over extended time periods. The Fund may be unable to recover any losses associated with such failures. In addition, if the third-party service providers and/or data sources upon which the Fund directly or indirectly relies to calculate its NAV or price individual securities are unavailable or otherwise unable to calculate the NAV correctly, it may be necessary for alternative procedures to be utilized to price the securities at the time of determining the Fund's NAV.

## SHARES OF THE TRUST

Each Fund is a series of Goldman Sachs ETF Trust, a Delaware statutory trust formed on December 16, 2009.

The Trustees have authority under the Trust's Declaration of Trust to create and classify shares of beneficial interest in separate series, without further action by shareholders. The Trustees also have authority to classify and reclassify any series of shares into one or more classes of shares. As of December 29, 2025, the Trustees have authorized the issuance of one class of shares of each Fund ("Shares"). Additional series may be added in the future.

Each Share of a Fund represents a proportionate interest in the assets belonging to the applicable class of the Fund and all expenses of the Fund are borne at the same rate by each class of shares. In addition, the fees and expenses set forth below for Shares may be subject to fee waivers or reimbursements, as discussed more fully in the Funds' Prospectus.

Certain aspects of the Shares may be altered after advance notice to shareholders if it is deemed necessary in order to satisfy certain tax regulatory requirements.

When issued for the consideration described in the Funds' Prospectus, shares are fully paid and non-assessable. The Trustees may, however, cause shareholders, or shareholders of a particular series or class, to pay certain custodian, transfer agency, shareholder servicing or similar charges by setting off the same against declared but unpaid dividends or by reducing share ownership (or by both means). In the event of liquidation, shareholders are entitled to share pro rata in the net assets of the Funds available for distribution to such shareholders. All shares are freely transferable and have no preemptive, subscription or conversion rights. The Trustees may require Shareholders to redeem Shares for certain reasons under terms set by the Trustees.

The Act requires that where more than one series of shares exists, each series must be preferred over all other series in respect of assets specifically allocated to such series. In addition, Rule 18f-2 under the Act provides that any matter required to be submitted by the provisions of the Act or applicable state law, or otherwise, to the holders of the outstanding voting securities of an investment company such as the Trust shall not be deemed to have been effectively acted upon unless approved by the holders of a majority of the outstanding shares of each series affected by such matter. Rule 18f-2 further provides that a series shall be deemed to be affected by a matter unless the interests of each series in the matter are substantially identical or the matter does not affect any interest of such series. However, Rule 18f-2 exempts the selection of independent public accountants, the approval of principal distribution contracts and the election of trustees from the separate voting requirements of Rule 18f-2.

The Trust is not required to hold annual meetings of shareholders and does not intend to hold such meetings. In the event that a meeting of shareholders is held, each Share of the Trust will be entitled, as determined by the Trustees without the vote or consent of the shareholders, either to one vote for each share or to one vote for each dollar of NAV represented by such share on all matters presented to shareholders including the election of Trustees (this method of voting being referred to as "dollar based voting"). However, to the extent required by the Act or otherwise determined by the Trustees, series and classes of the Trust will vote separately from each other. Shareholders of the Trust do not have cumulative voting rights in the election of Trustees. Meetings of shareholders of the Trust, or any series or class thereof, may be called by the Trustees, certain officers or upon the written request of holders of 10% or more of the shares entitled to vote at such meetings. The Trustees will call a special meeting of shareholders for the purpose of electing Trustees, if, at any time, less than a majority of Trustees holding office at the time were elected by shareholders. The shareholders of the Trust will have voting rights only with respect to the limited number of matters specified in the Declaration of Trust and such other matters as the Trustees may determine or may be required by law.

The Declaration of Trust provides for indemnification of Trustees, officers, employees and agents of the Trust unless the recipient is adjudicated (i) to be liable by reason of willful misfeasance, bad faith, gross negligence or reckless disregard of the duties involved in the conduct of such person's office or (ii) not to have acted in good faith in the reasonable belief that such person's actions were in the best interest of the Trust. The Declaration of Trust provides that, if any shareholder or former shareholder of any series is held personally liable solely by reason of being or having been a shareholder and not because of the shareholder's acts or omissions or for some other reason, the shareholder or former shareholder (or the shareholder's heirs, executors, administrators, legal representatives or general successors) shall be held harmless from and indemnified against all loss and expense arising from such liability. The Trust, acting on behalf of any affected series, must, upon request by such shareholder, assume the defense of any claim made against such shareholder for any act or obligation of the series and satisfy any judgment thereon from the assets of the series.

The Declaration of Trust states that the Trust shall continue without limitation of time but, Trustees may without Shareholder approval (i) sell and convey all or substantially all of the assets of the Trust or any affected Series to another trust, partnership, association, or corporation, or to a separate series of shares thereof, organized under the laws of any state, which trust, partnership, association, or corporation is an open-end management investment company as defined in the Investment Company Act, or is a series thereof, for adequate consideration which may include the assumption of all outstanding obligations, taxes, and other liabilities, accrued or contingent, of the Trust or any affected Series, and which may include shares of beneficial interest, stock, or other ownership interests of such trust, partnership, association, or corporation or of a series thereof; or (ii) at any time, sell and convert into money all of the assets of the Trust or any affected series.

The Declaration of Trust authorizes the Trustees, without shareholder approval, to cause the Trust, or any series thereof, to merge, reorganize or consolidate with any corporation, association, trust or other organization or sell or exchange all or substantially all of the property belonging to the Trust or any series thereof. In addition, the Trustees, without shareholder approval, may adopt a master-feeder structure by investing all or a portion of the assets of a series of the Trust in the securities of another open-end investment company with substantially the same investment objective, restrictions and policies.

The Declaration of Trust permits the Trustees to amend the Declaration of Trust without a shareholder vote. However, shareholders of the Trust have the right to vote on any amendment (i) that would adversely affect the voting rights of shareholders; (ii) that is required by law to be approved by shareholders; (iii) that would amend the provisions of the Declaration of Trust regarding amendments and supplements thereto; or (iv) that the Trustees determine to submit to shareholders.

### **Shareholder and Trustee Liability**

Under Delaware Law, the shareholders of the Funds are not generally subject to liability for the debts or obligations of the Trust. Similarly, Delaware law provides that a series of the Trust will not be liable for the debts or obligations of any other series of the Trust. However, no similar statutory or other authority limiting statutory trust shareholder liability exists in other states. As a result, to the extent that a Delaware statutory trust or a shareholder is subject to the jurisdiction of courts of such other states, the courts may not apply Delaware law and may thereby subject the Delaware statutory trust shareholders to liability. To guard against this risk, the Declaration of Trust contains an express disclaimer of shareholder liability for acts or obligations of a series. Notice of such disclaimer will normally be given in each agreement, obligation or instrument entered into or executed by a series of the Trust. The Declaration of Trust provides for indemnification by the relevant series for all loss suffered by a shareholder as a result of an obligation of the series. The Declaration of Trust also provides that a series shall, upon request, assume the defense of any claim made against any shareholder for any act or obligation of the series and satisfy any judgment thereon. In view of the above, the risk of personal liability of shareholders of a Delaware statutory trust is remote.

In addition to the requirements under Delaware law, the Declaration of Trust provides that shareholders of a series may bring a derivative action on behalf of the series only if the following conditions are met: (a) shareholders eligible to bring such derivative action under Delaware law who collectively hold at least 10% of the outstanding shares of the series, or 10% of the outstanding shares of the class to which such action relates, shall join in the request for the Trustees to commence such action; and (b) the Trustees must be afforded a reasonable amount of time to consider such shareholder request and to investigate the basis of such claim. The Trustees will be entitled to retain counsel or other advisers in considering the merits of the request and may require an undertaking by the shareholders making such request to reimburse the series for the expense of any such advisers in the event that the Trustees determine not to bring such action.

The Declaration of Trust further provides that the Trustees will not be liable for errors of judgment or mistakes of fact or law, but nothing in the Declaration of Trust protects a Trustee against liability to which he or she would otherwise be subject by reason of willful misfeasance, bad faith, gross negligence, or reckless disregard of the duties involved in the conduct of his or her office.

## TAXATION

The following are certain additional U.S. federal income tax considerations generally affecting the Funds and the purchase, ownership and disposition of shares of the Fund that are not described in the Prospectus. The discussions below and in the Prospectus are only summaries and are not intended as substitutes for careful tax planning. They do not address special tax rules applicable to certain classes of investors, such as tax-exempt entities, insurance companies and financial institutions. Each prospective shareholder is urged to consult his or her own tax adviser with respect to the specific federal, state, local and foreign tax consequences of investing in each Fund. The summary is based on the laws in effect on December 29, 2025, which are subject to change. Future changes in tax laws may adversely impact a Fund and its shareholders.

### Fund Taxation

Each Fund is treated as a separate taxable entity and has elected to be treated and intends to qualify for each of its taxable years as a regulated investment company under Subchapter M of Subtitle A, Chapter 1, of the Code.

There are certain tax requirements that each Fund must follow if it is to avoid federal taxation. In its efforts to adhere to these requirements, the Funds may have to limit its investment activities in some types of instruments. Qualification as a regulated investment company under the Code requires, among other things, that (i) the Fund derive at least 90% of its gross income (including tax exempt interest) for each taxable year from dividends, interest, payments with respect to securities loans, gains from the sale or other disposition of stocks or securities or foreign currencies, net income from qualified publicly traded partnerships or other income (including but not limited to gains from options, futures, and forward contracts) derived with respect to the Fund's business of investing in stocks, securities or currencies (the "90% gross income test"); and (ii) the Fund diversify its holdings so that, in general, at the close of each quarter of its taxable year, (a) at least 50% of the fair market value of the Fund's total (gross) assets is comprised of cash, cash items, U.S. Government Securities, securities of other regulated investment companies and other securities limited in respect of any one issuer to an amount not greater in value than 5% of the value of the Fund's total assets and to not more than 10% of the outstanding voting securities of such issuer, and (b) not more than 25% of the value of its total (gross) assets is invested in the securities of any one issuer (other than U.S. Government Securities and securities of other regulated investment companies), two or more issuers controlled by the Fund and engaged in the same, similar or related trades or businesses, or certain publicly traded partnerships.

For purposes of the 90% gross income test, income that a Fund earns from equity interests in certain entities that are not treated as corporations or as qualified publicly traded partnerships for U.S. federal income tax purposes (*e.g.*, partnerships or trusts) will generally have the same character for the Fund as in the hands of such an entity; consequently, a Fund may be required to limit its equity investments in any such entities that earn fee income, rental income, or other nonqualifying income. In addition, future Treasury Regulations could provide that qualifying income under the 90% gross income test will not include gains from foreign currency transactions that are not directly related to the Fund's principal business of investing in stock or securities or options and futures with respect to stock or securities. Using foreign currency positions or entering into foreign currency options, futures and forward or swap contracts for purposes other than hedging currency risk with respect to securities in a Fund's portfolio or anticipated to be acquired may not qualify as "directly-related" under these tests.

If a Fund complies with the foregoing provisions, then in any taxable year in which the Fund distributes, in compliance with the Code's timing and other requirements, an amount at least equal to the sum of 90% of its "investment company taxable income" (which includes dividends, taxable interest, taxable accrued original issue discount and market discount income, income from securities lending, any net short-term capital gain in excess of net long-term capital loss, certain net realized foreign exchange gains and any other taxable income other than "net capital gain," as defined below, and is reduced by deductible expenses), plus 90% of the excess of its gross tax-exempt interest income (if any) over certain disallowed deductions, the Fund (but not its shareholders) will be relieved of federal income tax on any income of the Fund, including long-term capital gains, distributed to shareholders. If, instead, a Fund retains any investment company taxable income or net capital gain (the excess of net long-term capital gain over net short-term

capital loss), it will be subject to a tax at regular corporate rates on the amount retained. Because there are some uncertainties regarding the computation of the amounts deemed distributed to Fund shareholders for these purposes — including, in particular, uncertainties regarding the portion, if any, of amounts paid in redemption of Fund Shares that should be treated as such distributions — there can be no assurance that the Fund will avoid corporate-level tax in each year.

Each Fund generally intends to distribute for each taxable year to its shareholders all or substantially all of its investment company taxable income, net capital gain and any tax-exempt interest. Exchange control or other foreign laws, regulations or practices may restrict repatriation of investment income, capital or the proceeds of securities sales by foreign investors and may therefore make it more difficult for these Funds to satisfy the distribution requirements described above, as well as the excise tax distribution requirements described below. These Funds generally expect, however, to be able to obtain sufficient cash to satisfy those requirements, from new investors, the sale of securities or other sources. If for any taxable year a Fund does not qualify as a regulated investment company, it will be taxed on all of its taxable income and net capital gain at corporate rates, and its distributions to shareholders will generally be taxable as ordinary dividends to the extent of its current and accumulated earnings and profits.

If a Fund retains any net capital gain, the Fund may designate the retained amount as undistributed capital gains in a notice to its shareholders who (1) if subject to U.S. federal income tax on long-term capital gains, will be required to include in income for federal income tax purposes, as long-term capital gain, their shares of that undistributed amount, and (2) will be entitled to credit their proportionate shares of the tax paid by the Fund against their U.S. federal income tax liabilities, if any, and to claim refunds to the extent the credit exceeds those liabilities. For U.S. federal income tax purposes, the tax basis of shares owned by a shareholder of the Fund will be increased by the amount of any such undistributed net capital gain included in the shareholder's gross income and decreased by the federal income tax paid by the Fund on that amount of net capital gain.

To avoid a 4% federal excise tax, each Fund must generally distribute (or be deemed to have distributed) by December 31 of each calendar year an amount at least equal to the sum of 98% of its taxable ordinary income (taking into account certain deferrals and elections) for the calendar year, 98.2% of the excess of its capital gains over its capital losses (generally computed on the basis of the one-year period ending on October 31 of such year), and all taxable ordinary income and the excess of capital gains over capital losses for all previous years that were not distributed for those years and on which the Fund paid no federal income tax. For federal income tax purposes, dividends declared by a Fund in October, November or December to shareholders of record on a specified date in such a month and paid during January of the following year are taxable to such shareholders, and deductible by the Fund, as if paid on December 31 of the year declared. Each Fund anticipates that it will generally make timely distributions of income and capital gains in compliance with these requirements so that it will generally not be required to pay the excise tax.

For federal income tax purposes, each Fund is generally permitted to carry forward a net capital loss in any taxable year to offset its own capital gains, if any. These amounts are available to be carried forward to offset future capital gains to the extent permitted by the Code and applicable tax regulations. Any such loss carryforwards will retain their character as short-term or long-term.

As of August 31, 2025, the Funds had capital loss carryforwards approximating the amount indicated, expiring in the years indicated:

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Capital Loss Carryforward</u>	<u>Expiration</u>
Goldman Sachs Dynamic California Municipal Income ETF	\$(1,512)	Perpetual Short-Term
Goldman Sachs Dynamic New York Municipal Income ETF	\$(2,389)	Perpetual Short-Term
Goldman Sachs Municipal Income ETF	\$(1,884)	Perpetual Short-Term
Goldman Sachs Ultra Short Municipal Income ETF	\$(1,683)	Perpetual Short-Term

Gains and losses on the sale, lapse, or other termination of options and futures contracts, options thereon and certain forward contracts (except certain foreign currency options, forward contracts and futures contracts) will generally be treated as capital gains and losses. Certain of the futures contracts, forward contracts and options held by a Fund will be required to be “marked-to-market” for federal tax purposes — that is, treated as having been sold at their fair market value on the last day of the Fund's taxable year (or, for excise tax purposes, on the last day of the relevant period). These provisions may require a Fund to recognize income or gains without a concurrent receipt of cash. Any gain or loss recognized on actual or deemed sales of these futures contracts, forward contracts, or options will (except for certain foreign currency options, forward contracts, and futures contracts) be treated as 60%

long-term capital gain or loss and 40% short-term capital gain or loss. As a result of certain hedging transactions entered into by a Fund, that Fund may be required to defer the recognition of losses on futures contracts, forward contracts, and options or underlying securities or foreign currencies to the extent of any unrecognized gains on related positions held by the Fund, and the characterization of gains or losses as long-term or short-term may be changed. The tax provisions described in this paragraph may affect the amount, timing and character of the Fund's distributions to shareholders. The application of certain requirements for qualification as a regulated investment company and the application of certain other tax rules may be unclear in some respects in connection with certain investment practices such as dollar rolls, or investments in certain derivatives, including interest rate swaps, floors, caps and collars, currency swaps, total return swaps, mortgage swaps, index swaps, forward contracts and structured notes. As a result, that Fund may therefore be required to limit its investments in such transactions and it is also possible that the IRS may not agree with the Fund's tax treatment of such transactions. In addition, the tax treatment of derivatives, and certain other investments, may be affected by future legislation, Treasury Regulations and guidance issued by the IRS that could affect the timing, character and amount of a Fund's income and gains and distributions to shareholders. Certain tax elections may be available to the Funds to mitigate some of the unfavorable consequences described in this paragraph.

Section 988 of the Code contains special tax rules applicable to certain foreign currency transactions and instruments, which may affect the amount, timing and character of income, gain or loss recognized by a Fund. Under these rules, foreign exchange gain or loss realized with respect to foreign currencies and certain futures and options thereon, foreign currency-denominated debt instruments, foreign currency forward contracts, and foreign currency-denominated payables and receivables will generally be treated as ordinary income or loss, although in some cases elections may be available that would alter this treatment. If a net foreign exchange loss treated as ordinary loss under Section 988 of the Code were to exceed a Fund's investment company taxable income (computed without regard to that loss) for a taxable year, the resulting loss would not be deductible by the Fund or its shareholders in future years. Net loss, if any, from certain foreign currency transactions or instruments could exceed net investment income otherwise calculated for accounting purposes, with the result being either no dividends being paid or a portion of a Fund's dividends being treated as a return of capital for tax purposes, nontaxable to the extent of a shareholder's tax basis in his shares and, once such basis is exhausted, generally giving rise to capital gains.

A Fund's investment, if any, in zero coupon securities, deferred interest securities, certain structured securities or other securities bearing original issue discount or, if a Fund elects to include market discount in income currently, market discount, as well as any "marked-to-market" gain from certain options, futures or forward contracts, as described above, will in many cases cause it to realize income or gain before the receipt of cash payments with respect to these securities or contracts. In order to obtain cash to enable it to distribute any such income or gain, to maintain its qualification as a regulated investment company and to avoid federal income and excise taxes, a Fund may be required to liquidate portfolio investments sooner than it might otherwise have done.

Investments in lower-rated securities may present special tax issues for a Fund to the extent actual or anticipated defaults may be more likely with respect to those kinds of securities. Tax rules are not entirely clear about issues such as when an investor in such securities may cease to accrue interest, original issue discount, or market discount; when and to what extent deductions may be taken for bad debts or worthless securities; how payments received on obligations in default should be allocated between principal and income; and whether exchanges of debt obligations in a workout context are taxable. These and other issues will generally need to be addressed by a Fund, in the event it invests in such securities, so as to seek to eliminate or to minimize any adverse tax consequences.

If a Fund acquires stock (including, under proposed regulations, an option to acquire stock such as is inherent in a convertible bond) in certain foreign corporations that receive at least 75% of their annual gross income from passive sources (such as interest, dividends, rents, royalties or capital gain) or hold at least 50% of their assets in investments producing such passive income ("passive foreign investment companies"), the Fund could be subject to federal income tax and additional interest charges on "excess distributions" received from such companies or gain from the sale of stock in such companies, even if all income or gain actually received by the Fund is timely distributed to its shareholders. The Fund will not be able to pass through to its shareholders any credit or deduction for such a tax. In some cases, elections may be available that will ameliorate these adverse tax consequences, but those elections will require the Fund to include each year certain amounts as income or gain (subject to the distribution requirements described above) without a concurrent receipt of cash. The Fund may attempt to limit and/or to manage its holdings in passive foreign investment companies to minimize its tax liability or maximize its return from these investments.

If a Fund invests in certain real estate investment trusts (“REITs”) or in real estate mortgage investment conduit residual interests, a portion of the Fund’s income may be classified as “excess inclusion income.” A shareholder that is otherwise not subject to tax may be taxable on their share of any such excess inclusion income as “unrelated business taxable income.” In addition, tax may be imposed on a Fund on the portion of any excess inclusion income allocable to any shareholders that are classified as disqualified organizations.

### **Taxable U.S. Shareholders – Distributions**

Each Fund expects to qualify to pay “exempt-interest dividends,” as defined in the Code. To qualify to pay exempt-interest dividends, a Fund must, at the close of each quarter of its taxable year, have at least 50% of the value of its total assets invested in municipal obligations whose interest is excluded from gross income under Section 103(a) of the Code. In purchasing municipal obligations, each Fund intends to rely on opinions of bond counsel or counsel to the issuers for each issue as to the excludability of interest on such obligations from gross income for federal income tax purposes. A Fund will not undertake independent investigations concerning the tax exempt status of such obligations, nor does it guarantee or represent that bond counsels’ opinions are correct. Bond counsels’ opinions will generally be based in part upon covenants by the issuers and related parties regarding continuing compliance with federal tax requirements. Tax laws not only limit the purposes for which tax exempt bonds may be issued and the supply of such bonds, but also contain numerous and complex requirements that must be satisfied on a continuing basis in order for bonds to be and remain tax exempt. If the issuer of a bond or a user of a bond-financed facility fails to comply with such requirements at any time, interest on the bond could become taxable, retroactive to the date the obligation was issued. In that event, a portion of a Fund’s distributions attributable to interest the Fund received on such bond for the current year and for prior years could be characterized or recharacterized as taxable income. The availability of tax exempt obligations and the value of a Fund’s portfolio may be affected by restrictive federal income tax legislation enacted in recent years or by similar, future legislation. If a Fund satisfies the applicable requirements, dividends paid by the Fund which are attributable to tax exempt interest on municipal obligations and designated by the Fund as exempt-interest dividends in a written notice to its shareholders after the close of its taxable year may be treated by shareholders as items of interest excludable from their gross income under Section 103(a) of the Code. The recipient of tax exempt income is required to report such income on his or her federal income tax return. The Code provides that interest on indebtedness incurred or continued to purchase or carry shares of a Fund is not deductible to the extent attributable to exempt-interest dividends.

Although all or a substantial portion of the dividends paid by a Fund may be excluded by shareholders of such Fund from their gross income for federal income tax purposes, each Fund may purchase private activity bonds, the interest from which (including a Fund’s distributions attributable to such interest) may be a preference item for purposes of the federal alternative minimum tax. All exempt-interest dividends from a Fund, whether or not attributable to private activity bond interest, will be taken into account in determining the extent to which a shareholder’s Social Security or certain railroad retirement benefits are taxable.

The Funds are not intended to constitute a balanced investment program and are not designed for investors seeking capital appreciation or maximum tax exempt income irrespective of fluctuations in principal. Shares of the Funds would not be suitable for tax exempt institutions, retirement plans qualified under Section 401 of the Code, H.R. 10 plans and individual retirement accounts since such institutions, plans and accounts are generally tax exempt and, therefore, would not gain any additional benefit from the Funds’ dividends being tax exempt. The same is generally true for non-U.S. persons, because they are generally exempt from U.S. tax on interest income. In addition, the Funds may not be an appropriate investment for persons or entities that are “substantial users” of facilities financed by private activity bonds or “related persons” thereof. “Substantial user” is defined under U.S. Treasury Regulations to include a non-exempt person which regularly uses a part of such facilities in its trade or business and whose gross revenues derived with respect to the facilities financed by the issuance of bonds are more than 5% of the total revenues derived by all users of such facilities, which occupies more than 5% of the usable area of such facilities or for which such facilities or a part thereof were specifically constructed, reconstructed or acquired. “Related persons” include certain related natural persons, affiliated corporations, partnerships and its partners and an S corporation and its shareholders. A shareholder is advised to consult his or her tax adviser with respect to whether exempt-interest dividends retain the exclusion under Section 103(a) if such shareholder would be treated as a “substantial user” under Section 147(a)(1) with respect to some or all of the tax exempt obligations held by a Fund.

For U.S. federal income tax purposes, taxable distributions by a Fund, whether reinvested in additional shares or paid in cash, generally will be taxable to shareholders who are subject to tax. Taxable distributions include distributions that are attributable to

(i) taxable income, including but not limited to dividends, taxable bond interest, recognized market discount income, original issue discount income accrued with respect to taxable bonds, income from repurchase agreements, income from dollar rolls, income from interest rate, currency, total return swaps, options on swaps, caps, floors and collars, and a portion of the discount from certain stripped tax exempt obligations or their coupons; or (ii) capital gains from the sale of securities or other investments (including from the disposition of rights to when-issued securities prior to issuance) or from options, futures or certain forward contracts.

In general, taxable distributions from investment company taxable income for the year will be taxable as ordinary income. However, taxable distributions to noncorporate shareholders attributable to dividends received by the Funds from U.S. and certain foreign corporations will generally be taxed at the long-term capital gain rate (described below), as long as certain other requirements are met. For these lower rates to apply, the noncorporate shareholders must have owned their Fund shares for at least 61 days during the 121-day period beginning 60 days before the Fund's ex-dividend date (or 91 days during the 181-day period beginning 90 days before the Fund's ex-dividend date in the case of certain preferred stock dividends paid by the Fund) and the Fund must also have owned the underlying stock for this same period beginning 60 days before the ex-dividend date for the stock (or 91 days during the 181-day period beginning 90 days before the Fund's ex-dividend date in the case of certain preferred stock dividends paid by the Fund). Distributions from the Funds generally will not qualify for taxation at the lower rate because the Funds generally will be earning interest rather than dividend income.

It is expected that distributions made by the Funds will ordinarily not qualify for the dividends-received deduction for corporations because qualifying distributions may be made only from the Fund's dividend income that it receives from stock in U.S. domestic corporations. The Funds do not intend to purchase stock of domestic corporations other than in limited instances, distributions from which may in rare cases qualify as dividends for this purpose. The dividends-received deduction, if available, is reduced to the extent the shares with respect to which the dividends are received are treated as debt-financed under the federal income tax law and is eliminated if the shares are deemed to have been held for less than a minimum period, generally 46 days. Receipt of certain distributions qualifying for the deduction may result in reduction of the tax basis of the corporate shareholder's shares. Capital gain dividends (i.e., dividends from net capital gain), if reported as such to shareholders, will be taxed to shareholders as long-term capital gain regardless of how long shares have been held by shareholders, but are not eligible for the dividends received deduction for corporations. The maximum individual rate applicable to long-term capital gains is generally either 15% or 20%, depending on whether the individual's income exceeds certain threshold amounts. Taxable distributions, if any, that are in excess of a Fund's current and accumulated earnings and profits will first reduce a shareholder's tax basis in his shares and, after such basis is reduced to zero, will generally constitute capital gains to a shareholder who holds his shares as capital assets.

Certain taxable distributions reported by a Fund as Section 163(j) interest dividends may be treated as interest income by shareholders for purposes of the tax rules applicable to interest expense limitations under Section 163(j). Such treatment by the shareholder is generally subject to holding period requirements and other potential limitations, although the holding period requirements are generally not applicable to dividends declared by money market funds and certain other funds that declare dividends daily and pay such dividends on a monthly or more frequent basis. The amount that a Fund is eligible to report as a Section 163(j) dividend for a tax year is generally limited to the excess of the Fund's business interest income over the sum of the Fund's (i) business interest expense and (ii) other deductions properly allocable to the Fund's business interest income.

Individuals (and certain other non-corporate entities) are generally eligible for a 20% deduction with respect to taxable ordinary dividends from REITs and certain taxable income from publicly traded partnerships through 2025. Treasury Regulations allow regulated investment companies to pass-through the deduction with respect to taxable ordinary dividends from REITs to shareholders. However, currently there is no mechanism to pass through the deductions with respect to income from publicly traded partnerships.

After the close of each calendar year, the shareholders will be informed of the federal income tax status of a Fund's dividends and distributions for such year, including the portion of such dividends, if any, that qualifies as tax exempt or as capital gain and the portion, if any, that should be treated as a tax preference item for purposes of the federal alternative minimum tax. Shareholders who have not held shares of a Fund for that Fund's full taxable year may have reported as tax exempt or as a tax preference item a percentage of distributions which is not equal to the actual amount of tax exempt income or tax preference item income earned by that Fund during the period of their investment in the Fund.

Different tax treatment, including penalties on certain excess contributions and deferrals, certain pre-retirement and post-retirement distributions and certain prohibited transactions, is accorded to accounts maintained as qualified retirement plans. Shareholders should consult their tax advisers for more information.

### **Taxable U.S. Shareholders - Sale of Shares**

When a shareholder's shares are sold, redeemed or otherwise disposed of in a transaction that is treated as a sale for tax purposes, the shareholder will generally recognize gain or loss equal to the difference between the shareholder's adjusted tax basis in the shares and the cash, or fair market value of any property, received. (To aid in computing that tax basis, a shareholder should generally retain its account statements for the period that it holds shares.) If the shareholder holds the shares as a capital asset at the time of sale, the character of the gain or loss should be capital, and treated as long-term if the shareholder's holding period is more than one year and short-term otherwise, subject to the rules below.

Certain special tax rules may apply to a shareholder's capital gains or losses on Fund shares. If a shareholder receives a capital gain dividend with respect to shares and such shares have a tax holding period of six months or less at the time of a sale or redemption of such shares, then any loss the shareholder realizes on the sale or redemption will be treated as a long-term capital loss to the extent of such capital gain dividend. In addition, any loss realized upon the sale or exchange of Fund shares with a tax holding period of six months or less may be disallowed to the extent of any distributions treated as exempt-interest dividends with respect to such shares. Additionally, any loss realized on a sale or redemption of shares of a Fund may be disallowed under "wash sale" rules to the extent the shares disposed of are replaced with other shares of the same Fund within a period of 61 days beginning 30 days before and ending 30 days after the shares are disposed of, such as pursuant to a dividend reinvestment in shares of such Fund. If disallowed, the loss will be reflected in an adjustment to the basis of the shares acquired. If a Fund redeems a shareholder in-kind rather than in cash, the shareholder would realize the same gain or loss as if the shareholder had been redeemed in cash. Further, the shareholder's basis in the securities received in the in-kind redemption would be the securities' fair market value on the date of the in-kind redemption.

### **Medicare Tax**

An additional 3.8% Medicare tax is imposed on certain net investment income (including ordinary dividends and capital gain distributions received from a Fund and net gains from redemptions or other taxable dispositions of Fund shares) of U.S. individuals, estates and trusts to the extent that such person's "modified adjusted gross income" (in the case of an individual) or "adjusted gross income" (in the case of an estate or trust) exceeds certain threshold amounts.

### **Backup Withholding**

Backup withholding may be required at a rate up to 24% with respect to distributions payable to shareholders who fail to provide their correct taxpayer identification number or to make required certifications, or who have been notified by the IRS that they are subject to backup withholding. Corporate shareholders and certain other shareholders specified in the Code generally are exempt from such backup withholding. Backup withholding is not an additional tax. Any amounts withheld may be credited against the shareholder's U.S. federal tax liability.

### **Non-U.S. Shareholders**

The discussion above relates solely to U.S. federal income tax law as it applies to "U.S. persons" subject to tax under such law.

Except as discussed below, distributions to shareholders who, as to the United States, are not "U.S. persons," (*i.e.*, are nonresident aliens, foreign corporations, fiduciaries of foreign trusts or estates or other non-U.S. investors) generally will be subject to U.S. federal withholding tax at the rate of 30% on distributions treated as ordinary income unless the tax is reduced or eliminated pursuant to a tax treaty or the distributions are effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business of the shareholder; but distributions of net capital gain (the excess of any net long-term capital gains over any net short-term capital losses) including amounts retained by a Fund which are designated as undistributed capital gains, to such a non-U.S. shareholder will not be subject to U.S. federal income or withholding tax unless the distributions are effectively connected with the shareholder's trade or business in the United States or, in the case of a shareholder who is a nonresident alien individual, the shareholder is present in the United States for 183 days or more during the taxable year and certain other conditions are met.

Non-U.S. shareholders generally are not subject to U.S. federal income tax withholding on distributions of certain qualified interest income and/or short-term capital gains that are reported by a Fund. It is expected that each Fund will generally report short-term capital gains, to the extent permitted, but the Fund does not intend to report any distributions attributable to qualified interest income. Therefore, all distributions of interest income (other than exempt interest dividends) will be subject to withholding when paid to non-U.S. investors.

Any capital gain realized by a non-U.S. shareholder upon a sale or redemption of shares of a Fund will not be subject to U.S. federal income or withholding tax unless the gain is effectively connected with the shareholder's trade or business in the U.S., or in the case of a shareholder who is a nonresident alien individual, the shareholder is present in the U.S. for 183 days or more during the taxable year and certain other conditions are met.

Non-U.S. persons who fail to furnish the proper IRS Form W-8 (*i.e.*, W-8BEN, W-8BEN-E, W-8ECI, W-8IMY or W-8EXP), or an acceptable substitute, may be subject to backup withholding at a 24% rate on dividends (including capital gain dividends) and on the proceeds of redemptions and exchanges. Also, non-U.S. shareholders of a Fund may be subject to U.S. estate tax with respect to their Fund shares.

Withholding of U.S. tax (at a 30% rate) is required with respect to payments of dividends made to certain non-U.S. entities that fail to comply (or be deemed compliant) with extensive reporting and withholding requirements designed to inform the U.S. Department of the Treasury of U.S.-owned foreign investment accounts. Shareholders may be requested to provide additional information to enable the applicable withholding agent to determine whether withholding is required.

Each shareholder who is not a U.S. person should consult his or her tax adviser regarding the U.S. and non-U.S. tax consequences of ownership of shares of, and receipt of distributions from, the Fund.

### **Creation Units**

As a result of U.S. federal income tax requirements, the Trust on behalf of each Fund, has the right to reject an order for a creation of shares if the creator (or group of creators) would, upon obtaining the shares so ordered, own 80% or more of the outstanding shares of a Fund and if, pursuant to Section 351 of the Code, the Fund would have a basis in the Deposit Securities different from the market value of such securities on the date of deposit. The Trust also has the right to require information necessary to determine beneficial share ownership for purposes of the 80% determination. See "Creations and Redemptions."

### **State and Local Taxes**

Each Fund may be subject to state or local taxes in jurisdictions in which the Fund is deemed to be doing business. A state income (and possibly local income and/or intangible property) tax exemption is generally available to the extent (if any) a Fund's distributions are derived from interest on (or, in the case of intangible property taxes, the value of its assets is attributable to) certain U.S. Government obligations and/or tax exempt municipal obligations issued by or on behalf of the particular state or a political subdivision thereof, provided in some states that certain thresholds for holdings of such obligations and/or reporting requirements are satisfied. In addition, in those states or localities that impose income taxes, the treatment of a Fund and its shareholders under those jurisdictions' tax laws may differ from the treatment under federal income tax laws, and investment in a Fund may have tax consequences for shareholders that are different from those of a direct investment in such Fund's portfolio securities. Shareholders should consult their own tax advisers concerning state and local tax matters.

In order for the Goldman Sachs Dynamic California Municipal Income ETF to distribute exempt-interest dividends for purposes of the California personal income tax, at least 50% of the value of the Fund's total assets at the end of each quarter of each taxable year must consist of California state or local obligations and/or U.S. federal obligations, the interest from which is exempt from California personal income taxation. If the Fund qualifies to distribute exempt-interest dividends and reports these distributions as such to the Fund shareholders, all distributions of such Fund attributable to interest income earned on such California state or local obligations and/or U.S. federal obligations for the taxable year of the Fund will be exempt from California personal income tax.

Individual shareholders of the Goldman Sachs Dynamic New York Municipal Income ETF will be entitled to exclude from their adjusted gross income for New York State and New York City personal income tax purposes any portion of distributions received from the Fund that is derived from or attributable to (i) interest income on obligations of New York State or any political subdivision thereof (including New York City) or of a possession or territory of the United States or any political subdivision thereof, provided that at least 50 percent of the value of the Fund's total assets at the close of each quarter of its taxable year consists of obligations the interest on which is tax-exempt for federal income tax purposes and such income is not otherwise properly includible in the shareholder's federal adjusted gross income, (ii) interest income on obligations of the United States and its possessions even if includible in the shareholder's federal adjusted gross income, provided that at least 50 percent of the value of the Fund's total assets at the close of each quarter of its taxable year consists of obligations of the United States and its possessions and the Fund provides a timely written notice of designation to shareholders, or (iii) interest income on obligations of any authority, commission or instrumentality of the United States to the extent federal law exempts such income from state income taxation, provided that at least 50 percent of the value of the Fund's total assets at the close of each quarter of its taxable year consists of obligations of the United States and its possessions and the Fund provides a timely written notice of designation to shareholders. Distributions from the Fund that are derived from or attributable to sources other than those described in the preceding sentence, including interest on obligations of other states and their political subdivisions (unless the obligation is created by a compact or an agreement to which New York State is a party) will generally be taxable to individual shareholders as ordinary income for New York State and New York City personal income tax purposes.

The foregoing is a general, abbreviated summary of certain of the provisions of the tax laws of California, New York State and New York City presently in effect as they govern the taxation of Fund shareholders. These provisions are subject to change by legislative or administrative action, and any such change may be retroactive with respect to the Fund's transactions. Shareholders are advised to consult their own tax advisers for more detailed information concerning state and local tax matters, including those involving California, New York State, New York City and any other applicable jurisdictions.

## **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The audited financial statements and related reports of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, independent registered public accounting firm for the Funds, contained in the Funds' Form N-CSR for the most recent fiscal year end, are hereby incorporated by reference. No other portions of the Funds' Form N-CSR are incorporated herein by reference. A copy of the Funds' financial information may be obtained upon request and without charge by writing Goldman Sachs Funds, 71 South Wacker Drive, Suite 1200, Chicago, IL 60606 or by calling 1-800-621-2550.

## **PROXY VOTING**

The Trust, on behalf of the Funds, has delegated the voting of portfolio securities to the Investment Adviser. For client accounts for which the Investment Adviser has voting discretion, the Investment Adviser has adopted policies and procedures (the "Proxy Voting Policy") for the voting of proxies. Under the Proxy Voting Policy, the Investment Adviser's guiding principles in performing proxy voting are to make decisions that favor proposals that in the Investment Adviser's view tend to maximize a company's shareholder value and are not influenced by conflicts of interest. To implement these guiding principles for investments in publicly-traded equities, the Investment Adviser has developed customized proxy voting guidelines (the "Guidelines") that they generally apply when voting on behalf of client accounts. Attached as Appendix B is a summary of the Guidelines. These Guidelines address a wide variety of individual topics, including, among other matters, shareholder voting rights, anti-takeover defenses, board structures, the election of directors, executive and director compensation, reorganizations, mergers, issues of corporate social responsibility and various shareholder proposals. The Guidelines embody the positions and factors the Investment Adviser generally considers important in casting proxy votes.

The Proxy Voting Policy, including the Guidelines, is reviewed periodically to ensure that it continues to be consistent with the Investment Adviser's guiding principles.

The Investment Adviser has retained a third-party proxy voting service ("Proxy Service"), currently Institutional Shareholder Services, to assist in the implementation and administration of certain proxy voting-related functions including, without limitation,

operational, recordkeeping and reporting services. The Proxy Service also prepares a written analysis and recommendation (a “Recommendation”) of each proxy vote that reflects the Proxy Service’s application of the Guidelines to particular proxy issues. While it is the Investment Adviser’s policy generally to follow the Guidelines and Recommendations from the Proxy Service, the Investment Adviser’s portfolio management teams (“Portfolio Management Teams”) may on certain proxy votes seek approval to diverge from the Guidelines or a Recommendation by following an “override” process. Such decisions are subject to a review and approval process, including a determination that the decision is not influenced by any conflict of interest. A Portfolio Management Team that receives approval through the override process to cast a proxy vote that diverges from the Guidelines and/or a Recommendation may vote differently than other Portfolio Management Teams that did not seek to override that vote. In forming their views on particular matters, the Portfolio Management Teams are also permitted to consider applicable regional rules and practices, including codes of conduct and other guides, regarding proxy voting, in addition to the Guidelines and Recommendations. The Investment Adviser may hire other service providers to replace or supplement the Proxy Service with respect to any of the services the Investment Adviser currently receives from the Proxy Service.

GSAM conducts periodic due diligence meetings with the Proxy Service which include, but are not limited to, a review of the Proxy Service’s general organizational structure, new developments with respect to research and technology, work flow improvements and internal due diligence with respect to conflicts of interest.

From time to time, the Investment Adviser may face regulatory, compliance, legal or logistical limits with respect to voting securities that they may purchase or hold for client accounts, which can affect the Investment Adviser’s ability to vote such proxies, as well as the desirability of voting such proxies. Among other limits, federal, state and foreign regulatory restrictions or company specific ownership limits, as well as legal matters related to consolidated groups, may restrict the total percentage of an issuer’s voting securities that the Investment Adviser can hold for clients and the nature of the Investment Adviser’s voting in such securities. The Investment Adviser’s ability to vote proxies may also be affected by, among other things: (i) late receipt of meeting notices; (ii) requirements to vote proxies in person; (iii) restrictions on a foreigner’s ability to exercise votes; (iv) potential difficulties in translating the proxy; (v) requirements to provide local agents with unrestricted powers of attorney to facilitate voting instructions; and (vi) requirements that investors who exercise their voting rights surrender the right to dispose of their holdings for some specified period in proximity to the shareholder meeting.

The Investment Adviser has adopted policies and procedures designed to prevent conflicts of interest from influencing its proxy voting decisions that the Investment Adviser makes on behalf of a client account. These policies and procedures include the Investment Adviser’s use of the Guidelines and Recommendations from the Proxy Service, the override approval process previously discussed, and the establishment of information barriers between the Investment Adviser and other businesses within The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. Notwithstanding such proxy voting policies and procedures, actual proxy voting decisions of the Investment Adviser may have the effect of benefitting the interests of other clients or businesses of other divisions or units of Goldman Sachs and/or its affiliates. To mitigate perceived or potential conflicts of interest when a proxy vote is for shares of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., the Investment Adviser will instruct that such shares be voted in the same proportion as other shares are voted with respect to a proposal.

Voting decisions with respect to fixed income securities and the securities of privately held issuers generally will be made by a Fund’s managers based on their assessment of the particular transactions or other matters at issue.

Information regarding how a Fund voted proxies relating to portfolio securities during the most recent 12-month period ended June 30 is available on the Funds’ website, or will be available as soon as reasonably practicable after the Funds’ latest filing on Form N-PX with the SEC, at [dfinview.com/GoldmanSachs](http://dfinview.com/GoldmanSachs) and on the SEC’s website at [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov). This information may also be obtained upon request and without charge by calling Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC at the toll-free telephone number listed on the front cover of this SAI.

#### **PAYMENTS TO OTHERS (INCLUDING INTERMEDIARIES)**

The Investment Adviser, and/or its affiliates may make payments to intermediaries from time to time to promote the sale, distribution and/or servicing of shares of a Fund (each, an “Intermediary”). Such payments (“Additional Payments”) are made out of the Investment Adviser’s, and/or its affiliates’ own assets (which may come directly or indirectly from fees paid by a Fund), are not an

additional charge to a Fund or its shareholders, and do not change the price paid by investors for the purchase of a Fund's shares or the amount a Fund receives as proceeds from such purchases.

The Additional Payments are intended to compensate Intermediaries for, among other things: marketing activities and presentations, educational training programs, and the support or purchase of technology platforms/software and/or reporting systems. The Investment Adviser and/or its affiliates may also make payments to Intermediaries for certain printing, publishing and mailing costs associated with the Funds or materials relating to exchange-traded funds in general and/or for the provision of analytical or other data to GSAM or its affiliates. In addition, the Investment Adviser and/or its affiliates may make payments to Intermediaries that make Fund shares available to their clients or for otherwise promoting the Funds, including through the inclusion of the Fund on the Financial Intermediary's platform or provision of consultative services to GSAM or its affiliates relating to marketing of the Funds and/or sale of Fund shares. These may include Additional Payments to Intermediaries that agree not to charge their customers any trading commissions when those customers purchase or sell shares of a Fund online and/or that promote the availability of commission-free ETF trading to their customers.

GSAM and/or its affiliates may determine to make Additional Payments based on any number of metrics. For example, GSAM and/or its affiliates may make Additional Payments at year-end or other intervals in a fixed amount, an amount based upon an Intermediary's services at defined levels or an amount based on the Intermediary's net sales of one or more Goldman Sachs Funds in a year or other period or calculated in basis points based on average net assets attributed to the Intermediary.

These Additional Payments may be significant to certain Intermediaries, and may be an important factor in an Intermediary's willingness to support the sale of a Fund through its distribution system.

The Investment Adviser and/or its affiliates may be motivated to make Additional Payments since they promote the sale of Fund shares to clients of Intermediaries and the retention of those investments by those clients. To the extent Intermediaries sell more shares of a Fund or retain shares of a Fund in their clients' accounts, the Investment Adviser benefits from the incremental management and other fees paid by a Fund with respect to those assets.

In addition, certain Intermediaries may have access to certain research and investment services from the Investment Adviser and/or its affiliates. Such research and investment services ("Additional Services") may include research reports; economic analysis; portfolio analysis, portfolio construction and similar tools and software; business planning services; certain marketing and investor education materials; and strategic asset allocation modeling. The Intermediary may not pay for these products or services or may only pay for a portion of the total cost of these products or services. The cost of the Additional Services and the particular services provided may vary from Intermediary to Intermediary.

The presence of these Additional Payments or Additional Services, the varying fee structure and the basis on which an Intermediary compensates its registered representatives or salespersons may create an incentive for a particular Intermediary, registered representative or salesperson to highlight, feature or recommend funds, including a Fund, or other investments based, at least in part, on the level of compensation paid. Additionally, if one fund sponsor makes greater distribution payments than another, an Intermediary may have an incentive to recommend one fund complex over another. Similarly, if an Intermediary receives more distribution assistance for one share class versus another, that Intermediary may have an incentive to recommend that share class. Because Intermediaries may be paid varying amounts per class of a fund for sub-transfer agency and related recordkeeping services, the service requirements of which also may vary by class, this may create an additional incentive for financial firms and their financial advisors to favor one fund complex over another, or one fund class over another. You should consider whether such incentives exist when evaluating any recommendations from an Intermediary to purchase or sell Shares of a Fund.

Your Intermediary may charge you additional fees or commissions other than those disclosed in the Prospectus. Shareholders should contact their Intermediary for more information about the Additional Payments or Additional Services they receive and any potential conflicts of interest, as well as for information regarding any fees and/or commissions it charges. For additional questions, please contact Goldman Sachs Funds at 1-800-621-2550.

Not described above are other subsidiaries of Goldman Sachs who may receive revenue from the Investment Adviser, and/or its affiliates through intra-company compensation arrangements and for financial, distribution, administrative and operational services.

Furthermore, the Investment Adviser and/or its affiliates may, to the extent permitted by applicable regulations, sponsor various trainings and educational programs and reimburse investors for certain expenses incurred in connection with accessing the Fund through portal arrangements. The Investment Adviser and its affiliates may also pay for the travel expenses, meals, lodging and entertainment of Intermediaries and their salespersons and guests in connection with educational, sales and promotional programs subject to applicable FINRA regulations. Other compensation may also be offered from time to time to the extent not prohibited by applicable federal or state laws or FINRA regulations. This compensation is not included in, and is made in addition to, the Additional Payments described above.

## OTHER INFORMATION

### Disclosure of Portfolio Holdings Information and Portfolio Characteristics Information

The Trust has adopted a policy regarding the selective disclosure of portfolio holdings information and portfolio characteristics information. The policy seeks to (1) ensure that the disclosure of portfolio holdings information and portfolio characteristics information is in the best interest of Fund shareholders; and (2) address the conflicts of interest associated with the disclosure of portfolio holdings information and portfolio characteristics information. The policy provides that neither the Fund nor the Trust's officers or Trustees, nor its Investment Adviser or any agent, nor any employee thereof ("Fund Representative"), will disclose the Fund's portfolio holdings information or portfolio characteristics information to any person other than in accordance with the policy. For purposes of the policy, "portfolio holdings information" means a Fund's actual portfolio holdings, as well as non-public information about its trading strategies, as applicable, or pending transactions. Portfolio holdings information does not include summary or statistical information which is derived from (but does not include) individual portfolio holdings ("portfolio characteristics information").

Under the policy, neither a Fund nor any Fund Representative may solicit or accept any compensation or other consideration in connection with the disclosure of portfolio holdings information or portfolio characteristics information. A Fund Representative may generally provide portfolio holdings information and material portfolio characteristics information to third parties if such information has been included in a Fund's public filings with the SEC, disclosed on the Funds' publicly accessible website, publicly disseminated through the NSCC or is otherwise publicly available.

*Portfolio Holdings Information.* Each Fund's complete portfolio holdings are publicly disseminated through financial reporting and news services, including the Funds' publicly accessible Internet website (am.gs.com). In addition, a basket composition file, which includes the security names and share quantities or amounts to deliver in exchange for Fund shares and may overlap with actual or expected Fund holdings, is publicly disseminated via the NSCC.

Portfolio holdings information that is not filed with the SEC, disclosed on the Funds' publicly available website, publicly disseminated through the NSCC or is otherwise publicly available may be provided to third parties (including, without limitation, individuals, institutional investors, intermediaries that sell shares of the Fund, consultants and third-party data and other providers) only for legitimate business purposes and only if the third-party recipients are required to keep all such portfolio holdings information confidential and are prohibited from trading on the information they receive in violation of the federal securities laws. Disclosure to such third parties must be approved in advance by the Investment Adviser's legal or compliance department. Disclosure to providers of auditing, custody, proxy voting and other similar services; rating and ranking organizations; lenders and other third-party service providers that may obtain access to such information in the performance of their contractual duties to the Funds will generally be permitted. In general, each recipient of non-public portfolio holdings information must sign a confidentiality agreement and agree not to trade on the basis of such information in violation of the federal securities laws, although this requirement will not apply when the recipient is otherwise subject to a duty of confidentiality.

*Portfolio Characteristics Information.* Material portfolio characteristics information that is not publicly available (e.g., information that is not filed with the SEC or disclosed on the Funds' publicly available website) or calculated from publicly available information may be provided to third parties only if the third-party recipients are required to keep all such portfolio characteristics information confidential and are prohibited from trading on the information they receive in violation of the federal securities laws. Disclosure to such third parties must be approved in advance by the Investment Adviser's legal or compliance department, who must first determine that the Fund has a legitimate business purpose for doing so. In general, each recipient of material, non-public

portfolio characteristics information must sign a confidentiality agreement and agree not to trade on the basis of such information in violation of the federal securities laws, although this requirement will not apply when the recipient is otherwise subject to a duty of confidentiality.

However, upon request, a Fund will provide certain non-public portfolio characteristics information to any (i) shareholder or (ii) non-shareholder (including, without limitation, individuals, institutional investors, intermediaries that sell shares of the Fund, consultants and third-party data providers) whose request for such information satisfies and/or serves a legitimate business purpose for the Fund. Examples of portfolio characteristics information include, but are not limited to, certain statistical information about a Fund's portfolio. In accordance with the policy, this type of portfolio characteristics information that is made available upon request will be disclosed in accordance with, and subject to the time lag indicated in, the schedule below. This portfolio characteristics information may be requested by calling Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC toll-free at 1-800-621-2550. Portfolio characteristics information that is otherwise publicly available may be disclosed without these time lags.

The type and volume of portfolio characteristics information that is made available upon request will vary among the Goldman Sachs Funds (depending on the investment strategies and the portfolio management team of the applicable Fund). If portfolio characteristics information is disclosed to one recipient, it must also be disclosed to all other eligible recipients requesting the same information. However, under certain circumstances, the volume of portfolio characteristics information provided to one recipient may differ from the volume of portfolio characteristics information provided to other recipients.

Type of Information	When Available Upon Request
<b>Financial Characteristics Information</b> (Aggregate Liquidity Classification Information)	<p><b>Prior to 90 Calendar Days After Month-End:</b> Cannot disclose without (i) a confidentiality agreement; (ii) an agreement not to trade on the basis of non-public information in violation of the federal securities laws; and (iii) legal or compliance approval.</p> <p><b>90 Calendar Days After Month-End:</b> May disclose to shareholders and any non-shareholder with a legitimate business purpose.</p>

In addition, the Fund described in this SAI currently intend to publish certain portfolio characteristics information on the Trust's website (am.gs.com) on a daily basis. Operational disruptions and other systems disruptions may delay the posting of this information on the Trust's website or the availability of this information by calling Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC at the toll-free number listed above.

*Oversight of the Policy.* Under the policy, Fund Representatives will periodically supply the Board of the Trustees with a list of third parties who receive non-public portfolio holdings information and material, non-public portfolio characteristics information pursuant to an ongoing arrangement subject to a confidentiality agreement and agreement not to trade on the basis of such information in violation of the federal securities laws. In addition, the Board receives information, on a quarterly basis, on such arrangements that were permitted during the preceding quarter. Under the policy, the Investment Adviser's legal and compliance personnel authorize the disclosure of portfolio holdings information and portfolio characteristics information.

**Miscellaneous**

The Prospectus and this SAI do not contain all the information included in the Registration Statement filed with the SEC under the 1933 Act with respect to the securities offered by the Prospectus. Certain portions of the Registration Statement have been omitted from the Prospectus and this SAI pursuant to the rules and regulations of the SEC. The Registration Statement including the exhibits filed therewith may be examined at the office of the SEC in Washington, D.C.

Statements contained in the Prospectus or in this SAI as to the contents of any contract or other document referred to are not necessarily complete, and, in each instance, reference is made to the copy of such contract or other document filed as an exhibit to the Registration Statement of which the Prospectus and this SAI form a part, each such statement being qualified in all respects by such reference.

## Corporate Actions

From time to time, the issuer of a security held in a Fund's portfolio may initiate a corporate action relating to that security. Corporate actions relating to equity securities may include, among others, an offer to purchase new shares, or to tender existing shares, of that security at a certain price. Corporate actions relating to debt securities may include, among others, an offer for early redemption of the debt security, or an offer to convert the debt security into stock. Certain corporate actions are voluntary, meaning that the Fund may only participate in the corporate action if it elects to do so in a timely fashion. Participation in certain corporate actions may enhance the value of a Fund's investment portfolio.

In cases where a Fund or the Investment Adviser receives sufficient advance notice of a voluntary corporate action, the Investment Adviser will exercise its discretion, in good faith, to determine whether the Fund will participate in that corporate action. If the Fund or the Investment Adviser does not receive sufficient advance notice of a voluntary corporate action, the Fund may not be able to timely elect to participate in that corporate action. Participation or lack of participation in a voluntary corporate action may result in a negative impact on the value of the Fund's investment portfolio.

## CONTROL PERSONS AND PRINCIPAL HOLDERS OF SECURITIES

Although the Trust does not have information concerning the beneficial ownership of shares held in the names of DTC Participants, as of December 1, 2025 the name and percentage ownership of each DTC Participant that owned of record 5% or more of the outstanding Shares of each Fund were as follows:

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Name/Address</u>	<u>Percentage of Shares</u>
Goldman Sachs Dynamic California Municipal Income ETF	Charles Schwab & Co., Inc., 101 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, CA 94104	56.92%
	National Financial Services LLC, 245 Summer Street Boston, MA 02210	31.80%
Goldman Sachs Dynamic New York Municipal Income ETF	Charles Schwab & Co., Inc., 101 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, CA 94104	68.79%
	National Financial Services LLC, 245 Summer Street Boston, MA 02210	10.82%
Goldman Sachs Municipal Income ETF	Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC, 200 West Street, New York, NY 10282	9.39%
	Charles Schwab & Co., Inc., 101 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, CA 94104	34.20%
	Apex Clearing Corporation, 350 North St., Paul Street, Suite 1300 Dallas, TX 75201	33.71%
	Stifel, Nicolaus & Company, Inc., FEBO Customers, 501 N Broadway, St. Louis, MO 63102-2188	13.95%
	Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC, 200 West Street, New York, NY 10282	8.40%

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Name/Address</b>	<b>Percentage of Shares</b>
Goldman Sachs Ultra Short Municipal Income ETF	Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC, 200 West Street, New York, NY 10282	36.90%
	National Financial Services LLC, 245 Summer Street Boston, MA 02210	22.72%
	Charles Schwab & Co., Inc., 101 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, CA 94104	13.51%
	Apex Clearing Corporation, 350 North St., Paul Street, Suite 1300 Dallas, TX 75201	9.19%
	BOFA Securities, Inc., 200 N College Street, 3rd Fl North, Charlotte, NC 28202	8.43%

## APPENDIX A DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES RATINGS

### Short-Term Credit Ratings

An S&P Global Ratings (“S&P”) short-term issue credit rating is a forward-looking opinion about the creditworthiness of an obligor with respect to a specific financial obligation having an original maturity of no more than 365 days. The following summarizes the rating categories used by S&P for short-term issues:

“A-1” – A short-term obligation rated “A-1” is rated in the highest category by S&P. The obligor’s capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation is strong. Within this category, certain obligations are designated with a plus sign (+). This indicates that the obligor’s capacity to meet its financial commitments on these obligations is extremely strong.

“A-2” – A short-term obligation rated “A-2” is somewhat more susceptible to the adverse effects of changes in circumstances and economic conditions than obligations in higher rating categories. However, the obligor’s capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation is satisfactory.

“A-3” – A short-term obligation rated “A-3” exhibits adequate protection parameters. However, adverse economic conditions or changing circumstances are more likely to weaken an obligor’s capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation.

“B” – A short-term obligation rated “B” is regarded as vulnerable and has significant speculative characteristics. The obligor currently has the capacity to meet its financial commitments; however, it faces major ongoing uncertainties that could lead to the obligor’s inadequate capacity to meet its financial commitments.

“C” – A short-term obligation rated “C” is currently vulnerable to nonpayment and is dependent upon favorable business, financial, and economic conditions for the obligor to meet its financial commitments on the obligation.

“D” – A short-term obligation rated “D” is in default or in breach of an imputed promise. For non-hybrid capital instruments, the “D” rating category is used when payments on an obligation are not made on the date due, unless S&P believes that such payments will be made within any stated grace period. However, any stated grace period longer than five business days will be treated as five business days. The “D” rating also will be used upon the filing of a bankruptcy petition or the taking of a similar action and where default on an obligation is a virtual certainty, for example due to automatic stay provisions. An obligation’s rating is lowered to “D” if it is subject to a distressed exchange offer.

Local Currency and Foreign Currency Ratings – S&P’s issuer credit ratings make a distinction between foreign currency ratings and local currency ratings. An issuer’s foreign currency rating will differ from its local currency rating when the obligor has a different capacity to meet its obligations denominated in its local currency, vs. obligations denominated in a foreign currency.

Moody’s Investors Service, Inc. (“Moody’s”) short-term ratings are forward-looking opinions of the relative credit risks of financial obligations with an original maturity of thirteen months or less and reflect both on the likelihood of a default on contractually promised payments and the expected financial loss suffered in the event of default.

Moody’s employs the following designations to indicate the relative repayment ability of rated issuers:

“P-1” – Issuers (or supporting institutions) rated Prime-1 have a superior ability to repay short-term debt obligations.

“P-2” – Issuers (or supporting institutions) rated Prime-2 have a strong ability to repay short-term debt obligations.

“P-3” – Issuers (or supporting institutions) rated Prime-3 have an acceptable ability to repay short-term obligations.

“NP” – Issuers (or supporting institutions) rated Not Prime do not fall within any of the Prime rating categories.

Fitch Ratings, Inc. (“Fitch”) short-term issuer or obligation ratings are based in all cases on the short-term vulnerability to default of the rated entity and relates to the capacity to meet financial obligations in accordance with the documentation governing the relevant obligation. Short-term deposit ratings may be adjusted for loss severity. Short-Term Ratings are assigned to obligations whose initial maturity is viewed as “short term” based on market convention. Typically, this means up to 13 months for corporate, sovereign, and structured obligations and up to 36 months for obligations in U.S. public finance markets.

The following summarizes the rating categories used by Fitch for short-term obligations:

“F1” – Securities possess the highest short-term credit quality. This designation indicates the strongest intrinsic capacity for timely payment of financial commitments; may have an added “+” to denote any exceptionally strong credit feature.

“F2” – Securities possess good short-term credit quality. This designation indicates good intrinsic capacity for timely payment of financial commitments.

“F3” – Securities possess fair short-term credit quality. This designation indicates that the intrinsic capacity for timely payment of financial commitments is adequate.

“B” – Securities possess speculative short-term credit quality. This designation indicates minimal capacity for timely payment of financial commitments, plus heightened vulnerability to near term adverse changes in financial and economic conditions.

“C” – Securities possess high short-term default risk. Default is a real possibility.

“RD” – Restricted Default. Indicates an entity that has defaulted on one or more of its financial commitments, although it continues to meet other financial obligations. Typically applicable to entity ratings only.

“D” – Default. Indicates a broad-based default event for an entity, or the default of a short-term obligation.

“NR” – This designation indicates that Fitch does not publicly rate the associated issuer or issue.

“WD” – This designation indicates that the rating has been withdrawn and is no longer maintained by Fitch.

DBRS, Inc. (“DBRS”) short-term debt rating scale provides an opinion on the risk that an issuer will not meet its short-term financial obligations in a timely manner. Ratings are based on quantitative and qualitative considerations relevant to the issuer and the relative ranking of claims. The “R-1” and “R-2” rating categories are further denoted by the sub-categories “(high)”, “(middle)”, and “(low)”.

The following summarizes the ratings used by DBRS for commercial paper and short-term debt:

“R-1 (high)” – Short-term debt rated “R-1 (high)” is of the highest credit quality. The capacity for the payment of short-term financial obligations as they fall due is exceptionally high. Unlikely to be adversely affected by future events.

“R-1 (middle)” – Short-term debt rated “R-1 (middle)” is of superior credit quality. The capacity for the payment of short-term financial obligations as they fall due is very high. Differs from “R-1 (high)” by a relatively modest degree. Unlikely to be significantly vulnerable to future events.

“R-1 (low)” – Short-term debt rated “R-1 (low)” is of good credit quality. The capacity for the payment of short-term financial obligations as they fall due is substantial. Overall strength is not as favorable as higher rating categories. May be vulnerable to future events, but qualifying negative factors are considered manageable.

“R-2 (high)” – Short-term debt rated “R-2 (high)” is considered to be at the upper end of adequate credit quality. The capacity for the payment of short-term financial obligations as they fall due is acceptable. May be vulnerable to future events.

“R-2 (middle)” – Short-term debt rated “R-2 (middle)” is considered to be of adequate credit quality. The capacity for the payment of short-term financial obligations as they fall due is acceptable. May be vulnerable to future events or may be exposed to other factors that could reduce credit quality.

“R-2 (low)” – Short-term debt rated “R-2 (low)” is considered to be at the lower end of adequate credit quality. The capacity for the payment of short-term financial obligations as they fall due is acceptable. May be vulnerable to future events. A number of challenges are present that could affect the issuer’s ability to meet such obligations.

“R-3” – Short-term debt rated “R-3” is considered to be at the lowest end of adequate credit quality. There is a capacity for the payment of short-term financial obligations as they fall due. May be vulnerable to future events and the certainty of meeting such obligations could be impacted by a variety of developments.

“R-4” – Short-term debt rated “R-4” is considered to be of speculative credit quality. The capacity for the payment of short-term financial obligations as they fall due is uncertain.

“R-5” – Short-term debt rated “R-5” is considered to be of highly speculative credit quality. There is a high level of uncertainty as to the capacity to meet short-term financial obligations as they fall due.

“D” – Short-term debt rated “D” is assigned when the issuer has filed under any applicable bankruptcy, insolvency or winding up statute or there is a failure to satisfy an obligation after the exhaustion of grace periods, a downgrade to “D” may occur. DBRS may also use “SD” (Selective Default) in cases where only some securities are impacted, such as the case of a “distressed exchange”.

### **Long-Term Credit Ratings**

The following summarizes the ratings used by S&P for long-term issues:

“AAA” – An obligation rated “AAA” has the highest rating assigned by S&P. The obligor’s capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation is extremely strong.

“AA” – An obligation rated “AA” differs from the highest-rated obligations only to a small degree. The obligor’s capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation is very strong.

“A” – An obligation rated “A” is somewhat more susceptible to the adverse effects of changes in circumstances and economic conditions than obligations in higher-rated categories. However, the obligor’s capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation is still strong.

“BBB” – An obligation rated “BBB” exhibits adequate protection parameters. However, adverse economic conditions or changing circumstances are more likely to weaken the obligor’s capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation.

Obligations rated “BB,” “B,” “CCC,” “CC” and “C” are regarded as having significant speculative characteristics. “BB” indicates the least degree of speculation and “C” the highest. While such obligations will likely have some quality and protective characteristics, these may be outweighed by large uncertainties or major exposures to adverse conditions.

“BB” – An obligation rated “BB” is less vulnerable to nonpayment than other speculative issues. However, it faces major ongoing uncertainties or exposure to adverse business, financial, or economic conditions that could lead to the obligor’s inadequate capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation.

“B” – An obligation rated “B” is more vulnerable to nonpayment than obligations rated “BB”, but the obligor currently has the capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation. Adverse business, financial, or economic conditions will likely impair the obligor’s capacity or willingness to meet its financial commitments on the obligation.

“CCC” – An obligation rated “CCC” is currently vulnerable to nonpayment and is dependent upon favorable business, financial, and economic conditions for the obligor to meet its financial commitments on the obligation. In the event of adverse business, financial, or economic conditions, the obligor is not likely to have the capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation.

“CC” – An obligation rated “CC” is currently highly vulnerable to nonpayment. The “CC” rating is used when a default has not yet occurred but S&P expects default to be a virtual certainty, regardless of the anticipated time to default.

“C” – An obligation rated “C” is currently highly vulnerable to nonpayment, and the obligation is expected to have lower relative seniority or lower ultimate recovery compared with obligations that are rated higher.

“D” – An obligation rated “D” is in default or in breach of an imputed promise. For non-hybrid capital instruments, the “D” rating category is used when payments on an obligation are not made on the date due, unless S&P believes that such payments will be made within five business days in the absence of a stated grace period or within the earlier of the stated grace period or 30 calendar days. The “D” rating also will be used upon the filing of a bankruptcy petition or the taking of similar action and where default on an obligation is a virtual certainty, for example due to automatic stay provisions. An obligation’s rating is lowered to “D” if it is subject to a distressed exchange offer.

“NR” – This indicates that no rating has been requested, or that there is insufficient information on which to base a rating, or that S&P does not rate a particular obligation as a matter of policy.

Plus (+) or minus (-) – The ratings from “AA” to “CCC” may be modified by the addition of a plus (+) or minus (-) sign to show relative standing within the major rating categories.

Local Currency and Foreign Currency Ratings – S&P’s issuer credit ratings make a distinction between foreign currency ratings and local currency ratings. An issuer’s foreign currency rating will differ from its local currency rating when the obligor has a different capacity to meet its obligations denominated in its local currency, vs. obligations denominated in a foreign currency.

Moody’s long-term ratings are forward-looking opinions of the relative credit risks of financial obligations with an original maturity of one year or more and reflect both on the likelihood of a default on contractually promised payments and the expected financial loss suffered in the event of default. The following summarizes the ratings used by Moody’s for long-term debt:

“Aaa” – Obligations rated “Aaa” are judged to be of the highest quality, subject to the lowest level of credit risk.

“Aa” – Obligations rated “Aa” are judged to be of high quality and are subject to very low credit risk.

“A” – Obligations rated “A” are judged to be upper-medium grade and are subject to low credit risk.

“Baa” – Obligations rated “Baa” are judged to be medium-grade and subject to moderate credit risk and as such may possess certain speculative characteristics.

“Ba” – Obligations rated “Ba” are judged to be speculative and are subject to substantial credit risk.

“B” – Obligations rated “B” are considered speculative and are subject to high credit risk.

“Caa” – Obligations rated “Caa” are judged to be speculative of poor standing and are subject to very high credit risk.

“Ca” – Obligations rated “Ca” are highly speculative and are likely in, or very near, default, with some prospect of recovery of principal and interest.

“C” – Obligations rated “C” are the lowest rated and are typically in default, with little prospect for recovery of principal or interest.

Note: Moody's appends numerical modifiers 1, 2, and 3 to each generic rating classification from "Aa" through "Caa." The modifier 1 indicates that the obligation ranks in the higher end of its generic rating category; the modifier 2 indicates a mid-range ranking; and the modifier 3 indicates a ranking in the lower end of that generic rating category.

The following summarizes long-term ratings used by Fitch:

"AAA" – Securities considered to be of the highest credit quality. "AAA" ratings denote the lowest expectation of credit risk. They are assigned only in cases of exceptionally strong capacity for payment of financial commitments. This capacity is highly unlikely to be adversely affected by foreseeable events.

"AA" – Securities considered to be of very high credit quality. "AA" ratings denote expectations of very low credit risk. They indicate very strong capacity for payment of financial commitments. This capacity is not significantly vulnerable to foreseeable events.

"A" – Securities considered to be of high credit quality. "A" ratings denote expectations of low credit risk. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered strong. This capacity may, nevertheless, be more vulnerable to adverse business or economic conditions than is the case for higher ratings.

"BBB" – Securities considered to be of good credit quality. "BBB" ratings indicate that expectations of credit risk are currently low. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered adequate, but adverse business or economic conditions are more likely to impair this capacity.

"BB" – Securities considered to be speculative. "BB" ratings indicate an elevated vulnerability to credit risk, particularly in the event of adverse changes in business or economic conditions over time; however, business or financial alternatives may be available to allow financial commitments to be met.

"B" – Securities considered to be highly speculative. "B" ratings indicate that material credit risk is present.

"CCC" – A "CCC" rating indicates that substantial credit risk is present.

"CC" – A "CC" rating indicates very high levels of credit risk.

"C" – A "C" rating indicates exceptionally high levels of credit risk.

Defaulted obligations typically are not assigned "RD" or "D" ratings but are instead rated in the "B" to "C" rating categories, depending on their recovery prospects and other relevant characteristics. Fitch believes that this approach better aligns obligations that have comparable overall expected loss but varying vulnerability to default and loss.

Plus (+) or minus (-) may be appended to a rating to denote relative status within major rating categories. Such suffixes are not added to the "AAA" category or to categories below "CCC".

"NR" – Denotes that Fitch does not publicly rate the associated issue or issuer.

"WD" – Indicates that the rating has been withdrawn and is no longer maintained by Fitch.

The DBRS long-term rating scale provides an opinion on the risk of default. That is, the risk that an issuer will fail to satisfy its financial obligations in accordance with the terms under which an obligation has been issued. Ratings are based on quantitative and qualitative considerations relevant to the issuer, and the relative ranking of the claims. All rating categories other than "AAA" and "D" also contain subcategories "(high)" and "(low)". The absence of either a "(high)" or "(low)" designation indicates the rating is in the middle of the category. The following summarizes the ratings used by DBRS for long-term debt:

“AAA” – Long-term debt rated “AAA” is of the highest credit quality. The capacity for the payment of financial obligations is exceptionally high and unlikely to be adversely affected by future events.

“AA” – Long-term debt rated “AA” is of superior credit quality. The capacity for the payment of financial obligations is considered high. Credit quality differs from “AAA” only to a small degree. Unlikely to be significantly vulnerable to future events.

“A” – Long-term debt rated “A” is of good credit quality. The capacity for the payment of financial obligations is substantial, but of lesser credit quality than “AA.” May be vulnerable to future events, but qualifying negative factors are considered manageable.

“BBB” – Long-term debt rated “BBB” is of adequate credit quality. The capacity for the payment of financial obligations is considered acceptable. May be vulnerable to future events.

“BB” – Long-term debt rated “BB” is of speculative, non-investment grade credit quality. The capacity for the payment of financial obligations is uncertain. Vulnerable to future events.

“B” – Long-term debt rated “B” is of highly speculative credit quality. There is a high level of uncertainty as to the capacity to meet financial obligations.

“CCC”, “CC” and “C” – Long-term debt rated in any of these categories is of very highly speculative credit quality. In danger of defaulting on financial obligations. There is little difference between these three categories, although “CC” and “C” ratings are normally applied to obligations that are seen as highly likely to default, or subordinated to obligations rated in the “CCC” to “B” range. Obligations in respect of which default has not technically taken place but is considered inevitable may be rated in the “C” category.

“D” – A security rated “D” is assigned when the issuer has filed under any applicable bankruptcy, insolvency or winding up statute or there is a failure to satisfy an obligation after the exhaustion of grace periods, a downgrade to “D” may occur. DBRS may also use “SD” (Selective Default) in cases where only some securities are impacted, such as the case of a “distressed exchange”.

## **Municipal Note Ratings**

An S&P U.S. municipal note rating reflects S&P’s opinion about the liquidity factors and market access risks unique to the notes. Notes due in three years or less will likely receive a note rating. Notes with an original maturity of more than three years will most likely receive a long-term debt rating. In determining which type of rating, if any, to assign, S&P’s analysis will review the following considerations:

Amortization schedule-the larger the final maturity relative to other maturities, the more likely it will be treated as a note; and

Source of payment-the more dependent the issue is on the market for its refinancing, the more likely it will be treated as a note.

Note rating symbols are as follows:

“SP-1” – A municipal note rated “SP-1” exhibits a strong capacity to pay principal and interest. An issue determined to possess a very strong capacity to pay debt service is given a plus (+) designation.

“SP-2” – A municipal note rated “SP-2” exhibits a satisfactory capacity to pay principal and interest, with some vulnerability to adverse financial and economic changes over the term of the notes.

“SP-3” – A municipal note rated “SP-3” exhibits a speculative capacity to pay principal and interest.

Moody’s uses the Municipal Investment Grade (“MIG”) scale to rate U.S. municipal bond anticipation notes of up to three years maturity. Municipal notes rated on the MIG scale may be secured by either pledged revenues or proceeds of a take-out financing received prior to note maturity. MIG ratings expire at the maturity of the obligation, and the issuer’s long-term rating is only one

consideration in assigning the MIG rating. MIG ratings are divided into three levels – “MIG-1” through “MIG-3”—while speculative grade short-term obligations are designated “SG.” The following summarizes the ratings used by Moody’s for these short-term obligations:

“MIG-1” – This designation denotes superior credit quality. Excellent protection is afforded by established cash flows, highly reliable liquidity support, or demonstrated broad-based access to the market for refinancing.

“MIG-2” – This designation denotes strong credit quality. Margins of protection are ample, although not as large as in the preceding group.

“MIG-3” – This designation denotes acceptable credit quality. Liquidity and cash-flow protection may be narrow, and market access for refinancing is likely to be less well-established.

“SG” – This designation denotes speculative-grade credit quality. Debt instruments in this category may lack sufficient margins of protection.

In the case of variable rate demand obligations (“VRDOs”), a two-component rating is assigned; a long- or short-term debt rating and a demand obligation rating. The first element represents Moody’s evaluation of risk associated with scheduled principal and interest payments. The second element represents Moody’s evaluation of risk associated with the ability to receive purchase price upon demand (“demand feature”). The second element uses a rating from a variation of the MIG scale called the Variable Municipal Investment Grade (“VMIG”) scale. The rating transitions on the VMIG scale differ from those on the Prime scale to reflect the risk that external liquidity support generally will terminate if the issuer’s long-term rating drops below investment grade.

“VMIG-1” – This designation denotes superior credit quality. Excellent protection is afforded by the superior short-term credit strength of the liquidity provider and structural and legal protections that ensure the timely payment of purchase price upon demand.

“VMIG-2” – This designation denotes strong credit quality. Good protection is afforded by the strong short-term credit strength of the liquidity provider and structural and legal protections that ensure the timely payment of purchase price upon demand.

“VMIG-3” – This designation denotes acceptable credit quality. Adequate protection is afforded by the satisfactory short-term credit strength of the liquidity provider and structural and legal protections that ensure the timely payment of purchase price upon demand.

“SG” – This designation denotes speculative-grade credit quality. Demand features rated in this category may be supported by a liquidity provider that does not have an investment grade short-term rating or may lack the structural and/or legal protections necessary to ensure the timely payment of purchase price upon demand.

“NR” – Is assigned to an unrated obligation.

Fitch uses the same ratings for municipal securities as described above for other short-term credit ratings.

## **About Credit Ratings**

An S&P issue credit rating is a forward-looking opinion about the creditworthiness of an obligor with respect to a specific financial obligation, a specific class of financial obligations, or a specific financial program (including ratings on medium-term note programs and commercial paper programs). It takes into consideration the creditworthiness of guarantors, insurers, or other forms of credit enhancement on the obligation and takes into account the currency in which the obligation is denominated. The opinion reflects S&P’s view of the obligor’s capacity and willingness to meet its financial commitments as they come due, and this opinion may assess terms, such as collateral security and subordination, which could affect ultimate payment in the event of default.

Moody’s credit ratings must be construed solely as statements of opinion and not statements of fact or recommendations to purchase, sell or hold any securities.

Fitch's credit ratings relating to issuers are an opinion on the relative ability of an entity to meet financial commitments, such as interest, preferred dividends, repayment of principal, insurance claims or counterparty obligations. Fitch credit ratings are used by investors as indications of the likelihood of receiving the money owed to them in accordance with the terms on which they invested. Fitch's credit ratings cover the global spectrum of corporate, sovereign financial, bank, insurance and public finance entities (including supranational and sub-national entities) and the securities or other obligations they issue, as well as structured finance securities backed by receivables or other financial assets.

Credit ratings provided by DBRS are forward-looking opinions about credit risk which reflect the creditworthiness of an issuer, rated entity, and/or security. Credit ratings are not statements of fact. While historical statistics and performance can be important considerations, credit ratings are not based solely on such; they include subjective considerations and involve expectations for future performance that cannot be guaranteed. To the extent that future events and economic conditions do not match expectations, credit ratings assigned to issuers and/or securities can change. Credit ratings are also based on approved and applicable methodologies, models and criteria ("Methodologies"), which are periodically updated and when material changes are deemed necessary, this may also lead to rating changes.

Credit ratings typically provide an opinion on the risk that investors may not be repaid in accordance with the terms under which the obligation was issued. In some cases, credit ratings may also include consideration for the relative ranking of claims and recovery, should default occur. Credit ratings are meant to provide opinions on relative measures of risk and are not based on expectations of any specific default probability, nor are they meant to predict such.

The data and information on which DBRS bases its opinions is not audited or verified by DBRS, although DBRS conducts a reasonableness review of information received and relied upon in accordance with its Methodologies and policies.

DBRS uses rating symbols as a concise method of expressing its opinion to the market but there are a limited number of rating categories for the possible slight risk differentials that exist across the rating spectrum and DBRS does not assert that credit ratings in the same category are of "exactly" the same quality.

## APPENDIX B GOLDMAN SACHS ASSET MANAGEMENT'S PROXY VOTING GUIDELINES SUMMARY

Effective March 2025

The following is a summary of the material Proxy Voting Guidelines (the "Guidelines"), which form the substantive basis of our Policy and Procedures on Proxy Voting for Investment Advisory Clients (the "Policy"). As described in the main body of the Policy, one or more Portfolio Management Teams and/or the Global Stewardship Team may diverge from the Guidelines and a related Recommendation on any particular proxy vote or in connection with any individual investment decision in accordance with the Policy.

### Region: Americas

1. Business Items	2-B
2. Board of Directors	3-B
3. Executive and Non- Executive Compensation	8-B
4. Shareholders Rights and Defenses	11-B
5. Strategic Transactions and Capital Structures	12-B
6. Other Management and Shareholder Proposals	14-B

### Region: Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) Proxy Items

1. Business Items	16-B
2. Board of Directors	17-B
3. Remuneration	22-B
4. Shareholder Rights and Defenses	23-B
5. Strategic Transactions, Capital Structures and other Business Considerations	23-B
6. Other Management and Shareholder Proposals	25-B

### Region: Asia Pacific (APAC) Proxy Items

1. Business Items	27-B
2. Board of Directors	28-B
3. Remuneration	32-B
4. Shareholder Rights and Defenses	34-B
5. Strategic Transactions, Capital Structures and other Business Considerations	34-B
6. Other Management and Shareholder Proposals	36-B

### Region: Japan Proxy Items

1. Operational Items	37-B
2. Board of Directors and Statutory Auditors	38-B
3. Compensation	42-B
4. Shareholder Rights and Defenses	42-B
5. Strategic Transactions and Capital Structures	42-B
6. Other Management and Shareholder Proposals	43-B

## **Region: Americas**

*The following section is a summary of the Guidelines, which form the substantive basis of the Policy with respect to North, Central and South American public equity investments of operating and/or holding companies. Applying these guidelines is subject to certain regional and country-specific exceptions and modifications and is not inclusive of all considerations in each market.*

### **1. Business Items**

#### **Auditor Ratification**

Generally vote FOR proposals to ratify auditors, unless any of the following apply within the last year:

- An auditor has a financial interest in or association with the company, and is therefore not independent;
- There is reason to believe that the independent auditor has rendered an opinion that is neither accurate nor indicative of the company's financial position;
- Poor accounting practices are identified that rise to a serious level of concern, such as: fraud; misapplication of GAAP; or material weaknesses identified in audit-related disclosures; or
- Fees for non-audit services are excessive (generally over 50% or more of the audit fees).

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on shareholder proposals asking companies to prohibit or limit their auditors from engaging in non-audit services or asking for audit firm rotation.

#### **Reincorporation Proposals**

We may support management proposals to reincorporate as long as the reincorporation would not substantially diminish shareholder rights. We may not support shareholder proposals for reincorporation unless the current jurisdiction of incorporation is substantially less shareholder friendly than the proposed reincorporation, there is a strong economic case to reincorporate or the company has a history of making decisions that are not shareholder friendly.

#### **Exclusive Venue for Shareholder Lawsuits**

Generally vote FOR on exclusive venue proposals, taking into account:

- Whether the company has been materially harmed by shareholder litigation outside its jurisdiction of incorporation, based on disclosure in the company's proxy statement;
- Whether the company has the following governance features:
  - Majority independent board;
  - Independent key committees;
  - An annually elected board;
  - A majority vote standard in uncontested director elections;
  - The absence of a poison pill, unless the pill was approved by shareholders; and/or
  - Separate Chairman CEO role or, if combined, an independent chairman with clearly delineated duties.

#### **Virtual Meetings**

Generally vote FOR management proposals allowing for the convening of hybrid\* shareholder meetings if it is clear that it is not the intention to hold virtual-only AGMs. Generally vote AGAINST proposals allowing for the convening of virtual-only\* shareholder meetings.

Generally vote FOR shareholder proposals requesting in person shareholder meetings if a meeting of shareholders is held exclusively through the use of online technology without a corresponding in-person meeting.

\* The phrase “virtual-only shareholder meeting” refers to a meeting of shareholders that is held exclusively through the use of online technology without a corresponding in-person meeting. The term “hybrid shareholder meeting” refers to an in-person, or physical, meeting in which shareholders are permitted to participate online.

### **Public Benefit Corporation Proposals (United States)**

Generally vote FOR management proposals and CASE-BY-CASE on shareholder proposals related to the conversion of the company into a public benefit corporation.

### **Amend Articles of Incorporation to Provide for Officer and Director Exculpation (United States)**

Generally vote FOR management proposals to amend the company’s certificate of incorporation to reflect new Delaware law provisions regarding officer and director exculpation.

### **Transact Other Business**

Generally vote AGAINST other business when it appears as a voting item.

### **Administrative Requests**

Generally vote FOR non-contentious administrative management requests.

## **2. Board of Directors**

The board of directors should promote the interests of shareholders by acting in an oversight and/or advisory role; should consist of a majority of independent directors and/or meet local best practice expectations; should be composed of directors with diverse backgrounds and perspectives; and should be held accountable for actions and results related to their responsibilities. The board of directors should seek to comply with commonly accepted corporate governance best practices as well as the corporate governance standards that are applicable in their country and state of incorporation. The board of directors should establish committees to oversee areas such as, but not limited to, audit, executive and non-executive compensation, and director nominations and appointments. The responsibilities of the committees should be publicly disclosed.

### **Voting on Director Nominees in Uncontested Elections**

Vote on director nominees should be determined on a CASE-BY-CASE basis taking into consideration the following:

- Adequate disclosure has not been provided in a timely manner; or
- There are clear concerns over questionable finances or restatements; or
- There have been questionable transactions or conflicts of interest; or
- There are any records of abuses against minority shareholder interests; or
- The board fails to meet minimum corporate governance standards; or
- There are reservations about:
  - Director terms
  - Bundling of proposals to elect directors
  - Disclosure of named nominees

- Overboarded directors
- Director independence
- Specific concerns about the individual or company, such as criminal wrongdoing or breach of fiduciary responsibilities; or
- There are other considerations which may include sanction from government or authority, violations of laws and regulations, or other issues relate to improper business practice, failure to replace management, or egregious actions related to service on other boards.

Generally vote FOR employee and/or labor representatives if they sit on either the audit or compensation committee and are required by law to be on those committees.

Generally vote AGAINST employee and/or labor representatives if they sit on either the audit or compensation committee, if they are not required to be on those committees.

### **Director Commitments**

Generally vote AGAINST or WITHHOLD from individual directors who, without further explanation:

- Sit on more than five public company boards; or
- Are CEOs of public companies who sit on the boards of more than two public companies besides their own--withhold only at their outside boards.

### **Director Independence (United States)**

At companies incorporated in the US, where applicable, the New York Stock Exchange or NASDAQ Listing Standards definition is to be used to classify directors as inside directors, affiliated outside directors, or independent outside directors.

Additionally, we will consider compensation committee interlocking directors to be affiliated (defined as CEOs who sit on each other's compensation committees).

### **Director Independence**

#### **Classification of Directors**

#### **Executive Director**

- Employee or executive of the company; and
- Any director who is classified as a non-executive, but receives salary, fees, bonus, and/or other benefits that are in line with the highest-paid executives of the company.

#### **Non-Independent Non-Executive Director (NED)**

- Any director who is attested by the board to be a non-independent NED;
- Any director specifically designated as a representative of a significant shareholder of the company;
- Any director who is also an employee or executive of a significant shareholder of the company;
- Beneficial owner (direct or indirect) of at least 10% of the company's stock, either in economic terms or in voting rights (this may be aggregated if voting power is distributed among more than one member of a defined group, e.g., family members who beneficially own less than 10% individually, but collectively own more than 10%), unless market best practice dictates a lower ownership and/or disclosure threshold (and in other special market-specific circumstances);

- Government representative;
- Currently provides (or a relative provides) professional services to the company, to an affiliate of the company, or to an individual officer of the company or of one of its affiliates in excess of \$10,000 per year;
- Represents customer, supplier, creditor, banker, or other entity with which company maintains transactional/commercial relationship (unless company discloses information to apply a materiality test);
- Any director who has conflicting or cross-directorships with executive directors or the chairman of the company;
- Relative of a current employee of the company or its affiliates;
- Relative of a former executive of the company or its affiliates;
- A new appointee elected other than by a formal process through the General Meeting (such as a contractual appointment by a substantial shareholder);
- Founder/co-founder/member of founding family but not currently an employee;
- Former executive (a cooling off period may be applied);
- Years of service is generally not a determining factor unless it is recommended best practice in a market and/or in extreme circumstances, in which case it may be considered; and
- Any additional relationship or principle considered to compromise independence under local corporate governance best practice guidance.

#### **Independent NED**

- No material connection, either directly or indirectly, to the company other than a board seat.

#### **Employee Representative**

- Represents employees or employee shareholders of the company (classified as “employee representative” but considered a non-independent NED).

#### **Director Accountability**

Generally vote AGAINST or WITHHOLD from individual directors who attend less than 75% of the board and committee meetings without a disclosed valid excuse.

Generally, vote FOR the bundled election of management nominees, unless adequate disclosures of the nominees have not been provided in a timely manner or if one or more of the nominees does not meet the expectation of our policy.

Other items considered for an AGAINST vote include specific concerns about the individual or the company, such as criminal wrongdoing or breach of fiduciary responsibilities, sanctions from government or authority, violations of laws and regulations, the presence of inappropriate related party transactions, or other issues related to improper business practices.

#### **Committee Responsibilities and Expectations**

The board of directors should establish committees to oversee areas such as, but not limited to, audit, executive and non-executive compensation, and director nominations and appointments. The responsibilities of the committees should be publicly disclosed.

We generally support incumbent directors, taking into consideration the below factors.

- Material failures of governance, stewardship, or fiduciary responsibilities at the company including but not limited to violations of global norms principles and/or other significant global standards;
- Failure to disclose material information;

- Egregious actions related to the director(s)' service on other boards that raise substantial doubt about his or her ability to effectively oversee management and serve the best interests of shareholders at any company;
- The board failed to act on a shareholder proposal that received approval of the majority of shares cast the previous year (a management proposal with other than a FOR recommendation by management will not be considered as sufficient action taken); an adopted proposal that is substantially similar to the original shareholder proposal will be deemed sufficient; (vote against members of the committee of the board that is responsible for the issue under consideration). If we did not support the shareholder proposal, we may still vote against the committee member(s).
- The company's poison pill has a dead-hand or modified dead-hand feature for two or more years. Vote against/withhold every year until this feature is removed; however, vote against the poison pill if there is one on the ballot with this feature rather than the director;
- The board adopts or renews a poison pill without shareholder approval, does not commit to putting it to shareholder vote within 12 months of adoption (or in the case of a newly public company, does not commit to put the pill to a shareholder vote within 12 months following the IPO), or reneges on a commitment to put the pill to a vote, and has not yet received a withhold/against recommendation for this issue;
- The board failed to act on takeover offers where the majority of the shareholders tendered their shares;
- If in an extreme situation the board lacks accountability and oversight, coupled with sustained poor performance relative to peers.

### **Audit Committee**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on members of the Audit Committee if poor accounting practices, which rise to a level of serious concern are identified, such as, but not limited to, fraud, misapplication of GAAP, excessive non-audit fees, excessive pledging or hedging of stock by executives, and material weaknesses identified in audit-related disclosures.

Examine the severity, breadth, chronological sequence and duration, as well as the company's efforts at remediation or corrective actions, in determining whether negative vote recommendations are warranted against the members of the Audit Committee who are responsible for the poor accounting practices, or the entire board.

### **Compensation Committee (North America)**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on members of the Compensation Committee, factors considered may include whether:

- We voted against the company's management say on pay proposal (MSOP) in the previous year, the company's previous MSOP received significant opposition of votes cast and we are voting against this year's MSOP;
- The board implements a MSOP on a less frequent basis than the frequency that received the plurality of votes cast; or
- The MSOP or equity-based incentive plan proposal item is not on the ballot and the company maintains problematic pay practices.

### **Nominating/Governance Committee**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on members of the Nominating/Governance Committee considering if:

- A company does not meet the board diversity requirements of local listing rules, corporate governance codes, national targets, or the board diversity is significantly below that of the average in its market; provided that company performance, or other factors, will generally be taken into consideration;
- The level of board independence does not meet the requirements of local regulations, listing rules, corporate governance codes, or local market best practices;
- If the average board tenure exceeds 15 years, and there has not been a new nominee in the past 5 years;

- A company maintains a classified board structure without a sunset provision, has opted into, or failed to opt out of, state laws requiring a classified board structure or has a capital structure with unequal voting rights (United States);
- At the previous board election, any director received more than 50% withhold/against votes of the shares cast and the company has failed to address the underlying issue(s) that caused the high withhold/against vote;
- The board amends the company's bylaws or charter without shareholder approval in a manner that materially diminishes shareholders' rights or could adversely impact shareholders; or
- The board has materially limited shareholders' right to proxy access (United States).

### **Voting on Director Nominees in Contested Elections**

Vote on a CASE-BY-CASE basis in contested elections of directors, e.g., the election of shareholder nominees or the dismissal of incumbent directors, determining which directors are best suited to add value for shareholders.

The analysis will generally be based on, but not limited to, the following major decision factors:

- Company performance relative to its peers;
- Strategy of the incumbents versus the dissidents;
- Independence of board candidates;
- Experience and skills of board candidates;
- Governance profile of the company;
- Evidence of management entrenchment;
- Responsiveness to shareholders;
- Whether a takeover offer has been rebuffed; and
- Whether minority or majority representation is being sought.

### **Proxy Access (United States)**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on shareholder or management proposals asking for proxy access.

We may support proxy access as an important right for shareholders and as an alternative to costly proxy contests and as a method for us to vote for directors on an individual basis, as appropriate, rather than voting on one slate or the other. While this could be an important shareholder right, the following factors will be taken into account when evaluating the shareholder proposals:

- The ownership thresholds, percentage and duration proposed (we generally will not support if the ownership threshold is less than 3%);
- The maximum proportion of directors that shareholders may nominate each year (we generally will not support if the proportion of directors is greater than 25%); and
- Other restricting factors that when taken in combination could serve to materially limit the proxy access provision.

We will take the above factors into account when evaluating proposals proactively adopted by the company or in response to a shareholder proposal to adopt or amend the right.

### **Reimbursing Proxy Solicitation Expenses**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on proposals to reimburse proxy solicitation expenses

### **Other Board Related Proposals (Management and Shareholder)**

Generally vote AGAINST management and shareholder proposals introducing classified boards.

Generally vote AGAINST shareholder proposals regarding mandatory retirement ages for directors.

Generally vote AGAINST management and shareholder proposals to alter board structure or size in the context of a fight for control of the company or the board.

### **Independent Board Chair (for applicable markets)**

We will generally vote AGAINST shareholder proposals requiring that the chairman's position be filled by an independent director, if the company satisfies 3 of the 4 following criteria:

- Two-thirds independent board, or majority in countries where employee representation is common practice;
- A designated, or a rotating, lead director, elected by and from the independent board members with clearly delineated and comprehensive duties;
- Fully independent key committees; and/or
- Established, publicly disclosed, governance guidelines and director biographies/profiles.

### **Proposals Regarding Board Declassification**

We will generally vote FOR management and shareholder proposals regarding the adoption of a declassified board structure.

### **Majority Vote Shareholder Proposals**

We will generally vote FOR proposals requesting that the board adopt majority voting in the election of directors provided it does not conflict with the law where the company is incorporated. We also look for companies to adopt a post-election policy outlining how the company will address the situation of a holdover director.

### **Cumulative Vote Shareholder Proposals**

We will generally vote FOR shareholder proposals to restore or provide cumulative voting unless the company has adopted (i) majority vote standard with a carve-out for plurality voting in situations where there are more nominees than seats and (ii) a director resignation policy to address failed elections.

## **3. Executive and Non- Executive Compensation**

### **Pay Practices**

Good pay practices should align management's interests with long-term shareholder value creation. Detailed disclosure of compensation criteria is preferred; proof that companies follow the criteria should be evident and retroactive performance target changes without proper disclosure is not viewed favorably. Compensation practices should allow a company to attract and retain proven talent. Some examples of poor pay practices include: abnormally large bonus payouts without justifiable performance linkage or proper disclosure, egregious employment contracts, excessive severance and/or change in control provisions, repricing or replacing of underwater stock options/stock appreciation rights without prior shareholder approval, and excessive perquisites. A company should also have an appropriate balance of short-term vs. long-term metrics and the metrics should be aligned with business goals and objectives.

If the company maintains problematic or poor pay practices, generally vote:

- AGAINST Management Say on Pay (MSOP) Proposals; or

- AGAINST an equity-based incentive plan proposal if excessive non-performance-based equity awards are the major contributor to a pay-for-performance misalignment.

### **Equity Compensation Plans**

We will generally vote FOR management proposals on equity-based compensation plans. Evaluation takes into account potential plan cost, plan features and grant practices. While a negative combination of these factors may cause a vote AGAINST, other reasons to consider a vote AGAINST the equity plan could include the following factors:

- The plan permits the repricing of stock options/stock appreciation rights (SARs) without prior shareholder approval; or
- There is more than one problematic material feature of the plan, which could include one of the following: unfavorable change-in-control features, presence of gross ups and options reload.

### **Advisory Vote on Executive Compensation (Say-on-Pay, MSOP) Management Proposals (North America)**

Generally vote FOR annual frequency and AGAINST all proposals asking for any frequency less than annual.

We will generally vote FOR management proposals for an advisory vote on executive compensation considering the context of each company's specific circumstances and the board's disclosed rationale for its practices.

When a disconnect between pay and performance exists, pay practices that may result in a vote AGAINST management proposals on an advisory vote on executive compensation may include:

- Lack of transparent disclosure of compensation philosophy and goals and targets, including details on short-term and long-term performance incentives;
- Long term incentive awards consisting of less than 50% performance-based awards;
- Lack of the board's response to failed MSOP vote the previous year;
- Abnormally large bonus payouts without justifiable performance linkage or proper disclosure;
- Egregious employment or retention contracts;
- Excessive perquisites or excessive severance and/or change in control provisions;
- Extraordinary relocation benefits;
- Long term incentive awards evaluated over a time period of less than three years;
- The board used discretion without sufficient disclosure;
- The board changed the targets and/or performance metrics during the pay period;
- The board awarded a multi-year guaranteed cash bonus or non-performance equity award;
- The board retested performance goals or awarded a pay for failure pay plan;
- The plan allows for the single trigger acceleration of unvested equity awards and/or provides excise tax gross ups;
- Repricing or replacing of underwater stock options without prior shareholder approval;
- Egregious pension/SERP (supplemental executive retirement plan) payouts; and
- The board has adopted other pay practices that may increase risk to shareholders.

### **Other Compensation Proposals and Policies**

## **Employee Stock Purchase Plans – Non-Qualified Plans**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on nonqualified employee stock purchase plans taking into account the following factors:

- Broad-based participation;
- Limits on employee contributions;
- Company matching contributions; and
- Presence of a discount on the stock price on the date of purchase.

## **Option Exchange Programs/Repricing Options**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on management proposals seeking approval to exchange/reprice options, taking into consideration:

- Historic trading patterns—the stock price should not be so volatile that the options are likely to be back “in-the-money” over the near term;
- Rationale for the re-pricing;
- If it is a value-for-value exchange;
- If surrendered stock options are added back to the plan reserve;
- Option vesting;
- Term of the option—the term should remain the same as that of the replaced option;
- Exercise price—should be set at fair market or a premium to market; and
- Participants—executive officers and directors should be excluded.

Generally vote FOR shareholder proposals to put option repricings to a shareholder vote.

## **Stock Retention Holding Period**

Generally vote FOR shareholder proposals asking for a policy requiring that senior executives retain a significant percentage of shares acquired through equity compensation programs if the policy requests retention for two years or less following the termination of their employment (through retirement or otherwise) **and** a holding threshold percentage of 50% or less.

Also consider whether the company has any holding period, retention ratio, or officer ownership requirements in place and the terms/provisions of awards already granted.

## **Elimination of Accelerated Vesting in the Event of a Change in Control**

Generally vote AGAINST shareholder proposals seeking a policy eliminating the accelerated vesting of time-based equity awards in the event of a change-in-control.

## **Performance-based Equity Awards and Pay-for-Superior-Performance Proposals**

Generally vote FOR unless there is sufficient evidence that the current compensation structure is already substantially performance-based. We consider performance-based awards to include awards that are tied to shareholder return or other metrics that are relevant to the business.

## **Say on Supplemental Executive Retirement Plans (SERP)**

Generally vote AGAINST proposals asking for shareholder votes on SERP.

## **4. Shareholders Rights and Defenses**

### **Shareholder Ability to Act by Written Consent**

Generally vote FOR shareholder proposals that provide shareholders with the ability to act by written consent, unless:

- The company already gives shareholders the right to call special meetings at a threshold of 25% or lower; and
- The company has a history of strong governance practices.

### **Special Meetings Arrangements**

Generally vote FOR management proposals that provide shareholders with the ability to call special meetings.

Generally vote FOR shareholder proposals that provide shareholders with the ability to call special meetings at a threshold of 25% or lower if the company currently does not give shareholders the right to call special meetings. However, if a company already gives shareholders the right to call special meetings at a threshold of at least 25%, vote AGAINST shareholder proposals to further reduce the threshold.

Generally vote AGAINST management proposals seeking shareholder approval for the company to hold special meetings with 14 days notice unless the company offers shareholders the ability to vote by electronic means and a proposal to reduce the period of notice to not less than 14 days has received majority support.

### **Advance Notice Requirements for Shareholder Proposals/Nominations**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on advance notice proposals, giving support to proposals that allow shareholders to submit proposals/nominations reasonably close to the meeting date and within the broadest window possible, recognizing the need to allow sufficient notice for company, regulatory and shareholder review.

### **Shareholder Voting Requirements**

Generally vote AGAINST proposals to require a supermajority shareholder vote. Generally vote FOR management and shareholder proposals to reduce supermajority vote requirements.

### **Poison Pills**

Generally vote FOR shareholder proposals requesting that the company submit its poison pill to a shareholder vote or redeem it, unless the company has:

- a shareholder-approved poison pill in place; or
- adopted a policy concerning the adoption of a pill in the future specifying certain shareholder friendly provisions.

Generally vote FOR shareholder proposals calling for poison pills to be put to a vote within a time period of less than one year after adoption.

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on management proposals on poison pill ratification, focusing on the features of the shareholder rights plan.

In addition, the rationale for adopting the pill should be thoroughly explained by the company. In examining the request for the pill, take into consideration the company's existing governance structure, including: board independence, existing takeover defenses, and any problematic governance concerns.

## **5. Strategic Transactions and Capital Structures**

### **Reorganizations/Restructurings**

Vote reorganizations and restructurings on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

### **Mergers and Acquisitions**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on mergers and acquisitions taking into account the following based on publicly available information:

- Valuation;
- Market reaction;
- Strategic rationale;
- Management's track record of successful integration of historical acquisitions;
- Presence of conflicts of interest; and
- Governance profile of the combined company.

### **Dual Class Structures**

Generally vote FOR resolutions that seek to maintain or convert to a one-share, one-vote capital structure.

Generally vote AGAINST requests for the creation or continuation of dual-class capital structures or the creation of new or additional super voting shares.

### **Share Issuance Requests**

#### *General Issuances:*

Generally vote FOR issuance requests with preemptive rights to a maximum of 100% over currently issued capital or any stricter limit set in local best practice recommendations or law.

Generally vote FOR issuance requests without preemptive rights to a maximum of 20% of currently issued capital or any stricter limit set in local best practice recommendations or law.

#### *Specific Issuances:*

Vote on a CASE-BY-CASE basis on all requests, with or without preemptive rights.

### **Increases in Authorized Capital**

Generally vote FOR non-specific proposals to increase authorized capital up to 100% over the current authorization unless the increase would leave the company with less than 30% of its new authorization outstanding, or any stricter limit set in local best practice recommendations or law.

Generally vote FOR specific proposals to increase authorized capital to any amount, unless:

- The specific purpose of the increase (such as a share-based acquisition or merger) does not meet guidelines for the purpose being proposed; or
- The increase would leave the company with less than 30% of its new authorization outstanding after adjusting for all proposed issuances or any stricter limit set in local best practice recommendations or law.

Generally vote AGAINST proposals to adopt unlimited capital authorizations.

## **Reduction of Capital**

Generally vote FOR proposals to reduce capital for routine accounting purposes unless the terms are unfavorable to shareholders.

Vote proposals to reduce capital in connection with corporate restructuring on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

## **Preferred Stock**

Generally vote FOR the creation of a new class of preferred stock or for issuances of preferred stock up to 50% of issued capital unless the terms of the preferred stock would adversely affect the rights of existing shareholders.

Generally vote FOR the creation/issuance of convertible preferred stock as long as the maximum number of common shares that could be issued upon conversion meets guidelines on equity issuance requests.

Generally vote AGAINST the creation of a new class of preference shares that would carry superior voting rights to the common shares.

Generally vote AGAINST the creation of blank check preferred stock unless the board clearly states that the authorization will not be used to thwart a takeover bid.

Vote proposals to increase blank check preferred authorizations on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

## **Debt Issuance Requests**

Vote non-convertible debt issuance requests on a CASE-BY-CASE basis, with or without preemptive rights.

Generally vote FOR the creation/issuance of convertible debt instruments as long as the maximum number of common shares that could be issued upon conversion meets guidelines on equity issuance requests.

Generally vote FOR proposals to restructure existing debt arrangements unless the terms of the restructuring would adversely affect the rights of shareholders.

## **Increase in Borrowing Powers**

Vote proposals to approve increases in a company's borrowing powers on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

## **Share Repurchase Plans**

We will generally vote FOR share repurchase programs taking into account whether:

- The share repurchase program can be used as a takeover defense;
- There is clear evidence of historical abuse;
- There is no safeguard in the share repurchase program against selective buybacks; and
- Pricing provisions and safeguards in the share repurchase program are deemed to be unreasonable in light of market practice.

## **Reissuance of Repurchased Shares**

Generally vote FOR requests to reissue any repurchased shares unless there is clear evidence of abuse of this authority in the past.

## **Capitalization of Reserves for Bonus Issues/Increase in Par Value**

Generally vote FOR requests to capitalize reserves for bonus issues of shares or to increase par value.

### **Related-Party Transactions**

Vote related-party transactions on a CASE-BY-CASE basis, considering factors including, but not limited to, the following:

- The parties on either side of the transaction;
- The nature of the asset to be transferred/service to be provided;
- The pricing of the transaction (and any associated professional valuation);
- The views of independent directors (where provided);
- The views of an independent financial adviser (where appointed);
- Whether any entities party to the transaction (including advisers) is conflicted; and
- The stated rationale for the transaction, including discussions of timing

### **Common and Preferred Stock Authorization**

Generally vote FOR proposals to increase the number of shares of common stock authorized for issuance.

Generally vote FOR proposals to increase the number of shares of preferred stock, as long as there is a commitment to not use the shares for anti-takeover purposes.

## **6. Other Management and Shareholder Proposals**

### **Overall Approach**

Management and shareholder proposals considered under this category could include, among others, requests that a company:

- Publish a report or additional information related to the company's business and impact on stakeholders;
- Disclose policies related to specific business practices and/or services;
- Conduct third party audits, reports or studies related to the company's business practices, services and/or impact on stakeholders

When evaluating management and shareholder proposals, the following factors are generally considered:

- Whether the subject of the proposal is considered to be material to the company's business;
- The company's current level of publicly available disclosure, including if the company already discloses similar information through existing reports or policies;
- If the company has implemented or formally committed to the implementation of a reporting program based on a recognized industry group standards or recommendations, such as the International Sustainability Standards Board's Sustainability Accounting Standards, the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board's (SASB) standards, the European Sustainability Reporting Standards, the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosure's (TCFD) recommendations, or a similar standard;
- Whether the information requested concerns business issues that relate to a meaningful percentage of the company's business;
- The degree to which the company's stated position on the issues raised in the proposal could affect its reputation or sales, or leave it vulnerable to a boycott or selective purchasing;
- Whether the company has already responded in some appropriate manner to the request embodied in the proposal;

- What other companies in the relevant industry have done in response to the issue addressed in the proposal;
- Whether the proposal itself is well framed and the cost of preparing the report and/or the implementation is reasonable;
- Whether the subject of the proposal is best left to the discretion of the board;
- Whether the proposal is legally binding for the board;
- Whether the company has material fines or violations in the area and if so, if appropriate actions have already been taken to remedy going forward; and
- Whether providing this information would reveal proprietary or confidential information that would place the company at a competitive disadvantage.

## **Region: Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) Proxy Items**

*The following section is a broad summary of the Guidelines, which form the basis of the Policy with respect to EMEA public equity investments of operating and/or holding companies. Applying these guidelines is subject to certain regional and country-specific exceptions and modifications and is not inclusive of all considerations in each market.*

### **1. Business Items**

#### **Financial Results/Director and Auditor Reports**

Generally vote FOR approval of financial statements and director and auditor reports, unless:

- There are serious concerns about the accounts presented, audit procedures used or audit opinion rendered; or
- The company is not responsive to shareholder questions about specific items that should be publicly disclosed.

#### **Appointment of Auditors and Auditor Fees**

Generally vote FOR the re-election of auditors and proposals authorizing the board to fix auditor fees unless:

- There are serious concerns about the accounts presented, audit procedures used or audit opinion rendered;
- There is reason to believe that the auditor has rendered an opinion that is neither accurate nor indicative of the company's financial position;
- Name of the proposed auditor has not been published;
- The auditors are being changed without explanation;
- Non-audit-related fees are substantial, or are in excess of standard annual audit-related fees, or in excess of permitted local limits and guidelines; or
- The appointment of external auditors if they have previously served the company in an executive capacity or can otherwise be considered affiliated with the company.

#### **Appointment of Internal Statutory Auditors**

Generally vote FOR the appointment or re-election of statutory auditors, unless:

- There are serious concerns about the statutory reports presented or the audit procedures used;
- Questions exist concerning any of the statutory auditors being appointed; or
- The auditors have previously served the company in an executive capacity or can otherwise be considered affiliated with the company.

#### **Reincorporation Proposals**

Vote reincorporation proposals on a CASE-BY-CASE basis

#### **Allocation of Income**

Generally vote FOR approval of the allocation of income, unless:

- The dividend payout ratio has been consistently low without adequate explanation; or
- The payout is excessive given the company's financial position.

### **Stock (Scrip) Dividend Alternative**

Generally vote FOR most stock (scrip) dividend proposals.

Generally vote AGAINST proposals that do not allow for a cash option unless management demonstrates that the cash option is harmful to shareholder value.

### **Amendments to Articles of Association**

Vote amendments to the articles of association on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

### **Change in Company Fiscal Term**

Generally vote FOR resolutions to change a company's fiscal term unless a company's motivation for the change is to postpone its annual general meeting.

### **Lower Disclosure Threshold for Stock Ownership**

Generally vote AGAINST resolutions to lower the stock ownership disclosure threshold below 5% unless specific reasons exist to implement a lower threshold.

### **Amend Quorum Requirements**

Vote proposals to amend quorum requirements for shareholder meetings on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

### **Virtual Meetings**

Generally vote FOR management proposals allowing for the convening of hybrid\* shareholder meetings if it is clear that it is not the intention to hold virtual-only AGMs. Generally vote AGAINST proposals allowing for the convening of virtual-only\* shareholder meetings.

\* The phrase "virtual-only shareholder meeting" refers to a meeting of shareholders that is held exclusively through the use of online technology without a corresponding in-person meeting. The term "hybrid shareholder meeting" refers to an in-person, or physical, meeting in which shareholders are permitted to participate online.

### **Public Benefit Corporation Proposals**

Generally vote FOR management proposals and CASE-BY-CASE on shareholder proposals related to the conversion of the company into a public benefit corporation.

### **Transact Other Business**

Generally vote AGAINST other business when it appears as a voting item.

### **Administrative Requests**

Generally vote FOR non-contentious administrative management requests.

## **2. Board of Directors**

The board of directors should promote the interests of shareholders by acting in an oversight and/or advisory role; should consist of a majority of independent directors and/or meet local best practice expectations; should be composed of directors with diverse backgrounds and perspectives; and should be held accountable for actions and results related to their responsibilities. The board of

directors should seek to comply with commonly accepted corporate governance best practices as well as the corporate governance standards that are applicable in their country and state of incorporation. The board of directors should establish committees to oversee areas such as, but not limited to, audit, executive and non-executive compensation, and director nominations and appointments. The responsibilities of the committees should be publicly disclosed.

### **Voting on Director Nominees in Uncontested Elections**

Vote on director nominees should be determined on a CASE-BY-CASE basis taking into consideration the following:

- Adequate disclosure has not been provided in a timely manner; or
- There are clear concerns over questionable finances or restatements; or
- There have been questionable transactions or conflicts of interest; or
- There are any records of abuses against minority shareholder interests; or
- The board fails to meet minimum corporate governance standards; or
- There are reservations about:
  - Director terms
  - Bundling of proposals to elect directors
  - Disclosure of named nominees
  - Overboarded directors
  - Director independence
- Specific concerns about the individual or company, such as criminal wrongdoing or breach of fiduciary responsibilities; or
- There are other considerations which may include sanction from government or authority, violations of laws and regulations, or other issues relate to improper business practice, failure to replace management, or egregious actions related to service on other boards.

Generally vote FOR employee and/or labor representatives if they sit on either the audit or compensation committee and are required by law to be on those committees.

Generally vote AGAINST employee and/or labor representatives if they sit on either the audit or compensation committee, if they are not required to be on those committees.

### **Director Independence**

#### **Classification of Directors**

##### **Executive Director**

- Employee or executive of the company; and
- Any director who is classified as a non-executive, but receives salary, fees, bonus, and/or other benefits that are in line with the highest-paid executives of the company.

##### **Non-Independent Non-Executive Director (NED)**

- Any director who is attested by the board to be a non-independent NED;
- Any director specifically designated as a representative of a significant shareholder of the company;

- Any director who is also an employee or executive of a significant shareholder of the company;
- Beneficial owner (direct or indirect) of at least 10% of the company's stock, either in economic terms or in voting rights (this may be aggregated if voting power is distributed among more than one member of a defined group, e.g., family members who beneficially own less than 10% individually, but collectively own more than 10%), unless market best practice dictates a lower ownership and/or disclosure threshold (and in other special market-specific circumstances);
- Government representative;
- Currently provides (or a relative provides) professional services to the company, to an affiliate of the company, or to an individual officer of the company or of one of its affiliates in excess of \$10,000 per year;
- Represents customer, supplier, creditor, banker, or other entity with which company maintains transactional/commercial relationship (unless company discloses information to apply a materiality test);
- Any director who has conflicting or cross-directorships with executive directors or the chairman of the company;
- Relative of a current employee of the company or its affiliates;
- Relative of a former executive of the company or its affiliates;
- A new appointee elected other than by a formal process through the General Meeting (such as a contractual appointment by a substantial shareholder);
- Founder/co-founder/member of founding family but not currently an employee;
- Former executive (a cooling off period may be applied);
- Years of service is generally not a determining factor unless it is recommended best practice in a market and/or in extreme circumstances, in which case it may be considered; and
- Any additional relationship or principle considered to compromise independence under local corporate governance best practice guidance.

#### **Independent NED**

- No material connection, either directly or indirectly, to the company other than a board seat.

#### **Employee Representative**

- Represents employees or employee shareholders of the company (classified as "employee representative" but considered a non-independent NED).

#### **Director Accountability**

Generally vote AGAINST individual directors who attend less than 75% of the board and committee meetings without a disclosed valid excuse.

Generally, vote FOR the bundled election of management nominees, unless adequate disclosures of the nominees have not been provided in a timely manner or if one or more of the nominees does not meet the expectation of our policy.

Other items considered for an AGAINST vote include specific concerns about the individual or the company, such as criminal wrongdoing or breach of fiduciary responsibilities, sanctions from government or authority, violations of laws and regulations, the presence of inappropriate related party transactions, or other issues related to improper business practices.

#### **Discharge of Directors**

Generally vote FOR the discharge of directors, including members of the management board and/or supervisory board, unless there is reliable information about significant and compelling controversies that the board is not fulfilling its fiduciary duties warranted by:

- A lack of oversight or actions by board members which invoke shareholder distrust related to malfeasance or poor supervision, such as operating in private or company interest rather than in shareholder interest; or
- Any legal issues (e.g., civil/criminal) aiming to hold the board responsible for breach of trust in the past or related to currently alleged actions yet to be confirmed (and not only the fiscal year in question), such as price fixing, insider trading, bribery, fraud, and other illegal actions; or
- Other egregious governance issues where shareholders may bring legal action against the company or its directors; or
- Vote on a CASE-BY-CASE basis where a vote against other agenda items are deemed inappropriate.

### **Committee Responsibilities and Expectations**

The board of directors should establish committees to oversee areas such as, but not limited to, audit, executive and non-executive compensation, and director nominations and appointments. The responsibilities of the committees should be publicly disclosed.

We generally support incumbent directors, taking into consideration the below factors.

- Material failures of governance, stewardship, or fiduciary responsibilities at the company, including but not limited to violations of global norms principles and/or other significant global standards;
- Failure to disclose material information;
- Egregious actions related to the director(s)' service on other boards that raise substantial doubt about his or her ability to effectively oversee management and serve the best interests of shareholders at any company;
- The board failed to act on a shareholder proposal that received approval of the majority of shares cast for previous year (a management proposal with other than a FOR recommendation by management will not be considered as sufficient action taken); an adopted proposal that is substantially similar to the original shareholder proposal will be deemed sufficient; (vote against members of the committee of the board that is responsible for the issue under consideration). If we did not support the shareholder proposal, we may still vote against the committee member(s).
- The board failed to act on takeover offers where the majority of the shareholders tendered their shares; or
- If in an extreme situation the board lacks accountability and oversight, coupled with sustained poor performance relative to peers.

### **Audit Committee**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on members of the Audit Committee if poor accounting practices, which rise to a level of serious concern are identified, such as, but not limited to, fraud, misapplication of GAAP, excessive non-audit fees, excessive pledging or hedging of stock by executives, and material weaknesses identified in audit-related disclosures.

Examine the severity, breadth, chronological sequence and duration, as well as the company's efforts at remediation or corrective actions, in determining whether negative vote recommendations are warranted against the members of the Audit Committee who are responsible for the poor accounting practices, or the entire board.

### **Remuneration Committee**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on members of the Remuneration Committee, factors considered may include whether:

- We voted against the company's MSOP in the previous year, the company's previous MSOP received significant opposition of votes cast and we are voting against this year's MSOP;
- The board implements a MSOP on a less frequent basis than the frequency that received the plurality of votes cast; or
- The MSOP or equity-based incentive plan proposal item is not on the ballot and the company maintains problematic pay practices.

## **Nominating/Governance Committee**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on members of the Nominating/Governance Committee considering if:

- A company does not meet the board diversity requirements of local listing rules, corporate governance codes, national targets, or the board diversity is significantly below that of the average in its market; provided that company performance, or other factors, will generally be taken into consideration;
- The level of board independence does not meet the requirements of local regulations, listing rules, corporate governance codes, or local market best practices;
- At the previous board election, any director received more than 50% withhold/against votes of the shares cast and the company has failed to address the underlying issue(s) that caused the high withhold/against vote; or
- The board amends the company's bylaws or charter without shareholder approval in a manner that materially diminishes shareholders' rights or could adversely impact shareholders.

## **Voting on Director Nominees in Contested Elections**

Vote on a CASE-BY-CASE basis in contested elections of directors, e.g., the election of shareholder nominees or the dismissal of incumbent directors, determining which directors are best suited to add value for shareholders.

The analysis will generally be based on, but not limited to, the following major decision factors:

- Company performance relative to its peers;
- Strategy of the incumbents versus the dissidents;
- Independence of board candidates;
- Experience and skills of board candidates;
- Governance profile of the company;
- Evidence of management entrenchment;
- Responsiveness to shareholders;
- Whether a takeover offer has been rebuffed; and
- Whether minority or majority representation is being sought.

## **Other Board Related Proposals (Management and Shareholder)**

Generally vote AGAINST management and shareholder proposals introducing classified boards.

Generally vote AGAINST shareholder proposals regarding mandatory retirement ages for directors.

Generally vote AGAINST management and shareholder proposals to alter board structure or size in the context of a fight for control of the company or the board.

## **Independent Board Chair** (for applicable markets)

We will generally vote AGAINST shareholder proposals requiring that the chairman's position be filled by an independent director, if the company satisfies 3 of the 4 following criteria:

- Two-thirds independent board, or majority in countries where employee representation is common practice;
- A designated, or a rotating, lead director, elected by and from the independent board members with clearly delineated and comprehensive duties;

- Fully independent key committees; and/or
- Established, publicly disclosed, governance guidelines and director biographies/profiles.

### **3. Remuneration**

#### **Pay Practices**

Good pay practices should align management's interests with long-term shareholder value creation. Detailed disclosure of remuneration criteria is preferred; proof that companies follow the criteria should be evident and retroactive performance target changes without proper disclosure is not viewed favorably. Remuneration practices should allow a company to attract and retain proven talent. Some examples of poor pay practices include: abnormally large bonus payouts without justifiable performance linkage or proper disclosure, egregious employment contracts, excessive severance and/or change in control provisions, repricing or replacing of underwater stock options/stock appreciation rights without prior shareholder approval, and excessive perquisites. A company should also have an appropriate balance of short-term vs. long-term metrics and the metrics should be aligned with business goals and objectives.

If the company maintains problematic or poor pay practices, generally vote:

- AGAINST Management Say on Pay (MSOP) Proposals, Remuneration Reports; or
- AGAINST an equity-based incentive plan proposal if excessive non-performance-based equity awards are the major contributor to a pay-for-performance misalignment.

#### **Remuneration Plans**

When a disconnect between pay and performance exists, pay practices that may result in a vote AGAINST management proposals on an advisory vote on executive compensation may include:

- Lack of transparent disclosure of compensation philosophy and goals and targets, including details on short-term and long-term performance incentives;
- Long term incentive awards consisting of less than 50% performance-based awards;
- Lack of the board's response to failed MSOP vote the previous year;
- Abnormally large bonus payouts without justifiable performance linkage or proper disclosure;
- Egregious employment or retention contracts;
- Excessive perquisites or excessive severance and/or change in control provisions; and
- Extraordinary relocation benefits.

#### **Non-Executive Director Compensation**

Generally vote FOR proposals to award cash fees to non-executive directors unless the amounts are excessive relative to other companies in the country or industry.

Vote non-executive director compensation proposals that include both cash and share-based components on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

Vote proposals that bundle compensation for both non-executive and executive directors into a single resolution on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

Generally vote AGAINST proposals to introduce retirement benefits for non-executive directors.

#### **Director, Officer, and Auditor Indemnification and Liability Provisions**

Vote proposals seeking indemnification and liability protection for directors and officers on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

Generally vote AGAINST proposals to indemnify auditors.

#### **Other Remuneration Related Proposals**

Vote on other remuneration related proposals on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

### **4. Shareholder Rights and Defenses**

#### **Antitakeover Mechanisms**

Generally vote AGAINST all antitakeover proposals, unless they are structured in such a way that they give shareholders the ultimate decision on any proposal or offer.

For the Netherlands, vote recommendations regarding management proposals to approve protective preference shares will be determined on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

For French companies listed on a regulated market, generally vote AGAINST any general authorities impacting the share capital (i.e. authorities for share repurchase plans and any general share issuances with or without preemptive rights) if they can be used for antitakeover purposes without shareholders' prior explicit approval.

### **5. Strategic Transactions, Capital Structures and other Business Considerations**

#### **Reorganizations/Restructurings**

Vote reorganizations and restructurings on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

#### **Mergers and Acquisitions**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on mergers and acquisitions taking into account the following based on publicly available information:

- Valuation;
- Market reaction;
- Strategic rationale;
- Management's track record of successful integration of historical acquisitions;
- Presence of conflicts of interest; and
- Governance profile of the combined company.

#### **Dual Class Structures**

Generally vote FOR resolutions that seek to maintain or convert to a one-share, one-vote capital structure.

Generally vote AGAINST requests for the creation or continuation of dual-class capital structures or the creation of new or additional super voting shares.

#### **Share Issuance Requests**

*General Issuances:*

Generally vote FOR issuance requests with preemptive rights to a maximum of 100% over currently issued capital or any stricter limit set in local best practice recommendations or law.

Generally vote FOR issuance requests without preemptive rights to a maximum of 20% of currently issued capital or any stricter limit set in local best practice recommendations or law.

*Specific Issuances:*

Vote on a CASE-BY-CASE basis on all requests, with or without preemptive rights.

**Increases in Authorized Capital**

Generally vote FOR non-specific proposals to increase authorized capital up to 100% over the current authorization unless the increase would leave the company with less than 30% of its new authorization outstanding, or any stricter limit set in local best practice recommendations or law.

Generally vote FOR specific proposals to increase authorized capital to any amount, unless:

- The specific purpose of the increase (such as a share-based acquisition or merger) does not meet guidelines for the purpose being proposed; or
- The increase would leave the company with less than 30% of its new authorization outstanding after adjusting for all proposed issuances or any stricter limit set in local best practice recommendations or law.

Generally vote AGAINST proposals to adopt unlimited capital authorizations.

**Reduction of Capital**

Generally vote FOR proposals to reduce capital for routine accounting purposes unless the terms are unfavorable to shareholders.

Vote proposals to reduce capital in connection with corporate restructuring on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

**Preferred Stock**

Generally vote FOR the creation of a new class of preferred stock or for issuances of preferred stock up to 50% of issued capital unless the terms of the preferred stock would adversely affect the rights of existing shareholders.

Generally vote FOR the creation/issuance of convertible preferred stock as long as the maximum number of common shares that could be issued upon conversion meets guidelines on equity issuance requests.

Generally vote AGAINST the creation of a new class of preference shares that would carry superior voting rights to the common shares.

Generally vote AGAINST the creation of blank check preferred stock unless the board clearly states that the authorization will not be used to thwart a takeover bid.

Vote proposals to increase blank check preferred authorizations on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

**Debt Issuance Requests**

Vote non-convertible debt issuance requests on a CASE-BY-CASE basis, with or without preemptive rights.

Generally vote FOR the creation/issuance of convertible debt instruments as long as the maximum number of common shares that could be issued upon conversion meets guidelines on equity issuance requests.

Generally vote FOR proposals to restructure existing debt arrangements unless the terms of the restructuring would adversely affect the rights of shareholders.

### **Increase in Borrowing Powers**

Vote proposals to approve increases in a company's borrowing powers on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

### **Share Repurchase Plans**

We will generally vote FOR share repurchase programs taking into account whether:

- The share repurchase program can be used as a takeover defense;
- There is clear evidence of historical abuse;
- There is no safeguard in the share repurchase program against selective buybacks; and
- Pricing provisions and safeguards in the share repurchase program are deemed to be unreasonable in light of market practice.

### **Reissuance of Repurchased Shares**

Generally vote FOR requests to reissue any repurchased shares unless there is clear evidence of abuse of this authority in the past.

### **Capitalization of Reserves for Bonus Issues/Increase in Par Value**

Generally vote FOR requests to capitalize reserves for bonus issues of shares or to increase par value.

### **Related-Party Transactions**

Vote related-party transactions on a CASE-BY-CASE basis, considering factors including, but not limited to, the following:

- The parties on either side of the transaction;
- The nature of the asset to be transferred/service to be provided;
- The pricing of the transaction (and any associated professional valuation);
- The views of independent directors (where provided);
- The views of an independent financial adviser (where appointed);
- Whether any entities party to the transaction (including advisers) is conflicted; and
- The stated rationale for the transaction, including discussions of timing

## **6. Other Management and Shareholder Proposals**

### **Overall Approach**

Management and shareholder proposals considered under this category could include, among others, requests that a company:

- Publish a report or additional information related to the company's business and impact on stakeholders;

- Disclose policies related to specific business practices and/or services;
- Conduct third party audits, reports or studies related to the company's business practices, services and/or impact on stakeholders

When evaluating management and shareholder proposals, the following factors are generally considered:

- Whether the subject of the proposal is considered to be material to the company's business;
- The company's current level of publicly available disclosure, including if the company already discloses similar information through existing reports or policies;
- If the company has implemented or formally committed to the implementation of a reporting program based on a recognized industry group standards or recommendations, such as the International Sustainability Standards Board's Sustainability Accounting Standards, the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board's (SASB) standards, the European Sustainability Reporting Standards, the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosure's (TCFD) recommendations, or a similar standard;
- Whether the information requested concerns business issues that relate to a meaningful percentage of the company's business;
- The degree to which the company's stated position on the issues raised in the proposal could affect its reputation or sales, or leave it vulnerable to a boycott or selective purchasing;
- Whether the company has already responded in some appropriate manner to the request embodied in the proposal;
- What other companies in the relevant industry have done in response to the issue addressed in the proposal;
- Whether the proposal itself is well framed and the cost of preparing the report and/or the implementation is reasonable;
- Whether the subject of the proposal is best left to the discretion of the board;
- Whether the proposal is legally binding for the board;
- Whether the company has material fines or violations in the area and if so, if appropriate actions have already been taken to remedy going forward; and
- Whether providing this information would reveal proprietary or confidential information that would place the company at a competitive disadvantage.

## **Region: Asia Pacific (APAC) Proxy Items**

*The following section is a broad summary of the Guidelines, which form the basis of the Policy with respect to APAC public equity investments of operating and/or holding companies. Applying these guidelines is subject to certain regional and country-specific exceptions and modifications and is not inclusive of all considerations in each market. For Japan-specific policies, see the Japan Proxy Items section.*

### **1. Business Items**

#### **Financial Results/Director and Auditor Reports**

Generally vote FOR approval of financial statements and director and auditor reports, unless:

- There are serious concerns about the accounts presented, audit procedures used or audit opinion rendered; or
- The company is not responsive to shareholder questions about specific items that should be publicly disclosed.

#### **Appointment of Auditors and Auditor Fees**

Generally vote FOR the re-election of auditors and proposals authorizing the board to fix auditor fees unless:

- There are serious concerns about the accounts presented, audit procedures used or audit opinion rendered;
- There is reason to believe that the auditor has rendered an opinion that is neither accurate nor indicative of the company's financial position;
- Name of the proposed auditor has not been published;
- The auditors are being changed without explanation;
- Non-audit-related fees are substantial, or are in excess of standard annual audit-related fees, or in excess of permitted local limits and guidelines; or
- The appointment of external auditors if they have previously served the company in an executive capacity or can otherwise be considered affiliated with the company.

#### **Allocation of Income**

Generally vote FOR approval of the allocation of income, unless:

- The dividend payout ratio has been consistently low without adequate explanation; or
- The payout is excessive given the company's financial position.

#### **Stock (Scrip) Dividend Alternative**

Generally vote FOR most stock (scrip) dividend proposals.

Generally vote AGAINST proposals that do not allow for a cash option unless management demonstrates that the cash option is harmful to shareholder value.

#### **Amendments to Articles of Association and Company Bylaws**

Vote amendments to the articles of association and Company Bylaws on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

#### **Change in Company Fiscal Term**

Generally vote FOR resolutions to change a company's fiscal term unless a company's motivation for the change is to postpone its annual general meeting.

### **Lower Disclosure Threshold for Stock Ownership**

Generally vote AGAINST resolutions to lower the stock ownership disclosure threshold below 5% unless specific reasons exist to implement a lower threshold.

### **Amend Quorum Requirements**

Vote proposals to amend quorum requirements for shareholder meetings on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

### **Virtual Meetings**

Generally vote FOR proposals allowing for the convening of hybrid\* shareholder meetings if it is clear that it is not the intention to hold virtual-only AGMs. Generally vote AGAINST proposals allowing for the convening of virtual- only\* shareholder meetings.

\* The phrase "virtual-only shareholder meeting" refers to a meeting of shareholders that is held exclusively through the use of online technology without a corresponding in-person meeting. The term "hybrid shareholder meeting" refers to an in-person, or physical, meeting in which shareholders are permitted to participate online.

### **Transact Other Business**

Generally vote AGAINST other business when it appears as a voting item.

### **Administrative Requests**

Generally vote FOR non-contentious administrative management requests.

## **2. Board of Directors**

The board of directors should promote the interests of shareholders by acting in an oversight and/or advisory role; should consist of a majority of independent directors and/or meet local best practice expectations; should be composed of directors with diverse backgrounds and perspectives; and should be held accountable for actions and results related to their responsibilities. The board of directors should seek to comply with commonly accepted corporate governance best practices as well as the corporate governance standards that are applicable in their country and state of incorporation. The board of directors should establish committees to oversee areas such as, but not limited to, audit, executive and non-executive compensation, and director nominations and appointments. The responsibilities of the committees should be publicly disclosed.

### **Voting on Director Nominees in Uncontested Elections**

Vote on director nominees should be determined on a CASE-BY-CASE basis taking into consideration the following:

- Adequate disclosure has not been provided in a timely manner; or
- There are clear concerns over questionable finances or restatements; or
- There have been questionable transactions or conflicts of interest; or
- There are any records of abuses against minority shareholder interests; or
- The board fails to meet minimum corporate governance standards; or
- There are reservations about:

- Director terms
- Bundling of proposals to elect directors
- Disclosure of named nominees
- Overboarded directors
- Director independence
- Specific concerns about the individual or company, such as criminal wrongdoing or breach of fiduciary responsibilities; or
- There are other considerations which may include sanction from government or authority, violations of laws and regulations, or other issues relate to improper business practice, failure to replace management, or egregious actions related to service on other boards.

## **Director Independence**

### **Classification of Directors**

#### **Executive Director**

- Employee or executive of the company; and
- Any director who is classified as a non-executive, but receives salary, fees, bonus, and/or other benefits that are in line with the highest-paid executives of the company.

#### **Non-Independent Non-Executive Director (NED)**

- Any director who is attested by the board to be a non-independent NED;
- Any director specifically designated as a representative of a significant shareholder of the company;
- Any director who is also an employee or executive of a significant shareholder of the company;
- Beneficial owner (direct or indirect) of at least 10% of the company's stock, either in economic terms or in voting rights (this may be aggregated if voting power is distributed among more than one member of a defined group, e.g., family members who beneficially own less than 10% individually, but collectively own more than 10%), unless market best practice dictates a lower ownership and/or disclosure threshold (and in other special market-specific circumstances);
- Government representative;
- Currently provides (or a relative provides) professional services to the company, to an affiliate of the company, or to an individual officer of the company or of one of its affiliates in excess of \$10,000 per year;
- Represents customer, supplier, creditor, banker, or other entity with which company maintains transactional/commercial relationship (unless company discloses information to apply a materiality test);
- Any director who has conflicting or cross-directorships with executive directors or the chairman of the company;
- Relative of a current employee of the company or its affiliates;
- Relative of a former executive of the company or its affiliates;
- A new appointee elected other than by a formal process through the General Meeting (such as a contractual appointment by a substantial shareholder);
- Founder/co-founder/member of founding family but not currently an employee;
- Former executive (a cooling off period may be applied);

- In markets where local regulations or standards require a maximum tenure, directors with excess tenure will be considered non-independent, except in certain cases where the company discloses a clear justification; and
- Any additional relationship or principle considered to compromise independence under local corporate governance best practice guidance.

#### **Independent NED**

- No material connection, either directly or indirectly, to the company other than a board seat.

#### **Employee Representative**

- Represents employees or employee shareholders of the company (classified as “employee representative” but considered a non-independent NED).

#### **Director Accountability**

Generally vote AGAINST individual directors who attend less than 75% of the board and committee meetings without a disclosed valid excuse.

Generally, vote FOR the bundled election of management nominees, unless adequate disclosures of the nominees have not been provided in a timely manner or if one or more of the nominees does not meet the expectation of our policy.

Other items considered for an AGAINST vote include specific concerns about the individual or the company, such as criminal wrongdoing or breach of fiduciary responsibilities, sanctions from government or authority, violations of laws and regulations, the presence of inappropriate related party transactions, or other issues related to improper business practices

#### **Discharge of Directors**

Generally vote FOR the discharge of directors, including members of the management board and/or supervisory board, unless there is reliable information about significant and compelling controversies that the board is not fulfilling its fiduciary duties warranted by:

- A lack of oversight or actions by board members which invoke shareholder distrust related to malfeasance or poor supervision, such as operating in private or company interest rather than in shareholder interest; or
- Any legal issues (e.g., civil/criminal) aiming to hold the board responsible for breach of trust in the past or related to currently alleged actions yet to be confirmed (and not only the fiscal year in question), such as price fixing, insider trading, bribery, fraud, and other illegal actions; or
- Other egregious governance issues where shareholders may bring legal action against the company or its directors; or
- Vote on a CASE-BY-CASE basis where a vote against other agenda items are deemed inappropriate.

#### **Committee Responsibilities and Expectations**

The board of directors should establish committees to oversee areas such as, but not limited to, audit, executive and non-executive compensation, and director nominations and appointments. The responsibilities of the committees should be publicly disclosed.

We generally support incumbent directors, taking into consideration the below factors.

- Material failures of governance, stewardship, or fiduciary responsibilities at the company, including but not limited to violations of global norms principles and/or other significant global standards;
- Failure to disclose material information;
- Egregious actions related to the director(s)’ service on other boards that raise substantial doubt about his or her ability to effectively oversee management and serve the best interests of shareholders at any company;

- The board failed to act on a shareholder proposal that received approval of the majority of shares cast the previous year (a management proposal with other than a FOR recommendation by management will not be considered as sufficient action taken); an adopted proposal that is substantially similar to the original shareholder proposal will be deemed sufficient; (vote against members of the committee of the board that is responsible for the issue under consideration). If we did not support the shareholder proposal, we may still vote against the committee member(s).
- The board failed to act on takeover offers where the majority of the shareholders tendered their shares; or
- If in an extreme situation the board lacks accountability and oversight, coupled with sustained poor performance relative to peers.

### **Audit Committee**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on members of the Audit Committee if poor accounting practices, which rise to a level of serious concern are identified, such as, but not limited to, fraud, misapplication of GAAP, excessive non-audit fees, excessive pledging or hedging of stock by executives, and material weaknesses identified in audit-related disclosures.

Examine the severity, breadth, chronological sequence and duration, as well as the company's efforts at remediation or corrective actions, in determining whether negative vote recommendations are warranted against the members of the Audit Committee who are responsible for the poor accounting practices, or the entire board.

Generally vote AGAINST Audit Committee members who are classified as promoters or beneficial owners in the company (India).

### **Remuneration Committee (Australia)**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on members of the Remuneration Committee, factors considered may include whether:

- We voted against the company's Remuneration Report in the previous year, the company's previous Remuneration Report received significant opposition of votes cast and we are voting against this year's Remuneration Report; or
- The remuneration structure is widely inconsistent with local market best practices or regulations.

### **Nominating Committee**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on members of the Nominating/Governance Committee considering if:

- A company does not meet the board diversity requirements of local listing rules, corporate governance codes, national targets, or the board diversity is significantly below that of the average in its market; provided that company performance, or other factors, will generally be taken into consideration; or
- The level of board independence does not meet the requirements of local regulations, listing rules, corporate governance codes, or local market best practices.

### **Voting on Director Nominees in Contested Elections**

Vote on a CASE-BY-CASE basis in contested elections of directors, e.g., the election of shareholder nominees or the dismissal of incumbent directors, determining which directors are best suited to add value for shareholders.

The analysis will generally be based on, but not limited to, the following major decision factors:

- Company performance relative to its peers;
- Strategy of the incumbents versus the dissidents;
- Independence of board candidates;
- Experience and skills of board candidates;

- Governance profile of the company;
- Evidence of management entrenchment;
- Responsiveness to shareholders;
- Whether a takeover offer has been rebuffed; and
- Whether minority or majority representation is being sought.

### **Other Board Related Proposals (Management and Shareholder)**

Generally vote AGAINST management and shareholder proposals introducing classified boards.

Generally vote AGAINST shareholder proposals regarding mandatory retirement ages for directors.

Generally vote AGAINST management and shareholder proposals to alter board structure or size in the context of a fight for control of the company or the board.

### **Independent Board Chair (applicable markets)**

We will generally vote AGAINST shareholder proposals requiring that the chairman's position be filled by an independent director, if the company satisfies 3 of the 4 following criteria:

- Two-thirds independent board, or majority in countries where employee representation is common practice;
- A designated, or a rotating, lead director, elected by and from the independent board members with clearly delineated and comprehensive duties;
- Fully independent key committees; and/or
- Established, publicly disclosed, governance guidelines and director biographies/profiles.

## **3. Remuneration**

### **Pay Practices**

Good pay practices should align management's interests with long-term shareholder value creation. Detailed disclosure of remuneration criteria is preferred; proof that companies follow the criteria should be evident and retroactive performance target changes without proper disclosure is not viewed favorably. Remuneration practices should allow a company to attract and retain proven talent. Some examples of poor pay practices include: abnormally large bonus payouts without justifiable performance linkage or proper disclosure, egregious employment contracts, excessive severance and/or change in control provisions, repricing or replacing of underwater stock options/stock appreciation rights without prior shareholder approval, and excessive perquisites. A company should also have an appropriate balance of short-term vs. long-term metrics and the metrics should be aligned with business goals and objectives.

If the company maintains problematic or poor pay practices, generally vote:

- AGAINST Remuneration Reports; or
- AGAINST an equity-based incentive plan proposal if excessive non-performance-based equity awards are the major contributor to a pay-for-performance misalignment.

### **Remuneration Reports (Australia)**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on management proposals for a vote on remuneration reports, considering the following factors in the context of each company's specific circumstances and the board's disclosed rationale for its practices.

When a disconnect between pay and performance exists, pay practices that may result in a vote AGAINST management proposals the company's remuneration report may include:

- Lack of transparent disclosure of compensation philosophy and goals and targets, including details on short-term and long-term performance incentives;
- Long term incentive awards consisting of less than 50% performance-based awards;
- Lack of the board's response to failed MSOP vote the previous year;
- Abnormally large bonus payouts without justifiable performance linkage or proper disclosure;
- Egregious employment or retention contracts;
- Excessive perquisites or excessive severance and/or change in control provisions; and
- Extraordinary relocation benefits.

### **Equity-based / Stock Option Compensation Plans**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on equity compensation plans, considering factors such as:

- Level of potential dilution (generally within 5% for mature companies and 10% for growth companies, or within local market best practices);
- Length of vesting period;
- Appropriate performance hurdles;
- Adequate disclosure of the remuneration plan;
- Governance and administration of the remuneration plan; and
- Any other concerns which may negatively impact shareholder value or alignment of incentives.

### **Non-Executive Director Compensation**

Generally vote FOR proposals to award cash fees to non-executive directors unless the amounts are excessive relative to other companies in the country or industry.

Vote non-executive director compensation proposals that include both cash and share-based components on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

Vote proposals that bundle compensation for both non-executive and executive directors into a single resolution on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

Generally vote AGAINST proposals to introduce retirement benefits for non-executive directors.

### **Director, Officer, and Auditor Indemnification and Liability Provisions**

Vote proposals seeking indemnification and liability protection for directors and officers on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

Generally vote AGAINST proposals to indemnify auditors.

### **Other Remuneration Related Proposals**

Vote on other remuneration related proposals on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

#### **4. Shareholder Rights and Defenses**

##### **Antitakeover Mechanisms**

Generally vote AGAINST all antitakeover proposals, unless they are structured in such a way that they give shareholders the ultimate decision on any proposal or offer.

#### **5. Strategic Transactions, Capital Structures and other Business Considerations**

##### **Reorganizations/Restructurings**

Vote reorganizations and restructurings on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

##### **Mergers and Acquisitions**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on mergers and acquisitions taking into account the following based on publicly available information:

- Valuation;
- Market reaction;
- Strategic rationale;
- Management's track record of successful integration of historical acquisitions;
- Presence of conflicts of interest; and
- Governance profile of the combined company.

##### **Dual Class Structures**

Generally vote FOR resolutions that seek to maintain or convert to a one-share, one-vote capital structure.

Generally vote AGAINST requests for the creation or continuation of dual-class capital structures or the creation of new or additional super voting shares.

##### **Share Issuance Requests**

###### *General Issuances:*

Generally vote FOR issuance requests with preemptive rights to a maximum of 100% over currently issued capital or any stricter limit set in local best practice recommendations or law (50% in Singapore).

Generally vote FOR issuance requests without preemptive rights to a maximum of 20% of currently issued capital or any stricter limit set in local best practice recommendations or law (15% in Australia, 10% in Hong Kong and Singapore Mainboard).

Generally vote FOR issuance requests without preemptive rights to a maximum of 25% of currently issued capital (India).

###### *Specific Issuances:*

Vote on a CASE-BY-CASE basis on all requests, with or without preemptive rights.

##### **Increases in Authorized Capital**

Generally vote FOR non-specific proposals to increase authorized capital up to 100% over the current authorization unless the increase would leave the company with less than 30% of its new authorization outstanding, or any stricter limit set in local best practice recommendations or law.

Generally vote FOR specific proposals to increase authorized capital to any amount, unless:

- The specific purpose of the increase (such as a share-based acquisition or merger) does not meet guidelines for the purpose being proposed; or
- The increase would leave the company with less than 30% of its new authorization outstanding after adjusting for all proposed issuances, or any stricter limit set in local best practice recommendations or law

Generally vote AGAINST proposals to adopt unlimited capital authorizations.

### **Reduction of Capital**

Generally vote FOR proposals to reduce capital for routine accounting purposes unless the terms are unfavorable to shareholders.

Vote proposals to reduce capital in connection with corporate restructuring on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

### **Preferred Stock**

- Generally vote FOR the creation of a new class of preferred stock or for issuances of preferred stock up to 50% of issued capital unless the terms of the preferred stock would adversely affect the rights of existing shareholders.
- Generally vote FOR the creation/issuance of convertible preferred stock as long as the maximum number of common shares that could be issued upon conversion meets guidelines on equity issuance requests.
- Generally vote AGAINST the creation of a new class of preference shares that would carry superior voting rights to the common shares.
- Generally vote AGAINST the creation of blank check preferred stock unless the board clearly states that the authorization will not be used to thwart a takeover bid.

### **Debt Issuance Requests**

- Vote non-convertible debt issuance requests on a CASE-BY-CASE basis, with or without preemptive rights.
- Generally vote FOR the creation/issuance of convertible debt instruments as long as the maximum number of common shares that could be issued upon conversion meets guidelines on equity issuance requests.
- Generally vote FOR proposals to restructure existing debt arrangements unless the terms of the restructuring would adversely affect the rights of shareholders.

### **Increase in Borrowing Powers**

- Vote proposals to approve increases in a company's borrowing powers on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

### **Share Repurchase Plans**

We will generally vote FOR share repurchase programs taking into account whether:

- The share repurchase program can be used as a takeover defense;
- There is clear evidence of historical abuse;
- There is no safeguard in the share repurchase program against selective buybacks; and

- Pricing provisions and safeguards in the share repurchase program are deemed to be unreasonable in light of market practice.

### **Reissuance of Repurchased Shares**

Generally vote FOR requests to reissue any repurchased shares unless there is clear evidence of abuse of this authority in the past.

### **Capitalization of Reserves for Bonus Issues/Increase in Par Value**

Generally vote FOR requests to capitalize reserves for bonus issues of shares or to increase par value.

### **Related-Party Transactions**

Vote related-party transactions on a CASE-BY-CASE basis, considering factors including, but not limited to, the following:

- The parties on either side of the transaction;
- The nature of the asset to be transferred/service to be provided;
- The pricing of the transaction (and any associated professional valuation);
- The views of independent directors (where provided);
- The views of an independent financial adviser (where appointed);
- Whether any entities party to the transaction (including advisers) is conflicted; and
- The stated rationale for the transaction, including discussions of timing

## **6. Other Management and Shareholder Proposals**

### **Overall Approach**

Management and shareholder proposals considered under this category could include, among others, requests that a company:

- Publish a report or additional information related to the company's business and impact on stakeholders;
- Disclose policies related to specific business practices and/or services;
- Conduct third party audits, reports or studies related to the company's business practices, services and/or impact on stakeholders

When evaluating management and shareholder proposals, the following factors are generally considered:

- Whether the subject of the proposal is considered to be material to the company's business;
- The company's current level of publicly available disclosure, including if the company already discloses similar information through existing reports or policies;
- If the company has implemented or formally committed to the implementation of a reporting program based on a recognized industry group standards or recommendations, such as the International Sustainability Standards Board's Sustainability Accounting Standards, the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board's (SASB) standards, the European Sustainability Reporting Standards, the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosure's (TCFD) recommendations, or a similar standard;
- Whether the information requested concerns business issues that relate to a meaningful percentage of the company's business;

- The degree to which the company's stated position on the issues raised in the proposal could affect its reputation or sales, or leave it vulnerable to a boycott or selective purchasing;
- Whether the company has already responded in some appropriate manner to the request embodied in the proposal;
- What other companies in the relevant industry have done in response to the issue addressed in the proposal;
- Whether the proposal itself is well framed and the cost of preparing the report and/or the implementation is reasonable;
- Whether the subject of the proposal is best left to the discretion of the board;
- Whether the proposal is legally binding for the board;
- Whether the company has material fines or violations in the area and if so, if appropriate actions have already been taken to remedy going forward; and
- Whether providing this information would reveal proprietary or confidential information that would place the company at a competitive disadvantage.

### **Region: Japan Proxy Items**

*The following section is a broad summary of the Guidelines, which form the basis of the Policy with respect to Japanese public equity investments of operating and/or holding companies. Applying these guidelines is not inclusive of all considerations in the Japanese market.*

## **1. Operational Items**

### **Financial Results/Director and Auditor Reports**

Generally vote FOR approval of financial statements and director and auditor reports, unless:

- There are concerns about the accounts presented or audit procedures used; or
- The company is not responsive to shareholder questions about specific items that should be publicly disclosed.

### **Appointment of Auditors and Auditor Fees**

Generally vote FOR the re-election of auditors and proposals authorizing the board to fix auditor fees, unless:

- There are serious concerns about the accounts presented, audit procedures used or audit opinion rendered;
- There is reason to believe that the auditor has rendered an opinion that is neither accurate nor indicative of the company's financial position;
- Name of the proposed auditor has not been published;
- The auditors are being changed without explanation;
- Non-audit-related fees are substantial or are in excess of standard annual audit-related fees; or
- The appointment of external auditors if they have previously served the company in an executive capacity or can otherwise be considered affiliated with the company.

### **Allocation of Income**

Generally vote FOR approval of the allocation of income, unless:

- The dividend payout ratio has been consistently low without adequate explanation; or
- The payout is excessive given the company's financial position;

## **Amendments to Articles of Association**

Vote amendments to the articles of association on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

## **Change in Company Fiscal Term**

Generally vote FOR resolutions to change a company's fiscal term unless a company's motivation for the change is to postpone its annual general meeting.

## **Amend Quorum Requirements**

Vote proposals to amend quorum requirements for shareholder meetings on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

## **Virtual Meetings**

Generally vote AGAINST management proposals allowing for the convening of virtual-only\* shareholder meetings.

\* The phrase "virtual-only shareholder meeting" refers to a meeting of shareholders that is held exclusively through the use of online technology without a corresponding in-person meeting. The term "hybrid shareholder meeting" refers to an in-person, or physical, meeting in which shareholders are permitted to participate online.

## **2. Board of Directors and Statutory Auditors**

The board of directors should promote the interests of shareholders by acting in an oversight and/or advisory role; should consist of a majority of independent directors and/or meet local best practice expectations; should be composed of directors with diverse backgrounds and perspectives; and should be held accountable for actions and results related to their responsibilities. The board of directors should seek to comply with commonly accepted corporate governance best practices as well as the corporate governance standards that are applicable in this market. The board of directors should establish committees to oversee areas such as, but not limited to, audit, executive and non-executive compensation, and director nominations and appointments. The responsibilities of the committees should be publicly disclosed.

### **Voting on Director Nominees in Uncontested Elections**

Vote on director nominees should be determined on a CASE-BY-CASE basis taking into consideration the following:

- The company's committee structure: statutory auditor board structure, U.S.-type three committee structure, or audit committee structure; or
- Adequate disclosure has not been provided in a timely manner; or
- There are clear concerns over questionable finances or restatements; or
- There have been questionable transactions or conflicts of interest; or
- There are any records of abuses against minority shareholder interests; or
- The board fails to meet minimum corporate governance standards; or
- There are reservations about:
  - Director terms
  - Bundling of proposals to elect directors
  - Disclosure of named nominees
  - Overboarded directors

- Director independence
- Specific concerns about the individual or company, such as criminal wrongdoing or breach of fiduciary responsibilities; or
- There are other considerations which may include sanctions from government or authority, violations of laws and regulations, or other issues related to improper business practice, failure to replace management, or egregious actions related to service on other boards.

Generally vote AGAINST top executives when the company has an excessive amount of strategic shareholdings.

Generally vote AGAINST top executives when the company has posted average return on equity (ROE) of less than five percent over the last five fiscal years.

## **Director Independence**

### **Classification of Directors**

#### **Inside Director**

- Employee or executive of the company; and
- Any director who is not classified as an outside director of the company.

#### **Non-Independent Non-Executive Director (affiliated outsider)**

- Any director specifically designated as a representative of a significant shareholder of the company;
- Any director who is/was also an employee or executive of a significant shareholder of the company;
- Beneficial owner (direct or indirect) of at least 10% of the company's stock, or one of the top 10 shareholders, either in economic terms or in voting rights (this may be aggregated if voting power is distributed among more than one member of a defined group, e.g., family members who beneficially own less than 10% individually, but collectively own more than 10%)
- Individuals who are employees or were previously employed at main lenders/banks of the company;
- Relative of a current employee of the company or its affiliates;
- Any director who works or has worked at a company whose shares are held by the company in question as strategic shareholdings (i.e. "cross-shareholdings")
- Any director who has served at a company as an outside director for 12 years or more;
- Any additional relationship or principle considered to compromise independence

#### **Independent Non-Executive Directors (independent outsider)**

- No material connection, either directly or indirectly, to the company other than a board seat.

At companies adopting a board with a statutory auditor committee structure or an audit committee structure, generally vote AGAINST top executives when the board consists of fewer than two independent outside directors or less than 1/3 of the board consists of independent outside directors. Additionally, if the company is a member of the TOPIX 100 index, generally vote AGAINST top executives when less than 1/2 of the board consists of outside directors.

At companies adopting an audit committee structure, generally vote AGAINST affiliated outside directors who are audit committee members.

At companies adopting a U.S.-type three committee structure, generally vote AGAINST members of the Nominating Committee when less than a majority of the board consists of independent outside directors.

At controlled companies adopting board with a statutory auditor structure or an audit committee structure, generally vote AGAINST top executives if the board does not consist of majority independent outside directors.

### **Director Accountability**

Generally vote AGAINST individual outside directors who attend less than 75% of the board and/or committee meetings without a disclosed valid excuse.

Other items considered for an AGAINST vote include specific concerns about the individual or the company, such as criminal wrongdoing or breach of fiduciary responsibilities, sanctions from government or authority, violations of laws and regulations, the presence of inappropriate related party transactions, or other issues related to improper business practices

### **Committee Responsibilities and Expectations**

The board of directors should establish committees to oversee areas such as, but not limited to, audit, executive and non-executive compensation, and director nominations and appointments. The responsibilities of the committees should be publicly disclosed.

We generally support incumbent directors, taking into consideration the below factors.

- Material failures of governance, stewardship, or fiduciary responsibilities at the company, including but not limited to violations of global norms principles and/or other significant global standards;
- Failure to disclose material information;
- Egregious actions related to the director(s)' service on other boards that raise substantial doubt about his or her ability to effectively oversee management and serve the best interests of shareholders at any company;
- The board adopts or renews a poison pill without shareholder approval, does not commit to putting it to shareholder vote within 12 months of adoption (or in the case of a newly public company, does not commit to put the pill to a shareholder vote within 12 months following the IPO), or reneges on a commitment to put the pill to a vote, and has not yet received a withhold/against recommendation for this issue;
- The board failed to act on takeover offers where the majority of the shareholders tendered their shares; or
- If in an extreme situation the board lacks accountability and oversight, coupled with sustained poor performance relative to peers.

Generally vote AGAINST members of the Nominating Committee or top executives if the board diversity is significantly below that of the average in its market; provided that company performance, or other factors, will generally be taken into consideration.

### **Voting on Director Nominees in Contested Elections**

Vote on a CASE-BY-CASE basis in contested elections of directors, e.g., the election of shareholder nominees or the dismissal of incumbent directors, determining which directors are best suited to add value for shareholders.

The analysis will generally be based on, but not limited to, the following major decision factors:

- Company performance relative to its peers;
- Strategy of the incumbents versus the dissidents;
- Independence of board candidates;
- Experience and skills of board candidates;

- Governance profile of the company;
- Evidence of management entrenchment;
- Responsiveness to shareholders;
- Whether a takeover offer has been rebuffed;
- Whether minority or majority representation is being sought.

### **Other Board Related Proposals (Management and Shareholder)**

Generally vote AGAINST management and shareholder proposals introducing classified boards.

Generally vote AGAINST shareholder proposals regarding mandatory retirement ages for directors.

Generally vote AGAINST management and shareholder proposals to alter board structure or size in the context of a fight for control of the company or the board.

### **Independent Board Chair (applicable markets)**

We will generally vote AGAINST shareholder proposals requiring that the chairman's position be filled by an independent director, if the company satisfies 3 of the 4 following criteria:

- Two-thirds independent board;
- A designated, or a rotating, lead director, elected by and from the independent board members with clearly delineated and comprehensive duties;
- Fully independent key committees; and/or
- Established, publicly disclosed, governance guidelines and director biographies/profiles.

### **Statutory Auditor Elections**

Generally vote AGAINST affiliated outside statutory auditors.

For definition of affiliated outsiders, see "Classification of Directors"

Generally vote FOR management nominees taking into consideration the following:

- Adequate disclosure has not been provided in a timely manner;
- There are clear concerns over questionable finances or restatements;
- There have been questionable transactions or conflicts of interest;
- There are any records of abuses against minority shareholder interests;
- The board fails to meet minimum corporate governance standards;
- Specific concerns about the individual or company, such as criminal wrongdoing or breach of fiduciary responsibilities;
- Outside statutory auditor's attendance at less than 75% of the board and statutory auditor meetings without a disclosed valid excuse; or
- Unless there are other considerations which may include sanctions from government or authority, violations of laws and regulations, or other issues related to improper business practice, failure to replace management, or egregious actions related to service on other boards.

### **3. Compensation**

#### **Director Compensation**

Generally vote FOR proposals to award cash fees to non-executive directors unless the amounts are excessive relative to other companies in the country or industry.

Vote non-executive director compensation proposals that include both cash and share-based components on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

Vote proposals that bundle compensation for both non-executive and executive directors into a single resolution on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

Generally vote AGAINST proposals to introduce retirement bonuses for outside directors and/or outside statutory auditors, unless the amounts are disclosed and are not excessive relative to other companies in the country or industry.

#### **Director, Officer, and Auditor Indemnification and Liability Provisions**

Vote proposals seeking indemnification and liability protection for directors and statutory auditors on a CASE-BY- CASE basis.

Generally vote AGAINST proposals to indemnify auditors.

### **4. Shareholder Rights and Defenses**

#### **Antitakeover Mechanisms**

Generally vote AGAINST all antitakeover proposals, unless certain conditions are met to ensure the proposal is intended to enhance shareholder value, including consideration of the company's governance structure, the anti- takeover defense duration, the trigger mechanism and governance, and the intended purpose of the antitakeover defense.

### **5. Strategic Transactions and Capital Structures**

#### **Reorganizations/Restructurings**

Vote reorganizations and restructurings on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

#### **Mergers and Acquisitions**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on mergers and acquisitions, and third-party share issuance requests, taking into account the following based on publicly available information:

- Valuation;
- Market reaction;
- Strategic rationale;
- Management's track record of successful integration of historical acquisitions;
- Presence of conflicts of interest; and
- Governance profile of the combined company.

#### **Dual Class Structures**

Generally vote FOR resolutions that seek to maintain or convert to a one-share, one-vote capital structure.

Generally vote AGAINST requests for the creation or continuation of dual-class capital structures or the creation of new or additional super voting shares.

### **Increases in Authorized Capital**

Generally vote FOR non-specific proposals to increase authorized capital up to 100% over the current authorization unless the increase would leave the company with less than 30% of its new authorization outstanding. The increase should also not be intended as a takeover defense.

Generally vote FOR specific proposals to increase authorized capital to any amount, unless:

- The specific purpose of the increase (such as a share-based acquisition or merger) does not meet guidelines for the purpose being proposed.

Generally vote AGAINST proposals to adopt unlimited capital authorizations.

### **Reduction of Capital**

Generally vote FOR proposals to reduce capital for routine accounting purposes unless the terms are unfavorable to shareholders.

Vote proposals to reduce capital in connection with corporate restructuring on a CASE-BY-CASE basis.

### **Preferred Stock**

Vote CASE-BY-CASE on any requests to issue or modify preferred shares or other share classes

### **Share Repurchase Plans**

We will generally vote FOR share repurchase programs taking into account whether:

- The share repurchase program can be used as a takeover defense;
- There is clear evidence of historical abuse;
- There is no safeguard in the share repurchase program against selective buybacks;
- Pricing provisions and safeguards in the share repurchase program are deemed to be unreasonable in light of market practice.

## **6. Other Management and Shareholder Proposals**

### **Overall Approach**

Management and shareholder proposals considered under this category could include, among others, requests that a company:

- Publish a report or additional information related to the company's business and impact on stakeholders;
- Disclose policies related to specific business practices and/or services;
- Conduct third party audits, reports or studies related to the company's business practices, services and/or impact on stakeholders

When evaluating management and shareholder proposals, the following factors are generally considered:

- Whether the subject of the proposal is considered to be material to the company's business;
- The company's current level of publicly available disclosure, including if the company already discloses similar information through existing reports or policies;
- If the company has implemented or formally committed to the implementation of a reporting program based on a recognized industry group standards or recommendations, such as the International Sustainability Standards Board's Sustainability Accounting Standards, the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board's (SASB) standards, the European Sustainability Reporting Standards, the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosure's (TCFD) recommendations, or a similar standard;
- Whether the information requested concerns business issues that relate to a meaningful percentage of the company's business;
- The degree to which the company's stated position on the issues raised in the proposal could affect its reputation or sales, or leave it vulnerable to a boycott or selective purchasing;
- Whether the company has already responded in some appropriate manner to the request embodied in the proposal;
- What other companies in the relevant industry have done in response to the issue addressed in the proposal;
- Whether the proposal itself is well framed and the cost of preparing the report and/or the implementation is reasonable;
- Whether the subject of the proposal is best left to the discretion of the board;
- Whether the proposal is legally binding for the board;
- Whether the company has material fines or violations in the area and if so, if appropriate actions have already been taken to remedy going forward; and
- Whether providing this information would reveal proprietary or confidential information that would place the company at a competitive disadvantage.