(AINF) Defiance Inference AI Chip ETF

Listed on The Nasdaq Stock Market LLC

(AIPK) Defiance AI Packaging & Testing ETF
(PRAM) Defiance Memory & Photonics ETF
(PLUM) Defiance Plumbing & Electrical ETF

Listed on the Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc.

each, a series of ETF Series Solutions

STATEMENT OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

August 13, 2026

This Statement of Additional Information (the "SAI") is not a prospectus and should be read in conjunction with the Prospectus dated August 13, 2026 for the Defiance Inference AI Chip ETF (the "Inference AI Chip ETF"), the Defiance AI Packaging & Testing ETF (the "AI Packaging & Testing ETF"), the Defiance Memory & Photonics ETF (the "Memory & Photonics ETF"), and the Defiance Plumbing & Electrical ETF (the "Plumbing & Electrical ETF") (each, a "Fund" and, collectively, the "Funds"), each a series of ETF Series Solutions (the "Trust"). Capitalized terms used in this SAI that are not defined have the same meaning as in the Prospectus, unless otherwise noted. A copy of the Prospectus may be obtained without charge, by calling the Funds at 1-800-617-0004 or visiting www.defianceetfs.com.

The Fund's audited financial statements for the most recent fiscal year (when available) are incorporated into this SAI by reference to the Fund's Annual Financial Statements and Additional Information, which will be filed as part of the Fund's Form N-CSR. When available, you may obtain a copy of the Fund's Annual Financial Statements and Additional Information as well as the Fund's Annual Report, each of which will be filed as part of the Funds' first Form N-CSR, without charge by request to the Fund at the website or phone number noted above.

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GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE TRUST

The Trust is an open-end management investment company consisting of multiple investment series. This SAI relates to the Funds. The Trust was organized as a Delaware statutory trust on February 9, 2012. The Trust is registered with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (together with the rules and regulations adopted thereunder, as amended, the "1940 Act"), as an open-end management investment company, and the offering of each Fund's shares ("Shares") is registered under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "Securities Act"). The Trust is governed by its Board of Trustees (the "Board").

Defiance ETFs, LLC ("Defiance" or the "Adviser") serves as the Funds' investment adviser. Tidal Investments LLC ("Tidal") serves as sub-adviser to the Funds (the "Sub-Adviser"). The investment objective of each Fund is to seek investment results that, before fees and expenses, track the performance of a rules-based index, as described in the Prospectus (each, an "Index").

Each Fund offers and issues Shares at its net asset value ("NAV") only in aggregations of a specified number of Shares (each, a "Creation Unit"). Each Fund generally issues Shares in exchange for (a)(i) a basket of securities ("Deposit Securities") and/or (ii) the cash value (*i.e.*, the cash in lieu amount) of any or all of the Deposit Securities ("Deposit Cash") and (b) a specified cash payment ("Cash Component"). Each Fund also generally redeems its Shares only in Creation Unit aggregations for (a)(i) a basket of securities included in its portfolio ("Fund Securities") and/or (ii) the cash value (*i.e.*, the cash in lieu amount) of the Fund Securities and (b) a specified cash payment ("Cash Redemption Amount"). The Trust reserves the right to permit or require the substitution of a cash in lieu amount to replace any Deposit Security or any Fund Security in connection with the purchase or redemption, respectively, of a Creation Unit. Shares of the Inference AI Chip ETF are listed on The Nasdaq Stock Market LLC (an "Exchange"). Shares of the AI Packaging & Testing ETF, Memory & Photonics ETF, and Plumbing & Electrical ETF are listed on the Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc. (an "Exchange"). Shares of the Funds trade or will trade on the relevant Exchange at market prices that may differ from the Shares' NAV. Shares are also redeemable only in Creation Unit aggregations, primarily for a basket of Deposit Securities together with a Cash Component. A Creation Unit of the Inference AI Chip ETF generally consists of 25,000 Shares, though this may change from time to time. A Creation Unit of the AI Packaging & Testing ETF, Memory & Photonics ETF, and Plumbing & Electrical ETF generally consists of 10,000 Shares, though this may change from time to time. As a practical matter, only institutions or large investors purchase or redeem Creation Units. Except when aggregated in Creation Units, Shares are not redeemable securities.

Shares may be issued in advance of receipt of Deposit Securities subject to various conditions, including a requirement to maintain on deposit with the Trust cash at least equal to a specified percentage of the value of the missing Deposit Securities, as set forth in the Participant Agreement (as defined below). The Trust may impose a transaction fee for each creation or redemption. In all cases, such fees will be limited in accordance with the requirements of the SEC applicable to management investment companies offering redeemable securities. As in the case of other publicly traded securities, brokers' commissions on transactions in the secondary market will be based on negotiated commission rates at customary levels.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND RELATED RISKS

Each Fund's investment objective and principal investment strategies are described in the Prospectus. The following information supplements, and should be read in conjunction with, the Prospectus. For a description of certain permitted investments, see "Description of Permitted Investments" in this SAI.

With respect to each Fund's investments, unless otherwise noted, if a percentage limitation on investment is adhered to at the time of investment or contract, a subsequent increase or decrease as a result of market movement or redemption will not result in a violation of such investment limitation.

Non-Diversification

Each Fund is classified as a non-diversified investment company under the 1940 Act. A "non-diversified" classification means that a Fund is not limited by the 1940 Act with regard to the percentage of its total assets that may be invested in the securities of a single issuer. This means that a Fund may invest a greater portion of its total assets in the securities of a single issuer or a small number of issuers than if it was a diversified fund. This may have an adverse effect on a Fund's performance or subject Shares to greater price volatility than more diversified investment companies. Moreover, in pursuing its objective, a Fund may hold the securities of a single issuer in an amount exceeding 10% of the value of the outstanding securities of the issuer, subject to restrictions imposed by the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code").

Although each Fund is non-diversified for purposes of the 1940 Act, the Funds intend to maintain the required level of diversification and otherwise conduct its operations so as to qualify as a "regulated investment company" ("RIC") for purposes of the Code. Compliance with the diversification requirements of the Code may limit the investment flexibility of a Fund and may make it less likely that a Fund will meet its investment objectives. To qualify as a RIC under the Code, a Fund must meet the Diversification Requirement described in the section titled "Federal Income Taxes" in this SAI.

General Risks

The value of a Fund's portfolio securities may fluctuate with changes in the financial condition of an issuer or counterparty, changes in specific economic or political conditions that affect a particular security or issuer and changes in general economic or political conditions. An investor in a Fund could lose money over short or long periods of time.

There can be no guarantee that a liquid market for the securities held by a Fund will be maintained. The existence of a liquid trading market for certain securities may depend on whether dealers will make a market in such securities. There can be no assurance that a market will be made or maintained or that any such market will be or remain liquid. The price at which securities may be sold and the value of Shares will be adversely affected if trading markets for a Fund's portfolio securities are limited or absent, or if bid-ask spreads are wide.

Cyber Security Risk. Investment companies, such as the Funds, and their service providers may be subject to operational and information security risks resulting from cyber attacks. Cyber attacks include, among other behaviors, stealing or corrupting data maintained online or digitally, denial of service attacks on websites, the unauthorized release of confidential information or various other forms of cyber security breaches. Cyber attacks affecting a Fund or the Adviser, Sub-Adviser, custodian, transfer agent, intermediaries and other third-party service providers may adversely impact a Fund. For instance, cyber attacks may interfere with the processing of shareholder transactions, impact a Fund's ability to calculate its NAV, cause the release of private shareholder information or confidential company information, impede trading, subject a Fund to regulatory fines or financial losses, and cause reputational damage. A Fund may also incur additional costs for cyber security risk management purposes. Similar types of cyber security risks are also present for issuers of securities in which a Fund invests, which could result in material adverse consequences for such issuers, and may cause a Fund's investments in such portfolio companies to lose value.

Recent Events. Beginning in the first quarter of 2020, financial markets in the United States and around the world experienced extreme and, in many cases, unprecedented volatility and severe losses due to the global pandemic caused by COVID-19, a novel coronavirus. The pandemic resulted in a wide range of social and economic disruptions, including closed borders, voluntary or compelled quarantines of large populations, stressed healthcare systems, reduced or prohibited domestic or international travel, and supply chain disruptions affecting the United States and many other countries. Some sectors of the economy and individual issuers experienced particularly large losses as a result of these disruptions. Although the immediate effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have dissipated, global markets and economies continue to contend with the ongoing and long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant market volatility and economic disruptions. It is unknown how long circumstances related to the pandemic will persist, whether they will reoccur in the future, whether efforts to support the economy and financial markets will be successful, and what additional implications may follow from the pandemic. The impact of these events and other epidemics or pandemics in the future could adversely affect Fund performance.

Russia's military invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the resulting responses by the United States and other countries, and the potential for wider conflict could increase volatility and uncertainty in the financial markets and adversely affect regional and global economies. The United States and other countries have imposed broad-ranging economic sanctions on Russia, certain Russian individuals, banking entities and corporations, and Belarus as a response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and may impose sanctions on other countries that provide military or economic support to Russia. The sanctions restrict companies from doing business with Russia and Russian companies, prohibit transactions with the Russian central bank and other key Russian financial institutions and entities, ban Russian airlines and ships from using many other countries' airspace and ports, respectively, and place a freeze on certain Russian assets. The sanctions also removed some Russian banks from the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications (SWIFT), the electronic network that connects banks globally to facilitate cross-border payments. In addition, the United States and the United Kingdom have banned oil and other energy imports from Russia, and the European Union has banned most Russian crude oil imports and refined petroleum products, with limited exceptions. The extent and duration of Russia's military actions and the repercussions of such actions (including any retaliatory actions or countermeasures that may be taken by those subject to sanctions, including cyber attacks) are impossible to predict, but could result in significant market disruptions, including in certain industries or sectors, such as the oil and natural gas markets, and may negatively affect global supply chains, inflation and global growth. These and any related events could significantly impact the Fund's performance and the value of an investment in the Fund, even if the Fund does not have direct exposure to Russian issuers or issuers in other countries affected by the invasion.

In addition, the foreign policy agenda of the U.S. administration, which includes the imposition of significant tariffs on foreign countries, including China and long-time U.S. allies, may have a substantial impact on both the U.S. and global economy. In particular, the imposition of increased tariffs by the United States could lead to retaliatory tariffs by foreign countries, increased and prolonged market volatility, and sector-specific downturns in industries reliant on international trade. Most recently, U.S. military operations in Venezuela and Iran, and the resultant changes to those countries' leaders, may have unforeseen consequences on the United States' relations with foreign countries, the economy, and markets generally. These efforts may adversely affect the growth of the global economy and, in turn, have a negative impact on the Fund.

Description of Permitted Investments

The following are descriptions of the Funds' permitted investments and investment practices and the associated risk factors. A Fund will only invest in any of the following instruments or engage in any of the following investment practices if such investment or activity is consistent with a Fund's investment objective and permitted by the Fund's stated investment policies. Each of the permitted investments described below applies to each Fund unless otherwise noted.

Borrowing

Although the Funds do not intend to borrow money, a Fund may do so to the extent permitted by the 1940 Act. Under the 1940 Act, a Fund may borrow up to one-third (1/3) of its total assets. A Fund will borrow money only for short-term or emergency purposes. Such borrowing is not for investment purposes and will be repaid by the borrowing Fund promptly. Borrowing will tend to exaggerate the

effect on NAV of any increase or decrease in the market value of the borrowing Fund's portfolio. Money borrowed will be subject to interest costs that may or may not be recovered by earnings on the securities purchased. A Fund also may be required to maintain minimum average balances in connection with a borrowing or to pay a commitment or other fee to maintain a line of credit; either of these requirements would increase the cost of borrowing over the stated interest rate.

Debt Securities

The Funds may invest in debt securities. In general, a debt security represents a loan of money to the issuer by the purchaser of the security. A debt security typically has a fixed payment schedule that obligates the issuer to pay interest to the lender and to return the lender's money over a certain time period. A company typically meets its payment obligations associated with its outstanding debt securities before it declares and pays any dividend to holders of its equity securities. Bonds, notes and commercial paper are examples of debt securities and differ in the length of the issuer's principal repayment schedule, with bonds carrying the longest repayment schedule and commercial paper the shortest.

Debt securities include a broad array of short-, medium-, and long-term obligations issued by the U.S. or foreign governments, government or international agencies and instrumentalities, and corporate and private issuers of various types. The maturity date is the date on which a fixed-income security matures. This is the date on which the borrower must pay back the borrowed amount, which is known as the principal. Some debt securities represent uncollateralized obligations of their issuers; in other cases, the securities may be backed by specific assets (such as mortgages or other receivables) that have been set aside as collateral for the issuer's obligation. Debt securities generally involve an obligation of the issuer to pay interest or dividends on either a current basis or at the maturity of the security, as well as the obligation to repay the principal amount of the security at maturity. The rate of interest on debt securities may be fixed, floating, or variable. Some securities pay a higher interest rate than the current market rate. An investor may have to pay more than the security's principal to compensate the seller for the value of the higher interest rate. This additional payment is a premium.

Debt securities are subject to credit risk, market risk, and interest rate risk, as discussed in greater detail below. Except to the extent values are affected by other factors such as developments relating to a specific issuer, generally the value of a fixed-income security can be expected to rise when interest rates decline and, conversely, the value of such a security can be expected to fall when interest rates rise. Some debt securities also involve prepayment or call risk. This is the risk that the issuer will repay a Fund the principal on the security before it is due, thus depriving such Fund of a favorable stream of future interest or dividend payments. Such Fund could buy another security, but that other security might pay a lower interest rate. In addition, many debt securities contain call or buy-back features that permit their issuers to call or repurchase the securities from their holders. Such securities may present risks based on payment expectations. Although a Fund would typically receive a premium if an issuer were to redeem a security, if an issuer were to exercise a call option and redeem the security during times of declining interest rates, the Fund may realize a capital loss on its investment if the security was purchased at a premium and such Fund may be forced to replace the called security with a lower yielding security.

Changes by nationally recognized securities rating organizations ("NRSROs") in their ratings of any fixed-income security or the issuer of a fixed-income security and changes in the ability of an issuer to make payments of interest and principal may also affect the value of these investments. Changes in the value of portfolio securities generally will not affect income derived from these securities, but will affect a Fund's NAV.

Duration is an estimate of how much a bond's price will fluctuate in response to a change in interest rates. In general, the value of a fixed-income security with positive duration will generally decline if interest rates increase, whereas the value of a security with negative duration will generally decline if interest rates decrease. If interest rates rise by one percentage point, the price of debt securities with an average duration of five years would be expected to decline by about 5%. If rates decrease by a percentage point, the price of debt securities with an average duration of five years would be expected to rise by about 5%. The greater the duration of a bond (whether positive or negative), the greater its percentage price volatility. Only a pure discount bond – that is, one with no coupon or sinking-fund payments – has a duration equal to the remaining maturity of the bond, because only in this case does the present value of the final redemption payment represent the entirety of the present value of the bond. For all other bonds, duration is less than maturity.

The Funds may invest in variable- or floating-rate securities (including, but not limited to, floating rate notes issued by the U.S. Treasury), which bear interest at rates subject to periodic adjustment or provide for periodic recovery of principal on demand. The value of a Fund's investment in certain of these securities may depend on such Fund's right to demand that a specified bank, broker-dealer, or other financial institution either purchase such securities from a Fund at par or make payment on short notice to a Fund of unpaid principal and/or interest on the securities.

A Fund's investments in debt securities may subject the Fund to the following risks:

Credit risk. Debt securities are subject to the risk of an issuer's (or other party's) failure or inability to meet its obligations under the security. Multiple parties may have obligations under a debt security. An issuer or borrower may fail to pay principal and interest when due. A guarantor, insurer or credit support provider may fail to provide the agreed upon protection. A counterparty to a transaction may fail to perform its side of the bargain. An intermediary or agent interposed between the investor and other parties may fail to perform the terms of its service. Also, performance under a debt security may be linked to the obligations of other persons who may fail to meet their obligations. The credit risk associated with a debt security could increase to the extent that the Fund's ability to benefit fully from its

investment in the security depends on the performance by multiple parties of their respective contractual or other obligations. The market value of a debt security is also affected by the market's perception of the creditworthiness of the issuer.

The Fund may incur substantial losses on debt securities that are inaccurately perceived to present a different amount of credit risk than they actually do by the market, the Sub-Adviser or the rating agencies. Credit risk is generally greater where less information is publicly available, where fewer covenants safeguard the investors' interests, where collateral may be impaired or inadequate, where little legal redress or regulatory protection is available, or where a party's ability to meet obligations is speculative. Additionally, any inaccuracy in the information used by the Fund to evaluate credit risk may affect the value of securities held by the Fund.

Obligations under debt securities held by the Fund may never be satisfied or, if satisfied, only satisfied in part.

Some securities are subject to risks as a result of a credit downgrade or default by a government, or its agencies or, instrumentalities. Credit risk is a greater concern for high-yield debt securities and debt securities of issuers whose ability to pay interest and principal may be considered speculative. Debt securities are typically classified as investment grade-quality (medium to highest credit quality) or below investment grade-quality (commonly referred to as high-yield or junk bonds). Many individual debt securities are rated by a third party source, such as Moody's Investors Service (Moody's) or Standard & Poor's Financial Services (S&P®), to help describe the creditworthiness of the issuer.

Credit ratings risk. Using credit ratings to evaluate debt securities can involve certain risks. For example, ratings assigned by the rating agencies are based upon an analysis completed at the time of the rating of the obligor's ability to pay interest and repay principal. Rating agencies typically rely to a large extent on historical data which may not accurately represent present or future circumstances. Ratings do not purport to reflect the risk of fluctuations in market value of the debt security and are not absolute standards of quality and only express the rating agency's current opinion of an obligor's overall financial capacity to pay its financial obligations. A credit rating is not a statement of fact or a recommendation to purchase, sell or hold a debt obligation. Also, credit quality can change suddenly and unexpectedly, and credit ratings may not reflect the issuer's current financial condition or events since the security was last rated. Rating agencies may have a financial interest in generating business, including from the arranger or issuer of the security that normally pays for that rating, and providing a low rating might affect the rating agency's prospects for future business. While rating agencies have policies and procedures to address this potential conflict of interest, there is a risk that these policies will fail to prevent a conflict of interest from impacting the rating.

Extension risk. The Fund is subject to extension risk, which is the risk that the market value of some debt securities, particularly mortgage securities and certain asset-backed securities, may be adversely affected when bond calls or prepayments on underlying mortgages or other assets are less or slower than anticipated. Extension risk may result from, for example, rising interest rates or unexpected developments in the markets for the underlying assets or mortgages. As a consequence, the security's effective maturity will be extended, resulting in an increase in interest rate sensitivity to that of a longer-term instrument. Extension risk generally increases as interest rates rise. This is because, in a rising interest rate environment, the rate of prepayment and exercise of call or buy-back rights generally falls and the rate of default and delayed payment generally rises. When the maturity of an investment is extended in a rising interest rate environment, a below-market interest rate is usually locked-in and the value of the security reduced. This risk is greater for fixed-rate than variable-rate debt securities.

Income risk. The Fund is subject to income risk, which is the risk that the Fund's income will decline during periods of falling interest rates or when the Fund experiences defaults on debt securities it holds. The Fund's income declines when interest rates fall because, as the Fund's higher-yielding debt securities mature or are prepaid, the Fund must re-invest the proceeds in debt securities that have lower, prevailing interest rates. The amount and rate of distributions that the Fund's shareholders receive are affected by the income that the Fund receives from its portfolio holdings. If the income is reduced, distributions by the Fund to shareholders may be less.

Fluctuations in income paid to the Fund are generally greater for variable rate debt securities. The Fund will be deemed to receive taxable income on certain securities which pay no cash payments until maturity, such as zero-coupon securities. The Fund may be required to sell portfolio securities that it would otherwise continue to hold in order to obtain sufficient cash to make the distribution to shareholders required for U.S. tax purposes.

Inflation risk. The market price of debt securities generally falls as inflation increases because the purchasing power of the future income and repaid principal is expected to be worth less when received by the Fund. Debt securities that pay a fixed rather than variable interest rate are especially vulnerable to inflation risk because variable-rate debt securities may be able to participate, over the long term, in rising interest rates which have historically corresponded with long-term inflationary trends.

Interest rate risk. The market value of debt securities generally varies in response to changes in prevailing interest rates. Interest rate changes can be sudden and unpredictable. In addition, short-term and long-term rates are not necessarily correlated to each other as short-term rates tend to be influenced by government monetary policy while long-term rates are market driven and may be influenced by macroeconomic events (such as economic expansion or contraction), inflation expectations, as well as supply and demand. During periods of declining interest rates, the market value of debt securities generally increases. Conversely, during periods of rising interest rates, the market value of debt securities generally declines. This occurs because new debt securities are likely to be issued with higher interest rates as interest rates increase, making the old or outstanding debt securities less attractive. In general, the market prices of long-term debt securities or securities that make little (or no) interest payments are more sensitive to interest rate fluctuations than shorter-term debt securities. The longer the Fund's average weighted portfolio duration, the greater the potential impact a change in interest rates

will have on its share price. Also, certain segments of the fixed income markets, such as high quality bonds, tend to be more sensitive to interest rate changes than other segments, such as lower-quality bonds.

Prepayment risk. Debt securities, especially bonds that are subject to "calls," such as asset-backed or mortgage-backed securities, are subject to prepayment risk if their terms allow the payment of principal and other amounts due before their stated maturity. Amounts invested in a debt security that has been "called" or "prepaid" will be returned to an investor holding that security before expected by the investor. In such circumstances, the investor, such as a fund, may be required to re-invest the proceeds it receives from the called or prepaid security in a new security which, in periods of declining interest rates, will typically have a lower interest rate. Prepayment risk is especially prevalent in periods of declining interest rates and will result for other reasons, including unexpected developments in the markets for the underlying assets or mortgages. For example, a decline in mortgage interest rates typically initiates a period of mortgage refinancings. When homeowners refinance their mortgages, the investor in the underlying pool of mortgage-backed securities (such as a fund) receives its principal back sooner than expected, and must reinvest at lower, prevailing rates.

Securities subject to prepayment risk are often called during a declining interest rate environment and generally offer less potential for gains and greater price volatility than other income-bearing securities of comparable maturity.

Call risk is similar to prepayment risk and results from the ability of an issuer to call, or prepay, a debt security early. If interest rates decline enough, the debt security's issuer can save money by repaying its callable debt securities and issuing new debt securities at lower interest rates.

Depositary Receipts

To the extent a Fund invests in stocks of foreign corporations, a Fund's investment in securities of foreign companies may be in the form of depositary receipts or other securities convertible into securities of foreign issuers. American Depositary Receipts ("ADRs") are dollar-denominated receipts representing interests in the securities of a foreign issuer, which securities may not necessarily be denominated in the same currency as the securities into which they may be converted. ADRs are receipts typically issued by U.S. banks and trust companies which evidence ownership of underlying securities issued by a foreign corporation. Generally, ADRs in registered form are designed for use in domestic securities markets and are traded on exchanges or over-the-counter in the United States. Global Depositary Receipts ("GDRs"), European Depositary Receipts ("EDRs"), and International Depositary Receipts ("IDRs") are similar to ADRs in that they are certificates evidencing ownership of shares of a foreign issuer; however, GDRs, EDRs, and IDRs may be issued in bearer form and denominated in other currencies and are generally designed for use in specific or multiple securities markets outside the U.S. EDRs, for example, are designed for use in European securities markets, while GDRs are designed for use throughout the world. Depositary receipts will not necessarily be denominated in the same currency as their underlying securities.

The Funds will not invest in any unlisted Depositary Receipts or any Depositary Receipt that the Sub-Adviser deems to be illiquid or for which pricing information is not readily available. In addition, all Depositary Receipts generally must be sponsored. However, a Fund may invest in unsponsored Depositary Receipts under certain limited circumstances. The issuers of unsponsored Depositary Receipts are not obligated to disclose material information in the United States and, therefore, there may be less information available regarding such issuers and there may not be a correlation between such information and the value of the Depositary Receipts. The use of a Depositary Receipt may increase tracking error relative to the applicable Index if the Index includes the foreign security instead of the Depositary Receipt.

Derivatives

Generally, derivatives are financial instruments whose value depends on or is derived from, the value of one or more underlying assets, reference rates, or indices or other market factors (a "reference instrument") and may relate to stocks, bonds, interest rates, credit, currencies, commodities or related indices. Derivative instruments can provide an efficient means to gain or reduce exposure to the value of a reference instrument without actually owning or selling the instrument. Some common types of derivatives include swaps, options, futures, and forwards.

Rule 18f-4 under the 1940 Act ("Rule 18f-4") imposes limits on the amount of leverage risk to which a fund may be exposed through derivatives that may oblige the fund to make payments or incur additional obligations in the future. Rule 18f-4 imposed requirements and restrictions on a fund's use of derivatives, including swaps, and eliminated the asset segregation framework previously used by funds, including the Fund, to comply with Section 18 of the 1940 Act. Under Rule 18f-4, a fund's investment in such derivatives is limited through a value-at-risk ("VaR") test. Rule 18f-4 requires funds whose use of derivatives is more than a limited specified exposure to establish and maintain a derivatives risk management program, subject to oversight by a fund's board of trustees, and appoint a derivatives risk manager. To the extent the Fund's compliance with Rule 18f-4 changes how the Fund uses swaps, Rule 18f-4 may adversely affect the Fund's performance and/or increase costs related to the Fund's use of derivatives.

Derivative instruments may be used to modify the effective duration of the Fund's portfolio investments. Derivative instruments may also be used for "hedging," which means that they may be used when the Adviser or Sub-Adviser seeks to protect the Fund's investments from a decline in value resulting from changes to interest rates, market prices, currency fluctuations, or other market factors. Derivative instruments may also be used for other purposes, including to seek to increase liquidity, provide efficient portfolio management, broaden investment opportunities (including taking short or negative positions), implement a tax or cash management strategy, gain exposure to a particular security or segment of the market and/or enhance total return. However derivative instruments are

used, their successful use is not assured and will depend upon, among other factors, the Adviser's or Sub-Adviser's ability to gauge relevant market movements.

Derivative instruments may be used for purposes of direct hedging. Direct hedging means that the transaction must be intended to reduce a specific risk exposure of a portfolio security or its denominated currency and must also be directly related to such security or currency. The Fund's use of derivative instruments may be limited from time to time by policies adopted by the Board.

To the extent the Fund invests in derivative instruments subject to regulation by the CFTC, it will seek to do so in reliance upon and in accordance with CFTC Rule 4.5. Specifically, pursuant to CFTC Rule 4.5, the Trust may claim exclusion from the definition of CPO, and thus from having to register as a CPO, with regard to the Fund that enters into commodity futures, commodity options or swaps solely for "bona fide hedging purposes," or that limits its investment in commodities to a "de minimis" amount, as defined in CFTC rules, so long as Shares are not marketed as interests in a commodity pool or other vehicle for trading in commodity futures, commodity options or swaps. The Trust, on behalf of the Fund, has filed a notice of eligibility for exclusion from the definition of the term "commodity pool operator" in accordance with CFTC Rule 4.5. Therefore, neither the Trust nor the Fund is deemed to be a "commodity pool" or "commodity pool operator" under the Commodity Exchange Act ("CEA"), and they are not subject to registration or regulation as such under the CEA. It is expected that the Fund will be able to operate pursuant to the limitations under CFTC Rule 4.5 without materially adversely affecting its ability to achieve its investment objective. If, however, these limitations were to make it difficult for the Fund to achieve its investment objective in the future, the Trust may determine to operate the Fund as a regulated commodity pool pursuant to the Trust's CPO registration or to reorganize or close the Fund or to materially change the Fund's investment objective and strategy. In addition, as of the date of this SAI, the Adviser is not deemed to be a "commodity pool operator" or "commodity trading adviser" with respect to the advisory services it provides to the Fund.

Swaps. Generally, swap agreements are contracts between the Fund and another party (the swap counterparty) involving the exchange of payments on specified terms over periods ranging from a few days to multiple years. A swap agreement may be negotiated bilaterally and traded OTC between the two parties (for an uncleared swap) or, in some instances, must be transacted through a FCM and cleared through a clearinghouse that serves as a central counterparty (for a cleared swap). In a basic swap transaction, the Fund agrees with the swap counterparty to exchange the returns (or differentials in rates of return) and/or cash flows earned or realized on a particular "notional amount" or value of predetermined underlying reference instruments. The notional amount is the set dollar or other value selected by the parties to use as the basis on which to calculate the obligations that the parties to a swap agreement have agreed to exchange. The parties typically do not actually exchange the notional amount. Instead, they agree to exchange the returns that would be earned or realized if the notional amount were invested in given investments or at given interest rates. Examples of returns that may be exchanged in a swap agreement are those of a particular security, a particular fixed or variable interest rate, a particular non-U.S. currency, or a "basket" of securities representing a particular index. Swaps can also be based on credit and other events.

The Fund will generally enter into swap agreements on a net basis, which means that the two payment streams that are to be made by the Fund and its counterparty with respect to a particular swap agreement are netted out, with the Fund receiving or paying, as the case may be, only the net difference in the two payments. The Fund's obligations (or rights) under a swap agreement that is entered into on a net basis will generally be the net amount to be paid or received under the agreement based on the relative values of the obligations of each party upon termination of the agreement or at set valuation dates. The Fund will accrue its obligations under a swap agreement daily (offset by any amounts the counterparty owes the Fund). If the swap agreement does not provide for that type of netting, the full amount of the Fund's obligations will be accrued on a daily basis.

Risks of Swaps Generally. The use of swap transactions is a highly specialized activity, which involves investment techniques and risks different from those associated with ordinary portfolio securities transactions. Whether the Fund will be successful in using swap agreements to achieve its investment goal will depend on the ability of the Adviser and Sub-Adviser to structure, value, collateralize and maintain swap positions that provide the intended exposure to the Index or its constituents and on each counterparty's ability and willingness to perform its obligations. The use of swaps may cause the Fund's returns to differ from the returns of the referenced securities or Index. If the Adviser and Sub-Adviser, in using swap agreements, are incorrect in their forecasts of market values, interest rates, inflation, currency exchange rates or other applicable factors, the investment performance of the Fund will be less than its performance would have been if it had not used the swap agreements.

The risk of loss to the Fund for swap transactions that are entered into on a net basis depends on which party is obligated to pay the net amount to the other party. If the counterparty is obligated to pay the net amount to the Fund, the risk of loss to the Fund is loss of the entire amount that the Fund is entitled to receive. If the Fund is obligated to pay the net amount, the Fund's risk of loss is generally limited to that net amount. If the swap agreement involves the exchange of the entire principal value of a security, the entire principal value of that security is subject to the risk that the other party to the swap will default on its contractual delivery obligations. In addition, the Fund's risk of loss also includes any margin at risk in the event of default by the counterparty (in an uncleared swap) or the central counterparty or FCM (in a cleared swap), plus any transaction costs.

Because bilateral swap agreements are structured as two-party contracts and may have terms of greater than seven days, these swaps may be considered to be illiquid and, therefore, subject to the Fund's limitation on investments in illiquid securities. If a swap transaction is particularly large or if the relevant market is illiquid, the Fund may not be able to establish or liquidate a position at an advantageous time or price, which may result in significant losses. Participants in the swap markets are not required to make

continuous markets in the swap contracts they trade. Participants could refuse to quote prices for swap contracts or quote prices with an unusually wide spread between the price at which they are prepared to buy and the price at which they are prepared to sell. Some swap agreements entail complex terms and may require a greater degree of subjectivity in their valuation. However, the swap markets have grown substantially in recent years, with a large number of financial institutions acting both as principals and agents, utilizing standardized swap documentation. As a result, the swap markets have become increasingly liquid. In addition, central clearing and the trading of cleared swaps on public facilities are intended to increase liquidity. The Adviser, under the supervision of the Board, is responsible for determining and monitoring the liquidity of the Fund's swap transactions.

Rules adopted under the Dodd-Frank Act require centralized reporting of detailed information about many swaps, whether cleared or uncleared. This information is available to regulators and also, to a more limited extent and on an anonymous basis, to the public. Reporting of swap data is intended to result in greater market transparency. This may be beneficial to funds that use swaps in their trading strategies. However, public reporting imposes additional recordkeeping burdens on these funds, and the safeguards established to protect anonymity are not yet tested and may not provide protection of the Fund's identities as intended.

Certain U.S. Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") positions may limit the Fund's ability to use swap agreements in a desired tax strategy. It is possible that developments in the swap markets and/or the laws relating to swap agreements, including potential government regulation, could adversely affect the Fund's ability to benefit from using swap agreements, or could have adverse tax consequences.

Risks of Potential Government Regulation of Derivatives. It is possible that additional government regulation of various types of derivative instruments, including futures and swap agreements, may limit or prevent the Fund from using such instruments as part of its investment strategy, and could ultimately prevent the Fund from being able to achieve its investment objectives. It is impossible to fully predict the effects of past, present or future legislation and regulation in this area, but the effects could be substantial and adverse. It is possible that legislative and regulatory activity could limit or restrict the ability of the Fund to use certain instruments as part of its investment strategy. Limits or restrictions applicable to the counterparties with which the Fund engages in derivative transactions could also prevent the Fund from using certain instruments.

There is a possibility of future regulatory changes altering, perhaps to a material extent, the nature of an investment in the Fund or the ability of the Fund to continue to implement its investment strategies. The futures and swaps markets are subject to comprehensive statutes, regulations, and margin requirements. In addition, the SEC, the CFTC and the exchanges are authorized to take extraordinary actions in the event of a market emergency, including, for example, the implementation or reduction of speculative position limits, the implementation of higher margin requirements, the establishment of daily price limits, and the suspension of trading. The regulation of futures and swap transactions in the U.S. is a rapidly changing area of law and is subject to modification by government action. In particular, Title VII of the Dodd-Frank Act set forth a new legislative framework for OTC derivatives, including financial instruments, such as swaps, in which the Fund may invest. As a result, swap dealers, major market participants and swap counterparties have become subject to new and/or additional regulations, requirements, compliance burdens and associated costs, the long-term impact of which are not known at this time and may adversely affect the Fund.

Derivatives Regulatory Risk

New rules and regulations could, among other things, restrict the Fund's ability to engage in, or increase the cost to the Fund of, derivatives transactions, for example, by making some types of derivatives no longer available to the Fund, increasing margin or capital requirements, or otherwise limiting liquidity or increasing transaction costs. The costs of derivatives transactions also may increase due to regulatory requirements imposed on clearing members, which may cause clearing members to raise their fees to cover the costs of additional capital requirements and other regulatory changes applicable to the clearing members. Certain aspects of these regulations are still being implemented, so their potential impact on the Fund and the financial system are not yet known. While the regulations and central clearing of some derivatives transactions are designed to reduce systemic risk (*i.e.*, the risk that the interdependence of large derivatives dealers could cause them to suffer liquidity, solvency or other challenges simultaneously), there is no assurance that the mechanisms imposed under the regulations will achieve that result, and in the meantime, as noted above, central clearing, minimum margin requirements and related requirements expose the Fund to new kinds of risks and costs.

Rule 18f-4 under the 1940 Act ("Rule 18f-4") imposes limits on the amount of leverage risk to which a fund may be exposed through the use of such derivatives and requires the adoption of certain derivatives risk management measures. Under Rule 18f-4, a fund's investment in such derivatives is limited through value-at-risk ("VaR") testing. Specifically, the VaR of the Fund's portfolio may not exceed 200% of the VaR of a specific unleveraged designated reference portfolio using relative VaR testing (or 20% of the value of the fund's net assets using absolute VaR testing). Generally, a fund whose derivatives exposure exceeds 10% of its net assets is required to establish and maintain a comprehensive derivatives risk management program, subject to oversight by a fund's board of trustees, and appoint a derivatives risk manager. Funds whose derivatives exposure does not exceed 10% of their net assets may be considered limited derivatives users and are not required to comply with all of the conditions of Rule 18f-4, including the adoption of a derivatives risk management program and appointment of a derivatives risk manager, though they are required to adopt policies and procedures designed to manage derivatives risk. Compliance with Rule 18f-4 may adversely affect the Fund's performance and/or increase costs related to the Fund's use of derivatives.

Equity Securities

Equity securities, such as the common stocks of an issuer, are subject to stock market fluctuations and therefore may experience volatile changes in value as market conditions, consumer sentiment or the financial condition of the issuers change. A decrease in value of the equity securities in a Fund's portfolio may also cause the value of the Fund's Shares to decline.

An investment in the Funds should be made with an understanding of the risks inherent in an investment in equity securities, including the risk that the financial condition of issuers may become impaired or that the general condition of the stock market may deteriorate (either of which may cause a decrease in the value of a Fund's portfolio securities and therefore a decrease in the value of Shares). Common stocks are susceptible to general stock market fluctuations and to volatile increases and decreases in value as market confidence and perceptions change. These investor perceptions are based on various and unpredictable factors, including expectations regarding government, economic, monetary and fiscal policies; inflation and interest rates; economic expansion or contraction; and global or regional political, economic, public health, or banking crises.

Holders of common stocks incur more risk than holders of preferred stocks and debt obligations because common stockholders, as owners of the issuer, generally have inferior rights to receive payments from the issuer in comparison with the rights of creditors or holders of debt obligations or preferred stocks. Further, unlike debt securities, which typically have a stated principal amount payable at maturity (whose value, however, is subject to market fluctuations prior thereto), or preferred stocks, which typically have a liquidation preference and which may have stated optional or mandatory redemption provisions, common stocks have neither a fixed principal amount nor a maturity. Common stock values are subject to market fluctuations as long as the common stock remains outstanding.

When-Issued Securities: A when-issued security is one whose terms are available and for which a market exists, but which has not been issued. When a Fund engages in when-issued transactions, it relies on the other party to consummate the sale. If the other party fails to complete the sale, a Fund may miss the opportunity to obtain the security at a favorable price or yield.

When purchasing a security on a when-issued basis, a Fund assumes the rights and risks of ownership of the security, including the risk of price and yield changes. At the time of settlement, the value of the security may be more or less than the purchase price. The yield available in the market when the delivery takes place also may be higher than those obtained in the transaction itself. Because a Fund does not pay for the security until the delivery date, these risks are in addition to the risks associated with its other investments.

Decisions to enter into "when-issued" transactions will be considered on a case-by-case basis when necessary to maintain continuity in a company's index membership. A Fund will segregate cash or liquid securities equal in value to commitments for the when-issued transactions. A Fund will segregate additional liquid assets daily so that the value of such assets is equal to the amount of the commitments.

Types of Equity Securities:

Common Stocks — Common stocks represent units of ownership in a company. Common stocks usually carry voting rights and earn dividends. Unlike preferred stocks, which are described below, dividends on common stocks are not fixed but are declared at the discretion of the company's board of directors.

Preferred Stocks — Preferred stocks are also units of ownership in a company. Preferred stocks normally have preference over common stock in the payment of dividends and the liquidation of the company. However, in all other respects, preferred stocks are subordinated to the liabilities of the issuer. Unlike common stocks, preferred stocks are generally not entitled to vote on corporate matters. Types of preferred stocks include adjustable-rate preferred stock, fixed dividend preferred stock, perpetual preferred stock, and sinking fund preferred stock.

Generally, the market values of preferred stock with a fixed dividend rate and no conversion element vary inversely with interest rates and perceived credit risk.

Rights and Warrants — A right is a privilege granted to existing shareholders of a corporation to subscribe to shares of a new issue of common stock before it is issued. Rights normally have a short life of usually two to four weeks, are freely transferable and entitle the holder to buy the new common stock at a lower price than the public offering price. Warrants are securities that are usually issued together with a debt security or preferred stock and that give the holder the right to buy a proportionate amount of common stock at a specified price. Warrants are freely transferable and are traded on major exchanges. Unlike rights, warrants normally have a life that is measured in years and entitles the holder to buy common stock of a company at a price that is usually higher than the market price at the time the warrant is issued. Corporations often issue warrants to make the accompanying debt security more attractive.

An investment in warrants and rights may entail greater risks than certain other types of investments. Generally, rights and warrants do not carry the right to receive dividends or exercise voting rights with respect to the underlying securities, and they do not represent any rights in the assets of the issuer. In addition, their value does not necessarily change with the value of the underlying securities, and they cease to have value if they are not exercised on or before their expiration date. Investing in rights and warrants increases the potential profit or loss to be realized from the investment as compared with investing the same amount in the underlying securities.

Medium-Sized Companies — Investors in medium-sized companies typically take on greater risk and price volatility than they would by investing in larger, more established companies. This increased risk may be due to the greater business risks of their medium size, limited markets and financial resources, narrow product lines and frequent lack of management depth. The securities of medium-sized

companies are often traded in the over-the-counter market and might not be traded in volumes typical of securities traded on a national securities exchange. Thus, the securities of medium capitalization companies are likely to be less liquid, and subject to more abrupt or erratic market movements, than securities of larger, more established companies.

Smaller Companies — The securities of small- and mid-capitalization companies may be more vulnerable to adverse issuer, market, political, or economic developments than securities of larger-capitalization companies. The securities of small- and mid-capitalization companies generally trade in lower volumes and are subject to greater and more unpredictable price changes than larger capitalization stocks or the stock market as a whole. Some small- or mid-capitalization companies have limited product lines, markets, and financial and managerial resources and tend to concentrate on fewer geographical markets relative to larger capitalization companies. There is typically less publicly available information concerning small- and mid-capitalization companies than for larger, more established companies. Small- and mid-capitalization companies also may be particularly sensitive to changes in interest rates, government regulation, borrowing costs, and earnings.

Tracking Stocks — The Funds may invest in tracking stocks. A tracking stock is a separate class of common stock whose value is linked to a specific business unit or operating division within a larger company and which is designed to "track" the performance of such business unit or division. The tracking stock may pay dividends to shareholders independent of the parent company. The parent company, rather than the business unit or division, generally is the issuer of tracking stock. However, holders of the tracking stock may not have the same rights as holders of the company's common stock.

Exchange-Traded Funds ("ETFs")

The Funds may invest in shares of other investment companies (including ETFs). As the shareholder of another ETF, a Fund would bear, along with other shareholders, its pro rata portion of the other ETF's expenses, including advisory fees. Such expenses are in addition to the expenses each Fund pays in connection with its own operations. A Fund's investments in other ETFs may be limited by applicable law.

Disruptions in the markets for the securities underlying ETFs purchased or sold by a Fund could result in losses on investments in ETFs. ETFs also carry the risk that the price a Fund pays or receives may be higher or lower than the ETF's NAV. ETFs are also subject to certain additional risks, including the risks of illiquidity and of possible trading halts due to market conditions or other reasons, based on the policies of the relevant exchange. ETFs and other investment companies in which a Fund may invest may be leveraged, which would increase the volatility of a Fund's NAV.

Illiquid Investments

Each Fund may invest up to an aggregate amount of 15% of its net assets in illiquid investments, as such term is defined by Rule 22e-4 under the 1940 Act. A Fund may not invest in illiquid investments if, as a result of such investment, more than 15% of the Fund's net assets would be invested in illiquid investments. Illiquid investments include securities subject to contractual or other restrictions on resale and other instruments that lack readily available markets. The inability of a Fund to dispose of illiquid investments readily or at a reasonable price could impair a Fund's ability to raise cash for redemptions or other purposes. The liquidity of securities purchased by a Fund that are eligible for resale pursuant to Rule 144A, except for certain 144A bonds, will be monitored by a Fund on an ongoing basis. In the event that more than 15% of a Fund's net assets are invested in illiquid investments, the Fund, in accordance with Rule 22e-4(b)(1)(iv), will report the occurrence to both the Board and the SEC and seek to reduce its holdings of illiquid investments within a reasonable period of time.

Investment Company Securities

The Funds may invest in the securities of other investment companies, including exchange traded funds ("ETFs") and money market funds, subject to applicable limitations under Section 12(d)(1) of the 1940 Act and Rule 12d1-4 under the 1940 Act. Investing in another pooled vehicle exposes a Fund to all the risks of that pooled vehicle. Pursuant to Section 12(d)(1), a Fund may invest in the securities of another investment company (the "acquired company") provided that such Fund, immediately after such purchase or acquisition, does not own in the aggregate: (i) more than 3% of the total outstanding voting stock of the acquired company; (ii) securities issued by the acquired company having an aggregate value in excess of 5% of the value of the total assets of such Fund; or (iii) securities issued by the acquired company and all other investment companies (other than treasury stock of such Fund) having an aggregate value in excess of 10% of the value of the total assets of the applicable Fund. To the extent allowed by law or regulation, each Fund may invest its assets in securities of investment companies that are money market funds in excess of the limits discussed above.

The Funds may rely on Section 12(d)(1)(F) and Rule 12d1-3 under the 1940 Act, which provide an exemption from Section 12(d)(1) that allow the Funds to invest all of their assets in other registered funds, including ETFs, if, among other conditions: (a) a Fund, together with its affiliates, acquires no more than three percent of the outstanding voting stock of any acquired fund, and (b) the sales load charged on a Fund's Shares is no greater than the limits set forth in Rule 2341 of the Rules of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc. ("FINRA"). In addition, the Funds may invest beyond the limits of Section 12(d)(1) subject to certain terms and conditions set forth in Rule 12d1-4 under the 1940 Act, including that the Funds enter into an agreement with the acquired company.

If a Fund invests in and, thus, is a shareholder of, another investment company, the Fund's shareholders will indirectly bear the Fund's proportionate share of the fees and expenses paid by such other investment company, including advisory fees, in addition to both the

management fees payable directly by the Fund to the Fund's own investment adviser and the other expenses that the Fund bears directly in connection with the Fund's own operations.

Section 12(d)(1) of the 1940 Act restricts investments by registered investment companies ("Investing Funds") in the securities of other registered investment companies, including the Funds. The acquisition of Shares by Investing Funds is subject to the restrictions of Section 12(d)(1) of the 1940 Act, except as may be permitted by exemptive rules under the 1940 Act such as Rule 12d1-4, subject to certain terms and conditions, including that the Investing Fund enter into an agreement with the Funds regarding the terms of the investment.

Non-U.S. Securities

The Funds may invest in non-U.S. equity securities. Investments in non-U.S. equity securities involve certain risks that may not be present in investments in U.S. securities. For example, non-U.S. securities may be subject to currency risks or to political or economic instability. There may be less information publicly available about a non-U.S. issuer than about a U.S. issuer, and a foreign issuer may or may not be subject to uniform accounting, auditing and financial reporting standards and practices comparable to those in the U.S. Investments in non-U.S. securities may be subject to withholding or other taxes and may be subject to additional trading, settlement, custodial, and operational risks. Other risks of investing in such securities include political or economic instability in the country involved, the difficulty of predicting international trade patterns, and the possible imposition of tariffs and exchange controls. The prices of such securities may be more volatile than those of domestic securities. With respect to certain foreign countries, there is a possibility of expropriation of assets or nationalization, imposition of withholding taxes on dividend or interest payments, difficulty in obtaining and enforcing judgments against foreign entities or diplomatic developments which could affect investment in these countries. Losses and other expenses may be incurred in converting between various currencies in connection with purchases and sales of foreign securities. Since foreign exchanges may be open on days when the Funds do not price their Shares, the value of the securities in a Fund's portfolio may change on days when shareholders will not be able to purchase or sell the Fund's Shares. Conversely, Shares may trade on days when foreign exchanges are closed. Each of these factors can make investments in the Funds more volatile and potentially less liquid than other types of investments.

Non-U.S. stock markets may not be as developed or efficient as, and may be more volatile than, those in the U.S. While the volume of shares traded on non-U.S. stock markets generally has been growing, such markets usually have substantially less volume than U.S. markets. Therefore, a Fund's investment in non-U.S. equity securities may be less liquid and subject to more rapid and erratic price movements than comparable securities listed for trading on U.S. exchanges. Non-U.S. equity securities may trade at price/earnings multiples higher than comparable U.S. securities and such levels may not be sustainable. There may be less government supervision and regulation of foreign stock exchanges, brokers, banks and listed companies abroad than in the U.S. Moreover, settlement practices for transactions in foreign markets may differ from those in U.S. markets. Such differences may include delays beyond periods customary in the U.S. and practices, such as delivery of securities prior to receipt of payment, that increase the likelihood of a failed settlement, which can result in losses to a Fund. The value of non-U.S. investments and the investment income derived from them may also be affected unfavorably by changes in currency exchange control regulations. Foreign brokerage commissions, custodial expenses and other fees are also generally higher than for securities traded in the U.S. This may cause a Fund to incur higher portfolio transaction costs than domestic equity funds. Fluctuations in exchange rates may also affect the earning power and asset value of the foreign entity issuing a security, even one denominated in U.S. dollars. Dividend and interest payments may be repatriated based on the exchange rate at the time of disbursement, and restrictions on capital flows may be imposed.

Set forth below for certain markets in which a Fund may invest are brief descriptions of some of the conditions and risks in each such market.

Investments in Australia. Investments in Australian issuers may subject the Fund to regulatory, political, currency, security, and economic risk specific to Australia. The Australian economy is heavily dependent on exports from the agricultural and mining sectors. This makes the Australian economy susceptible to fluctuations in the commodity markets. Australia is also dependent on trading with key trading partners.

Investments in Canada. The Canadian economy is reliant on the sale of natural resources and commodities, which can pose risks such as the fluctuation of prices and the variability of demand for exportation of such products. Changes in spending on Canadian products by the economies of other countries or changes in any of these economies may cause a significant impact on the Canadian economy. In particular, the United States is Canada's largest trading partner, and the imposition of tariffs on Canadian goods by the United States may have a significant negative impact on the Canadian economy.

Investments in China and Hong Kong. Investing in ADRs with underlying shares organized, listed or domiciled in China involves special considerations not typically associated with investing in countries with more democratic governments or more established economies or securities markets. Such risks may include: (i) the risk of nationalization or expropriation of assets or confiscatory taxation; (ii) greater social, economic and political uncertainty (including the risk of war); (iii) dependency on exports and the corresponding importance of international trade; (iv) increasing competition from Asia's other low-cost emerging economies; (v) higher rates of inflation; (vi) controls on foreign investment and limitations on repatriation of invested capital; (vii) greater governmental involvement in and control over the economy; (viii) the risk that the Chinese government may decide not to continue to support the economic reform programs implemented since 1978 and could return to the prior, completely centrally planned, economy; (ix) the fact that Chinese companies, particularly those located in China, may be smaller, less seasoned and newly

organized; (x) the differences in, or lack of, auditing and financial reporting standards which may result in unavailability of material information about issuers, particularly in China; (xi) the fact that statistical information regarding the economy of China may be inaccurate or not comparable to statistical information regarding the U.S. or other economies; (xii) the less extensive, and still developing, regulation of the securities markets, business entities and commercial transactions; (xiii) the fact that the settlement period of securities transactions in foreign markets may be longer; (xiv) the fact that the willingness and ability of the Chinese government to support the Chinese and Hong Kong economies and markets is uncertain; (xv) the risk that it may be more difficult, or impossible, to obtain and/or enforce a judgment than in other countries; (xvi) the rapid and erratic nature of growth, particularly in China, resulting in inefficiencies and dislocations; (xvii) the risk that, because of the degree of interconnectivity between the economies and financial markets of China and Hong Kong, any sizable reduction in the demand for goods from China, or an economic downturn in China, could negatively affect the economy and financial market of Hong Kong as well; and (xviii) the risk that certain companies in a Fund's Index may have dealings with countries subject to sanctions or embargoes imposed by the U.S. Government or identified as state sponsors of terrorism.

China is also vulnerable economically to the impact of a public health crisis, which could depress consumer demand, reduce economic output, and potentially lead to market closures, travel restrictions, and quarantines, all of which would negatively impact China's economy and could affect the economies of its trading partners.

After many years of steady growth, the growth rate of China's economy has recently slowed. Although this slowdown was to some degree intentional, the slowdown has also slowed the once rapidly growing Chinese real estate market and left local governments with high debts with few viable means to raise revenue, especially with the fall in demand for housing. Despite its attempts to restructure its economy towards consumption, China remains heavily dependent on exports. Accordingly, China is susceptible to economic downturns abroad, including any weakness in demand from its major trading partners, including the United States, Japan, and Europe. In addition, China's aging infrastructure, worsening environmental conditions, rapid and inequitable urbanization, quickly widening urban and rural income gap, domestic unrest and provincial separatism all present major challenges to the country. Further, China's territorial claims, including its land reclamation projects and the establishment of an Air Defense Identification Zone over islands claimed and occupied by Japan, are another source of tension and present risks to diplomatic and trade relations with certain of China's regional trade partners.

Investments in Hong Kong are also subject to certain political risks not associated with other investments. Following the establishment of the People's Republic of China by the Communist Party in 1949, the Chinese government renounced various debt obligations incurred by China's predecessor governments, which obligations remain in default, and expropriated assets without compensation. There can be no assurance that the Chinese government will not take similar action in the future. Investments in China and Hong Kong involve risk of a total loss due to government action or inaction. China has committed by treaty to preserve Hong Kong's autonomy and its economic, political and social freedoms for 50 years from the July 1, 1997 transfer of sovereignty from Great Britain to China. However, if China would exert its authority so as to alter the economic, political or legal structures or the existing social policy of Hong Kong, investor and business confidence in Hong Kong could be negatively affected, which in turn could negatively affect markets and business performance. In addition, the Hong Kong dollar trades at a fixed exchange rate in relation to (or, is "pegged" to) the U.S. dollar, which has contributed to the growth and stability of the Hong Kong economy. However, it is uncertain how long the currency peg will continue or what effect the establishment of an alternative exchange rate system would have on the Hong Kong economy. Because each Fund's NAV is denominated in U.S. dollars, the establishment of an alternative exchange rate system could result in a decline in a Fund's NAV. These and other factors could have a negative impact on each Fund's performance.

Investments in Variable Interest Entities ("VIEs"). In seeking exposure to Chinese companies through Hong Kong issuers, the Fund may invest in VIE structures. VIE structures can vary, but generally consist of a U.S.-listed company with contractual arrangements, through one or more wholly-owned special purpose vehicles, with a Chinese company that ultimately provides the U.S.-listed company with contractual rights to exercise control over and obtain economic benefits from the Chinese company. Although the U.S.-listed company in a VIE structure has no equity ownership in the underlying Chinese company, the VIE contractual arrangements permit the VIE structure to consolidate its financial statements with those of the underlying Chinese company. The VIE structure enables foreign investors, such as the Fund, to obtain investment exposure similar to that of an equity owner in a Chinese company in situations in which the Chinese government has restricted the non-Chinese ownership of such company. As a result, an investment in a VIE structure subjects the Fund to the risks associated with the underlying Chinese company. In its efforts to monitor, regulate and/or control foreign investment and participation in the ownership and operation of Chinese companies, including in particular those within the technology, telecommunications and education industries, the Chinese government may intervene or seek to control the operations, structure, or ownership of Chinese companies, including VIEs, to the disadvantage of foreign investors, such as the Fund. Intervention by the Chinese government with respect to a VIE could significantly and adversely affect the Chinese company's performance or the enforceability of the company's contractual arrangements with the VIE and thus, the value of the Fund's investment in the VIE. In addition to the risk of government intervention, the Fund's investment in a VIE structure is subject to the risk that the underlying Chinese company (or its officers, directors, or Chinese equity owners) may breach the contractual arrangements with the other entities in the VIE structure, or that Chinese law changes in a way that affects the enforceability of these arrangements, or those contracts are otherwise not enforceable under Chinese law, in which case the Fund may suffer significant losses on its VIE investments with little or no recourse available.

Investments in Japan. The Japanese economy has recently emerged from a prolonged economic downturn. Since 2000, Japan's economic growth rate has remained relatively low. Its economy is characterized by government intervention and protectionism, an unstable financial services sector, low domestic consumption, and relatively high unemployment. Japan's economy is heavily dependent on international trade and has been adversely affected by trade tariffs and competition from emerging economies. As such, economic growth is heavily dependent on continued growth in international trade, government support of the financial services sector, among other troubled sectors, and consistent government policy. Any changes or trends in these economic factors could have a significant impact on Japan's economy overall and may negatively affect the Fund's investment. Japan's economy is also closely tied to its two largest trading partners, the U.S. and China. Economic volatility in either nation may create volatility for Japan's economy as well. Additionally, as China has increased its role with Japan as a trading partner, political tensions between the countries has become strained. Any increase or decrease in such tension may have consequences for investment in or exposure to Japanese issuers.

In March 2011, a massive earthquake and tsunami struck northeastern Japan causing major damage to the country's domestic energy supply, including damage to nuclear power plants. In the wake of this natural disaster, Japan's financial markets fluctuated dramatically and the resulting economic distress affected Japan's recovery from its recession. The government injected capital into the economy and proposed plans for massive spending on reconstruction efforts in disaster-affected areas to stimulate economic growth. The full extent of the disaster's impact on Japan's economy and foreign investment in Japan is difficult to estimate. The risks of natural disasters of varying degrees, such as earthquakes and tsunamis, and the resulting damage, continue to exist. These and other factors could have a negative impact on a Fund's performance.

Investments in South Korea. Investments in South Korean issuers involve risks that are specific to South Korea, including legal, regulatory, political, currency, security and economic risks. Substantial political tensions exist between North Korea and South Korea and recently these political tensions have escalated. The outbreak of hostilities between the two nations, or even the threat of an outbreak of hostilities, will likely adversely impact the South Korean economy. In addition, South Korea's economic growth potential has recently been on a decline, mainly because of a rapidly aging population and structural problems.

Investments in Taiwan. Investments in Taiwanese issuers may subject a Fund to legal, regulatory, political, currency and economic risks that are specific to Taiwan. Specifically, Taiwan's geographic proximity and history of political contention with China have resulted in ongoing tensions between the two countries. These tensions may materially affect the Taiwanese economy and its securities market. Taiwan's economy is export-oriented, so it depends on an open world trade regime and remains vulnerable to fluctuations in the world economy. The Taiwanese economy is dependent on the economies of Asia, mainly those of Japan and China, and the United States. Reduction in spending by any of these countries on Taiwanese products and services or negative changes in any of these economies may cause an adverse impact on the Taiwanese economy.

Other Short-Term Instruments

The Funds may invest in short-term instruments, including money market instruments, on an ongoing basis to provide liquidity or for other reasons. Money market instruments are generally short-term investments that may include but are not limited to: (i) shares of money market funds; (ii) obligations issued or guaranteed by the U.S. government, its agencies or instrumentalities (including government-sponsored enterprises); (iii) negotiable certificates of deposit ("CDs"), bankers' acceptances, fixed time deposits and other obligations of U.S. and foreign banks (including foreign branches) and similar institutions; (iv) commercial paper rated at the date of purchase "Prime-1" by Moody's or "A-1" by Standard & Poor's ("S&P") or, if unrated, of comparable quality as determined by the Sub-Adviser; (v) non-convertible corporate debt securities (*e.g.*, bonds and debentures) with remaining maturities at the date of purchase of not more than 397 days and that satisfy the rating requirements set forth in Rule 2a-7 under the 1940 Act; and (vi) short-term U.S. dollar-denominated obligations of foreign banks (including U.S. branches) that, in the opinion of the Sub-Adviser, are of comparable quality to obligations of U.S. banks which may be purchased by a Fund. Any of these instruments may be purchased on a current or a forward-settled basis. Money market instruments also include shares of money market funds. Time deposits are non-negotiable deposits maintained in banking institutions for specified periods of time at stated interest rates. Bankers' acceptances are time drafts drawn on commercial banks by borrowers, usually in connection with international transactions.

Repurchase Agreements

Each Fund may invest in repurchase agreements to generate income from its excess cash balances and to invest securities lending cash collateral. A repurchase agreement is an agreement under which a Fund acquires a financial instrument (*e.g.*, a security issued by the U.S. government or an agency thereof, a banker's acceptance or a certificate of deposit) from a seller, subject to resale to the seller at an agreed upon price and date (normally, the next Business Day). A repurchase agreement may be considered a loan collateralized by securities. The resale price reflects an agreed upon interest rate effective for the period the instrument is held by the applicable Fund and is unrelated to the interest rate on the underlying instrument.

In these repurchase agreement transactions, the securities acquired by a Fund (including accrued interest earned thereon) must have a total value in excess of the value of the repurchase agreement and are held by the Custodian until repurchased. No more than an aggregate of 15% of a Fund's net assets will be invested in illiquid investments, including repurchase agreements having maturities longer than seven days and securities subject to legal or contractual restrictions on resale, or for which there are no readily available market quotations.

The use of repurchase agreements involves certain risks. For example, if the other party to the agreement defaults on its obligation to repurchase the underlying security at a time when the value of the security has declined, a Fund may incur a loss upon disposition of the security. If the other party to the agreement becomes insolvent and subject to liquidation or reorganization under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code or other laws, a court may determine that the underlying security is collateral for a loan by a Fund not within the control of the Fund and, therefore, the Fund may not be able to substantiate its interest in the underlying security and may be deemed an unsecured creditor of the other party to the agreement.

Securities Lending

Each Fund may lend portfolio securities in an amount up to one-third of its total assets to brokers, dealers and other financial institutions. In a portfolio securities lending transaction, a Fund receives from the borrower an amount equal to the interest paid or the dividends declared on the loaned securities during the term of the loan as well as the interest on the collateral securities, less any fees (such as finders or administrative fees) the Fund pays in arranging the loan. A Fund may share the interest it receives on the collateral securities with the borrower. The terms of each Fund's loans permit each Fund to reacquire loaned securities on five business days' notice or in time to vote on any important matter. Loans are subject to termination at the option of the applicable Fund or borrower at any time, and the borrowed securities must be returned when the loan is terminated. The Funds may pay fees to arrange for securities loans.

The SEC currently requires that the following conditions must be met whenever a Fund's portfolio securities are loaned: (1) the Fund must receive at least 100% cash collateral from the borrower; (2) the borrower must increase such collateral whenever the market value of the securities rises above the level of such collateral; (3) the Fund must be able to terminate the loan at any time; (4) the Fund must receive reasonable interest on the loan, as well as any dividends, interest or other distributions on the loaned securities, and any increase in market value; (5) the Fund may pay only reasonable custodian fees approved by the Board in connection with the loan; (6) while voting rights on the loaned securities may pass to the borrower, the Board must terminate the loan and regain the right to vote the securities if a material event adversely affecting the investment occurs; and (7) the Fund may not loan its portfolio securities so that the value of the loaned securities is more than one-third of its total asset value, including collateral received from such loans. These conditions may be subject to future modification. Such loans will be terminable at any time upon specified notice. A Fund might experience the risk of loss if the institution with which it has engaged in a portfolio loan transaction breaches its agreement with the Fund. In addition, the Funds will not enter into any portfolio security lending arrangement having a duration of longer than one year. The principal risk of portfolio lending is potential default or insolvency of the borrower. In either of these cases, a Fund could experience delays in recovering securities or collateral or could lose all or part of the value of the loaned securities. As part of participating in a lending program, the applicable Fund may be required to invest in collateralized debt or other securities that bear the risk of loss of principal. In addition, all investments made with the collateral received are subject to the risks associated with such investments. If such investments lose value, a Fund will have to cover the loss when repaying the collateral.

Any loans of portfolio securities are fully collateralized based on values that are marked-to-market daily. Any securities that a Fund may receive as collateral will not become part of the Fund's investment portfolio at the time of the loan and, in the event of a default by the borrower, the Fund will, if permitted by law, dispose of such collateral except for such part thereof that is a security in which the Fund is permitted to invest. During the time securities are on loan, the borrower will pay a Fund any accrued income on those securities, and the Fund may invest the cash collateral and earn income or receive an agreed-upon fee from a borrower that has delivered cash-equivalent collateral.

Tax Risk

As with any investment, you should consider how your investment in Shares will be taxed. The tax information in the Prospectus and this SAI is provided as general information. You should consult your own tax professional about the tax consequences of an investment in Shares.

Unless your investment in Shares is made through a tax-exempt entity or tax-deferred retirement account, such as an individual retirement account, you need to be aware of the possible tax consequences when a Fund makes distributions or you sell Shares.

U.S. Government Securities

Each Fund may invest in U.S. government securities. Securities issued or guaranteed by the U.S. government or its agencies or instrumentalities include U.S. Treasury securities, which are backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. Treasury and which differ only in their interest rates, maturities, and times of issuance. U.S. Treasury bills have initial maturities of one-year or less; U.S. Treasury notes have initial maturities of one to ten years; and U.S. Treasury bonds generally have initial maturities of greater than ten years. Certain U.S. government securities are issued or guaranteed by agencies or instrumentalities of the U.S. government including, but not limited to, obligations of U.S. government agencies or instrumentalities such as the Federal National Mortgage Association ("Fannie Mae"), the Government National Mortgage Association ("Ginnie Mae"), the Small Business Administration, the Federal Farm Credit Administration, the Federal Home Loan Banks, Banks for Cooperatives (including the Central Bank for Cooperatives), the Federal Land Banks, the Federal Intermediate Credit Banks, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Export-Import Bank of the United States, the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Federal Financing Bank, the Student Loan Marketing Association, the National Credit Union Administration and the Federal Agricultural Mortgage Corporation ("Farmer Mac").

Some obligations issued or guaranteed by U.S. government agencies and instrumentalities, including, for example, Ginnie Mae pass-through certificates, are supported by the full faith and credit of the U.S. Treasury. Other obligations issued by or guaranteed by federal

agencies, such as those securities issued by Fannie Mae, are supported by the discretionary authority of the U.S. government to purchase certain obligations of the federal agency, while other obligations issued by or guaranteed by federal agencies, such as those of the Federal Home Loan Banks, are supported by the right of the issuer to borrow from the U.S. Treasury. Although the U.S. government provides financial support to such U.S. government-sponsored federal agencies, no assurance can be given that the U.S. government will always do so, since the U.S. government is not so obligated by law. U.S. Treasury notes and bonds typically pay coupon interest semi-annually and repay the principal at maturity.

On September 7, 2008, the U.S. Treasury announced a federal takeover of Fannie Mae and the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation ("Freddie Mac"), placing the two federal instrumentalities in conservatorship. Under the takeover, the U.S. Treasury agreed to acquire $1 billion of senior preferred stock of each instrumentality and obtained warrants for the purchase of common stock of each instrumentality (the "Senior Preferred Stock Purchase Agreement" or "Agreement"). Under the Agreement, the U.S. Treasury pledged to provide up to $200 billion per instrumentality as needed, including the contribution of cash capital to the instrumentalities in the event their liabilities exceed their assets. This was intended to ensure that the instrumentalities maintain a positive net worth and meet their financial obligations, preventing mandatory triggering of receivership. On December 24, 2009, the U.S. Treasury announced that it was amending the Agreement to allow the $200 billion cap on the U.S. Treasury's funding commitment to increase as necessary to accommodate any cumulative reduction in net worth over the next three years. As a result of this Agreement, the investments of holders, including the Funds, of mortgage-backed securities and other obligations issued by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac are protected.

The total public debt of the United States as a percentage of gross domestic product has grown rapidly since the beginning of the 2008–2009 financial downturn. Although high debt levels do not necessarily indicate or cause economic problems, they may create certain systemic risks if sound debt management practices are not implemented. A high national debt can raise concerns that the U.S. government will not be able to make principal or interest payments when they are due. This increase has also necessitated the need for the U.S. Congress to negotiate adjustments to the statutory debt limit to increase the cap on the amount the U.S. government is permitted to borrow to meet its existing obligations and finance current budget deficits. In August 2023, Fitch lowered its long-term sovereign credit rating on the U.S. In explaining the downgrade, Fitch cited, among other reasons, expected fiscal deterioration of the U.S. government and extended and contentious negotiations related to raising the government's debt ceiling. Future downgrades could increase volatility in domestic and foreign financial markets, result in higher interest rates, lower prices of U.S. Treasury securities and increase the costs of different kinds of debt. Any controversy or ongoing uncertainty regarding the statutory debt ceiling negotiations may impact the U.S. long-term sovereign credit rating and may cause market uncertainty. As a result, market prices and yields of securities supported by the full faith and credit of the U.S. government may be adversely affected.

INVESTMENT RESTRICTIONS

The Trust has adopted the following investment restrictions as fundamental policies with respect to the Funds. These restrictions cannot be changed with respect to a Fund without the approval of the holders of a majority of the Fund's outstanding voting securities. For the purposes of the 1940 Act, a "majority of outstanding shares" means the vote of the lesser of: (1) 67% or more of the voting securities of a Fund present at the meeting if the holders of more than 50% of the Fund's outstanding voting securities are present or represented by proxy; or (2) more than 50% of the outstanding voting securities of a Fund.

Except with the approval of a majority of the outstanding voting securities, each Fund may not:

1. Concentrate its investments (*i.e.*, invest more than 25% of its net assets) in a particular industry or group of related industries, except that the Fund will concentrate to approximately the same extent that its Index concentrates in the securities of such particular industry or group of related industries. For purposes of this limitation, securities of the U.S. government (including its agencies and instrumentalities), repurchase agreements collateralized by U.S. government securities, and tax-exempt securities of state or municipal governments and their political subdivisions are not considered to be issued by members of any industry.
2. Borrow money or issue senior securities (as defined under the 1940 Act), except to the extent permitted under the 1940 Act.
3. Make loans, except to the extent permitted under the 1940 Act.
4. Purchase or sell real estate unless acquired as a result of ownership of securities or other instruments, except to the extent permitted under the 1940 Act. This shall not prevent a Fund from investing in securities or other instruments backed by real estate, REITs or securities of companies engaged in the real estate business.
5. Purchase or sell physical commodities unless acquired as a result of ownership of securities or other instruments, except to the extent permitted under the 1940 Act. This shall not prevent a Fund from purchasing or selling options and futures contracts or from investing in securities or other instruments backed by physical commodities.
6. Underwrite securities issued by other persons, except to the extent permitted under the 1940 Act.

In addition to the investment restrictions adopted as fundamental policies as set forth above, the Funds observe the following non-fundamental restrictions, which may be changed without a shareholder vote. The following non-fundamental policies may be changed without shareholder approval upon 60 days' written notice to shareholders.

1. Under normal circumstances, the Inference AI Chip ETF invests at least 80% of its net assets (plus borrowings for investment purposes) in AI Chip Companies (as defined in the Prospectus). The Fund's investments in AI Chip Companies will primarily

consist of equity securities (domestic and foreign) but may include total return swap agreements that provide exposure to AI Chip Companies.

2. Under normal circumstances, the AI Packaging & Testing ETF invests at least 80% of its net assets (plus borrowings for investment purposes) in AI Packaging & Testing Companies (as defined in the Prospectus). The Fund's investments in AI Packaging & Testing Companies will primarily consist of equity securities (domestic and foreign) but may include total return swap agreements that provide exposure to AI Packaging & Testing Companies.

3. Under normal circumstances, the Memory & Photonics ETF invests at least 80% of its net assets (plus borrowings for investment purposes) in Memory & Photonics Companies (as defined in the Prospectus). The Fund's investments in Memory & Photonics Companies will primarily consist of equity securities (domestic and foreign) but may include total return swap agreements that provide exposure to Memory & Photonics Companies.

4. Under normal circumstances, the Plumbing & Electrical ETF invests at least 80% of its net assets (plus borrowings for investment purposes) in Plumbing & Electrical Companies (as defined in the Prospectus). The Fund's investments in Plumbing & Electrical Companies will primarily consist of domestic equity securities but may include total return swap agreements that provide exposure to Plumbing & Electrical Companies.

In determining its compliance with the fundamental investment restriction on concentration, a Fund will consider the investments of other investment companies in which such Fund invests to the extent it has sufficient information about such investment companies. With respect to a Fund's investments in affiliated investment companies, the Fund will consider its entire investment in any investment company with a policy to concentrate, or having otherwise disclosed that it is concentrated, in a particular industry or group of related industries as being invested in such industry or group of related industries.

If a percentage limitation is adhered to at the time of investment or contract, a later increase or decrease in percentage resulting from any change in value or total or net assets will not result in a violation of such restriction, except that the percentage limitation with respect to the borrowing of money will be observed continuously.

The following descriptions of certain provisions of the 1940 Act may assist investors in understanding the above policies and restrictions:

Concentration. The SEC has defined concentration as investing more than 25% of a Fund's net assets in an industry or group of industries, with certain exceptions.

Borrowing. The 1940 Act presently allows a Fund to borrow from a bank (including pledging, mortgaging or hypothecating assets) in an amount up to 33 1/3% of its total assets (not including temporary borrowings up to 5% of its total assets).

Senior Securities. Senior securities may include any obligation or instrument issued by a Fund evidencing indebtedness. The 1940 Act generally prohibits a fund from issuing senior securities. An exemptive rule under the 1940 Act, however, permits a fund to enter into transactions that might otherwise be deemed to be senior securities, such as derivative transactions, reverse repurchase agreements and similar financing transactions, and short sales, subject to certain conditions.

Lending. Under the 1940 Act, a Fund may only make loans if expressly permitted by its investment policies. The Funds' current investment policy on lending is that a Fund may not make loans if, as a result, more than 33 1/3% of its total assets would be lent to other parties, except that a Fund may: (i) purchase or hold debt instruments in accordance with its investment objective and policies; (ii) enter into repurchase agreements; and (iii) engage in securities lending as described in this SAI.

Real Estate and Commodities. The 1940 Act does not directly restrict a Fund's ability to invest in real estate or commodities, but the 1940 Act requires every investment company to have a fundamental investment policy governing such investments.

Underwriting. Under the 1940 Act, underwriting securities involves the Funds purchasing securities directly from an issuer for the purpose of selling (distributing) them or participating in any such activity either directly or indirectly.

EXCHANGE LISTING AND TRADING

Shares are listed for trading and trade throughout the day on the Exchange.

There can be no assurance that a Fund will continue to meet the requirements of the Exchange necessary to maintain the listing of Shares. The Exchange will consider the suspension of trading in, and will initiate delisting proceedings of, the Shares if any of the requirements set forth in the Exchange rules, including compliance with Rule 6c-11(c) under the 1940 Act, are not continuously maintained or such other event shall occur or condition shall exist that, in the opinion of the Exchange, makes further dealings on the Exchange inadvisable. The Exchange will remove the Shares of a Fund from listing and trading upon termination of such Fund.

The Trust reserves the right to adjust the price levels of Shares in the future to help 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 the applicable Fund.

MANAGEMENT OF THE TRUST

Board Responsibilities. The management and affairs of the Trust and its series are overseen by the Board, which elects the officers of the Trust who are responsible for administering the day-to-day operations of the Trust and the Funds. The Board has approved contracts, as described below, under which certain companies provide essential services to the Trust.

The day-to-day business of the Trust, including the management of risk, is performed by third-party service providers, such as the Adviser, the Sub-Adviser, the Distributor, and the Administrator. The Board is responsible for overseeing the Trust's service providers and, thus, has oversight responsibility with respect to risk management performed by those service providers. Risk management seeks to identify and address risks, *i.e.*, events or circumstances that could have material adverse effects on the business, operations, shareholder services, investment performance or reputation of a Fund. The Funds and their service providers employ a variety of processes, procedures and controls to identify such events or circumstances, to lessen the probability of their occurrence and/or to mitigate the effects of such events or circumstances if they do occur. Each service provider is responsible for one or more discrete aspects of the Trust's business (*e.g.,* the Sub-Adviser is responsible for the day-to-day management of each Fund's portfolio investments) and, consequently, for managing the risks associated with those aspects for which it is responsible. The Board has emphasized to the Funds' service providers the importance of maintaining vigorous risk management.

The Board's role in risk oversight begins before the inception of the Funds, at which time certain of the Funds' service providers present the Board with information concerning the investment objectives, strategies, and risks of the Funds as well as proposed investment limitations for the Funds. Additionally, the Adviser and Sub-Adviser provide the Board with an overview of, among other things, their investment philosophy, brokerage practices, and compliance infrastructure. Thereafter, the Board continues its oversight function as various personnel, including the Trust's Chief Compliance Officer, as well as personnel of the Sub-Adviser, and other service providers such as the Funds' independent registered public accounting firm, make periodic reports to the Audit Committee or to the Board with respect to various aspects of risk management. The Board and the Audit Committee oversee efforts by management and service providers to manage risks to which the Funds may be exposed.

The Board is responsible for overseeing the nature, extent, and quality of the services provided to the Funds by the Adviser and the Sub-Adviser and receives information about those services at its regular meetings. In addition, on an annual basis (following the initial two-year period), in connection with its consideration of whether to renew the Investment Advisory Agreement with the Adviser, and Sub-Advisory Agreement with the Sub-Adviser, the Board or its designee may meet with the Adviser and/or Sub-Adviser to review such services. Among other things, the Board regularly considers the Adviser's and Sub-Adviser's adherence to each Fund's investment restrictions and compliance with various Fund policies and procedures and with applicable securities regulations. The Board also reviews information about each Fund's performance and each Fund's investments, including, for example, portfolio holdings schedules.

The Trust's Chief Compliance Officer reports regularly to the Board to review and discuss compliance issues and Fund, Adviser, and Sub-Adviser risk assessments. At least annually, the Trust's Chief Compliance Officer provides the Board with a report reviewing the adequacy and effectiveness of the Trust's policies and procedures and those of its service providers, including the Adviser and the Sub-Adviser. The report addresses the operation of the policies and procedures of the Trust and each service provider since the date of the last report; any material changes to the policies and procedures since the date of the last report; any recommendations for material changes to the policies and procedures; and any material compliance matters since the date of the last report.

The Board receives reports from the Funds' service providers regarding operational risks and risks related to the valuation and liquidity of portfolio securities. Annually, the Funds' independent registered public accounting firm reviews with the Audit Committee its audit of the Funds' financial statements, focusing on major areas of risk encountered by the Funds and noting any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in the Funds' internal controls. Additionally, in connection with its oversight function, the Board oversees Fund management's implementation of disclosure controls and procedures, which are designed to ensure that information required to be disclosed by the Trust in its periodic reports with the SEC are recorded, processed, summarized, and reported within the required time periods. The Board also oversees the Trust's internal controls over financial reporting, which comprise policies and procedures designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the reliability of the Trust's financial reporting and the preparation of the Trust's financial statements.

From their review of these reports and discussions with the Adviser and Sub-Adviser, the Chief Compliance Officer, independent registered public accounting firm and other service providers, the Board and the Audit Committee learn in detail about the material risks of each Fund, thereby facilitating a dialogue about how management and service providers identify and mitigate those risks.

The Board recognizes that not all risks that may affect a Fund can be identified and/or quantified, that it may not be practical or cost-effective to eliminate or mitigate certain risks, that it may be necessary to bear certain risks (such as investment-related risks) to achieve a Fund's goals, and that the processes, procedures and controls employed to address certain risks may be limited in their effectiveness. Moreover, reports received by the Board as to risk management matters are typically summaries of the relevant information. Most of the Funds' investment management and business affairs are carried out by or through the Adviser, Sub-Adviser, and other service providers, each of which has an independent interest in risk management but whose policies and the methods by which one or more risk management functions are carried out 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 of the foregoing and other factors, the Board's ability to monitor and manage risk, as a practical matter, is subject to limitations.

Members of the Board. There are three members of the Board, and all three members are not interested persons of the Trust, as that term is defined in the 1940 Act (the "Independent Trustees"). Mr. Michael A. Castino serves as Chair of the Board and as the Trust's Lead Independent Trustee. As Lead Independent Trustee, Mr. Castino acts as a spokesperson for the Independent Trustees in between meetings of the Board, serves as a liaison for the Independent Trustees with the Trust's service providers, officers, and legal counsel to discuss ideas informally, and participates in setting the agenda for meetings of the Board and separate meetings or executive sessions of the Independent Trustees.

The Board is comprised entirely of Independent Trustees. There is an Audit Committee of the Board that is chaired by an Independent Trustee and comprised solely of Independent Trustees. However, the Audit Committee currently does not have a Chair due to the recent death of the Trustee who had most recently served as the Audit Committee's Chair. The Board is developing a plan to appoint a new Audit Committee Chair. The Audit Committee Chair presides at the Audit Committee meetings, participates in formulating agendas for Audit Committee meetings, and coordinates with management to serve as a liaison between the Independent Trustees and management on matters within the scope of responsibilities of the Audit Committee as set forth in its Board-approved charter. There is a Nominating and Governance Committee of the Board that is chaired by an Independent Trustee and comprised solely of Independent Trustees. The Nominating and Governance Committee Chair presides at the Nominating and Governance Committee meetings, participates in formulating agendas for Nominating and Governance Committee meetings, and coordinates with management to serve as a liaison between the Independent Trustees and management on matters within the scope of responsibilities of the Nominating and Governance Committee as set forth in its Board-approved charter. The Trust has determined its leadership structure is appropriate given the specific characteristics and circumstances of the Trust. The Trust made this determination in consideration of, among other things, the fact that the Independent Trustees of the Trust constitute the entire Board, the number of Independent Trustees that constitute the Board, the amount of assets under management in the Trust, and the number of funds overseen by the Board. The Board also believes that its leadership structure facilitates the orderly and efficient flow of information to the Independent Trustees from Fund management.

Additional information about each Trustee of the Trust is set forth below. The address of each Trustee of the Trust is c/o U.S. Bank Global Fund Services, 615 E. Michigan Street, Milwaukee, WI 53202.

Name and Year of Birth	Position Held with the Trust	Term of Office and Length of Time Served	Principal Occupation(s) During Past 5 Years	Number of Portfolios in Fund Complex Overseen by Trustee	Other Directorships Held by Trustee During Past 5 Years
Independent Trustees					
Michael A. Castino Born: 1967	Lead Independent Trustee and Chair	Indefinite term; Trustee since 2014; Chair since 2013	President, Sound Capital Solutions LLC (since 2023); Senior Vice President, U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC (2013–2023); Managing Director of Index Services, Zacks Investment Management (2011–2013).	67	None.
David A. Massart Born: 1967	Trustee and Nominating and Governance Committee Chair	Indefinite term; Trustee since 2012; Committee Chair since 2023	Partner and Managing Director, Beacon Pointe Advisors, LLC (since 2022); Co-Founder and Chief Investment Strategist, Next Generation Wealth Management, Inc. (2005-2021).	67	Independent Trustee, Managed Portfolio Series (22 portfolios) (since 2011).
Janet D. Olsen Born: 1956	Trustee	Indefinite term; since 2018	Retired; formerly Managing Director and General Counsel, Artisan Partners Limited Partnership (investment adviser) (2000–2013); Executive Vice President and General Counsel, Artisan Partners Asset Management Inc. (2012–2013); Vice President and General Counsel, Artisan Funds, Inc. (investment company) (2001–2012).	67	Independent Trustee, PPM Funds (2 portfolios) (2017–2024).

Individual Trustee Qualifications. The Trust has concluded that each of the Trustees should serve on the Board because of their ability to review and understand information about the Funds provided to them by management, to identify and request other information they may deem relevant to the performance of their duties, to question management and other service providers regarding material factors bearing on the management and administration of the Funds, and to exercise their business judgment in a manner that serves the best interests of each Fund's shareholders. The Trust has concluded that each of the Trustees should serve as a Trustee based on his or her own experience, qualifications, attributes and skills as described below.

The Trust has concluded that Mr. Castino should serve as Trustee because of the experience he gained as Chair of the Trust since 2013, as a senior officer of U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC, doing business as U.S. Bank Global Fund Services ("Fund Services" or the "Transfer Agent"), from 2012 to 2023, and in his past roles with investment management firms and indexing firms involved with ETFs, as well as his experience in and knowledge of the financial services industry. Mr. Castino currently serves as President of Sound Capital Solutions, LLC, an SEC registered investment adviser.

The Trust has concluded that Mr. Massart should serve as a Trustee because of his substantial industry experience, including over three decades working with high net worth individuals, families, trusts, and retirement accounts to identify strategic asset allocation decisions, evaluate and select investment managers, and manage client relationships, and the experience he has gained as serving as a trustee of another investment company trust since 2011. He is currently a Managing Director at Beacon Pointe Advisors, LLC. Previously, he served as Chief Investment Strategist and lead member of the investment committees of the SEC-registered investment advisory firm he co-founded. He also previously served as Managing Director of Strong Private Client and as a Manager of Wells Fargo Investments, LLC.

The Trust has concluded that Ms. Olsen should serve as a Trustee because of her substantial industry experience, including nearly 20 years as a practicing attorney representing primarily registered investment companies and investment advisers, over a decade serving as a senior executive of an investment management firm and a related public company, and the experience she has gained by serving as an executive officer of another investment company from 2001 to 2012. Ms. Olsen most recently served as Managing Director and General Counsel of Artisan Partners Limited Partnership, a registered investment adviser serving primarily investment companies and institutional investors, and several affiliated entities, including its general partner, Artisan Partners Asset Management Inc. (NYSE: APAM), and as an executive officer of Artisan Funds Inc.

In its periodic assessment of the effectiveness of the Board, the Board considers the complementary individual skills and experience of the individual Trustees primarily in the broader context of the Board's overall composition so that the Board, as a body, possesses the appropriate (and appropriately diverse) skills and experience to oversee the business of the Funds.

Board Committees. The Board has established the following standing committees of the Board:

Audit Committee. The Board has a standing Audit Committee that is composed of each of the Independent Trustees of the Trust. The Audit Committee operates under a written charter approved by the Board. The principal responsibilities of the Audit Committee include: recommending which firm to engage as the Funds' independent registered public accounting firm and whether to terminate this relationship; reviewing the independent registered public accounting firm's compensation, the proposed scope and terms of its engagement, and the firm's independence; pre-approving audit and non-audit services provided by the Funds' independent registered public accounting firm to the Trust and certain other affiliated entities; serving as a channel of communication between the independent registered public accounting firm and the Trustees; reviewing the results of each external audit, including any qualifications in the independent registered public accounting firm's opinion, any related management letter, management's responses to recommendations made by the independent registered public accounting firm in connection with the audit, reports submitted to the Committee by the internal auditing department of the Trust's Administrator that are material to the Trust as a whole, if any, and management's responses to any such reports; reviewing the Funds' audited financial statements and considering any significant disputes between the Trust's management and the independent registered public accounting firm that arose in connection with the preparation of those financial statements; considering, in consultation with the independent registered public accounting firm and the Trust's senior internal accounting executive, if any, the independent registered public accounting firm's report on the adequacy of the Trust's internal financial controls; reviewing, in consultation with the Funds' independent registered public accounting firm, major changes regarding auditing and accounting principles and practices to be followed when preparing the Funds' financial statements; and other audit related matters. During the fiscal year ended December 31, 2025, the Audit Committee met four times.

The Audit Committee also serves as the Qualified Legal Compliance Committee ("QLCC") for the Trust for the purpose of compliance with Rules 205.2(k) and 205.3(c) of the Code of Federal Regulations, regarding alternative reporting procedures for attorneys retained or employed by an issuer who appear and practice before the SEC on behalf of the issuer (the "issuer attorneys"). An issuer attorney who becomes aware of evidence of a material violation by the Trust, or by any officer, director, employee, or agent of the Trust, may report evidence of such material violation to the QLCC as an alternative to the reporting requirements of Rule 205.3(b) (which requires reporting to the chief legal officer and potentially "up the ladder" to other entities).

Nominating and Governance Committee. The Board has a standing Nominating and Governance Committee that is composed of each of the Independent Trustees of the Trust. The Nominating and Governance Committee operates under a written charter approved by the Board. The principal responsibility of the Nominating and Governance Committee is to consider, recommend and nominate candidates to fill vacancies on the Trust's Board, if any. The Nominating and Governance Committee generally will not consider nominees recommended by shareholders. The Nominating and Governance Committee is also responsible for, among other things, reviewing and making recommendations regarding Independent Trustee compensation and the Trustees' annual "self-assessment." The Nominating and Governance Committee meets periodically, as necessary. During the fiscal year ended December 31, 2025, the Nominating and Governance Committee met three times.

Board Consultant. Effective July 4, 2026, the Board engaged Kristina Nelson as a consultant to the Board with respect to its oversight of the Trust. In this role, Ms. Nelson attends all meetings of the Board and provides advice with respect to investment company operations and the investment management business as well as any other guidance that the Board may request from time to time. In exchange for her services, Ms. Nelson receives a retainer, paid quarterly, from the Trust. Ms. Nelson most recently was employed, since May 2010, by U.S. Bancorp Fund Services LLC (Fund Services), the administrator to the Trust and its series and various other investment companies. In addition to her service as consultant to the Board, at the recommendation and nomination of the Board, Ms. Nelson will stand for election by Trust shareholders to serve as a trustee. If elected by Trust shareholders, it is expected that Ms. Nelson

will join the Board as an independent trustee in early January 2027. Ms. Nelson's consultant role will end when her election as trustee takes effect.

Principal Officers of the Trust

The officers of the Trust conduct and supervise its daily business. The address of each officer of the Trust is c/o U.S. Bank Global Fund Services, 615 E. Michigan Street, Milwaukee, WI 53202. Additional information about the Trust's officers is as follows:

Name and Year of Birth	Position(s) Held with the Trust	Term of Office and Length of Time Served	Principal Occupation(s) During Past 5 Years
Kristen M. Weitzel Born: 1977	President	Indefinite term; since 2026 (other roles since 2013)	Vice President, U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC (since 2015).
Cynthia L. Andrae Born: 1971	Chief Compliance Officer and Anti-Money Laundering Officer	Indefinite term; since 2022 (other roles since 2021)	Vice President, U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC (since 2019); Deputy Chief Compliance Officer, U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC (2021–2022); Compliance Officer, U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC (2015–2019).
Kyle L. Kroken Born: 1986	Treasurer	Indefinite term; since 2026 (other roles since 2024)	Vice President, U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC (since 2019).
Peter A. Walker, CPA Born: 1993	Assistant Treasurer	Indefinite term; since 2026	Officer, U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC (since 2016)
Aaron P. Wroblewski Born: 1968	Assistant Treasurer	Indefinite term; since 2025	Officer, U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC (since 2010).
Noelle-Nadia A. Filali Born: 1997	Assistant Secretary	Indefinite term; since 2025	Assistant Vice President, U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC (since 2025); Regulatory Administration Attorney, U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC (since 2023); Regulatory Administration Intern, U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC (2022–2023); Law Student (2020–2023).
Cheri A. Van Eperen Born: 1970	Assistant Secretary	Indefinite term; since 2026	Assistant Vice President, U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC (since 2025), Director of Legal and Regulatory Compliance, ETF Architect (2024-2025); Senior Legal Analyst, Transamerica Asset Management, Inc. (2023-2024); Officer, U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC (2018-2023).

Trustee Ownership of Shares. The Funds are required to show the dollar amount ranges of each Trustee's "beneficial ownership" of Shares and each other series of the Trust as of the end of the most recently completed calendar year. Dollar amount ranges disclosed are established by the SEC. "Beneficial ownership" is determined in accordance with Rule 16a-1(a)(2) under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "1934 Act").

As of December 31, 2025, no Trustee owned Shares or shares of any other series of the Trust.

Board Compensation. Effective January 1, 2026, the Trustees each receive an annual trustee fee of $281,400. During the calendar year ended December 31, 2025, the Trustees each received an annual trustee fee of $244,000. The Board holds regularly scheduled quarterly meetings and the Trustees receive additional compensation for each additional meeting attended ($2,000) as well as reimbursement for travel and other out-of-pocket expenses incurred in connection with attendance at Board meetings. The Lead Independent Trustee receives an additional annual fee of $18,000. The Chair of the Audit Committee receives an additional annual fee of $18,000. The Chair of the Nominating and Governance Committee receives an additional annual fee of $8,000. The Trust has no pension or retirement plan.

The following table shows the compensation earned by each Trustee for the Funds' fiscal year ended December 31, 2025. Independent Trustee fees are paid by the adviser to each series of the Trust and not by the Funds. Trustee compensation does not include reimbursed out-of-pocket expenses in connection with attendance at meetings.

Name	Aggregate Compensation From the Funds	Total Compensation From Fund Complex Paid to Trustees
Independent Trustees		
Michael A. Castino	$0	$217,800
David A. Massart	$0	$221,300
Janet D. Olsen	$0	$213,300

PRINCIPAL SHAREHOLDERS, CONTROL PERSONS, AND MANAGEMENT OWNERSHIP

A principal shareholder is any person who owns of record or beneficially 5% or more of the outstanding Shares of a Fund. A control person is a shareholder that owns beneficially or through controlled companies more than 25% of the voting securities of a company or acknowledges the existence of control. Shareholders owning voting securities in excess of 25% may determine the outcome of any matter affecting and voted on by shareholders of a Fund. As of the date of this SAI, there were no outstanding Shares.

CODES OF ETHICS

The Trust, the Adviser, and the Sub-Adviser have each adopted codes of ethics pursuant to Rule 17j-1 of the 1940 Act. These codes of ethics are designed to prevent affiliated persons of the Trust, the Adviser, and the Sub-Adviser from engaging in deceptive, manipulative or fraudulent activities in connection with securities held or to be acquired by a Fund (which may also be held by persons subject to the codes of ethics). Each Code of Ethics permits personnel subject to that Code of Ethics to invest in securities for their personal investment accounts, subject to certain limitations, including limitations related to securities that may be purchased or held by a Fund. The Distributor (as defined below) relies on the principal underwriters exception under Rule 17j-1(c)(3), specifically where the Distributor is not affiliated with the Trust, the Adviser, the Sub-Adviser, and no officer, director, or general partner of the Distributor serves as an officer, director, or general partner of the Trust, the Adviser, or the Sub-Adviser.

There can be no assurance that the codes of ethics will be effective in preventing such activities. Each code of ethics may be examined at the office of the SEC in Washington, D.C. or on the Internet at the SEC's website at http://www.sec.gov.

PROXY VOTING POLICIES

The Funds have delegated proxy voting responsibilities to the Adviser, subject to the Board's oversight. In delegating proxy responsibilities, the Board has directed that proxies be voted consistent with each Fund's and its shareholders' best interests and in compliance with all applicable proxy voting rules and regulations. The Adviser has adopted proxy voting policies and guidelines for this purpose ("Proxy Voting Policies") and has engaged a third-party proxy solicitation firm to assist with voting proxies in a timely manner. A copy of the Proxy Voting Policies is set forth in Appendix A to this SAI. The Trust's Chief Compliance Officer is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the Proxy Voting Policies. The Proxy Voting Policies have been adopted by the Trust as the policies and procedures that the Adviser will use when voting proxies on behalf of a Fund.

The Proxy Voting Policies address, among other things, material conflicts of interest that may arise between the interests of the Funds and the interests of the Adviser. The Proxy Voting Policies will ensure that all issues brought to shareholders are analyzed in light of the Adviser's fiduciary responsibilities.

Information on how the Funds voted proxies relating to portfolio securities during the most recent 12-month period ended June 30 is available (1) without charge, upon request, by calling 1-800-617-0004, (2) on the Funds' website at www.defianceetfs.com and (3) on the SEC's website at www.sec.gov.

INVESTMENT ADVISER AND SUB-ADVISER

Investment Adviser

Defiance ETFs, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company, serves as the investment adviser to the Funds and was organized in 2018. The Adviser is majority owned and controlled by Matthew Bielski, its Chief Executive Officer.

Pursuant to an Investment Advisory Agreement (the "Advisory Agreement"), the Adviser provides investment advice to the Funds and oversees the day-to-day operations of the Funds, subject to the direction and control of the Board and the officers of the Trust. Under the Advisory Agreement, the Adviser is also responsible for arranging transfer agency, custody, fund administration, securities lending, accounting, distribution, and other services necessary for the Funds to operate. The Adviser administers the Funds' business affairs, provides office facilities and equipment and certain clerical, bookkeeping and administrative services. The Adviser bears the costs of all advisory and non-advisory services required to operate the Funds, in exchange for a single unitary management fee from each Fund. For the services it provides to each Fund, the Fund pays the Adviser a unified management fee, which is calculated daily and paid monthly, at an annual rate based on the Fund's average daily net assets as follows:

Name of Fund	Management Fee
Inference AI Chip ETF	0.65%
AI Packaging & Testing ETF	0.65%
Memory & Photonics ETF	0.65%
Plumbing & Electrical ETF	0.59%

Under the Advisory Agreement, the Adviser has agreed to pay all expenses of the Funds, except for: the fee paid to the Adviser pursuant to the Advisory Agreement, interest charges on any borrowings, dividends and other expenses on securities sold short, taxes, brokerage commissions and other expenses incurred in placing orders for the purchase and sale of securities and other investment instruments, acquired fund fees and expenses, accrued deferred tax liability, extraordinary expenses, and distribution (12b-1) fees and expenses. The Adviser, in turn, compensates the Sub-Adviser from the management fee the Adviser receives.

The Advisory Agreement with respect to the Funds will continue in force for an initial period of two years. Thereafter, the Advisory Agreement will be renewable from year to year with respect to a Fund, so long as its continuance is approved at least annually (1) by the vote, cast in person at a meeting called for that purpose, of a majority of those Trustees who are not "interested persons" of the Adviser or the Trust; and (2) by the majority vote of either the full Board or the vote of a majority of the outstanding Shares. The Advisory Agreement automatically terminates on assignment and is terminable on a 60-day written notice either by the Trust or the Adviser.

The Adviser shall not be liable to the Trust or any shareholder for anything done or omitted by it, except acts or omissions involving willful misfeasance, bad faith, negligence or reckless disregard of the duties imposed upon it by its agreement with the Trust or for any losses that may be sustained in the purchase, holding or sale of any security.

Each Fund is new and, therefore, has not paid any management fees to the Adviser as of the date of this SAI.

Sub-Adviser

The Trust, on behalf of each Fund, and the Adviser have retained Tidal Investments LLC ("Tidal" or the "Sub-Adviser") to serve as sub-adviser for the Funds. Tidal's principal office is located at 234 West Florida Street, Suite 203, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53204. Tidal is a Delaware limited liability company founded in March 2012 that is dedicated to understanding, researching and managing assets within the expanding ETF universe.

Pursuant to an Investment Sub-Advisory Agreement (the "Sub-Advisory Agreement") among the Adviser, the Sub-Adviser, and the Trust, the Sub-Adviser is responsible for trading portfolio securities on behalf of the Funds, including selecting broker-dealers to execute purchase and sale transactions as instructed by the Adviser, subject to the supervision of the Adviser and the Board. For the services it provides to the Funds, the Sub-Adviser is compensated by the Adviser from the management fees paid by each Fund to the Adviser.

The Sub-Advisory Agreement with respect to each Fund will continue in force for an initial period of two years. Thereafter, the Sub-Advisory Agreement will be renewable from year to year with respect to each Fund, so long as its continuance is approved at least annually (1) by the vote, cast in person at a meeting called for that purpose, of a majority of those Trustees who are not "interested persons" of the Trust; and (2) by the majority vote of either the full Board or the vote of a majority of the outstanding Shares. The Sub-Advisory Agreement will terminate automatically in the event of its assignment, and is terminable at any time without penalty by the Board or, with respect to each Fund, by a majority of the outstanding Shares of such Fund, on not less than 30 days' nor more than 60 days' written notice to the Sub-Adviser, or by the Sub-Adviser on 60 days' written notice to the Adviser and the Trust. The Sub-Advisory Agreement provides that the Sub-Adviser shall not be protected against any liability to the Trust or its shareholders by reason of willful misfeasance, bad faith or gross negligence on its part in the performance of its duties or from reckless disregard of its obligations or duties thereunder.

Each Fund is new and, therefore, the Adviser has not paid any sub-advisory fees to the Sub-Adviser with respect to the Funds as of the date of this SAI.

PORTFOLIO MANAGERS

The Funds are co-managed by Christopher Mullen, CFA and Brett Johnson, CFA for the Sub-Adviser.

Share Ownership

The Funds are required to show the dollar range of each portfolio manager's "beneficial ownership" of Shares as of the end of the most recently completed fiscal year or a more recent date for a new portfolio manager. Dollar amount ranges disclosed are established by the SEC. "Beneficial ownership" is determined in accordance with Rule 16a-1(a)(2) under the 1934 Act. As of the date of this SAI, the portfolio managers did not beneficially own Shares.

Other Accounts

In addition to the Funds, the portfolio managers co-managed the following other accounts as of June 30, 2026, none of which were subject to a performance-based fee:

Portfolio Manager	Type of Accounts	Total Number of Accounts	Total Assets of Accounts
Christopher Mullen	Registered Investment Companies	73	$5,372.90 million
	Other Pooled Investment Vehicles	0	$0
	Other Accounts	0	$0
Brett Johnson	Registered Investment Companies	73	$5,372.90 million
	Other Pooled Investment Vehicles	0	$0
	Other Accounts	0	$0

Compensation

The Funds' portfolio managers receive a fixed base salary and discretionary bonus that are not tied to the performance of the Funds. The Funds' portfolio managers are eligible for deferred compensation and a retirement plan.

Material Conflicts of Interest

A portfolio manager's management of "other accounts" may give rise to potential conflicts of interest in connection with his/her management of the Funds' investments, on the one hand, and the investments of the other accounts, on the other. The other accounts may have similar investment objectives or strategies as a Fund. Therefore, a potential conflict of interest may arise as a result, whereby a

portfolio manager could favor one account over another. Another potential conflict could include a portfolio manager's knowledge about the size, timing, and possible market impact of Fund trades, whereby the portfolio manager could use this information to the advantage of other accounts and to the disadvantage of a Fund. However, the Sub-Adviser has established policies and procedures to ensure that the purchase and sale of securities among all accounts the Sub-Adviser manages are fairly and equitably allocated.

THE DISTRIBUTOR

The Trust and Foreside Fund Services, LLC (the "Distributor"), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Foreside Financial Group, LLC (d/b/a ACA Group), are parties to a distribution agreement ("Distribution Agreement"), whereby the Distributor acts as principal underwriter for the Trust and distributes Shares. Shares are continuously offered for sale by the Distributor only in Creation Units. The Distributor will not distribute Shares in amounts less than a Creation Unit and does not maintain a secondary market in Shares. The principal business address of the Distributor is 190 Middle Street, Suite 301, Portland, Maine 04101.

Under the Distribution Agreement, the Distributor, as agent for the Trust, will review orders for the purchase and redemption of Creation Units, provided that any subscriptions and orders will not be binding on the Trust until accepted by the Trust. The Distributor is a broker-dealer registered under the 1934 Act and a member of FINRA.

The Distributor may also enter into agreements with securities dealers ("Soliciting Dealers") who will solicit purchases of Creation Units of Shares. Such Soliciting Dealers may also be Authorized Participants (as discussed in "Procedures for Purchase of Creation Units" below) or DTC participants (as defined below).

The Distribution Agreement will continue for two years from its effective date and is renewable annually thereafter. The continuance of the Distribution Agreement must be specifically approved at least annually (i) by the vote of the Trustees or by a vote of the shareholders of the applicable Fund(s) and (ii) by the vote of a majority of the Independent Trustees who have no direct or indirect financial interest in the operations of the Distribution Agreement or any related agreement, cast in person at a meeting called for the purpose of voting on such approval. The Distribution Agreement is terminable without penalty by the Trust on 60 days' written notice when authorized either by majority vote of its outstanding voting Shares or by a vote of a majority of its Board (including a majority of the Independent Trustees), or by the Distributor on 60 days' written notice, and will automatically terminate in the event of its assignment. The Distribution Agreement provides that in the absence of willful misfeasance, bad faith, or gross negligence on the part of the Distributor, or reckless disregard by it of its obligations thereunder, the Distributor shall not be liable for any action or failure to act in accordance with its duties thereunder.

Intermediary Compensation. The Adviser, the Sub-Adviser, or their affiliates, out of their own resources and not out of Fund assets (*i.e.*, without additional cost to the Fund or its shareholders), may pay certain broker-dealers, banks and other financial intermediaries ("Intermediaries") for certain activities related to a Fund, including participation in activities that are designed to make Intermediaries more knowledgeable about exchange traded products, including the Fund, or for other activities, such as marketing and educational training or support. These arrangements are not financed by a Fund and, thus, do not result in increased Fund expenses. They are not reflected in the fees and expenses listed in the fees and expenses sections of a Fund's Prospectus and they do not change the price paid by investors for the purchase of Shares or the amount received by a shareholder as proceeds from the redemption of Shares.

Such compensation may be paid to Intermediaries that provide services to a Fund, including marketing and education support (such as through conferences, webinars and printed communications). The Adviser and Sub-Adviser periodically assess the advisability of continuing to make these payments. Payments to an Intermediary may be significant to the Intermediary, and amounts that Intermediaries pay to your adviser, broker or other investment professional, if any, may also be significant to such adviser, broker or investment professional. Because an Intermediary may make decisions about what investment options it will make available or recommend, and what services to provide in connection with various products, based on payments it receives or is eligible to receive, such payments create conflicts of interest between the Intermediary and its clients. For example, these financial incentives may cause the Intermediary to recommend a Fund over other investments. The same conflict of interest exists with respect to your financial adviser, broker or investment professional if he or she receives similar payments from his or her Intermediary firm.

Intermediary information is current only as of the date of this SAI. Please contact your adviser, broker, or other investment professional for more information regarding any payments his or her Intermediary firm may receive. Any payments made by the Adviser, Sub-Adviser or their affiliates to an Intermediary may create the incentive for an Intermediary to encourage customers to buy Shares.

If you have any additional questions, please call 1-800-617-0004.

Distribution and Service Plan. The Trust has adopted a Distribution and Service Plan (the "Plan") in accordance with the provisions of Rule 12b-1 under the 1940 Act, which regulates circumstances under which an investment company may directly or indirectly bear expenses relating to the distribution of its shares. No payments pursuant to the Plan are expected to be made during the twelve (12) month period from the date of this SAI. Rule 12b-1 fees to be paid by a Fund under the Plan may only be imposed after approval by the Board.

Continuance of the Plan must be approved annually by a majority of the Trustees of the Trust and by a majority of the Trustees who are not interested persons (as defined in the 1940 Act) of the Trust and have no direct or indirect financial interest in the Plan or in any agreements related to the Plan ("Qualified Trustees"). The Plan requires that quarterly written reports of amounts spent under the Plan and the purposes of such expenditures be furnished to and reviewed by the Trustees. The Plan may not be amended to increase

materially the amount that may be spent thereunder without approval by a majority of the outstanding Shares of a Fund. All material amendments of the Plan will require approval by a majority of the Trustees of the Trust and of the Qualified Trustees.

The Plan provides that each Fund pays the Distributor an annual fee of up to a maximum of 0.25% of the average daily net assets of the Shares. Under the Plan, the Distributor may make payments pursuant to written agreements to financial institutions and intermediaries such as banks, savings and loan associations and insurance companies including, without limit, investment counselors, broker-dealers and the Distributor's affiliates and subsidiaries (collectively, "Agents") as compensation for services and reimbursement of expenses incurred in connection with distribution assistance. The Plan is characterized as a compensation plan since the distribution fee will be paid to the Distributor without regard to the distribution expenses incurred by the Distributor or the amount of payments made to other financial institutions and intermediaries. The Trust intends to operate the Plan in accordance with its terms and with the FINRA rules concerning sales charges.

Under the Plan, subject to the limitations of applicable law and regulations, each Fund is authorized to compensate the Distributor up to the maximum amount to finance any activity primarily intended to result in the sale of Creation Units of the Fund or for providing or arranging for others to provide shareholder services and for the maintenance of shareholder accounts. Such activities may include, but are not limited to: (i) delivering copies of a Fund's then current reports, prospectuses, notices, and similar materials, to prospective purchasers of Creation Units; (ii) marketing and promotional services, including advertising; (iii) paying the costs of and compensating others, including Authorized Participants (as discussed in "Procedures for Purchase of Creation Units" below) with whom the Distributor has entered into written Participant Agreements (as defined below), for performing shareholder servicing on behalf of a Fund; (iv) compensating certain Authorized Participants for providing assistance in distributing the Creation Units of a Fund, including the travel and communication expenses and salaries and/or commissions of sales personnel in connection with the distribution of the Creation Units of a Fund; (v) payments to financial institutions and intermediaries such as banks, savings and loan associations, insurance companies and investment counselors, broker-dealers, mutual fund supermarkets and the affiliates and subsidiaries of the Trust's service providers as compensation for services or reimbursement of expenses incurred in connection with distribution assistance; (vi) facilitating communications with beneficial owners of Shares, including the cost of providing (or paying others to provide) services to beneficial owners of Shares, including, but not limited to, assistance in answering inquiries related to shareholder accounts; and (vii) such other services and obligations as are set forth in the Distribution Agreement. The Distributor does not retain Fund monies for profit. Instead, it keeps them in retention for future distribution-related expenses. The Adviser compensates the Distributor for certain distribution-related services.

THE ADMINISTRATOR, CUSTODIAN, AND TRANSFER AGENT

U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC, doing business as U.S. Bank Global Fund Services, located at 615 East Michigan Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202, serves as the Funds' transfer agent, administrator, and index receipt agent.

Pursuant to a Fund Administration Servicing Agreement and a Fund Accounting Servicing Agreement between the Trust and Fund Services, Fund Services provides the Trust with administrative and management services (other than investment advisory services) and accounting services, including portfolio accounting services, tax accounting services and furnishing financial reports. In this capacity, Fund Services does not have any responsibility or authority for the management of the Funds, the determination of investment policy, or for any matter pertaining to the distribution of Shares. As compensation for the administration, accounting and management services, the Adviser pays Fund Services a fee based on each Fund's average daily net assets, subject to a minimum annual fee. Fund Services also is entitled to certain out-of-pocket expenses for the services mentioned above, including pricing expenses.

Each Fund is new and the Adviser has not paid Fund Services any fees for administrative services to the Fund as of the date of this SAI.

Pursuant to a Custody Agreement, U.S. Bank National Association (the "Custodian" or "U.S. Bank"), 1555 North Rivercenter Drive, Suite 302, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212, serves as the Custodian of the Funds' assets. The Custodian holds and administers the assets in each Fund's portfolio. Pursuant to the Custody Agreement, the Custodian receives an annual fee from the Adviser based on the Trust's total average daily net assets, subject to a minimum annual fee, and certain settlement charges. The Custodian also is entitled to certain out-of-pocket expenses.

SECURITIES LENDING ACTIVITIES

U.S. Bank (the "Securities Lending Agent") also serves as securities lending agent to the Funds. The Securities Lending Agent is responsible for the implementation and administration of the Funds' securities lending program pursuant to an agreement between the Trust, on behalf of the Funds, and the Securities Lending Agent (the "Securities Lending Agreement"). The Securities Lending Agent acts as agent to each Fund to lend available securities with any person on its list of borrowers approved by the Board and (i) determines whether a loan shall be made and negotiates and establishes the terms and conditions of the loan with the borrower; (ii) ensures that all substitute interest, dividends, and other distributions paid with respect to loan securities is credited to the Fund's relevant account on the date such amounts are delivered by the borrower to the Securities Lending Agent; (iii) receives and holds, on the Fund's behalf, collateral from borrowers to secure obligations of borrowers with respect to any loan of available securities; (iv) marks loaned securities and collateral to their market value each business day based upon the market value of the loaned securities and collateral at the close of business employing the most recently available pricing information and receives and delivers collateral to maintain the value of the collateral at no less than 100% of the market value of the loaned securities; (v) at the termination of a loan, returns the collateral to the borrower upon the return of the loaned securities to the Securities Lending Agent; (vi) invests cash collateral in accordance with the

Securities Lending Agreement; and (vii) maintains such records as are reasonably necessary to account for loans that are made and the income derived therefrom and makes available to the Fund a monthly statement describing the loans outstanding, including an accounting of all securities lending transactions.

LEGAL COUNSEL

Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP, located at 1111 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20004-2541, serves as legal counsel for the Trust.

INDEPENDENT REGISTERED PUBLIC ACCOUNTING FIRM

Cohen & Company, Ltd., located at 1835 Market Street, Suite 310, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103, serves as the independent registered public accounting firm for the Funds. Its services include auditing the Funds' financial statements. Cohen & Co Advisory, LLC, an affiliate of Cohen & Company, Ltd., provides tax services to the Funds as requested.

PORTFOLIO HOLDINGS DISCLOSURE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Board has adopted a policy regarding the disclosure of information about each Fund's security holdings. Each Fund's entire portfolio holdings are publicly disseminated each day a Fund is open for business and may be available through financial reporting and news services, including publicly available internet web sites. In addition, the composition of the Deposit Securities (as defined below) is publicly disseminated daily prior to the opening of the Exchange via the National Securities Clearing Corporation ("NSCC").

DESCRIPTION OF SHARES

The Declaration of Trust authorizes the issuance of an unlimited number of funds and Shares. Each Share represents an equal proportionate interest in the applicable Fund with each other Share. Shares are entitled upon liquidation to a pro rata share in the net assets of the applicable Fund. Shareholders have no preemptive rights. The Declaration of Trust provides that the Trustees may create additional series or classes of Shares. All consideration received by the Trust for shares of any additional funds and all assets in which such consideration is invested would belong to that fund and would be subject to the liabilities related thereto. Share certificates representing Shares will not be issued. Shares, when issued, are fully paid and non-assessable.

Each Share has one vote with respect to matters upon which a shareholder vote is required, consistent with the requirements of the 1940 Act and the rules promulgated thereunder. Shares of all funds of the Trust vote together as a single class, except that if the matter being voted on affects only a particular fund it will be voted on only by that fund and if a matter affects a particular fund differently from other funds, that fund will vote separately on such matter. As a Delaware statutory trust, the Trust is not required, and does not intend, to hold annual meetings of shareholders. Approval of shareholders will be sought, however, for certain changes in the operation of the Trust and for the election of Trustees under certain circumstances. Upon the written request of shareholders owning at least 10% of the Trust's Shares, the Trust will call for a meeting of shareholders to consider the removal of one or more Trustees and other certain matters. In the event that such a meeting is requested, the Trust will provide appropriate assistance and information to the shareholders requesting the meeting.

Under the Declaration of Trust, the Trustees have the power to liquidate a Fund without shareholder approval. While the Trustees have no present intention of exercising this power, they may do so if a Fund fails to reach a viable size within a reasonable amount of time or for such other reasons as may be determined by the Board.

LIMITATION OF TRUSTEES' LIABILITY

The Declaration of Trust provides that a Trustee shall be liable only for his or her own willful misfeasance, bad faith, gross negligence or reckless disregard of the duties involved in the conduct of the office of Trustee, and shall not be liable for errors of judgment or mistakes of fact or law. The Trustees shall not be responsible or liable in any event for any neglect or wrong-doing of any officer, agent, employee, adviser or principal underwriter of the Trust, nor shall any Trustee be responsible for the act or omission of any other Trustee. The Declaration of Trust also provides that the Trust shall indemnify each person who is, or has been, a Trustee, officer, employee or agent of the Trust, any person who is serving or has served at the Trust's request as a Trustee, officer, trustee, employee or agent of another organization in which the Trust has any interest as a shareholder, creditor or otherwise to the extent and in the manner provided in the Amended and Restated By-laws. However, nothing in the Declaration of Trust shall protect or indemnify a Trustee against any liability for his or her willful misfeasance, bad faith, gross negligence, or reckless disregard of the duties involved in the conduct of the office of Trustee. Nothing contained in this section attempts to disclaim a Trustee's individual liability in any manner inconsistent with the federal securities laws.

BROKERAGE TRANSACTIONS

The policy of the Trust regarding purchases and sales of securities for a Fund is that primary consideration will be given to obtaining the most favorable prices and efficient executions of transactions. Consistent with this policy, when securities transactions are effected on a stock exchange, the Trust's policy is to pay commissions which are considered fair and reasonable without necessarily determining that the lowest possible commissions are paid in all circumstances. The Trust believes that a requirement always to seek the lowest possible commission cost could impede effective portfolio management and preclude the Funds and the Sub-Adviser from obtaining a high quality of brokerage and research services. In seeking to determine the reasonableness of brokerage commissions paid in any transaction, the Sub-Adviser will rely upon its experience and knowledge regarding commissions generally charged by various brokers and on its

judgment in evaluating the brokerage services received from the broker effecting the transaction. Such determinations are necessarily subjective and imprecise, as in most cases, an exact dollar value for those services is not ascertainable. The Trust has adopted policies and procedures that prohibit the consideration of sales of Shares as a factor in the selection of a broker or dealer to execute its portfolio transactions.

The Sub-Adviser owes a fiduciary duty to its clients to seek to provide best execution on trades effected. In selecting a broker-dealer for each specific transaction, the Sub-Adviser chooses the broker-dealer deemed most capable of providing the services necessary to obtain the most favorable execution. "Best execution" is generally understood to mean the most favorable cost or net proceeds reasonably obtainable under the circumstances. The full range of brokerage services applicable to a particular transaction may be considered when making this judgment, which may include, but is not limited to: liquidity, price, commission, timing, aggregated trades, capable floor brokers or traders, competent block trading coverage, ability to position, capital strength and stability, reliable and accurate communications and settlement processing, use of automation, knowledge of other buyers or sellers, arbitrage skills, administrative ability, underwriting and provision of information on a particular security or market in which the transaction is to occur. The specific criteria will vary depending upon the nature of the transaction, the market in which it is executed, and the extent to which it is possible to select from among multiple broker-dealers. The Sub-Adviser will also use electronic crossing networks ("ECNs") when appropriate.

Subject to the foregoing policies, brokers or dealers selected to execute a Fund's portfolio transactions may include such Fund's Authorized Participants (as discussed in "Procedures for Purchase of Creation Units" below) or their affiliates. An Authorized Participant or its affiliates may be selected to execute a Fund's portfolio transactions in conjunction with an all-cash creation unit order or an order including "cash-in-lieu" (as described below under "Purchase and Redemption of Shares in Creation Units"), so long as such selection is in keeping with the foregoing policies. As described below under "Purchase and Redemption of Shares in Creation Units—Creation Transaction Fee" and "—Redemption Transaction Fee", each Fund may determine to not charge a variable fee on certain orders when the Adviser has determined that doing so is in the best interests of Fund shareholders, *e.g.*, for creation orders that facilitate the rebalance of the applicable Fund's portfolio in a more tax efficient manner than could be achieved without such order, even if the decision to not charge a variable fee could be viewed as benefiting the Authorized Participant or its affiliate selected to execute the Fund's portfolio transactions in connection with such orders.

The Sub-Adviser may use a Fund's assets for, or participate in, third-party soft dollar arrangements, in addition to receiving proprietary research from various full-service brokers, the cost of which is bundled with the cost of the broker's execution services. The Sub-Adviser does not "pay up" for the value of any such proprietary research. Section 28(e) of the 1934 Act permits the Sub-Adviser, under certain circumstances, to cause a Fund to pay a broker or dealer a commission for effecting a transaction in excess of the amount of commission another broker or dealer would have charged for effecting the transaction in recognition of the value of brokerage and research services provided by the broker or dealer. The Sub-Adviser may receive a variety of research services and information on many topics, which it can use in connection with its management responsibilities with respect to the various accounts over which it exercises investment discretion or otherwise provides investment advice. The research services may include qualifying order management systems, portfolio attribution and monitoring services and computer software and access charges which are directly related to investment research. Accordingly, a Fund may pay a broker commission higher than the lowest available in recognition of the broker's provision of such services to the Sub-Adviser, but only if the Sub-Adviser determines the total commission (including the soft dollar benefit) is comparable to the best commission rate that could be expected to be received from other brokers. The amount of soft dollar benefits received depends on the amount of brokerage transactions effected with the brokers. A conflict of interest exists because there is an incentive to: 1) cause clients to pay a higher commission than the firm might otherwise be able to negotiate; 2) cause clients to engage in more securities transactions than would otherwise be optimal; and 3) only recommend brokers that provide soft dollar benefits.

The Sub-Adviser faces a potential conflict of interest when it uses client trades to obtain brokerage or research services. This conflict exists because the Sub-Adviser is able to use the brokerage or research services to manage client accounts without paying cash for such services, which reduces the Sub-Adviser's expenses to the extent that the Sub-Adviser would have purchased such products had they not been provided by brokers. Section 28(e) permits the Sub-Adviser to use brokerage or research services for the benefit of any account it manages. Certain accounts managed by the Sub-Adviser may generate soft dollars used to purchase brokerage or research services that ultimately benefit other accounts managed by the Sub-Adviser, effectively cross subsidizing the other accounts managed by the Sub-Adviser that benefit directly from the product. The Sub-Adviser may not necessarily use all of the brokerage or research services in connection with managing a Fund whose trades generated the soft dollars used to purchase such products.

The Sub-Adviser is responsible, subject to oversight by the Adviser and the Board, for placing orders on behalf of each Fund for the purchase or sale of portfolio securities. If purchases or sales of portfolio securities of a Fund and one or more other investment companies or clients supervised by the Sub-Adviser are considered at or about the same time, transactions in such securities are allocated among the several investment companies and clients in a manner deemed equitable and consistent with its fiduciary obligations to all by the Sub-Adviser. In some cases, this procedure could have a detrimental effect on the price or volume of the security so far as a Fund is concerned. However, in other cases, it is possible that the ability to participate in volume transactions and to negotiate lower brokerage commissions will be beneficial to a Fund. The primary consideration is prompt execution of orders at the most favorable net price.

A Fund may deal with affiliates in principal transactions to the extent permitted by exemptive order or applicable rule or regulation.

Each Fund is new and, therefore, has not paid any brokerage commissions as of the date of this SAI.

Directed Brokerage. Because each Fund is new, the Funds have not paid any commissions on brokerage transactions directed to brokers pursuant to an agreement or understanding whereby the broker provides research or other brokerage services to the Adviser as of the date of this SAI.

Brokerage with Fund Affiliates. A Fund may execute brokerage or other agency transactions through registered broker-dealer affiliates of the Funds, the Adviser, the Sub-Adviser or the Distributor for a commission in conformity with the 1940 Act, the 1934 Act and rules promulgated by the SEC. These rules require that commissions paid to the affiliate by the Funds for exchange transactions not exceed "usual and customary" brokerage commissions. The rules define "usual and customary" commissions to include amounts which are "reasonable and fair compared to the commission, fee or other remuneration received or to be received by other brokers in connection with comparable transactions involving similar securities being purchased or sold on a securities exchange during a comparable period of time." The Trustees, including those who are not "interested persons" of the Funds, have adopted procedures for evaluating the reasonableness of commissions paid to affiliates and review these procedures periodically. Each Fund is new and did not pay brokerage commissions to any registered broker-dealer affiliates of such Fund, the Adviser, the Sub-Adviser, or the Distributor as of the date of this SAI.

Securities of "Regular Broker-Dealers.**"** Each Fund is required to identify any securities of its "regular brokers and dealers" (as such term is defined in the 1940 Act) that it may hold at the close of its most recent fiscal year. "Regular brokers or dealers" of a Fund are the ten brokers or dealers that, during the most recent fiscal year: (i) received the greatest dollar amounts of brokerage commissions from the Fund's portfolio transactions; (ii) engaged as principal in the largest dollar amounts of portfolio transactions of the Fund; or (iii) sold the largest dollar amounts of Shares. Each Fund is new and did not acquire any securities of its "regular broker dealers" as of the date of the SAI.

PORTFOLIO TURNOVER RATE

Portfolio turnover may vary from year to year, as well as within a year. High turnover rates are likely to result in comparatively greater brokerage expenses. The overall reasonableness of brokerage commissions is evaluated by the Sub-Adviser based upon its knowledge of available information as to the general level of commissions paid by other institutional investors for comparable services.

BOOK ENTRY ONLY SYSTEM

The Depository Trust Company ("DTC") acts as securities depositary for Shares. Shares are represented by securities registered in the name of DTC or its nominee, Cede & Co., and deposited with, or on behalf of, DTC. Except in limited circumstances set forth below, certificates will not be issued for Shares.

DTC is a limited-purpose trust company that was created to hold securities of its participants (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. 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 in this SAI 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. The Trust recognizes DTC or its nominee as the record owner of all Shares for all purposes. Beneficial Owners of Shares are not entitled to have Shares registered in their names and will not receive or be entitled to physical delivery of Share certificates. Each Beneficial Owner must rely on the procedures of DTC and any DTC Participant and/or Indirect Participant through which such Beneficial Owner holds its interests, to exercise any rights of a holder of Shares.

Conveyance of all notices, statements, and other communications to Beneficial Owners is effected as follows. DTC will make available to the Trust upon request and for a fee a listing of Shares held by each DTC Participant. The Trust shall obtain from each such DTC Participant 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 a Fund 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 aspect of the records relating to or notices to Beneficial Owners, or payments made on account of beneficial ownership interests in 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 a Fund at any time by giving reasonable notice to the Fund and discharging its responsibilities with respect thereto under applicable law. Under such circumstances, the applicable Fund shall take action either to find a replacement for DTC to perform its functions at a comparable cost or, if such replacement is unavailable, to issue and deliver printed certificates representing ownership of Shares, unless the Trust makes other arrangements with respect thereto satisfactory to the Exchange.

PURCHASE AND REDEMPTION OF SHARES IN CREATION UNITS

Each Fund issues and redeems Shares only in Creation Units on a continuous basis through the Transfer Agent, without a sales load (but subject to transaction fees, if applicable), at their NAV per share next determined after receipt of an order, on any Business Day, in proper form pursuant to the terms of the Authorized Participant Agreement ("Participant Agreement"). The NAV of Shares is calculated each Business Day as of the scheduled close of regular trading on the New York Stock Exchange ("NYSE"), generally 4:00 p.m., Eastern time. The Funds will not issue fractional Creation Units. A "Business Day" is any day on which the NYSE is open for business.

Fund Deposit. The consideration for purchase of a Creation Unit of a Fund generally consists of (a)(i) Deposit Securities and/or (ii) Deposit Cash and (b) a Cash Component, computed as described below. Notwithstanding the foregoing, each Fund reserves the right to permit or require the substitution of a cash in lieu amount to replace any Deposit Security in connection with the purchase of a Creation Unit. When accepting purchases of Creation Units for all or a portion of Deposit Cash, a Fund may incur additional costs associated with the acquisition of Deposit Securities that would otherwise be provided by an in-kind purchaser.

Together, the Deposit Securities or Deposit Cash, as applicable, and the Cash Component constitute the "Fund Deposit," which represents the minimum initial and subsequent investment amount for a Creation Unit of the applicable Fund. The "Cash Component" is an amount equal to the difference between the NAV of Shares (per Creation Unit) and the value of the Deposit Securities or Deposit Cash, as applicable. If the Cash Component is a positive number (*i.e.*, the NAV per Creation Unit exceeds the value of the Deposit Securities or Deposit Cash, as applicable), the Cash Component shall be such positive amount. If the Cash Component is a negative number (*i.e.*, the NAV per Creation Unit is less than the value of the Deposit Securities or Deposit Cash, as applicable), the Cash Component shall be such negative amount and the creator will be entitled to receive cash in an amount equal to the Cash Component. The Cash Component serves the function of compensating for any differences between the NAV per Creation Unit and the value of the Deposit Securities or Deposit Cash, as applicable. 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, if applicable, which shall be the sole responsibility of the Authorized Participant (as defined below).

Each Fund, through NSCC, makes available on each Business Day, prior to the opening of business on the Exchange (currently 9:30 a.m., Eastern time), the list of the names and the required number of Shares of each Deposit Security or the required amount of Deposit Cash, as applicable, to be included in the current Fund Deposit (based on information at the end of the previous Business Day) for the applicable Fund. Such Fund Deposit is subject to any applicable adjustments as described below, to effect purchases of Creation Units of the applicable Fund until such time as the next-announced composition of the Deposit Securities or the required amount of Deposit Cash, as applicable, is made available.

The identity and number of Shares of the Deposit Securities or the amount of Deposit Cash, as applicable, required for a Fund Deposit changes as rebalancing adjustments and corporate action events are reflected from time to time by the Sub-Adviser. For passively managed ETFs, such as the Funds, the composition of the Deposit Securities may also change in response to adjustments to the weighting or composition of the component securities of each Fund's Index.

Each Fund reserves the right to permit or require the substitution of Deposit Cash to replace any Deposit Security, which shall be added to the Cash Component, including, without limitation, in situations where the Deposit Security: (i) may not be available in sufficient quantity for delivery; (ii) may not be eligible for transfer through the systems of DTC for corporate securities and municipal securities; (iii) may not be eligible for trading by an Authorized Participant (as defined below) or the investor for which it is acting; (iv) would be restricted under the securities laws or where the delivery of the Deposit Security to the Authorized Participant would result in the disposition of the Deposit Security by the Authorized Participant becoming restricted under the securities laws; or (v) in certain other situations (collectively, "custom orders"). The Trust also reserves the right to include or remove Deposit Securities from the basket in anticipation of Index rebalancing changes. The adjustments described above will reflect changes, known to the Sub-Adviser on the date of announcement to be in effect by the time of delivery of the Fund Deposit, in the composition of the subject Index being tracked by the Fund or resulting from certain corporate actions.

Passively managed ETFs, such as the Funds, also reserve the right to include or remove Deposit Securities from the basket in anticipation of Index rebalancing changes. The adjustments described above will reflect changes, known to the Sub-Adviser on the date

of announcement to be in effect by the time of delivery of the Fund Deposit, in the composition of the subject Index being tracked by the Fund or resulting from certain corporate actions.

Procedures for Purchase of Creation Units. To be eligible to place orders with the Transfer Agent to purchase a Creation Unit of a Fund, an entity must be (i) a "Participating Party" (*i.e.*, a broker-dealer or other participant in the clearing process through the Continuous Net Settlement System of the NSCC (the "Clearing Process")), a clearing agency that is registered with the SEC; or (ii) a DTC Participant (see "Book Entry Only System"). In addition, each Participating Party or DTC Participant (each, an "Authorized Participant") must execute a Participant Agreement that has been agreed to by the Distributor, and that has been accepted by the Transfer Agent, with respect to purchases and redemptions of Creation Units. Each Authorized Participant will agree, pursuant to the terms of a Participant Agreement, on behalf of itself or any investor on whose behalf it will act, to certain conditions, including that it will pay to the Fund, an amount of cash sufficient to pay the Cash Component together with the creation transaction fee (described below), if applicable, and any other applicable fees and taxes.

(Plumbing & Electrical ETF only.) All orders to purchase Shares directly from the Funds must be placed for one or more Creation Units and in the manner and by the time set forth in the Participant Agreement and/or applicable order form. The order cut-off time for the Funds for orders to purchase Creation Units is 4:00 p.m. Eastern time, which time may be modified by the Funds from time-to-time by amendment to the Participant Agreement and/or applicable order form. In addition, orders to purchase Shares directly from the Funds on the next Business Day must be submitted as a "Future Dated Trade" for one or more Creation Units between 4:30 p.m. Eastern time and 5:30 p.m. Eastern time on the prior Business Day and in the manner set forth in the Participant Agreement and/or applicable order form. The date on which an order to purchase Creation Units (or an order to redeem Creation Units, as set forth below) is received and accepted is referred to as the "Order Placement Date."

(Inference AI Chip ETF, AI Packaging & Testing ETF, and Memory & Photonics ETF only). All orders to purchase Shares directly from the Funds on the next Business Day must be submitted as a "Future Dated Trade" for one or more Creation Units between 4:30 p.m. Eastern time and 5:30 p.m. Eastern time on the prior Business Day and in the manner set forth in the Participant Agreement and/or applicable order form. With respect to the Funds, the Business Day following the day on which such an order is submitted to purchase Creation Units (or an order to redeem Creation Units, as set forth below) is referred to as the "Order Placement Date."

An Authorized Participant may require an investor to make certain representations or enter into agreements with respect to the order (*e.g.*, to provide for payments of cash, when required). Investors should be aware that their particular broker may not have executed a Participant Agreement and that, therefore, orders to purchase Shares directly from a Fund in Creation Units have to be placed by the investor's broker through an Authorized Participant that has executed a Participant Agreement. In such cases there may be additional charges to such investor. At any given time, there may be only a limited number of broker-dealers that have executed a Participant Agreement and only a small number of such Authorized Participants may have international capabilities.

On days when the Exchange closes earlier than normal, a Fund may require orders to create Creation Units to be placed earlier in the day. In addition, if a market or markets on which a Fund's investments are primarily traded is closed, the applicable Fund will also generally not accept orders on such day(s). Orders must be transmitted by an Authorized Participant by telephone or other transmission method acceptable to the Transfer Agent pursuant to procedures set forth in the Participant Agreement. On behalf of the Funds, the Transfer Agent will notify the Custodian of such order. The Custodian will then provide such information to the appropriate local sub-custodian(s). Those placing orders through an Authorized Participant should allow sufficient time to permit proper submission of the purchase order to the Transfer Agent by the cut-off time on such Business Day. Economic or market disruptions or changes, or telephone or other communication failure may impede the ability to reach the Transfer Agent or an Authorized Participant.

Fund Deposits must be delivered by an Authorized Participant through the Federal Reserve System (for cash) or through DTC (for corporate securities), through a subcustody agent (for foreign securities) and/or through such other arrangements allowed by the Fund or its agents. With respect to foreign Deposit Securities, the Custodian shall cause the subcustodian of the Funds to maintain an account into which the Authorized Participant shall deliver, on behalf of itself or the party on whose behalf it is acting, such Deposit Securities (or Deposit Cash for all or a part of such securities, as permitted or required), with any appropriate adjustments as advised by the Fund. Foreign Deposit Securities must be delivered to an account maintained at the applicable local subcustodian. A Fund Deposit transfer must be ordered by the Authorized Participant in a timely fashion so as to ensure the delivery of the requisite number of Deposit Securities or Deposit Cash, as applicable, to the account of the applicable Fund or its agents by no later than 12:00 p.m. Eastern time (or such other time as specified by the Fund) on the Settlement Date. If a Fund or its agents do not receive all of the Deposit Securities, or the required Deposit Cash in lieu thereof, by such time, then the order may be deemed rejected and the Authorized Participant shall be liable to the applicable Fund for losses, if any, resulting therefrom. The "Settlement Date" for a Fund is generally the first Business Day after the Order Placement Date. However, the Funds reserve the right to settle transactions on a basis other than the Business Day after the Order Placement Date.

All questions as to the number of Deposit Securities or Deposit Cash to be delivered, as applicable, and the validity, form and eligibility (including time of receipt) for the deposit of any tendered securities or cash, as applicable, will be determined by the Fund, whose determination shall be final and binding. The amount of cash represented by the Cash Component must be transferred directly to the Custodian through the Federal Reserve Bank wire transfer system in a timely manner so as to be received by the Custodian no later than the Settlement Date. If the Cash Component and the Deposit Securities or Deposit Cash, as applicable, are not received by the Custodian in a timely manner by the Settlement Date, the creation order may be cancelled. Upon written notice to the Transfer Agent, such

canceled order may be resubmitted the following Business Day using a Fund Deposit as newly constituted to reflect the then current NAV of the applicable Fund.

The order shall be deemed to be received on the Business Day on which the order is placed provided that the order is placed in proper form prior to the applicable cut-off time. Trades are to be settled when the federal funds in the appropriate amount are deposited by 2:00 p.m. or 3:00 p.m., Eastern time, with the Custodian on the Settlement Date. If the order is not placed in proper form as required, or federal funds in the appropriate amount are not received by 2:00 p.m. or 3:00 p.m., Eastern time on the Settlement Date, then the order may be deemed to be rejected and the Authorized Participant shall be liable to the applicable Fund for losses, if any, resulting therefrom. A creation request is considered to be in "proper form" if all procedures set forth in the Participant Agreement and this SAI are properly followed.

Issuance of a Creation Unit. Except as provided in this SAI, Creation Units will not be issued until the transfer of good title to the Fund of the Deposit Securities or payment of Deposit Cash, as applicable, and the payment of the Cash Component 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 or subcustodians, the Transfer Agent and the Adviser shall be notified of such delivery, and the Fund will issue and cause the delivery of the Creation Units. The delivery of Creation Units so created generally will occur no later than one Business Day following the day on which the purchase order is deemed received by the Transfer Agent. However, the Funds reserve the right to settle transactions on a basis other than the Business Day after the purchase order is deemed received by the Transfer Agent to accommodate foreign market holiday schedules, to account for different treatment among foreign and U.S. markets of dividend record dates and ex-dividend dates (that is the last day the holder of a security can sell the security and still receive dividends payable on the security), and in certain other circumstances.

Creation Units may be purchased in advance of receipt by the Fund of all or a portion of the applicable Deposit Securities as described below. In these circumstances, the initial deposit will have a value greater than the NAV of Shares on the date the order is placed in proper form since, in addition to available Deposit Securities, cash must be deposited in an amount equal to the sum of (i) the Cash Component, plus (ii) an additional amount of cash equal to a percentage of the value as set forth in the Participant Agreement, of the undelivered Deposit Securities (the "Additional Cash Deposit"), which shall be maintained in a separate non-interest bearing collateral account. The Authorized Participant must deposit with the Custodian the Additional Cash Deposit, as applicable, by 12:00 p.m. Eastern time (or such other time as specified by the Fund) on the Settlement Date. If a Fund or its agents do not receive the Additional Cash Deposit in the appropriate amount, by such time, then the order may be deemed rejected and the Authorized Participant shall be liable to the applicable Fund for losses, if any, resulting therefrom. An additional amount of cash shall be required to be deposited with the Fund, pending delivery of the missing Deposit Securities to the extent necessary to maintain the Additional Cash Deposit with the Fund in an amount at least equal to the applicable percentage, as set forth in the Participant Agreement, of the daily market value of the missing Deposit Securities. The Participant Agreement will permit the Fund to buy the missing Deposit Securities at any time. Authorized Participants will be liable to the Fund for the costs incurred by the Fund in connection with any such purchases. These costs will be deemed to include the amount by which the actual purchase price of the Deposit Securities exceeds the value of such Deposit Securities on the day the purchase order was deemed received by the Transfer Agent plus the brokerage and related transaction costs associated with such purchases. The Fund will return any unused portion of the Additional Cash Deposit once all of the missing Deposit Securities have been properly received by the Custodian or purchased by the Fund and deposited into the Fund. In addition, a transaction fee, as described below under "Creation Transaction Fee," may be charged. The delivery of Creation Units so created generally will occur no later than the Settlement Date.

Acceptance of Orders of Creation Units. Each Fund reserves the right to reject an order for Creation Units transmitted to it by the Transfer Agent with respect to a Fund including, without limitation, if (a) the order is not in proper form; (b) the Deposit Securities or Deposit Cash, as applicable, delivered by the Participant are not as disseminated through the facilities of the NSCC for that date by the Custodian; (c) the investor(s), upon obtaining Shares ordered, would own 80% or more of the currently outstanding Shares of the applicable Fund; (d) the acceptance of the Fund Deposit would, in the opinion of counsel, be unlawful; (e) the acceptance or receipt of the order for a Creation Unit would, in the opinion of Fund counsel, be unlawful; or (f) in the event that circumstances outside the control of the Fund, the Custodian, the Transfer Agent and/or the Adviser make it for all practical purposes not feasible to process orders for Creation Units.

Examples of such circumstances include acts of God or public service or utility problems such as fires, floods, extreme weather conditions and power outages resulting in telephone, telecopy and computer failures; market conditions or activities causing trading halts; systems failures involving computer or other information systems affecting the Fund, the Distributor, the Custodian, a sub-custodian, the Transfer Agent, DTC, NSCC, Federal Reserve System, or any other participant in the creation process, and other extraordinary events. The Transfer Agent shall notify a prospective creator of a Creation Unit and/or the Authorized Participant acting on behalf of the creator of a Creation Unit of its rejection of the order of such person. The Fund, the Transfer Agent, the Custodian, any sub-custodian and the Distributor are under no 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. The Fund, the Transfer Agent, the Custodian and the Distributor shall not be liable for the rejection of any purchase order for Creation Units.

All questions as to the number of Shares of each security in the Deposit Securities and the validity, form, eligibility and acceptance for deposit of any securities to be delivered shall be determined by the Fund, and the Fund's determination shall be final and binding.

Creation Transaction Fee. A fixed purchase (*i.e.*, creation) transaction fee, payable to the Fund's custodian, may be imposed for the transfer and other transaction costs associated with the purchase of Creation Units ("Creation Order Costs"). The standard fixed creation transaction fee for each Fund, regardless of the number of Creation Units created in the transaction, can be found in the table below. Each Fund may adjust the standard fixed creation transaction fee from time to time. The fixed creation fee may be waived on certain orders if the applicable Fund's custodian has determined to waive some or all of the Creation Order Costs associated with the order or another party, such as the Adviser, has agreed to pay such fee.

In addition, a variable fee, payable to the applicable Fund, of up to the maximum percentage listed in the table below of the value of the Creation Units subject to the transaction may be imposed for cash purchases, non-standard orders, or partial cash purchases of Creation Units. The variable charge is primarily designed to cover additional costs (*e.g.*, brokerage, taxes) involved with buying the securities with cash. Each Fund may determine to not charge a variable fee on certain orders when the Sub-Adviser has determined that doing so is in the best interests of Fund shareholders, *e.g.*, for creation orders that facilitate the rebalance of the applicable Fund's portfolio in a more tax efficient manner than could be achieved without such order.

Name of Fund	Fixed Creation Transaction Fee	Maximum Variable Transaction Fee
Inference AI Chip ETF	$300	2%
AI Packaging & Testing ETF	$300	2%
Memory & Photonics ETF	$750	2%
Plumbing & Electrical ETF	$300	2%

Investors who use the services of a broker or other such intermediary may be charged a fee for such services. Investors are responsible for the fixed costs of transferring the Fund Securities from the Trust to their account or on their order.

Risks of Purchasing Creation Units. There are certain legal risks unique to investors purchasing Creation Units directly from a Fund. Because Shares may be issued on an ongoing basis, a "distribution" of Shares could be occurring at any time. Certain activities that a shareholder performs as a dealer could, depending on the circumstances, result in the shareholder being deemed a participant in the distribution in a manner that could render the shareholder a statutory underwriter and subject to the prospectus delivery and liability provisions of the Securities Act. For example, a shareholder could be deemed a statutory underwriter if it purchases Creation Units from a Fund, breaks them down into the constituent Shares, and sells those Shares directly to customers, or if a shareholder chooses to couple the creation of a supply of new Shares with an active selling effort involving solicitation of secondary-market demand for Shares. Whether a person is an underwriter depends upon all of the facts and circumstances pertaining to that person's activities, and the examples mentioned here should not be considered a complete description of all the activities that could cause you to be deemed an underwriter.

Dealers who are not "underwriters" but are participating in a distribution (as opposed to engaging in ordinary secondary-market transactions), and thus dealing with Shares as part of an "unsold allotment" within the meaning of Section 4(a)(3)(C) of the Securities Act, will be unable to take advantage of the prospectus delivery exemption provided by Section 4(a)(3) of the Securities Act.

Redemption. Shares may be redeemed only in Creation Units at their NAV next determined after receipt of a redemption request in proper form by a Fund through the Transfer Agent and only on a Business Day. A Fund will not redeem shares in amounts less than Creation Units, except upon liquidation of the Fund.

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. Investors should expect to incur brokerage and other costs in connection with assembling a sufficient number of Shares to constitute a redeemable Creation Unit.

Fund Securities received on redemption may not be identical to Deposit Securities.

With respect to the Funds, the Custodian, 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 list of the names and Share quantities of each Fund's portfolio securities that will be applicable (subject to possible amendment or correction) to redemption requests received in proper form (as defined below) on that day ("Fund Securities").

Redemption proceeds for a Creation Unit are paid either in-kind or in cash, or combination thereof, as determined by such Fund. With respect to in-kind redemptions of a Fund, redemption proceeds for a Creation Unit will consist of the applicable Fund Securities, as announced by the Custodian on the Business Day of the request for redemption, received in proper form plus the Cash Redemption Amount, less a fixed redemption transaction fee, as applicable on that day. The Cash Redemption Amount is an amount equal to the difference between the NAV of Shares being redeemed, as next determined after a receipt of a request in proper form, and the value of the Fund Securities. Fund Securities received on redemption may not be identical to Deposit Securities.

In the event that the Fund Securities have a value greater than the NAV of Shares, a compensating cash payment equal to the differential is required to be made by or through an Authorized Participant by the redeeming shareholder. Notwithstanding the foregoing, at a Fund's discretion, an Authorized Participant may receive the corresponding cash value of the securities in lieu of the in-kind securities value representing one or more Fund Securities.

Redemption Transaction Fee. A fixed redemption transaction fee, payable to the Fund's custodian, may be imposed for the transfer and other transaction costs associated with the redemption of Creation Units ("Redemption Order Costs"). The standard fixed redemption transaction fee for each Fund, regardless of the number of Creation Units redeemed in the transaction, can be found in the table below. Each Fund may adjust the redemption transaction fee from time to time. The fixed redemption fee may be waived on certain orders if the applicable Fund's custodian has determined to waive some or all of the Redemption Order Costs associated with the order or another party, such as the Adviser, has agreed to pay such fee.

In addition, a variable fee, payable to the applicable Fund, of up to the maximum percentage listed in the table below of the value of the Creation Units subject to the transaction may be imposed for cash redemptions, non-standard orders, or partial cash redemptions (when cash redemptions are available) of Creation Units. The variable charge is primarily designed to cover additional costs (*e.g.*, brokerage, taxes) involved with selling portfolio securities to satisfy a cash redemption. Each Fund may determine to not charge a variable fee on certain orders when the Adviser has determined that doing so is in the best interests of Fund shareholders, *e.g.*, for redemption orders that facilitate the rebalance of the Fund's portfolio in a more tax efficient manner than could be achieved without such order.

Name of Fund	Fixed Redemption Transaction Fee	Maximum Variable Transaction Fee
Inference AI Chip ETF	$300	2%
AI Packaging & Testing ETF	$300	2%
Memory & Photonics ETF	$750	2%
Plumbing & Electrical ETF	$300	2%

Investors who use the services of a broker or other such intermediary may be charged a fee for such services. Investors are responsible for the fixed costs of transferring the Fund Securities from the Fund to their account or on their order.

Procedures for Redemption of Creation Units *(Plumbing & Electrical ETF only).* Orders to redeem Creation Units of the Funds must be submitted in proper form to the Transfer Agent prior to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time. In addition, orders to redeem Creation Units of the Funds on the next Business Day must be submitted in proper form to the Transfer Agent as a "Future Dated Trade" for one or more Creation Units between 4:30 p.m. Eastern time and 5:30 p.m. Eastern time on the prior Business Day and in the manner set forth in the Participant Agreement and/or applicable order form. A redemption request is considered to be in "proper form" if (i) an Authorized Participant has transferred or caused to be transferred to the Trust's Transfer Agent the Creation Unit(s) being redeemed through the book-entry system of DTC so as to be effective by the time as set forth in the Participant Agreement and (ii) a request in form satisfactory to the Trust is received by the Transfer Agent from the Authorized Participant on behalf of itself or another redeeming investor within the time periods specified in the Participant Agreement. If the Transfer Agent does not receive the investor's Shares through DTC's facilities by the times and pursuant to the other terms and conditions set forth in the Participant Agreement, the redemption request shall be rejected.

(Inference AI Chip ETF, AI Packaging & Testing ETF, and Memory & Photonics ETF only). Orders to redeem Creation Units of the Funds on the next Business Day must be submitted in proper form to the Transfer Agent as a "Future Dated Trade" for one or more Creation Units between 4:30 p.m. Eastern time and 5:30 p.m. Eastern time on the prior Business Day and in the manner set forth in the Participant Agreement and/or applicable order form. A redemption request is considered to be in "proper form" if (i) an Authorized Participant has transferred or caused to be transferred to the Trust's Transfer Agent the Creation Unit(s) being redeemed through the book-entry system of DTC so as to be effective by the time as set forth in the Participant Agreement and (ii) a request in form satisfactory to the Trust is received by the Transfer Agent from the Authorized Participant on behalf of itself or another redeeming investor within the time periods specified in the Participant Agreement. If the Transfer Agent does not receive the investor's Shares through DTC's facilities by the times and pursuant to the other terms and conditions set forth in the Participant Agreement, the redemption request shall be rejected.

The Authorized Participant must transmit the request for redemption, in the form required by the Fund, to the Transfer Agent in accordance with procedures set forth in the Participant Agreement. Investors should be aware that their particular broker may not have executed a Participant Agreement, and that, therefore, requests to redeem Creation Units may have to be placed by the investor's broker through an Authorized Participant who has executed a Participant Agreement. Investors making a redemption request should be aware that such request must be in the form specified by such Authorized Participant. Investors making a request to redeem Creation Units should allow sufficient time to permit proper submission of the request by an Authorized Participant and transfer of the Shares to the Fund's Transfer Agent; such investors should allow for the additional time that may be required to effect redemptions through their banks, brokers or other financial intermediaries if such intermediaries are not Authorized Participants.

Additional Redemption Procedures. In connection with taking delivery of Fund Securities upon redemption of Creation Units, a redeeming shareholder or Authorized Participant acting on behalf of such 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. Deliveries of redemption proceeds generally will be made within one Business Day of the trade date. However, the Funds reserve the right to settle transactions on a basis other than the Business Day after the trade date.

However, due to the schedule of holidays in certain countries, the different treatment among foreign and U.S. markets of dividend record dates and dividend ex-dates (that is the last date the holder of a security can sell the security and still receive dividends payable on the security sold), and in certain other circumstances, the delivery of in-kind redemption proceeds with respect to the Funds may take longer than one Business Day after the day on which the redemption request is received in proper form. If neither the redeeming shareholder nor the Authorized Participant acting on behalf of such 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 jurisdiction, the Trust may, in its discretion, exercise its option to redeem such Shares in cash, and the redeeming shareholders will be required to receive its redemption proceeds in cash.

If it is not possible to make other such arrangements, or it is not possible to effect deliveries of the Fund Securities, the Trust may in its discretion exercise its option to redeem such Shares in cash, and the redeeming investor will be required to receive its redemption proceeds in cash. In addition, an investor may request a redemption in cash that a Fund may, in its sole discretion, permit. In either case, the investor will receive a cash payment equal to the NAV of its Shares based on the NAV of Shares of the applicable Fund next determined after the redemption request is received in proper form (minus a redemption transaction fee, if applicable, and additional charge for requested cash redemptions specified above, to offset the Fund's brokerage and other transaction costs associated with the disposition of Fund Securities). A Fund may also, in its sole discretion, upon request of a shareholder, provide such redeemer a portfolio of securities that differs from the exact composition of the Fund Securities but does not differ in NAV.

Redemptions of Shares for Fund Securities will be subject to compliance with applicable federal and state securities laws and the Funds (whether or not it otherwise permits cash redemptions) reserve the right to redeem Creation Units for cash to the extent that the Fund 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 an investor for which it is acting subject to a legal restriction with respect to a particular security included in the Fund Securities applicable to the redemption of Creation Units may be paid an equivalent amount of cash. The Authorized Participant may request the redeeming investor of the Shares to enter into agreements with respect to such matters as compensating cash payment. Further, an Authorized Participant that is not a "qualified institutional buyer," ("QIB") as such term is defined under Rule 144A of the Securities Act, will not be able to receive Fund Securities that are restricted securities eligible for resale under Rule 144A. An Authorized Participant may be required by the Fund to provide a written confirmation with respect to QIB status to receive Fund Securities.

Because the portfolio securities of the Funds may trade on other exchanges on days that the Exchanges are closed or are otherwise not Business Days for such Fund, shareholders may not be able to redeem their Shares of the applicable Fund, or to purchase or sell Shares of the applicable Fund on the Exchange, on days when the NAV of the applicable Fund could be significantly affected by events in the relevant foreign markets.

The right of redemption may be suspended or the date of payment postponed with respect to a Fund (1) for any period during which the Exchange is closed (other than customary weekend and holiday closings); (2) for any period during which trading on the Exchange is suspended or restricted; (3) for any period during which an emergency exists as a result of which disposal of the Shares of the applicable Fund or determination of the NAV of the Shares is not reasonably practicable; or (4) in such other circumstance as is permitted by the SEC.

DETERMINATION OF NET ASSET VALUE

NAV per Share for a Fund is computed by dividing the value of the net assets of the applicable Fund (*i.e.*, the value of its total assets less total liabilities) by the total number of Shares outstanding, rounded to the nearest cent. Expenses and fees, including the management fees, are accrued daily and taken into account for purposes of determining NAV. The NAV of each Fund is calculated by Fund Services and determined at the scheduled close of the regular trading session on the NYSE (ordinarily 4:00 p.m., Eastern time) on each day that the NYSE is open, provided that fixed-income assets may be valued as of the announced closing time for trading in fixed-income instruments on any day that the Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association ("SIFMA") announces an early closing time.

Pursuant to Rule 2a-5 under the 1940 Act, the Board has appointed the Adviser as the Funds' valuation designee (the "Valuation Designee") to perform all fair valuations of each Fund's portfolio investments, subject to the Board's oversight. As the Valuation Designee, the Adviser has established procedures for its fair valuation of each Fund's portfolio investments. These procedures address, among other things, determining when market quotations are not readily available or reliable and the methodologies to be used for determining the fair value of investments, as well as the use and oversight of third-party pricing services for fair valuation. The Adviser's fair value determinations will be carried out in compliance with Rule 2a-5 and based on fair value methodologies established and applied by the Adviser and periodically tested to ensure such methodologies are appropriate and accurate with respect to each Fund's portfolio investments. The Adviser's fair value methodologies may involve obtaining inputs and prices from third-party pricing services.

In calculating each Fund's NAV per Share, each Fund's investments are generally valued using market quotations to the extent such market quotations are readily available. If market quotations are not readily available or are deemed to be unreliable by the Adviser, the Adviser will fair value such investments and use the fair value to calculate each Fund's NAV. When fair value pricing is employed, the prices of securities used by the Adviser to calculate each Fund's NAV may differ from quoted or published prices for the same securities. Due to the subjective and variable nature of fair value pricing, it is possible that the fair value determined for a particular security may be materially different (higher or lower) from the price of the security quoted or published by others, or the value when

trading resumes or is realized upon its sale. There may be multiple methods that can be used to value a portfolio investment when market quotations are not readily available. The value established for any portfolio investment at a point in time might differ from what would be produced using a different methodology or if it had been priced using market quotations.

DIVIDENDS AND DISTRIBUTIONS

The following information supplements and should be read in conjunction with the section in the Prospectus entitled "Dividends, Distributions and Taxes."

General Policies. Dividends from net investment income, if any, are declared and paid at least annually by each Fund. Distributions of net realized securities gains, if any, generally are declared and paid once a year, but a Fund may make distributions on a more frequent basis to improve index tracking for the Fund or for the Fund to comply with the distribution requirements of the Code to preserve a Fund's eligibility for treatment as a RIC, in all events in a manner consistent with the provisions of the 1940 Act.

Dividends and other distributions on Shares are distributed, as described below, on a pro rata basis to Beneficial Owners of such Shares. Dividend payments are made through DTC Participants and Indirect Participants to Beneficial Owners then of record with proceeds received from the Trust.

Each Fund makes additional distributions to the extent necessary (i) to distribute the entire annual taxable income of the applicable Fund, plus any net capital gains and (ii) to avoid imposition of the excise tax imposed by Section 4982 of the Code. Management of the Trust reserves the right to declare special dividends if, in its reasonable discretion, such action is necessary or advisable to preserve a Fund's eligibility for treatment as a RIC or to avoid imposition of income or excise taxes on undistributed income.

Dividend Reinvestment Service. The Trust will not make the DTC book-entry dividend reinvestment service available for use by Beneficial Owners for reinvestment of their cash proceeds, but certain individual broker-dealers may make available the DTC book-entry Dividend Reinvestment Service for use by Beneficial Owners of the Funds through DTC Participants for reinvestment of their dividend distributions. Investors should contact their brokers to ascertain the availability and description of these services. Beneficial Owners should be aware that each broker may require investors to adhere to specific procedures and timetables to participate in the dividend reinvestment service and investors should ascertain from their brokers such necessary details. If this service is available and used, dividend distributions of both income and realized gains will be automatically reinvested in additional whole Shares issued by the Trust of the applicable Fund at NAV per Share. Distributions reinvested in additional Shares will nevertheless be taxable to Beneficial Owners acquiring such additional Shares to the same extent as if such distributions had been received in cash.

FEDERAL INCOME TAXES

The following is only a summary of certain important U.S. federal income tax considerations generally affecting a Fund and its shareholders that supplements the discussion in the Prospectus. No attempt is made to present a comprehensive explanation of the federal, state, local or foreign tax treatment of a Fund or its shareholders, and the discussion here and in the Prospectus is not intended to be a substitute for careful tax planning.

The following general discussion of certain U.S. federal income tax consequences is based on provisions of the Code and the regulations issued thereunder as in effect on the date of this SAI. New legislation, as well as administrative changes or court decisions, may significantly change the conclusions expressed herein, and may have a retroactive effect with respect to the transactions contemplated herein.

Shareholders are urged to consult their own tax advisers regarding the application of the provisions of tax law described in this SAI in light of the particular tax situations of the shareholders and regarding specific questions as to federal, state, foreign or local taxes.

Taxation of the Funds. Each Fund intends to elect and intends to qualify each year to be treated as a separate RIC under the Code. As such, the Funds should not be subject to federal income taxes on their net investment income and capital gains, if any, to the extent that they timely distribute such income and capital gains to their shareholders. To qualify for treatment as a RIC, a Fund must distribute annually to its shareholders at least the sum of 90% of its net investment income (generally including the excess of net short-term capital gains over net long-term capital losses) and 90% of its net tax-exempt interest income, if any (the "Distribution Requirement") and also must meet several additional requirements. Among these requirements are the following: (i) at least 90% of the applicable Fund's gross income each taxable year must be derived from dividends, interest, payments with respect to certain securities loans, gains from the sale or other disposition of stock, securities or foreign currencies, or other income derived with respect to its business of investing in such stock, securities or foreign currencies and net income derived from interests in qualified publicly traded partnerships (the "Qualifying Income Requirement"); and (ii) at the end of each quarter of the Fund's taxable year, the Fund's assets must be diversified so that (a) at least 50% of the value of the Fund's total assets is represented by cash and cash items, U.S. government securities, securities of other RICs, and other securities, with such other securities limited, in respect to 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, including the equity securities of a qualified publicly traded partnership, and (b) not more than 25% of the value of its total assets is invested, including through corporations in which the Fund owns a 20% or more voting stock interest, in the securities (other than U.S. government securities or securities of other RICs) of any one issuer, the securities (other than securities of other RICs) of two or more issuers which the applicable Fund controls and which are engaged in the same, similar, or related trades or businesses, or the securities of one or more qualified publicly traded partnerships (the "Diversification Requirement"). The determination of the value and the identity of the issuer

of derivative investments that the Fund may invest in are often unclear for purposes of the Diversification Requirement described above. Although each Fund intends to carefully monitor its investments to ensure that it is adequately diversified under the Diversification Requirement, there are no assurances that the Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") will agree with a Fund's determination of the issuer under the Diversification Requirement with respect to such derivatives.

It may not be possible for a Fund to fully implement a replication strategy or a representative sampling strategy while satisfying the Diversification Requirement. A Fund's efforts to satisfy the Diversification Requirement may affect the Fund's execution of its investment strategy and may cause the Fund's return to deviate from that of the Index, and the Fund's efforts to represent the Index using a sampling strategy, if such a strategy is used at any point, may cause it inadvertently to fail to satisfy the Diversification Requirement.

To the extent a Fund makes investments that may generate income that is not qualifying income, the Fund will seek to restrict the resulting income from such investments so that the Fund's non-qualifying income does not exceed 10% of its gross income.

Although the Funds intend to distribute substantially all of their net investment income and may distribute their capital gains for any taxable year, the Funds will be subject to federal income taxation to the extent any such income or gains are not distributed. Each Fund is treated as a separate corporation for federal income tax purposes. A Fund therefore is considered to be a separate entity in determining its treatment under the rules for RICs described herein. The requirements (other than certain organizational requirements) for qualifying RIC status are determined at the fund level rather than at the Trust level.

If a Fund fails to satisfy the Qualifying Income Requirement or the Diversification Requirement in any taxable year, the applicable Fund may be eligible for relief provisions if the failures are due to reasonable cause and not willful neglect and if a penalty tax is paid with respect to each failure to satisfy the applicable requirements. Additionally, relief is provided for certain *de minimis* failures of the Diversification Requirement where a Fund corrects the failure within a specified period of time. To be eligible for the relief provisions with respect to a failure to meet the Diversification Requirement, a Fund may be required to dispose of certain assets. If these relief provisions were not available to a Fund and it were to fail to qualify for treatment as a RIC for a taxable year, all of its taxable income would be subject to tax at the regular 21% corporate rate without any deduction for distributions to shareholders, and its distributions (including capital gains distributions) generally would be taxable to the shareholders of the applicable Fund as ordinary income dividends to the extent of a Fund's current and accumulated earnings and profits, subject to the dividends received deduction for corporate shareholders and the lower tax rates on qualified dividend income received by non-corporate shareholders, subject to certain limitations. To requalify for treatment as a RIC in a subsequent taxable year, a Fund would be required to satisfy the RIC qualification requirements for that year and to distribute any earnings and profits from any year in which the applicable Fund failed to qualify for tax treatment as a RIC. If a Fund failed to qualify as a RIC for a period greater than two taxable years, it would generally be required to pay a Fund-level tax on certain net built in gains recognized with respect to certain of its assets upon a disposition of such assets within five years of qualifying as a RIC in a subsequent year. The Board reserves the right not to maintain the qualification of a Fund for treatment as a RIC if it determines such course of action to be beneficial to shareholders. If a Fund determines that it will not qualify as a RIC, the applicable Fund will establish procedures to reflect the anticipated tax liability in the Fund's NAV.

A Fund may elect to treat part or all of any "qualified late year loss" as if it had been incurred in the succeeding taxable year in determining the Fund's taxable income, net capital gain, net short-term capital gain, and earnings and profits. The effect of this election is to treat any such "qualified late year loss" as if it had been incurred in the succeeding taxable year in characterizing Fund distributions for any calendar year. A "qualified late year loss" generally includes net capital loss, net long-term capital loss, or net short-term capital loss incurred after October 31 of the current taxable year (commonly referred to as "post-October losses") and certain other late-year losses.

Capital losses in excess of capital gains ("net capital losses") are not permitted to be deducted against a RIC's net investment income. Instead, for U.S. federal income tax purposes, potentially subject to certain limitations, a Fund may carry a net capital loss from any taxable year forward indefinitely to offset its capital gains, if any, in years following the year of the loss. To the extent subsequent capital gains are offset by such losses, they will not result in U.S. federal income tax liability to the applicable Fund and may not be distributed as capital gains to its shareholders. Generally, a Fund may not carry forward any losses other than net capital losses. The carryover of capital losses may be limited under the general loss limitation rules if the Fund experiences an ownership change as defined in the Code.

A Fund will be subject to a nondeductible 4% federal excise tax on certain undistributed income if it does not distribute to its shareholders in each calendar year an amount at least equal to 98% of its ordinary income for the calendar year plus 98.2% of its capital gain net income for the one-year period ending on October 31 of that year, subject to an increase for any shortfall in the prior year's distribution. For this purpose, any ordinary income or capital gain net income retained by a Fund and subject to corporate income tax will be considered to have been distributed. The Funds intend to declare and distribute dividends and distributions in the amounts and at the times necessary to avoid the application of the excise tax, but can make no assurances that all such tax liability will be eliminated. A Fund may in certain circumstances be required to liquidate Fund investments in order to make sufficient distributions to avoid federal excise tax liability at a time when the investment adviser might not otherwise have chosen to do so, and liquidation of investments in such circumstances may affect the ability of the Fund to satisfy the requirement for qualification as a RIC.

If a Fund meets the Distribution Requirement but retains some or all of its income or gains, it will be subject to federal income tax to the extent any such income or gains are not distributed. A Fund may designate certain amounts retained as undistributed net capital gain in a notice to its shareholders, who (i) will be required to include in income for U.S. federal income tax purposes, as long-term capital gain, their proportionate shares of the undistributed amount so designated, (ii) will be entitled to credit their proportionate shares of the

income tax paid by the Fund on that undistributed amount against their federal income tax liabilities and to claim refunds to the extent such credits exceed their tax liabilities, and (iii) will be entitled to increase their tax basis, for federal income tax purposes, in their Shares by an amount equal to the excess of the amount of undistributed net capital gain included in their respective income over their respective income tax credits.

Taxation of Shareholders – Distributions. Each Fund intends to distribute annually to its shareholders substantially all of its investment company taxable income (computed without regard to the deduction for dividends paid), its net tax-exempt income, if any, and any net capital gain (net recognized long-term capital gains in excess of net recognized short-term capital losses, taking into account any capital loss carryforwards). The distribution of investment company taxable income (as so computed) and net realized capital gain will be taxable to Fund shareholders regardless of whether the shareholder receives these distributions in cash or reinvests them in additional Shares.

Each Fund (or your broker) will report to shareholders annually the amounts of dividends paid from ordinary income, the amount of distributions of net capital gain, the portion of dividends which may qualify for the dividends received deduction for corporations, and the portion of dividends which may qualify for treatment as qualified dividend income, which, subject to certain limitations and requirements, is taxable to non-corporate shareholders at rates of up to 20%. Distributions from a Fund's net capital gain will be taxable to shareholders at long-term capital gains rates, regardless of how long shareholders have held their Shares. Distributions by a Fund of its net short-term capital gains will be taxable as ordinary income. Distributions may be subject to state and local taxes.

Qualified dividend income includes, in general and, subject to certain holding period and other requirements, dividend income from taxable domestic corporations and certain foreign corporations. Subject to certain limitations, eligible foreign corporations include those incorporated in possessions of the United States, those incorporated in certain countries with comprehensive tax treaties with the United States, and other foreign corporations if the stock with respect to which the dividends are paid is readily tradable on an established securities market in the United States. Dividends received by a Fund from an underlying fund taxable as a RIC or from a REIT may be treated as qualified dividend income generally only to the extent so reported by such underlying fund or REIT, however, dividends received by a Fund from a REIT are generally not treated as qualified dividend income. If 95% or more of a Fund's gross income (calculated without taking into account net capital gain derived from sales or other dispositions of stock or securities) consists of qualified dividend income, such Fund may report all distributions of such income as qualified dividend income. Certain of a Fund's investment strategies may limit its ability to distribute dividends eligible to be treated as qualified dividend income.

Fund dividends will not be treated as qualified dividend income if a Fund does not meet holding period and other requirements with respect to dividend paying stocks in its portfolio, and the shareholder does not meet holding period and other requirements with respect to the Shares on which the dividends were paid.

In the case of corporate shareholders, certain dividends received by a Fund from U.S. corporations (generally, dividends received by the Fund in respect of any share of stock (1) with a tax holding period of at least 46 days during the 91-day period beginning on the date that is 45 days before the date on which the stock becomes ex-dividend as to that dividend and (2) that is held in an unleveraged position) and distributed and appropriately so reported by the Fund may be eligible for the 50% dividends received deduction. Certain preferred stock must have a holding period of at least 91 days during the 181-day period beginning on the date that is 90 days before the date on which the stock becomes ex-dividend as to that dividend to be eligible. Capital gain dividends distributed to a Fund from other RICs are not eligible, and dividends distributed to a Fund from REITs are generally not eligible for the dividends received deduction. To qualify for the deduction, corporate shareholders must meet the minimum holding period requirement stated above with respect to their Shares, taking into account any holding period reductions from certain hedging or other transactions or positions that diminish their risk of loss with respect to their Shares, and, if they borrow to acquire or otherwise incur debt attributable to Shares, they may be denied a portion of the dividends received deduction with respect to those Shares.

A RIC that receives business interest income may pass through its net business interest income for purposes of the tax rules applicable to the interest expense limitations under Section 163(j) of the Code. A RIC's total "Section 163(j) Interest Dividend" for a tax year is limited to the excess of the RIC's business interest income over the sum of its business interest expense and its other deductions properly allocable to its business interest income. A RIC may, in its discretion, designate all or a portion of ordinary dividends as Section 163(j) Interest Dividends, which would allow the recipient shareholder to treat the designated portion of such dividends as interest income for purposes of determining such shareholder's interest expense deduction limitation under Section 163(j). This can potentially increase the amount of a shareholder's interest expense deductible under Section 163(j). Such treatment of Section 163(j) Interest Dividends by a 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. Section 163(j) Interest Dividends, if so designated by the Fund, will be reported to your financial intermediary or otherwise in accordance with the requirements specified by the Internal Revenue Service (the "IRS").

Although dividends generally will be treated as distributed when paid, any dividend declared by a Fund in October, November or December and payable to shareholders of record in such a month that is paid during the following January will be treated for U.S. federal income tax purposes as received by shareholders on December 31 of the calendar year in which it was declared.

Shareholders who have not held Shares for a full year should be aware that a Fund may report and distribute, as ordinary dividends or capital gain dividends, a percentage of income that is not equal to the percentage of the Fund's ordinary income or net capital gain, respectively, actually earned during the applicable shareholder's period of investment in the Fund. A taxable shareholder may wish to

avoid investing in a Fund shortly before a dividend or other distribution, because the distribution will generally be taxable even though it may economically represent a return of a portion of the shareholder's investment.

To the extent that a Fund makes a distribution of income received by the Fund in lieu of dividends (a "substitute payment") with respect to securities on loan pursuant to a securities lending transaction, such income will not constitute qualified dividend income to individual shareholders and will not be eligible for the dividends received deduction for corporate shareholders.

If a Fund's distributions exceed its earnings and profits, all or a portion of the distributions made for a taxable year may be recharacterized as a return of capital to shareholders. A return of capital distribution will generally not be taxable, but will reduce each shareholder's cost basis in a Fund and result in a higher capital gain or lower capital loss when the Shares on which the distribution was received are sold. After a shareholder's basis in the Shares has been reduced to zero, distributions in excess of earnings and profits will be treated as gain from the sale of the shareholder's Shares.

Taxation of Shareholders – Sale, Redemption, or Exchange of Shares. A sale, redemption, or exchange of Shares may give rise to a gain or loss. For tax purposes, an exchange of your Fund Shares for shares of a different fund is the same as a sale. In general, any gain or loss realized upon a taxable disposition of Shares will be treated as long-term capital gain or loss if Shares have been held for more than 12 months. Otherwise, the gain or loss on the taxable disposition of Shares will generally be treated as short-term capital gain or loss. Any loss realized upon a taxable disposition of Shares held for six months or less will be treated as long-term capital loss, rather than short-term capital loss, to the extent of any amounts treated as distributions to the shareholder of long-term capital gain (including any amounts credited to the shareholder as undistributed capital gains). All or a portion of any loss realized upon a taxable disposition of Shares may be disallowed if substantially identical Shares are acquired (through the reinvestment of dividends or otherwise) within a 61-day period beginning 30 days before and ending 30 days after the disposition. In such a case, the basis of the newly acquired Shares will be adjusted to reflect the disallowed loss.

The cost basis of Shares acquired by purchase will generally be based on the amount paid for Shares and then may be subsequently adjusted for other applicable transactions as required by the Code. The difference between the selling price and the cost basis of Shares generally determines the amount of the capital gain or loss realized on the sale or exchange of Shares. Contact the broker through whom you purchased your Shares to obtain information with respect to the available cost basis reporting methods and elections for your account.

An Authorized Participant who exchanges securities for Creation Units generally will recognize a gain or a loss. The gain or loss will be equal to the difference between the market value of the Creation Units at the time and the sum of the exchanger's aggregate basis in the securities surrendered plus the amount of cash paid for such Creation Units. A person who redeems Creation Units will generally recognize a gain or loss equal to the difference between the exchanger's basis in the Creation Units and the sum of the aggregate market value of any securities received plus the amount of any cash received for such Creation Units. The ability of Authorized Participants to receive a full or partial cash redemption of Creation Units of a Fund may limit the tax efficiency of such Fund. The IRS, however, may assert that a loss realized upon an exchange of securities for Creation Units cannot currently be deducted under the rules governing "wash sales" (for a person who does not mark-to-market its portfolio) or on the basis that there has been no significant change in economic position.

The Trust, on behalf of the Funds, has the right to reject an order for Creation Units if the purchaser (or a group of purchasers) would, upon obtaining the Creation Units so ordered, own 80% or more of the outstanding Shares and if, pursuant to Section 351 of the Code, a 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 the provision of information necessary to determine beneficial Share ownership for purposes of the 80% determination. If a Fund does issue Creation Units to a purchaser (or a group of purchasers) that would, upon obtaining the Creation Units so ordered, own 80% or more of the outstanding Shares, the purchaser (or a group of purchasers) will generally not recognize gain or loss upon the exchange of securities for Creation Units.

Authorized Participants purchasing or redeeming Creation Units should consult their own tax advisers with respect to the tax treatment of any creation or redemption transaction and whether the wash sales rule applies and when a loss may be deductible.

Taxation of Shareholders – Net Investment Income Tax. U.S. individuals with adjusted gross income (subject to certain adjustments) exceeding certain threshold amounts ($250,000 if married filing jointly or if considered a "surviving spouse" for federal income tax purposes, $125,000 if married filing separately, and $200,000 in other cases) are subject to a 3.8% tax on all or a portion of their "net investment income," which includes taxable interest, dividends, and certain capital gains (generally including capital gain distributions and capital gains realized on the sale of Shares). This 3.8% tax also applies to all or a portion of the undistributed net investment income of certain shareholders that are estates and trusts.

Taxation of Fund Investments. Certain of a Fund's investments may be subject to complex provisions of the Code (including provisions relating to hedging transactions, straddles, integrated transactions, foreign currency contracts, forward foreign currency contracts, and notional principal contracts) that, among other things, may affect a Fund's ability to qualify as a RIC, affect the character of gains and losses realized by the Fund (*e.g.*, may affect whether gains or losses are ordinary or capital), accelerate recognition of income to the Fund and defer losses. These rules could therefore affect the character, amount and timing of distributions to shareholders. These provisions also may require a Fund to mark to market certain types of positions in its portfolio (*i.e.*, treat them as if they were closed out) which may cause the Fund to recognize income without the Fund receiving cash with which to make distributions in amounts sufficient

to enable the Fund to satisfy the RIC distribution requirements for avoiding income and excise taxes. A Fund intends to monitor its transactions, intends to make appropriate tax elections, and intends to make appropriate entries in its books and records to mitigate the effect of these rules and preserve the Fund's qualification for treatment as a RIC. To the extent a Fund invests in an underlying fund that is taxable as a RIC, the rules applicable to the tax treatment of complex securities will also apply to the underlying funds that also invest in such complex securities and investments.

Any market discount recognized on a bond is taxable as ordinary income. A market discount bond is a bond acquired in the secondary market at a price below redemption value or adjusted issue price if issued with original issue discount. Absent an election by the Fund to include the market discount in income as it accrues, gain on the Fund's disposition of such an obligation will be treated as ordinary income rather than capital gain to the extent of the accrued market discount.

The Fund may invest in, or hold, debt obligations that are in the lowest rating categories or that are unrated, including debt obligations of issuers not currently paying interest or that are in default. Investments in debt obligations that are at risk of or are in default present special tax issues for the Fund. Federal income tax rules are not entirely clear about issues such as when the Fund 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 interest and whether certain exchanges of debt obligations in a workout context are taxable. These and other issues will be addressed by the Fund, in the event it invests in or holds such securities, in order to seek to ensure that it distributes sufficient income to preserve its status as a RIC and does not become subject to U.S. federal income or excise tax.

Foreign Investments. Dividends and interest received by a Fund from sources within foreign countries may be subject to withholding and other taxes imposed by such countries. Tax treaties between certain countries and the U.S. may reduce or eliminate such taxes.

If more than 50% of the value of a Fund's assets at the close of any taxable year consists of stock or securities of foreign corporations, which for this purpose may include obligations of foreign governmental issuers, the Fund may elect, for U.S. federal income tax purposes, to treat any foreign income or withholding taxes paid by the Fund as paid by its shareholders. For any year that a Fund is eligible for and makes such an election, each shareholder of the Fund will be required to include in income an amount equal to his or her allocable share of qualified foreign income taxes paid by the Fund, and shareholders will be entitled, subject to certain holding period requirements and other limitations, to credit their portions of these amounts against their U.S. federal income tax due, if any, or to deduct their portions from their U.S. taxable income, if any. No deductions for foreign taxes paid by a Fund may be claimed, however, by non-corporate shareholders who do not itemize deductions. No deduction for such taxes will be permitted to individuals in computing their alternative minimum tax liability. Shareholders that are not subject to U.S. federal income tax, and those who invest in a Fund through tax-advantaged accounts (including those who invest through individual retirement accounts or other tax-advantaged retirement plans), generally will receive no benefit from any tax credit or deduction passed through by such Fund. Each Fund does not expect to satisfy the requirements for passing through to its shareholders any share of foreign taxes paid by the Fund, with the result that shareholders will not include such taxes in their gross incomes and will not be entitled to a tax deduction or credit for such taxes on their own tax returns. Foreign taxes paid by a Fund will reduce the return from the Fund's investments.

If a Fund holds shares in a "passive foreign investment company" ("PFIC"), it may be subject to U.S. federal income tax on a portion of any "excess distribution" or gain from the disposition of such shares even if such income is distributed as a taxable dividend by the Fund to its shareholders. Additional charges in the nature of interest may be imposed on a Fund in respect of deferred taxes arising from such distributions or gains.

Each Fund may be eligible to treat a PFIC as a "qualified electing fund" ("QEF") under the Code in which case, in lieu of the foregoing requirements, the Fund will be required to include in income each year a portion of the ordinary earnings and net capital gains of the qualified electing fund, even if not distributed to the Fund, and such amounts will be subject to the 90% and excise tax distribution requirements described above. To make this election, a Fund would be required to obtain certain annual information from the PFICs in which it invests, which may be difficult or impossible to obtain. Alternatively, a Fund may make a mark-to-market election that will result in such Fund being treated as if it had sold and repurchased its PFIC stock at the end of each year. In such case, a Fund would report any gains resulting from such deemed sales as ordinary income and would deduct any losses resulting from such deemed sales as ordinary losses to the extent of previously recognized gains. The election must be made separately for each PFIC owned by a Fund and, once made, is effective for all subsequent taxable years, unless revoked with the consent of the IRS. By making the election, a Fund could potentially ameliorate the adverse tax consequences with respect to its ownership of shares in a PFIC, but in any particular year may be required to recognize income in excess of the distributions it receives from PFICs and its proceeds from dispositions of PFIC stock. A Fund may have to distribute this excess income to satisfy the 90% distribution requirement and to avoid imposition of the 4% excise tax. To distribute this income and avoid a tax at the fund level, a Fund might be required to liquidate portfolio securities that it might otherwise have continued to hold, potentially resulting in additional taxable gain or loss. Each Fund intends to make the appropriate tax elections, if possible, and take any additional steps that are necessary to mitigate the effect of these rules. Amounts included in income each year by a Fund arising from a QEF election, will be "qualifying income" under the Qualifying Income Requirement (as described above) even if not distributed to the Fund, if the Fund derives such income from its business of investing in stock, securities or currencies.

Under Section 988 of the Code, gains or losses attributable to fluctuations in exchange rates which occur between the time a Fund accrues income or other receivables or accrues expenses or other liabilities denominated in a foreign currency and the time the Fund

actually collects such income or receivables or pays such expenses or liabilities generally are treated as ordinary income or loss. Similarly, on disposition of debt securities denominated in a foreign currency and on disposition of certain other financial instruments (such as forward currency contracts and currency swaps), gains or losses attributable to fluctuations in the value of the foreign currency between the date of acquisition of the security or contract and the date of settlement or disposition are also treated as ordinary gain or loss. The gains and losses may increase or decrease the amount of a Fund's income to be distributed to its shareholders as ordinary income. Each Fund may elect out of the application of Section 988 of the Code with respect to the tax treatment of each of its foreign currency forward contracts to the extent that (i) such contract is a capital asset in the hands of the Fund and is not part of a straddle transaction and (ii) the Fund makes an election by the close of the day the contract is entered into to treat the gain or loss attributable to such contract as capital gain or loss.

Tax Treatment of Complex Securities. Certain of each Fund's investments may be subject to complex provisions of the Code (including provisions relating to hedging transactions, straddles, integrated transactions, foreign currency contracts, forward foreign currency contracts, and notional principal contracts) that, among other things, may affect such Fund's ability to qualify as a RIC, may affect the character of gains and losses realized by such Fund (*e.g.*, may affect whether gains or losses are ordinary or capital), accelerate recognition of income to such Fund and defer losses. These rules could therefore affect the character, amount and timing of distributions to shareholders. These provisions also may require a Fund to mark to market certain types of positions in its portfolio *(i.e.*, treat them as if they were closed out) which may cause such Fund to recognize income without the Fund receiving cash with which to make distributions in amounts sufficient to enable the Fund to satisfy the RIC distribution requirements for avoiding income and excise taxes. Each Fund intends to monitor its transactions, intends to make appropriate tax elections, and intends to make appropriate entries in its books and records to mitigate the effect of these rules and preserve such Fund's qualification for treatment as a RIC.

Certain of each Fund's investments may not produce qualifying income to such Fund. To the extent a Fund invests in such investments, such Fund will seek to restrict its income from such instruments that do not generate qualifying income to a maximum of 10% of its gross income (when combined with its other investments that produce non-qualifying income).

Each Fund is required for federal income tax purposes to mark to market and recognize as income for each taxable year its net unrealized gains and losses on certain futures and options contracts subject to section 1256 of the Code ("Section 1256 Contracts") as of the end of the year as well as those actually realized during the year. Gain or loss from Section 1256 Contracts on broad-based indexes required to be marked to market will be 60% long-term and 40% short-term capital gain or loss. Application of this rule may alter the timing and character of distributions to shareholders. A Fund may be required to defer the recognition of losses on Section 1256 Contracts to the extent of any unrecognized gains on offsetting positions held by such Fund. These provisions also may require a Fund to mark-to-market certain types of positions in its portfolio (*i.e.*, treat them as if they were closed out), which may cause such Fund to recognize income without receiving cash with which to make distributions in amounts necessary to satisfy the Distribution Requirement and for avoiding the excise tax discussed above. Accordingly, to avoid certain income and excise taxes, a Fund may be required to liquidate its investments at a time when the investment adviser might not otherwise have chosen to do so.

Certain derivative investments by a Fund, exchange-traded products, and over-the-counter derivatives, may not produce qualifying income for purposes of the Qualifying Income Requirement described above, which must be met in order for such Fund to maintain its status as a RIC under the Code. In addition, the determination of the value and the identity of the issuer of such derivative investments are often unclear for purposes of the Diversification Requirement described above. Each Fund intends to carefully monitor such investments to ensure that any non-qualifying income does not exceed permissible limits and to ensure that it is adequately diversified under the Diversification Requirement. A Fund, however, may not be able to accurately predict the non-qualifying income from these investments and there are no assurances that the IRS will agree with the Fund's determination of the Diversification Requirement with respect to such derivatives. Failure to satisfy the Diversification Requirement might also result from a determination by the IRS that financial instruments in which a Fund invests are not securities.

A U.S. person that owns (directly, indirectly or constructively) 10% or more of the total combined voting power of all classes of stock or 10% or more of the total value of shares of all classes of stock of a foreign corporation is a "U.S. Shareholder" for purposes of Subpart F of the Code. A foreign corporation is a "controlled foreign corporation" within the meaning of Section 957 of the Code (a "CFC") if, on any day of its taxable year, more than 50% of the voting power or value of its stock is owned (directly, indirectly or constructively) by "U.S. Shareholders." If a Fund is a "U.S. Shareholder" of a CFC, such Fund will be required to include in its gross income for United States federal income tax purposes the CFCs "subpart F income" (described below), whether or not such income is distributed by the CFC. "Subpart F income" generally includes interest, original issue discount, dividends, net gains from the disposition of stocks or securities, receipts with respect to securities loans and net payments received with respect to equity swaps and similar derivatives. "Subpart F income" also includes the excess of gains over losses from transactions (including futures, forward and similar transactions) in any commodities. A Fund's recognition of "subpart F income" and GILTI will increase such Fund's tax basis in the CFC. Distributions by a CFC to a Fund will be tax-free, to the extent of its previously undistributed "subpart F income" and GILTI and will correspondingly reduce such Fund's tax basis in the CFC. "Subpart F income" and GILTI is generally treated as ordinary income, regardless of the character of the CFC's underlying income.

Backup Withholding. Each Fund will be required in certain cases to withhold (as "backup withholding") on amounts payable to any shareholder who (1) fails to provide a correct taxpayer identification number certified under penalty of perjury; (2) is subject to backup withholding by the IRS for failure to properly report all payments of interest or dividends; (3) fails to provide a certified statement that he or she is not subject to "backup withholding"; or (4) fails to provide a certified statement that he or she is a U.S. person (including a

U.S. resident alien). The backup withholding rate is currently 24%. Backup withholding is not an additional tax and any amounts withheld may be credited against the shareholder's ultimate U.S. tax liability. Backup withholding will not be applied to payments that have been subject to the 30% withholding tax on shareholders who are neither citizens nor permanent residents of the U.S.

Non-U.S. Shareholders. Any non-U.S. investors in a Fund may be subject to U.S. withholding and estate tax and are encouraged to consult their tax advisers prior to investing in the Fund. Foreign shareholders (*i.e.*, nonresident alien individuals and foreign corporations, partnerships, trusts and estates) are generally subject to U.S. withholding tax at the rate of 30% (or a lower tax treaty rate) on distributions derived from taxable ordinary income. Each Fund may, under certain circumstances, report all or a portion of a dividend as an "interest-related dividend" or a "short-term capital gain dividend," which would generally be exempt from this 30% U.S. withholding tax, provided certain other requirements are met. Short-term capital gain dividends received by a nonresident alien individual who is present in the U.S. for a period or periods aggregating 183 days or more during the taxable year are not exempt from this 30% withholding tax. Gains realized by foreign shareholders from the sale or other disposition of Shares generally are not subject to U.S. taxation, unless the recipient is an individual who is physically present in the U.S. for 183 days or more per year. Foreign shareholders who fail to provide an applicable IRS form may be subject to backup withholding on certain payments from a Fund. Backup withholding will not be applied to payments that are subject to the 30% (or lower applicable treaty rate) withholding tax described in this paragraph. Different tax consequences may result if the foreign shareholder is engaged in a trade or business within the United States. In addition, the tax consequences to a foreign shareholder entitled to claim the benefits of a tax treaty may be different than those described above.

Unless certain non-U.S. entities that hold Shares comply with IRS requirements that will generally require them to report information regarding U.S. persons investing in, or holding accounts with, such entities, a 30% withholding tax may apply to Fund distributions payable to such entities. A non-U.S. shareholder may be exempt from the withholding described in this paragraph under an applicable intergovernmental agreement between the U.S. and a foreign government, provided that the shareholder and the applicable foreign government comply with the terms of the agreement.

For foreign shareholders to qualify for an exemption from backup withholding, described above, the foreign shareholder must comply with special certification and filing requirements. Foreign shareholders in a Fund should consult their tax advisers in this regard.

Tax-Exempt Shareholders. Certain tax-exempt shareholders, including qualified pension plans, IRAs, salary deferral arrangements, 401(k) plans, and other tax-exempt entities, generally are exempt from federal income taxation except with respect to their unrelated business taxable income ("UBTI"). Tax-exempt entities are not permitted to offset losses from one unrelated trade or business against the income or gain of another unrelated trade or business. Certain net losses incurred prior to January 1, 2018 are permitted to offset gain and income created by an unrelated trade or business, if otherwise available. Under current law, each Fund generally serves to block UBTI from being realized by its tax-exempt shareholders with respect to their shares of Fund income. However, notwithstanding the foregoing, tax-exempt shareholders could realize UBTI by virtue of their investment in a Fund if, for example, (i) the Fund invests in residual interests of Real Estate Mortgage Investment Conduits ("REMICs"), (ii) the Fund invests in a REIT that is a taxable mortgage pool ("TMP") or that has a subsidiary that is a TMP or that invests in the residual interest of a REMIC, or (iii) Shares constitute debt-financed property in the hands of the tax-exempt shareholders within the meaning of section 514(b) of the Code. Charitable remainder trusts are subject to special rules and should consult their tax advisers. The IRS has issued guidance with respect to these issues and prospective shareholders, especially charitable remainder trusts, are strongly encouraged to consult with their tax advisers regarding these issues.

A Fund's shares held in a tax-qualified retirement account will generally not be subject to federal taxation on income and capital gains distributions from the Fund until a shareholder begins receiving payments from their retirement account. Because each shareholder's tax situation is different, shareholders should consult their tax advisors with specific reference to their own tax situations, including their state, local, and foreign tax liabilities.

Certain Potential Tax Reporting Requirements. Under U.S. Treasury regulations, if a shareholder recognizes a loss on disposition of Shares of $2 million or more for an individual shareholder or $10 million or more for a corporate shareholder (or certain greater amounts over a combination of years), the shareholder must file with the IRS a disclosure statement on IRS Form 8886. Direct shareholders of portfolio securities are in many cases excepted from this reporting requirement, but under current guidance, shareholders of a RIC are not excepted. Significant penalties may be imposed for the failure to comply with the reporting requirements. The fact that a loss is reportable under these regulations does not affect the legal determination of whether the taxpayer's treatment of the loss is proper. Shareholders should consult their tax advisers to determine the applicability of these regulations in light of their individual circumstances.

Other Issues. In those states which have income tax laws, the tax treatment of a Fund and of Fund shareholders with respect to distributions by the Fund may differ from federal tax treatment.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Financial Statements and Annual Reports will be available after the Funds have completed a fiscal year of operations. When available you may request a copy of the Funds' Annual Report at no charge by calling 1-800-617-0004 or through the Funds' website at www.defianceetfs.com.

APPENDIX A

Defiance ETFs, LLC

Proxy Voting Guidelines

Proxy Voting Guidelines

Set forth below are Defiance's proxy voting guidelines ("Guidelines") pertaining to specific issues. We generally vote Proposals in accordance with these Guidelines, however, we may deviate from the Guidelines if warranted by the specific facts and circumstances of the situation. If Defiance determines to deviate from these Guidelines, the reasons must be given in writing. In addition, these Guidelines are not intended to address all issues that may appear on all proxy ballots. Proposals not specifically addressed by these Guidelines, whether submitted by management or shareholders, will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and memorialized in writing, keeping in mind that the objective of these Guidelines is to increase the value of the securities in our clients' accounts.

These Guidelines are divided into two sections: Management and Shareholder proposals. These Guidelines set forth how Defiance will respond to certain proxy voting issues. Where the Guidelines state we will vote in favor of a management proposal on a given issue, we would in turn vote against any corresponding shareholder proposal (*e.g.* we will vote for management proposals to eliminate cumulative voting and vote against shareholder proposals to adopt it).

I. MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

A. BUSINESS / FINANCIAL ISSUES

1. Election of Directors — For

Unless there is a proxy contest for seats on the Board or if Defiance determines that there are other compelling reasons for withholding votes for directors, we will vote in favor of the management-proposed slate of directors.

Defiance believes that directors have a duty to respond to shareholder actions that have received significant shareholder support. We may withhold votes for directors that fail to act on key issues such as proposals to declassify boards, to implement a majority vote requirement, or to submit a rights plan to a shareholder vote, and for directors who fail to act on tender offers where a majority of shareholders have tendered their shares. In addition, we will withhold votes for directors who fail to attend at least 75% of board meetings within a given year without a reasonable excuse. Finally, we may withhold votes for directors of non-U.S. issuers where there is insufficient information about the nominees disclosed in the proxy statement.

Voting for Director Nominees in a Contested Election — Case-by-Case

Votes in a contested election of directors are evaluated on a case-by-case basis considering, among other things, the following factors: the target company's long-term financial performance relative to its industry; management's track record on safeguarding the interests of shareholders; the background of the proxy contest including the steps the dissidents took to influence management prior to initiating the proxy contest; the qualifications of director nominees of both the incumbent and dissident slates; and an evaluation of the objectives and goals made in the competing offers as well as the likelihood that the proposed objectives and goals can be met.

2. Appointment of Auditors — For

Defiance believes that the company is in the best position to choose the accounting firm and will generally support management's recommendation. While the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 has proscribed certain non-audit services by auditors, there are still many non-audit services that auditing firms are permitted to provide to a company. We recognize that there may be inherent conflicts when a company's independent auditors perform substantial non-audit related services for the company. Therefore, in reviewing a proposed auditor we will consider the amount of non-audit related services performed versus the total audit fees paid by the company to the auditing firm and if there are any other reasons to question the independence of the firm's auditors.

3. Increase Authorized Common Stock — Case-by-Case

Defiance will generally support proposals to increase authorized common stock when it is necessary to implement a stock split, aid in a restructuring or acquisition or provide a sufficient number of shares for employee savings plans, stock option or executive compensation plans. A satisfactory explanation for a company's plans for the stock must be disclosed in the proxy statement. We will oppose increases in authorized common stock where there is evidence that the shares are to be used to implement a poison pill or another form of anti-takeover device, or if the issuance of new shares could excessively dilute the value of the outstanding shares upon issuance. In addition, a satisfactory explanation of a company's intentions must be disclosed in the proxy statement for proposals requesting an increase of greater than one hundred percent of the shares outstanding.

4. Changes in Board Structure and

Amending the Articles of Incorporation — For

Companies may propose changes to the structure of the Board of Directors including changing the manner in which Board vacancies are filled, directors are nominated or the number of directors. Such proposals may require amending the charter or by-laws or otherwise require shareholder approval. In most instances, these proposals are not controversial nor an anti-takeover device. Therefore, Defiance generally votes in favor of such proposals.

Other changes in a company's charter, articles of incorporation or by-laws are usually technical or administrative in nature. Absent a compelling reason to the contrary, we will support such proposals.

5. Corporate Restructurings,

Merger Proposals and Spin-offs — Case-by-Case

Proposals requesting shareholder approval of corporate restructurings, merger proposals and spin-offs are determined on a case-by-case basis.

6. Considering Non-Financial Effects of a Merger Proposal — Against

We will oppose proposals that require the Board to consider the impact a merger would have on groups other than a company's shareholders, such as employees, consumers, business partners, and the communities in which the company is located. We expect that a company's Board will act only in the best interest of its shareholders at all times.

7. Director Liability and Indemnification — Case-by-Case

Some companies argue that increased indemnification and decreased liability for directors are important to ensure the continued availability of competent directors. However, others argue that the risk of such personal liability minimizes the propensity for corruption and negligence.

Moreover, increased litigation against directors and an accompanying rise in the cost for directors' liability insurance has prompted a number of states to adopt laws that reduce a director's liability for a breach of the fiduciary duty of care. These state laws usually require shareholder approval of this statutory protection.

Generally, Defiance will support indemnification provisions that are in accordance with state law. Defiance will vote in favor of proposals adopting indemnification for directors as to acts conducted in the normal course of business. We will vote in favor of proposals that expand coverage for directors and officers in the event their legal defense is unsuccessful but where the director was found to have acted in good faith and in the best interests of the company. We will oppose indemnification for gross negligence.

8. Stock Option Plans — Case-by-Case

Stock option plans are designed to attract, hold and motivate good executives, employees and, increasingly, outside directors. However, some plans are excessively generous and reward only a small percentage of top executives.

Stock option plans are the single most common, and perhaps the most complex, item shareholders are called upon to decide. Additionally, they are a major corporate expense and therefore warrant careful study. Because each plan may be different, it is necessary to look at the terms and conditions of each proposed plan to ensure that the plan properly aligns the long term interests of management and shareholders.

Defiance will review the proposed plans to ensure that shareholder equity will not be excessively diluted, the exercise price is not below market price on the date of grant, an acceptable number of employees are eligible to participate

and an excessive percentage of the company's shares are not granted but unexercised and/or reserved under other plans (commonly referred to as "overhang").

Excessive dilution generally occurs where the dilution level of the proposed plan, together with all other continuing plans, exceeds 10 to 20%. In addition, we will scrutinize closely plans that allow for granting in excess of 2% of the shares outstanding in a given year (commonly referred to as the "run rate") and will look favorably on plans that specifically restrict annual grants to below this level. We will generally oppose plans that permit repricing of underwater stock options without shareholder approval. We also consider other factors such as the company's performance and industry practice.

Defiance will use outside proxy advisory services to assist in compiling the data relevant to our decision.

9. Stock Splits — Case-by-Case

Companies often seek shareholder approval for a stock split in order to increase the liquidity of its common stock. This in turn lowers the price thereby making the stock more attractive to small investors. Defiance will generally vote in favor of a proposal to split a company's stock.

B. ANTI-TAKEOVER ISSUES

1. Blank Check Preferred Stock — Against

A Blank Check Preferred Stock proposal is one that authorizes the issuance of certain preferred stock at some future point in time and allows the Board to establish voting, dividend, conversion, and other rights at the time of issuance. While blank check preferred stock can provide a corporation with the flexibility needed to meet changing financial conditions, it also may be used as the vehicle for implementing a poison pill defense, or some other entrenchment device. Our concern is that once this stock has been authorized, shareholders have no further power to determine how or when it will be allocated. Accordingly, we will generally oppose this type of proposal.

2. Classified Boards — Against

A classified board typically is divided into three separate classes. Each class holds office for a term of two or three years. Only a portion of the Board can be elected or replaced each year. Since this type of proposal has fundamental anti-takeover implications, Defiance opposes the adoption of classified boards unless there is a justifiable financial reason or where adequate sunset provisions exist. However, where a classified board already exists, we will not withhold votes for directors who sit on such boards. We will withhold votes for directors that fail to implement shareholder approved proposals to declassify boards.

3. Fair Price Provisions — Case-by-case

A Fair Price Provision in the company's charter or by-laws is designed to ensure that each shareholder's securities will be purchased at the same price if the corporation is acquired under a plan not agreed to by the Board. In most instances, the provision requires that any tender offer made by a third party must be made to all shareholders at the same price.

Fair pricing provisions attempt to prevent the "two-tiered front loaded offer" where the acquirer of a company initially offers a premium for a sufficient percentage of shares of the company to gain control and subsequently makes an offer for the remaining shares at a much lower price. The remaining shareholders have no choice but to accept the offer. The two-tiered approach is coercive as it compels a shareholder to sell his or her shares immediately in order to receive the higher price per share. This type of tactic has caused many states to adopt fair price provision statutes to restrict this practice.

Defiance will consider fair price provisions on a case-by-case basis. We will vote against any proposal where there is evidence that management intends to use the provision as an anti-takeover device as well as any fair price proposal where the shareholder vote requirement is greater than a majority of disinterested shares (*i.e.* shares beneficially owned by individuals other than the acquiring party).

4. Limiting a Shareholder's Right to Call Special Meetings — Against

Companies contend that limitations upon the shareholders' right to call special meetings are needed to prevent minority shareholders from taking control of the company's agenda. However, such limits also have anti-takeover implications because they prevent a shareholder or a group of shareholders who have acquired a significant stake in the company from forcing management to address urgent issues such as the potential sale of the company. Because most states

prohibit shareholders from abusing this right, we see no justifiable reason for management to eliminate this fundamental shareholder right. Accordingly, we generally will vote against such proposals.

5. Limiting a Shareholder's Right to Act by Written Consent — Against

Action by written consent enables a large shareholder or group of shareholders of a company to initiate votes on corporate matters prior to the annual meeting. Defiance believes this is a fundamental shareholder right and therefore will oppose proposals that seek to eliminate or limit this right. Conversely, we will support shareholder proposals seeking to restore these rights.

6. Supermajority Vote Requirements — Against

A supermajority vote requirement is a charter or by-law requirement that, when implemented, raises the percentage (higher than the customary simple majority) of shareholder votes needed to approve certain proposals, such as mergers, changes of control, or proposals to amend or repeal a portion of the Articles of Incorporation.

In most instances, Defiance will oppose these proposals and will support shareholder proposals that seek to reinstate the simple majority vote requirement.

7. Reincorporation — Case-by-Case

Defiance individually reviews proposals that seek shareholder approval to reincorporate in a different state or country taking into consideration management's stated reasons for the proposed move.

There are many valid business reasons why a corporation may choose to reincorporate in another jurisdiction. For example, corporations may choose to reincorporate in another state after a restructuring or a merger or they may seek the flexibility certain states offer when organizing and operating a corporation's internal governance. Delaware is the state most often selected. However, in many cases a reincorporation proposal is an attempt by the corporation to take advantage of a particular state's anti-takeover statute.

Careful scrutiny will also be given to proposals that seek approval to reincorporate outside the United States to countries, such as Bermuda, that serve as tax havens. Defiance recognizes that such provisions can help facilitate the growth of a company's non-US business and can potentially benefit shareholders when a company lowers its tax liability. When evaluating such proposals, Defiance considers factors such as the location of the company's business, the statutory protections available in the country to enforce shareholder rights and the tax consequences to shareholders as a result of the reincorporation.

8. Issuance of Stock with Unequal Voting Rights — Against

Proposals seeking shareholder approval for the issuance of stock with unequal voting rights generally are used as anti-takeover devices. These proposals are frequently structured as a dual class capitalization plan that establishes two classes of stock. To encourage shareholders to approve plans designed to concentrate voting power in the hands of insiders, some plans give higher dividends to shareholders willing to exchange their shares for new shares with inferior voting rights.

Unequal voting rights plans are designed to reduce the voting power of existing shareholders and concentrate a significant amount of voting power in the hands of management. In the majority of instances, they serve as an effective deterrent to takeover attempts. Defiance deems such plans unacceptable and in most instances will vote against these proposals.

9. Elimination of Preemptive Rights — Case-by-Case

Preemptive rights allow the shareholders of the company to buy newly issued shares before they are offered to the public in order to maintain their percentage ownership. Defiance believes preemptive rights are an important shareholder right and therefore careful scrutiny must be given to management's attempts to eliminate them. However, since preemptive rights can be prohibitively costly to widely held companies, the benefit of such rights will be weighed against the economic effect of maintaining the right.

10. Other Business — Against

Proposals such as this allow management to act on issues that shareholders may raise at the annual meeting. Because it is impossible to know what issues may be raised, Defiance will vote against such proposals.

II. SHAREHOLDER PROPOSALS

A. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ISSUES

1. Submit Company's Shareholder Rights Plan to Shareholder Vote — For

Most shareholder rights plans (also known as "poison pills") permit the shareholders of a target company involved in a hostile takeover to acquire shares of that company, the acquiring company, or both, at a substantial discount once a "triggering event" occurs. A triggering event is usually a hostile tender offer or the acquisition by an outside party of a certain percentage of the company's stock. Because most plans exclude the hostile bidder from the purchase, the effect in most instances is to dilute the equity interest and the voting rights of the potential acquirer once the plan is triggered. A shareholder rights plan is designed to discourage potential acquirers from acquiring shares to make a bid for the issuer. We believe that measures that impede takeovers or entrench management not only infringe on the rights of shareholders but may also have a detrimental effect on the value of the company.

Defiance will support shareholder proposals that seek to require the company to submit a shareholder rights plan to a shareholder vote. Defiance will evaluate on a case-by-case basis proposals to completely redeem or eliminate a rights plan.

2. Implement Confidential Voting — For

Proponents of confidential voting argue that proxy voting should be conducted under the same rules of confidentiality as voting in political and other elections -- by secret ballot, with an independent party verifying the results. Supporters of these proposals argue that open balloting allows management to re-solicit shareholders and to urge--or sometimes coerce--them into changing their votes. Opponents argue that confidential voting makes it more difficult for a company to garner the necessary votes to conduct business (especially where a supermajority vote is required) because proxy solicitors cannot determine how individual shareholders voted.

Defiance supports confidential voting because we believe that voting on shareholder matters should be free of any potential for coercion or undue influence from the company or other interested parties.

3. Adopt Cumulative Voting — Against

Cumulative voting is a method of electing directors that enables each shareholder to multiply the number of his or her shares by the number of directors being voted upon. A shareholder may then cast the total votes for any one director or a selected group of directors. For example, A holder of 10 shares normally casts 10 votes for each of 12 nominees to the Board thus giving him 120 (10 x 12) votes. Under cumulative voting, the shareholder may cast all 120 votes for a single nominee, 60 for two, 40 for three, or any other combination that the shareholder may choose.

Defiance believes that cumulative voting provides a disproportionate voice to minority shareholders in the affairs of a company. Therefore we will generally vote against such proposals, and for management proposals to eliminate it.

4. Anti-Greenmail Proposal — For

Greenmail, commonly referred to as "legal corporate blackmail", is payments made to a potential hostile acquirer who has accumulated a significant percentage of a company's stock. The company acquires the raider's holdings of the company's stock at a premium in exchange for an agreement that the raider will not attempt to acquire control for a certain number of years. This practice discriminates against all other shareholders as only the hostile party receives a substantial premium over the market value of its shares. These proposals seek to prevent greenmail by adopting amendments to the company's charter or by-laws that limit the board's ability to acquire blocks of the company's stock at above- market prices.

Defiance will vote in favor of an anti-greenmail proposal provided the proposal has no other management initiated anti-takeover features.

5. Opt Out of State Anti-takeover Law — Case-by-Case

Many states have enacted anti-takeover laws requiring an acquirer to obtain a supermajority of a company's stock in order to exercise control. For example, under Delaware law, absent board approval, a bidder must acquire at least 85% of a company's stock before the bidder can exercise control. Such laws represent a formidable takeover defense for companies because by simply placing 15% of the stock in "friendly" hands, a company can block an otherwise successful takeover attempt that may be in the best interests of the shareholders. These statutes often allow companies to opt out of this law with the approval of a majority of the outstanding shares.

Shareholders proposing opt-out resolutions argue that these anti-takeover laws grant the Board too much power to determine a matter that should be left to the shareholders. Critics of such proposals argue that opt-out provisions do not prevent takeovers, but rather provide the Board with an opportunity to negotiate a better deal for all shareholders. Because each state's anti-takeover laws are different, and must be considered in the totality of all of a company's takeover defenses, Defiance reviews these proposals on a case-by-case basis.

6. Equal Access to the Proxy — For

These proposals ask companies to give shareholders equal access to the proxy materials in order to state their views on various proxy issues.

Proponents argue that, as owners, shareholders should have access to the proxy materials. While SEC rules provide for the inclusion of shareholder resolutions in the proxy materials, there are a number of handicaps, such as the 500-word limit on a proponent's written argument and limits on the subjects that can be addressed. By contrast, management ability to comment on shareholder proposals is unlimited.

Management often argues that shareholders already have significant access to the proxy as provided by law (*i.e.*, the right to have shareholder proposals included in the proxy statement and the right to suggest director candidates to the nominating committee). Furthermore, it would be unworkable to open the proxy process, management argues, because of the large number of shareholders that might wish to comment and it would be impossible to screen out "nuisance" proposals.

Defiance supports resolutions calling for enhancement of shareholders' ability to access proxy materials to ensure that proxy statements are written in a manner that allows for reasonable consideration by shareholders. However, we believe access should still be limited to discourage proposals put forward by shareholders who may have their own agenda or who otherwise do not have the best interests of all shareholders in mind.

7. Submit Golden Parachutes/Severance Plans to a Shareholder Vote — For

Golden Parachutes assure key officers of a company lucrative compensation packages if the company is acquired and/or if the new owners terminate such officers. Defiance recognizes that offering generous compensation packages that are triggered by a change in control may help attract qualified officers. However, such compensation packages cannot be so excessive that they are unfair to shareholders or make the company unattractive to potential bidders thereby serving as a constructive anti-takeover mechanism. Accordingly, we will support proposals to submit severance plans that exceed 2.99 times the sum of an executive officer's base salary plus bonus and that are triggered by a change in control to a shareholder vote but will review proposals to ratify or reject such plans on a case-by-case basis.

8. Submit Golden Parachutes/Severance Plans to a Shareholder Vote Prior to being Negotiated by Management — Against

Defiance believes that in order to attract qualified employees companies must be free to negotiate compensation packages without shareholder interference. Shareholders must then be given an opportunity to analyze a compensation plan's final, material terms in order to ensure it is within acceptable limits. Accordingly, we will oppose proposals that require submitting severance plans and/or employment contracts for a shareholder vote prior to being negotiated by management.

9. Disclose and/or Limit Executive and Director Pay — Case-by-Case

Defiance believes that management, within reason, should be given latitude in determining the mix and types of awards it offers. Generally, we vote for shareholder proposals seeking additional disclosure of executive and director compensation. This includes proposals that seek to specify the measurement of performance based compensation. We will vote on a case-by-case basis shareholder proposals seeking to limit executive and director pay.

10. Performance Based Stock Option Plans — Case-by-Case

Shareholder proposals such as these require a company to adopt a policy that all or a portion of future stock options granted to executives be performance based. Performance based options usually take the form of indexed options (where the option sale price is linked to the company's stock performance versus an industry index), premium priced options (where the strike price is significantly above the market price at the time of the grant) or performance vesting options (where options vest when the company's stock price exceeds a specific target). Proponents argue that performance based options

provide an incentive for executives to outperform the market as a whole and prevent management from being rewarded for average performance. While Defiance believes that management, within reason, should be given latitude in determining the mix and types of awards it offers, it recognizes the benefit of linking executive compensation to certain types of performance benchmarks. While we will not support proposals that require all options be performance based, we will generally support proposals that require a portion of options granted to senior executives be performance based. However, since performance based options can also result in unfavorable tax treatment and the company may already have in place an option plan that sufficiently ties executive stock option plans to the company's performance, we will consider such proposals on a case-by-case basis.

11. Submit Option Repricing to a Shareholder Vote — For

Repricing underwater options reduces the incentive value of stock compensation plans and dilutes shareholder value. Consequently, Defiance supports shareholder proposals to seek to require a company to submit option repricing to a shareholder vote.

12. Expensing Stock Options — For

Defiance recognizes that stock options have become a significant part of the compensation structure of many companies. Critics argue that since there is no uniform method of accounting for options, expensing them may distort a company's income statement in comparison to its competitors that do not expense them. However, we believe that not expensing options may lead to a similar distortion as we view options as a large company expense. Accordingly, we will support shareholder proposals requiring companies to expense stock options.

13. Exclude Pension Income from Performance Based Compensation — For

Defiance is aware that companies may seek to artificially inflate earnings based on questionable assumptions about pension income. Even though these practices are acceptable under the relevant accounting rules, we believe that pension income is not an acceptable way to increase executive pay and that management's discretion in estimating pension income is a potential conflict of interest. Accordingly, we will support such proposals.

14. Majority of Independent[1] Directors — For

The Board of Directors has a duty to act in the best interest of shareholders at all times. Defiance believes that these interests are best served by having directors who bring objectivity to the company and are free from potential conflicts of interests. Accordingly, we will support proposals seeking a majority of independent directors on the board. While we are aware that the NYSE and NASDAQ have adopted rules that require listed companies to have a majority of independent directors on their board, we will support such proposals regardless of where the company is listed.

15. Majority of Independent Directors on Key Committees — For

In order to ensure that those who evaluate management's performance, recruit directors and set management's compensation are free from conflicts of interests, Defiance believes that the audit[2], nominating and compensation committees should be composed of a majority of independent outside directors. While we are aware of that the NYSE and NASDAQ require fully independent audit, nominating and compensation committees), we will support such proposals regardless of where the company is listed. However, in order to allow companies an opportunity to select qualified candidates for these important board positions, at this time we will not withhold votes for inside directors that sit on these committees.

16. Separate Chairman and CEO — For

We believe that a combined chairman and CEO position raises doubt as to the objectivity of the board towards evaluating the performance of senior executives. Therefore, we will generally vote in favor of proposals to separate the two positions. However, companies may have governance structures in place that can satisfactorily counterbalance a combined position. Further, for companies with smaller market capitalizations separate positions may not be practical.

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[1] For purposes of this manual, an independent director is one that meets the requirements of independence pursuant to the listing standards of the exchange on which the common stock is listed. For stocks listed on the NYSE and NASDAQ, a director must qualify as independent under the revised listing standards.

[2] Pursuant to exchange and NASDAQ rules, adopted as directed by the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, by the earlier of i) their first annual shareholder meeting after January 15, 2004 or ii) October 31, 2004, U.S. listed issuers must have a fully independent audit committee.

17. Separating Auditors and Consultants — Case-by-Case

We believe that a company serves its shareholders' interest by avoiding potential conflicts of interest that might interfere with an auditor's independent judgment. SEC rules adopted as a result of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 attempted to address these concerns by prohibiting certain services by a company's independent auditors and requiring additional disclosure of others services. Defiance will evaluate on a case-by-case basis proposals that go beyond the SEC rules by prohibiting auditors from performing other non-audit services or calling for the Board to adopt a policy to ensure auditor independence. We will take into consideration the policies and procedures the company already has in place to ensure auditor independence and limit non-audit fees as a percentage of total fees paid to the auditor.

18. Limit Term of Directorship — Against

Such proposals limit the term a director may serve on a Board to a set number of years. Proponents believe that this will enable new ideas to be introduced to the company. Opponents argue that director turnover increases the instability of the Board. Defiance believes that a director's qualifications, not length of service, should be the only factor considered.

19. Stock Ownership Requirement — Against

These proposals require directors to own a minimum amount of company stock in order to qualify as a director, or to remain on the Board. Defiance does not believe stock ownership is necessary to align the interests of directors and shareholders. Accordingly, we will oppose these proposals.

20. Pay Directors Only in Stock — Against

Defiance does not believe that share ownership is the only way for a director to align his or her interests with those of the shareholders. Further, we believe that management should be given latitude in determining the mix and types of compensation it offers its directors. Accordingly, we will oppose these proposals.

21. Require Two Candidates for Each Board Seat — Against

Defiance believes that proposals such as these are detrimental to a company's ability to attract highly qualified candidates. Accordingly, we will oppose these proposals.

22. Rotation of Locale for Annual Meeting — Against

Proponents contend that the site of the annual meeting should be moved each year to a different locale in order to allow as many shareholders as possible to attend the annual meeting. Defiance believes the location of a company's annual meeting is best left to the discretion of management, unless there is evidence that the location of previous meetings was specifically chosen with the intention of making it more difficult for shareholders to participate in the meeting.

B. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, ENVIRONMENTAL AND POLITICAL ISSUES

1. Introduction

These types of shareholder proposals often raise controversial issues and may have both a financial and non-financial impact on the company. Accordingly, Defiance will assess these proposals on a case-by-case basis.

We recognize that the effect of certain polices on a company may be difficult to quantify, but nevertheless they usually affect the company's long term performance. Long term value creation is our overriding concern in these matters. We therefore consider the impact of these proposals on the future earnings of the company. Defiance will vote against proposals that are unduly burdensome or result in unnecessary and excessive costs to the company with no discernable benefits to shareholders. We may abstain from voting on social proposals that do not have a readily determinable financial impact on shareholder value. Set forth below are recent examples of issues that we may be required to address.

2. Social Issues

a. Tobacco

There is perhaps no issue more controversial than tobacco, due to the increased negative media attention and heightened concern not only of doctors and smokers, but of nonsmokers, politicians, public health and child welfare advocates. With this backdrop, tobacco companies and even non-tobacco companies with ties to the industry have seen a marked increase in proposals seeking greater responsibility and social consciousness from management.

Proposals relating to tobacco issues range from issuing warnings on the risks of environmental tobacco smoke and risks of smoking-related diseases, to linking executive compensation with reductions in teen smoking.

b. Report on Workplace Diversity and/or Employment Policies

Equal employment refers to the hiring and promotion of women, minorities and the handicapped in the work force. Resolutions generally ask companies to report progress in complying with affirmative action laws. Proponents of equal employment opportunity resolutions support additional reporting in order to sensitize companies to the issue and provide a measurement of performance in this area. We will give careful consideration to whatever policies are already in place at the company.

c. Sweatshops

These proposals ask companies to issue reports on their corporate standards for doing business abroad and to adopt mechanisms for ensuring vendor compliance with these standards. The standards include policies to ensure that workers are paid sustainable living wages, and to ensure that children are not used as forced labor. We will give careful consideration to whatever policies are already in place at the company.

d. Animal Testing

These proposals ask companies to reduce reliance on animal tests for consumer product safety. Proponents of the resolutions argue that animals are needlessly being subjected to painful tests, and that companies should be required to disclose information on the numbers of animals tested, the types of animals used and the types of tests performed. Opponents, on the other hand, argue that the disclosure requirements of the U.S. Department of Agriculture are sufficient and that some testing is still necessary to avoid product liability suits.

e. Genetically Altered or Engineered Food

These proposals seek to require companies to label genetically modified organisms in a company's products or in some cases completely eliminate their use. Proponents argue that such measures should be required due to the possible health and safety issues surrounding the use of such products. Opponents point out that the use of such products help improve crop productivity, there is no evidence that such products pose a safety hazard and that implementing such proposals could have immediate negative economic effects on the company.

f. Plant Closings

These proposals ask companies to create or expand programs to relocate workers displaced by a plant closing. Supporters of plant closing resolutions argue management should be more sensitive to employees both during the decision on closing a plant and in efforts at relocation. Companies generally respond that they already have programs to accommodate displaced workers. In addition, federal law requires companies with a certain number of employees to give 60 days' advance notice of a major plant closing or layoff and a number of states also have regulations in this area.

g. Bank Lending in Developing Countries

These shareholder proposals call on banks to change their lending policies in order to benefit social peace, economic growth and endangered natural resources in developing countries. Supporters of these resolutions ask banks to forgive some of the loans because most U.S. banks have already increased their loan-loss reserves to cover possible losses, and that this is already reflected in the stock price. Opponents argue that banks cannot become charitable institutions, and that to forgive debt would simply exacerbate and prolong basic structural economic problems among the debtor countries.

h. Pharmaceutical Pricing

Proposals such as these seek to require a company to implement pricing restraints to make prescription drugs more affordable, both domestically and in third-world countries. Proponents argue that drug prices in the United States, considered to be among the highest in the world, make adequate medical care inaccessible to those other than the most affluent. Critics of such proposals argue that artificial price controls would reduce revenues, deter investors and ultimately reduce funds available for future research and development.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Environmentalists have launched nationwide campaigns over the past three decades in an effort to preserve and protect the natural resources of the United States. Greater emphasis is being placed on the responsibility of industry to preserve these natural resources by modifying or eliminating ecologically destructive activities. Increasingly, corporations are asked to be more responsive to environmental concerns.

a. The CERES Principles

Many environmental proposals include a recommendation that companies adopt and report their compliance with the Coalition of Environmentally Responsible Economies (the "CERES" Principles). The CERES Principles are a set of ten principles committing the company to environmental improvement. Proponents argue that endorsement of the CERES Principles gives a company greater public credibility than standards created by industry or government regulation alone. Companies argue that implementing the CERES Principles only duplicates their current environmental policies and is an additional cost to the company.

b. Nuclear Waste Disposal

These resolutions ask companies to allocate a portion of the cost of building nuclear power plants for research into nuclear waste disposal. Proponents argue that, because the life span of certain waste byproducts exceeds current containment capabilities, the industry should begin concentrating on waste management and disposal. While opponents acknowledge the need for research, they contend that the problem is overstated, and that some suggested containment programs are unnecessarily expensive.

4. POLITICAL ISSUES

a. Implement the MacBride Principles in Northern Ireland

The MacBride Principles aim to fight discriminatory anti-Catholic employment practices in the British state of Northern Ireland. The Principles encourage U.S. companies to actively recruit Catholic employees and where possible groom them for management responsibilities. Companies are also asked to ensure job security for their Catholic employees and to abolish the use of inflammatory religious emblems.

Supporters argue that the MacBride Principles effectively address Northern Ireland's inequalities in employment (in Northern Ireland, unemployment among Catholic men is twice as high as among Protestant men). Opponents contend that the adoption of the MacBride Principles is itself a form of reverse discrimination, which may violate British law. The British government is concerned that adoption may increase the "hassle factor" of doing business in the economically troubled area, as well as reduce the attractiveness of investments.

b. Reports on Corporate and Subcontractor Operations in Northern Ireland

These proposals request that corporate Boards submit a report to shareholders outlining the company's, or its subcontractors', labor practices in Northern Ireland. Supporters argue that such proposals could encourage fair labor practices within Northern Ireland, and provide a means for companies to align their worldwide stance on employment with the position they hold in America. Opponents contend that current anti-discrimination regulation is sufficient and that providing one more report (which some companies consider a burdensome task) will do little to alleviate Northern Ireland's religious tensions.

c. Military Issues

These proposals ask companies involved in military production to report on future plans and to diversify or convert to the production of civilian goods and services. Opponents of these resolutions are concerned that conversion is not economically rational, and view the proposals as intrusions into management's decision-making prerogative. Opponents also point to the imperative of a strong defense as reason enough to continue military production.

d. Reporting Political/Charitable Contributions

These shareholder resolutions typically ask for greater disclosure of charitable and political contributions. By requiring reports to shareholders, proponents of these shareholder resolutions contend investors can help police wrongdoings in the political system. Critics of these proposals contend that reformers overstate the problem and that a company should play an active role in expressing its opinion about relevant legislation.

Shareholder proposals relating to charitable contributions often seek to require companies to report on or restrict charitable contributions. Proponents of such proposals argue that charitable contributions are an inappropriate use of company assets since the purpose of any corporation is to make a profit. Opponents argue that charitable contributions are a useful means for a company to create goodwill. They believe management is in the best position to determine which charities are deserving and are against proposals that seek to promote the special interests of a particular shareholder.

III. **Proxy Voting Guideline Summary**

I. Management Proposals

A. Business Financial Issues

	Issue	For	Against	Case-by-Case	Abstain
1.	Election of Directors	√			
2.	Voting for Nominees in a Contested Election			√	
3.	Appointment of Auditors	√			
4.	Increase Authorized Common Stock			√	
5.	Changes in Board Structure and Amending the Articles of Incorporation	√			
6.	Corporate Restructurings, Merger Proposals and Spin-offs			√	
7.	Considering Non-Financial Effects of a Merger Proposal		√		
8.	Director Liability and Indemnification			√	
9.	Stock Option Plans			√	
10.	Stock Splits			√	

B. Anti-Takeover Issues

	Issue	For	Against	Case-by-Case	Abstain
1.	Blank Check Preferred Stock		√		
2.	Classified Boards		√		
3.	Fair Price Provisions			√	
4.	Limiting a Shareholder's Right to Call Special Meetings		√		
5.	Limiting a Shareholder's Right to Act by Written Consent		√		
6.	Supermajority Vote Requirements		√		
7.	Reincorporation			√	
8.	Issuance of Stock with Unequal Voting Rights		√		
9.	Elimination of Preemptive Rights			√	
10.	Other Business		√		

II. Shareholder Proposals

A. Corporate Governance Issues

	Issue	For	Against	Case-by-Case	Abstain
1.	Submit a Shareholder Rights Plan to a Shareholder Vote	√			
2.	Implement Confidential Voting	√			
3.	Adopt Cumulative Voting		√		
4.	Anti-Greenmail Proposal	√			
5.	Opt out of State Anti-takeover law			√	
6.	Equal Access to Proxy	√			
7.	Submit Severance Plans (Golden Parachutes) to a Shareholder Vote	√			
8.	Submit Severance Plans (Golden Parachutes) and/or Employment Agreements to a Shareholder Vote Prior to being Negotiated by Management		√		
9.	Disclose and/or Limit Executive and Director Pay			√	
10.	Performance Based Stock Option Plans			√	
11.	Submit Option Repricing to a Shareholder Vote	√			
12.	Expensing Stock Options	√			
13.	Exclude Pension Income from Performance Based Compensation	√			
14.	Majority of Independent Directors	√			
15.	Majority of Independent Directors on Key Committees	√			
16.	Separate Chairman and CEO	√			
17.	Separating Auditors and Consultants			√	
18.	Limit Term of Directorships		√		
19.	Stock Ownership Requirement		√		
20.	Pay Directors Only in Stock		√		
21.	Require Two Candidates for Each Board Seat		√		
22.	Rotation of Locale for Annual Meeting		√		

B. *Social, Environmental and Political Issues*

We vote on these proposals on a case-by-case basis. We will vote against shareholder proposals that will cause the company to incur excessive or unnecessary expenses and may abstain from shareholder proposals that are unlikely to have any economic effect on company's business or financial conditions.