

VanEck Vectors ETF Trust

Form 485BPOS

March 27, 2017

As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on March 27, 2017

**Securities Act File No. 333-123257**

**Investment Company Act File No. 811-10325**

**United States Securities and Exchange Commission**

Washington, D.C. 20549

**FORM N-1A**

<b>Registration Statement Under the Securities Act of 1933</b>	X
Pre-Effective Amendment No.	O
Post Effective Amendment No. 2,496	X
and/or	
<b>Registration Statement Under the Investment Company Act of 1940</b>	X
Amendment No. 2,500	X

**VANECK VECTORS ETF TRUST**

(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in its Charter)

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Approximate Date of Proposed Public Offering: **As soon as practicable after the effective date of this registration statement.**

**IT IS PROPOSED THAT THIS FILING WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE (CHECK APPROPRIATE BOX)**

- Immediately upon filing pursuant to paragraph (b)
- On March 31, 2017 pursuant to paragraph (b)
- 60 days after filing pursuant to paragraph (a)(1)
- On [date] pursuant to paragraph (a)(1)
- 75 days after filing pursuant to paragraph (a)(2)
- On [date] pursuant to paragraph (a)(2) of rule 485

PROSPECTUS  
APRIL 1, 2017

VANECK VECTORS™  
High Income MLP ETF                      YMLP®  
High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF   YMLI®

Principal U.S. Listing Exchange for each Fund: NYSE Arca, Inc.

The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission has not approved or disapproved these securities or passed upon the accuracy or adequacy of this Prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

800.826.2333 [vaneck.com](http://vaneck.com)

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**VANECK VECTORS™ HIGH INCOME MLP ETF\*****SUMMARY INFORMATION****INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE**

VanEck Vectors™ High Income MLP ETF (the Fund) seeks to provide investment results that, before fees and expenses, correspond generally to the price and yield performance of the Solactive High Income MLP Index (the MLP Index).

**FUND FEES AND EXPENSES**

The following tables describe the fees and expenses that you may pay if you buy and hold shares of the Fund (Shares).

**Shareholder Fees** (*fees paid directly from your investment*) None

**Annual Fund Operating Expenses**

(*expenses that you pay each year as a percentage of the value of your investment*)

Management Fee	0.82%
Other Expenses <sup>(a)</sup>	0.00%
Deferred Income Tax Expense and Franchise Tax Expense <sup>(b)</sup>	0.06%

Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses 0.88%

<sup>(a)</sup> Van Eck Associates Corporation (the Adviser) will pay all expenses of the Fund, except for the fee payment under the investment management agreement, acquired fund fees and expenses, interest expense, offering costs, trading expenses, taxes (including accrued deferred tax liability) and extraordinary expenses.

<sup>(b)</sup> The Fund is classified for federal income tax purposes as a taxable regular corporation or Subchapter C corporation. As a C corporation, the Fund accrues deferred income tax liability for its future tax liability associated with the capital appreciation of its investments, with certain distributions received by the Fund on equity securities of Master Limited Partnerships (MLPs) considered to be return of capital, and with any net operating gains. The Fund's accrued deferred tax liability, if any, is reflected each day in the Fund's net asset value per share and may vary greatly from year to year depending on the nature of the Fund's investments, the performance of those investments and general market conditions. Therefore, any estimate of deferred income tax expense/(benefit) cannot be reliably predicted from year to year. State franchise taxes are separate and distinct from state income taxes. Due to the nature of the Fund's investments, the Fund may be required to file franchise tax returns in several states. The Fund is expected to absorb net operating losses and accrue net deferred tax expense primarily related to unrealized depreciation on investments and state franchise tax liability.

**EXPENSE EXAMPLE**

This example is intended to help you compare the cost of investing in the Fund with the cost of investing in other funds. This example does not take into account brokerage commissions that you pay when purchasing or selling Shares of the Fund.

The example assumes that you invest \$10,000 in the Fund for the time periods indicated and then redeem all of your Shares at the end of those periods. The example also assumes that your investment has a 5% annual return and that the

Fund's operating expenses remain the same. Although your actual costs may be higher or lower, based on these assumptions, your costs would be:

**YEAR EXPENSES**

1	\$	90
3	\$	281
5	\$	488
10	\$	1,084

**PORTFOLIO TURNOVER**

The Fund will pay transaction costs, such as commissions, when it purchases and sells securities (or turns over its portfolio). A higher portfolio turnover will cause the Fund to incur additional transaction costs and may result in higher taxes when Fund Shares are held in a taxable account. These costs, which are not reflected in annual fund operating expenses or in the example, may affect the Fund's performance. During the most recent fiscal year, the Fund's portfolio turnover rate was 46% of the average value of its portfolio.

\* Prior to May 1, 2016, the Fund's name was Market Vectors High Income MLP ETF.

**VANECK VECTORS™ HIGH INCOME MLP ETF (continued)**

**PRINCIPAL INVESTMENT STRATEGIES**

The Fund will normally invest at least 80% of its total assets in securities that comprise the Fund's benchmark index. The MLP Index is a rules-based index designed to provide investors a means of tracking the performance of selected master limited partnerships ( MLPs ) which are publicly traded on a U.S. securities exchange. Under normal circumstances, the Fund invests at least 80% of its net assets, plus the amount of any borrowings for investment purposes, in securities of MLPs. Each 80% investment policy is non-fundamental and may be changed without shareholder approval upon 60 days' prior written notice to shareholders.

The MLP Index consists of MLPs operating with one of the following as a substantial business segment: exploration and production of oil and/or natural gas; sale, distribution and retail and wholesale marketing of propane, natural gas liquids, gasoline and other fuels; marine transportation of one or more of the following: crude oil, dry bulk, refined products, liquefied natural gas ( LNG ), and other commodities; direct mining, production and marketing of natural resources, including timber, fertilizers, coal and other minerals; energy services to the oil and gas industry; oil refining; leasing of mineral reserves; and operating as the general partner of any business listed above. As of December 31, 2016, the MLP Index included 20 MLPs and the U.S. dollar-denominated market capitalizations of the MLP Index components ranged from approximately \$286 million to approximately \$4.5 billion. These amounts are subject to change.

The Fund employs a passive management investment strategy in seeking to achieve its investment objective. The Fund generally will use a replication methodology, meaning it will invest in all of the securities comprising the MLP Index in proportion to the weightings in the MLP Index. However, the Fund may utilize a sampling methodology under various circumstances where it may not be possible or practicable to purchase all of the securities in the MLP Index.

MLPs are publicly traded partnerships engaged in the transportation, storage, processing, refining, marketing, exploration, production, and mining of minerals and natural resources. By confining their operations to these specific activities, their interests, or units, are able to trade on public securities exchanges exactly like the shares of a corporation, without entity level taxation.

An MLP consists of a general partner and limited partners (or in the case of MLPs organized as limited liability companies, a managing member and members). The general partner or managing member typically controls the operations and management of the MLP and has an ownership stake in the MLP. The limited partners or members, through their ownership of limited partner or member interests, provide capital to the entity, are intended to have no role in the operation and management of the entity, and receive cash distributions. The Fund will be a limited partner (or a member) in the MLPs in which it invests. MLPs are generally treated as partnerships for United States federal income tax purposes. Thus, the MLPs themselves generally do not pay United States federal income taxes, but investors (like the Fund) that hold interests in MLPs are generally subject to tax on their allocable shares of the MLPs income and gains. Currently, most MLPs operate in the energy and/or natural resources sectors.

To qualify as an MLP and to not be taxed as a corporation, a partnership must receive at least 90% of its income from qualifying sources as set forth in Section 7704(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the Code ). These qualifying sources include natural resource-based activities such as the processing, transportation and storage of mineral or natural resources and other commodities.

Partnerships eligible for inclusion in the MLP Index are subject to further market capitalization and liquidity screens before they may be included in the MLP Index.

The Fund is classified as a non-diversified fund and, therefore, may invest a greater percentage of its assets in a particular issuer. The Fund may concentrate its investments (*i.e.*, hold 25% or more of its total assets) in a particular industry or group of industries to the extent that the MLP Index concentrates in an industry or group of industries. As of November 30, 2016, the MLP Index was concentrated in the energy sector, and the basic materials sector represented a significant portion of the MLP Index.

The MLP Index is calculated and administered by Solactive AG, which is not affiliated with the Fund or the Adviser. Solactive AG determines the components and the relative weightings of the securities in the MLP Index subject to the MLP Index rules and publishes information regarding the MLP Index. The MLP Index is rebalanced annually, but may be adjusted more frequently under extraordinary circumstances, consistent with the MLP Index's methodology.

#### **PRINCIPAL RISKS OF INVESTING IN THE FUND**

**Investors in the Fund should be willing to accept a high degree of volatility in the price of the Fund's Shares and the possibility of significant losses. An investment in the Fund involves a substantial degree of risk. An investment in the Fund is not a deposit with a bank and is not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or**



**any other government agency. Therefore, you should consider carefully the following risks before investing in the Fund, each of which could significantly and adversely affect the value of an investment in the Fund.**

**MLP Risk.** Investments in common units of MLPs involve risks that differ from investments in common stock including risks inherent in the structure of MLPs, including (i) tax risks (described further below), (ii) risk related to limited control of management or the general partner or managing member (iii) limited rights to vote on matters affecting the MLP, except with respect to extraordinary transactions, and (iv) conflicts of interest between the general partner or managing member and its affiliates, on the one hand, and the limited partners or members, on the other hand, including those arising from incentive distribution payments or corporate opportunities, and cash flow risks, as described in more detail in this Prospectus.

MLP common units and other equity securities can be affected by macro-economic and other factors affecting the stock market in general, expectations of interest rates, investor sentiment towards MLPs or the energy sector, changes in a particular issuer's financial condition, or unfavorable or unanticipated poor performance of a particular issuer (in the case of MLPs, generally measured in terms of distributable cash flow). Prices of common units of individual MLPs and other equity securities also can be affected by fundamentals unique to the partnership or company, including cash flow growth, cash generating power and distribution coverage.

**MLP Tax Risk.** Much of the benefit the Fund derives from its investment in equity securities of MLPs is a result of MLPs generally being treated as partnerships for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Partnerships generally do not pay U.S. federal income tax at the partnership level. Rather, each partner is allocated a share of the partnership's income, gains, losses, deductions and expenses, and takes that share into account in calculating its own U.S. federal income tax liability. A change in current tax law, or a change in the business of a given MLP, could result in an MLP being treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes. As a result, the amount of cash available for distribution by the MLP could be reduced and the after-tax return to the Fund with respect to its investment in such MLPs could be materially reduced. Thus, if any of the MLPs owned by the Fund were treated as corporations for U.S. federal income tax purposes, it could result in a reduction in the value of your investment in the Fund and lower distributions.

Changes in tax laws or regulations, or future interpretations of such laws or regulations, could adversely affect the Fund or the MLPs in which the Fund invests. Legislation could also negatively impact the amount and tax characterization of dividends received by the Fund's shareholders. For example, Congress could take actions which would eliminate the tax benefits of depreciation, depletion and amortization deductions realized by MLPs. Alternatively, Congress could impose a tax on pass-through entities such as MLPs or eliminate the use of pass-through taxation entirely. The tax benefits of depreciation, depletion and amortization deductions realized by MLPs effectively defer the income of the MLPs and, in turn, the taxable income of the Fund. Without these benefits the Fund would be subject to current U.S. federal, state and local corporate income taxes on a greater proportion of its allocable share of the income and gains of MLPs in which it invests, and the Fund's ability to pay distributions treated as return-of-capital distributions (for tax purposes). Imposing a tax on pass-through entities and/or eliminating the use of pass-through taxation entirely could result in three levels of tax at the MLP level, the Fund level and the shareholder level.

An MLP's distributions to the Fund generally will not be taxable unless the cash amount (or, in certain cases, the value of marketable securities) distributed exceeds the Fund's basis in its interest in the MLP. Distributions received by the Fund from an MLP will reduce the Fund's adjusted basis in its interest in the MLP, but not below zero. A reduced basis will generally result in an increase in the amount of gain (or decrease in the amount of loss) that will be recognized by the Fund for tax purposes on the sale of its interest in the MLP. Cash distributions from an MLP to the Fund (and, in certain cases, the value of marketable securities distributed by an MLP to the Fund) in excess of the

Fund's basis in the MLP will generally be taxable to the Fund as capital gain. The Fund will not benefit from favorable federal income tax rates on long-term capital gains because it will be treated as a corporation for federal income tax purposes.

Depreciation or other cost recovery deductions passed through to the Fund from investments in MLPs in a given year will generally reduce the Fund's taxable income (and earnings and profits), but those deductions may be recaptured in the Fund's income (and earnings and profits) in subsequent years when the MLPs dispose of their assets or when the Fund disposes of its interests in the MLPs. When deductions are recaptured, the Fund may owe a tax (the payment of which will reduce the Fund's net assets) and distributions to the Fund's shareholders may be taxable, even though the shareholders at the time of the recapture might not have held Shares in the Fund at the time the deductions were taken by the Fund, and even though the Fund does not have corresponding economic gain on its investment at the time of the recapture.

The tax treatment of all items allocated to the Fund each year by the MLPs will not be known until the Fund receives a schedule K-1 for that year with respect to each of its MLP investments. The Fund's tax liability will not be known until the Fund completes its annual tax return. The Fund's tax estimates could vary substantially from the actual liability and therefore the determination of the Fund's actual tax liability may have a material adverse effect on the value of an investment in the

**VANECK VECTORS™ HIGH INCOME MLP ETF (continued)**

Fund. The payment of corporate income taxes imposed on the Fund will decrease cash available for distribution to shareholders.

**Energy Sector Risks.** To the extent that the Fund continues to be concentrated in the energy sector, the Fund will be sensitive to changes in, and its performance will depend to a greater extent on, the overall condition of the energy sector. Many MLPs operate within the energy sector. Therefore, a substantial portion of the MLPs in which the Fund invests are engaged in the energy sector of the economy. As a result, a downturn in the energy sector of the economy, adverse political, legislative or regulatory developments or other events could have a larger impact on the Fund than on an investment company that does not invest a substantial portion of its assets in the energy sector. At times, the performance of securities of companies in the energy sector may lag the performance of other sectors or the broader market as a whole. Recently, the price of oil, natural gas and other fossil fuels has declined significantly and experienced significant volatility, which has adversely impacted companies operating in the energy sector. There can be no assurance that the price of oil, natural gas and other fossil fuels will not decline further and have a further adverse affect. In addition, there are several specific risks associated with investments in the energy sector, including the following:

- the energy sector is highly regulated. MLPs operating in the energy sector are subject to significant regulation of nearly every aspect of their operations by federal, state and local governmental agencies;
- MLPs operating in the energy sector may be affected by fluctuations in the prices of energy commodities, including, for example, natural gas, natural gas liquids, crude oil and coal, in the short- and long-term;
- MLPs engaged in the exploration, development, management or production of energy commodities face the risk that commodity reserves are depleted over time, with the potential associated effect of causing the market value of the MLP to decline over time;
- MLPs operating in the energy sector could be adversely affected by reductions in the supply of or demand for energy commodities;
- extreme weather or other natural disasters could impact the value of MLPs operating in the energy sector;
- the abilities of MLPs operating in the energy sector to grow and to increase cash distributions to unitholders can be highly dependent on their ability to make acquisitions that result in an increase in cash flows;
- rising interest rates which could adversely impact the financial performance and/or the present value of cash flow of MLPs operating in the energy sector; and
- MLPs operating in the energy sector are subject to many dangers inherent in the production, exploration, management, transportation, processing and distribution of natural gas, natural gas liquids, crude oil, refined petroleum and petroleum products and other hydrocarbons. In addition, threats of attack by terrorists on energy assets could impact the market for MLPs operating in the energy sector.

**Industry Specific Risks.** MLPs operating in the energy sector are also subject to risks that are specific to the industry they serve.

**Midstream.** Midstream MLPs that provide crude oil, refined product and natural gas services are subject to supply and demand fluctuations in the markets they serve which may be impacted by a wide range of factors including fluctuating commodity prices, weather, increased conservation or use of alternative fuel sources, increased governmental or environmental regulation, depletion, rising interest rates, declines in domestic or foreign production, accidents or catastrophic events, increasing operating expenses and economic conditions, among others.

**Downstream.** Downstream companies are businesses engaged in refining, marketing and other end-customer distribution activities relating to refined energy sources, such as: customer-ready natural gas, propane and gasoline;

the production and manufacturing of petrochemicals including olefins, polyolefins, ethylene and similar co-products as well as intermediates and derivatives; and the generation, transmission and distribution of power and electricity. In addition to the other risks described herein, downstream companies may be more susceptible to risks associated with reduced customer demand for the products and services they provide.

**Exploration and production.** Exploration and production MLPs produce energy resources, including natural gas and crude oil. Exploration and production MLPs that own oil and gas reserves are particularly vulnerable to declines in the demand for and prices of crude oil and natural gas. Substantial downward adjustments in reserve estimates could have a material adverse effect on the value of such reserves and the financial condition of an MLP. Exploration and production MLPs seek to reduce cash flow volatility associated with commodity prices by executing multi-year hedging strategies that fix the price of gas and oil produced. There can be no assurance that the hedging strategies currently employed by these MLPs are currently effective or will remain effective.

**Marine shipping.** Marine shipping MLPs are primarily marine transporters of natural gas, crude oil or refined petroleum products. Marine shipping companies are exposed to many of the same risks as other energy companies. The highly

cyclical nature of the marine transportation industry may lead to volatile changes in charter rates and vessel values, which may adversely affect the revenues, profitability and cash flows of MLPs with marine transportation assets.

**Propane.** Propane MLPs are distributors of propane to homeowners for space and water heating. MLPs with propane assets are subject to earnings variability based upon weather conditions in the markets they serve, fluctuating commodity prices, customer conservation and increased use of alternative fuels, increased governmental or environmental regulation, and accidents or catastrophic events, among others.

**Natural Resource.** MLPs with coal, timber, fertilizer and other mineral assets are subject to supply and demand fluctuations in the markets they serve, which will be impacted by a wide range of domestic and foreign factors including fluctuating commodity prices, the level of their customers' coal stockpiles, weather, increased conservation or use of alternative fuel sources, increased governmental or environmental regulation, depletion, declines in production, mining accidents or catastrophic events, health claims and economic conditions, among others.

**Geopolitical Risk.** Global political and economic instability could affect the operations of MLPs and energy companies in unpredictable ways, including through disruptions of natural resources supplies and markets and the resulting volatility in commodity prices. Recent political and military instability in a variety of countries throughout the Middle East and North Africa has heightened these risks.

**Risk of Investing in the Basic Materials Sector.** To the extent that the basic materials sector continues to represent a significant portion of the Fund, the Fund will be sensitive to changes in, and its performance may depend to a greater extent on, the overall condition of the basic materials sector. Companies engaged in the production and distribution of basic materials may be adversely affected by changes in world events, political and economic conditions, energy conservation, environmental policies, commodity price volatility, changes in exchange rates, imposition of import controls, increased competition, depletion of resources and labor relations.

**Tax Status of the Fund.** The Fund is treated as a regular corporation, or C corporation, for U.S. federal income tax purposes. This differs from most investment companies, which elect to be treated as regulated investment companies under the Code in order to avoid paying entity level income taxes. Under current law, the Fund is not eligible to elect treatment as a regulated investment company due to its investments primarily in MLPs. Accordingly, the Fund is subject to U.S. federal income tax on its taxable income at the graduated rates applicable to corporations (currently at a maximum rate of 35%) as well as state and local income taxes. As discussed below, the Fund expects that a portion of the distributions it receives from MLPs may be treated as a tax-deferred return of capital. The amount of taxes currently paid by the Fund will vary depending on the amount of income, gains, losses, and deductions the Fund is allocated from its MLP investments and on the amount of gains and losses derived from sales of MLP interests. Fund-level taxes will reduce your return from an investment in the Fund.

**Deferred Tax Risk.** For financial reporting (but not tax reporting) purposes, the Fund will accrue deferred income taxes for any future tax liability associated with (i) all or a portion of certain MLP distributions and any net operating gains as well as (ii) capital appreciation of its investments. The Fund's accrued deferred tax liability will be reflected each day in the Fund's net asset value (NAV). Increases in deferred tax liability will decrease NAV. Conversely, decreases in deferred tax liability will increase NAV. The Fund generally computes deferred income taxes based on the federal tax rate generally applicable to corporations, currently 35%, and an assumed rate attributable to state taxes. A change in the federal tax rate applicable to corporations and, consequently, any change in the deferred tax liability of the Fund, may have a significant impact on the NAV of the Fund. The Fund's current and deferred tax liability, if any, will depend upon the income, gains, losses, and deductions the Fund is allocated from its MLP investments, and on the Fund's realized and unrealized gains and losses, and therefore may vary greatly from year to year depending on

the nature of the Fund's investments, the performance of these investments and general market conditions. The Fund will rely to a significant extent on information provided by the MLPs, which may not be timely, to estimate deferred tax liability for purposes of financial statement reporting and determining NAV. From time to time, the Adviser may modify the estimates or assumptions regarding the Fund's deferred tax liability as new information becomes available.

The Fund estimates regarding its deferred tax liability are made in good faith; however, the daily estimate of the Fund's deferred tax liability used to calculate the Fund's NAV could vary dramatically from the Fund's actual tax liability. The Fund's actual income tax expense, if any, may be deferred for many years, concentrated in a small number of years, or spread over many years depending on if, and when, investment gains and losses are realized, the timing of recapture income realized by an MLP or realized by the Fund on a sale of an MLP interest, and other factors. As a result, the determination of the Fund's actual tax liability may have a material impact on the Fund's NAV.

Although the Fund's NAV will take into account deferred tax liabilities, there can be no assurance that the purchase price you pay for Shares will take into account deferred tax liabilities. If you purchase Shares at a substantial premium to NAV, the

**VANECK VECTORS™ HIGH INCOME MLP ETF (continued)**

value of the Shares may be adversely impacted by a recapture event that triggers a deferred tax liability not fully reflected in your purchase price or by the issuance of Creation Units (as defined below) at an NAV less than your purchase price. Shareholders who redeem their shares at a NAV that is based on estimates of the Fund's current taxes and deferred tax liability and/or asset balances may benefit at the expense of remaining shareholders (or remaining shareholders may benefit at the expense of redeeming shareholders) if the estimates are later revised or ultimately differ from the Fund's actual tax liability and/or asset balances.

In the event the Fund is in a net deferred tax asset position, the Fund will evaluate all available information and consider the criterion established by the Financial Accounting Standards Board Codification Topic 740, Income Taxes (formerly Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 109) in order to properly assess whether it is more likely than not that the deferred tax asset will be realized or whether a valuation allowance is required.

**Return of Capital Distributions From the Fund Reduce the Tax Basis of Fund Shares.** A portion of the Fund's distributions are expected to be treated as a return of capital for tax purposes. Return of capital distributions are not taxable income to you but reduce your tax basis in your Fund Shares. Such a reduction in tax basis will generally result in larger taxable gains and/or lower tax losses on a subsequent sale of Fund Shares. The Fund's return of capital distributions are not derived from the net income or earnings and profits of the Fund. Shareholders should not assume that all Fund distributions are derived from the net income or earnings and profits of the Fund.

**Liquidity Risk.** Although MLPs trade on national securities exchanges, certain MLP securities may trade less frequently than those of larger companies due to their smaller capitalizations. At times, due to limited trading volumes of certain MLPs, the prices of such MLPs may display abrupt or erratic movements. Moreover, it may be more difficult for the Fund to buy and sell significant amounts of such securities without an unfavorable impact on prevailing market prices. The Fund's investment in securities that are less actively traded or over time experience decreased trading volume may restrict its ability to take advantage of other market opportunities or to dispose of securities at a fair price at the times when the Adviser believes it is desirable to do so. This also may affect adversely the Fund's ability to make dividend distributions to you.

**Potential Substantial After-Tax Tracking Error From Index Performance.** As discussed above, the Fund will be subject to taxation on its taxable income. The MLP Index, however, is calculated without any deductions for taxes. As a result, the Fund's after tax performance could differ significantly from the MLP Index even if the pretax performance of the Fund and the performance of the MLP Index are closely correlated.

**Risk of Cash Transactions.** Unlike with respect to most exchange-traded funds (ETFs) that qualify for treatment as regulated investment companies under the Code, the Fund will be taxable as a C Corporation. As such, unlike with respect to such other ETFs, the Fund's in-kind redemptions will generally result in taxable income or loss to the Fund. Additionally, the Fund expects to effect its redemptions principally for cash, rather than in-kind securities. Therefore, it may be required to sell portfolio securities and subsequently recognize gains on such sales that the Fund might not have recognized if it were to distribute the portfolio securities in kind. As such, investments in Shares may be less tax-efficient than an investment in a conventional ETF that qualifies for treatment as a regulated investment company under the Code.

**Index Tracking Risk.** The Fund's return may not match the return of the MLP Index for a number of reasons, including due to the effect of taxes. For example, the Fund incurs a number of operating expenses not applicable to the MLP Index and incurs costs associated with buying and selling securities, especially when rebalancing the Fund's

securities holdings to reflect changes in the composition of the MLP Index and raising cash to meet redemptions or deploying cash with newly created Creation Units (defined herein). The Fund also bears the costs and risks associated with buying and selling securities while such costs are not factored into the return of the MLP Index. The Fund may not be fully invested at times either as a result of cash flows into the Fund or reserves of cash held by the Fund to meet redemptions or pay expenses. Transaction costs, including brokerage costs, will decrease the Fund's NAV to the extent not offset by the transaction fee payable by an Authorized Participant ( AP ). Market disruptions and regulatory restrictions could have an adverse effect on the Fund's ability to adjust its exposure to the required levels in order to track the MLP Index. Errors in the MLP Index data, the MLP Index computations and/or the construction of the MLP Index in accordance with its methodology may occur from time to time and may not be identified and corrected by the MLP Index provider for a period of time or at all, which may have an adverse impact on the Fund and its shareholders. In addition, the Fund may not be able to invest in certain securities included in the MLP Index, or invest in them in the exact proportions they represent of the MLP Index, due to legal restrictions or limitations, a lack of liquidity on stock exchanges in which such securities trade, potential adverse tax consequences or other regulatory reasons. The Fund may value certain of its investments based on fair value prices. Fair value pricing involves subjective judgments and it is possible that a fair value determination for a security or other asset is materially different than the value that could be realized upon the sale of such security or asset. In addition, fair value pricing could result in a difference between the prices used to calculate the Fund's NAV and the prices used by the Fund's Index. This may adversely affect the Fund's ability to track its Index. For tax efficiency purposes, the Fund may sell certain securities, and such sale may cause



the Fund to realize a loss and deviate from the performance of the MLP Index. In light of the factors discussed above, the Fund's return may deviate significantly from the return of the MLP Index.

**Issuer-Specific Changes Risk.** The value of an individual security or particular type of security can be more volatile than the market as a whole and can perform differently from the value of the market as a whole, which may have a greater impact if the Fund's portfolio is concentrated in a country, group of countries, region, market, industry, group of industries, sector or asset class. The value of securities of smaller issuers can be more volatile than that of larger issuers.

**Market Risk.** The prices of the securities in the Fund are subject to the risks associated with investing in the securities market, including general economic conditions and sudden and unpredictable drops in value. An investment in the Fund may lose money.

**Operational Risk.** The Fund is exposed to operational risk arising from a number of factors, including, but not limited to, human error, processing and communication errors, errors of the Fund's service providers, counterparties or other third-parties, failed or inadequate processes and technology or system failures.

**Non-Diversified Risk.** The Fund is classified as a non-diversified fund under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (the 1940 Act). Therefore, the Fund may invest a relatively high percentage of its assets in a smaller number of issuers or may invest a larger proportion of its assets in obligations of a single issuer. As a result, the gains and losses on a single investment may have a greater impact on the Fund's NAV and may make the Fund more volatile than more diversified funds. The Fund may be particularly vulnerable to this risk because the MLP Index it seeks to replicate is comprised of securities of a very limited number of companies.

**Fund Shares Trading, Premium/Discount Risk and Liquidity of Fund Shares.** The market price of the Shares may fluctuate in response to the Fund's NAV, the intraday value of the Fund's holdings and supply and demand for Shares. The Adviser cannot predict whether Shares will trade above, below, or at their most recent NAV. Disruptions to creations and redemptions, the existence of market volatility or potential lack of an active trading market for Shares (including through a trading halt), as well as other factors, may result in Shares trading at a significant premium or discount to NAV or to the intraday value of the Fund's holdings. If a shareholder purchases Shares at a time when the market price is at a premium to the NAV or sells Shares at a time when the market price is at a discount to the NAV, the shareholder may pay significantly more or receive significantly less than the underlying value of the Shares that were bought or sold. Additionally, in stressed market conditions, the market for the Fund's Shares may become less liquid in response to deteriorating liquidity in the markets for the Fund's underlying portfolio holdings.

**Replication Management Risk.** An investment in the Fund involves risks similar to those of investing in any fund of equity securities traded on an exchange, such as market fluctuations caused by such factors as economic and political developments, changes in interest rates and perceived trends in security prices. However, because the Fund is not actively managed, unless a specific security is removed from the MLP Index, the Fund generally would not sell a security because the security's issuer was in financial trouble. Therefore, the Fund's performance could be lower than funds that may actively shift their portfolio assets to take advantage of market opportunities or to lessen the impact of a market decline or a decline in the value of one or more issuers.

**No Guarantee of Active Trading Market.** While Shares are listed on NYSE Arca, there can be no assurance that an active trading market for the Shares will be maintained. Further, secondary markets may be subject to irregular trading activity, wide bid/ask spreads and extended trade settlement periods in times of market stress because market makers and APs may step away from making a market in the Shares and in executing creation and redemption orders, which

could cause a material deviation in the Fund's market price from its NAV.

**Authorized Participant Concentration Risk.** The Fund may have a limited number of financial institutions that act as APs, none of which are obligated to engage in creation and/or redemption transactions. To the extent that those APs exit the business, or are unable to or choose not to process creation and/or redemption orders, and no other AP is able to step forward to create and redeem, there may be a significantly diminished trading market for Shares or Shares may trade like closed-end funds at a discount (or premium) to NAV and possibly face trading halts and/or de-listing. The AP concentration risk may be heightened in scenarios where APs have limited or diminished access to the capital required to post collateral.

**Trading Issues.** Trading in Shares on NYSE Arca may be halted due to market conditions or for reasons that, in the view of NYSE Arca, make trading in Shares inadvisable. In addition, trading in Shares on NYSE Arca is subject to trading halts caused by extraordinary market volatility pursuant to NYSE Arca's circuit breaker rules. There can be no assurance that the requirements of NYSE Arca necessary to maintain the listing of the Fund will continue to be met or will remain unchanged.

**Concentration Risk.** The Fund's assets may be concentrated in a particular sector or sectors or industry or group of industries to the extent the MLP Index concentrates in a particular sector or sectors or industry or group of industries. To the

**VANECK VECTORS™ HIGH INCOME MLP ETF (continued)**

extent that the Fund continues to be concentrated in the energy sector, the Fund will be subject to the risk that economic, political or other conditions that have a negative effect on that sector will negatively impact the Fund to a greater extent than if the Fund's assets were invested in a wider variety of sectors or industries.

**PERFORMANCE**

Pursuant to an agreement and plan of reorganization between the VanEck Vectors ETF Trust (the "Trust"), on behalf of the Fund, and Exchange Traded Concepts Trust, on behalf of Yorkville High Income MLP ETF (the "Predecessor Fund"), on February 22, 2016 the Fund acquired all of the assets and liabilities of the Predecessor Fund in exchange for shares of beneficial interest of the Fund (the "Reorganization"). As a result of the Reorganization, the Fund is the accounting successor of the Predecessor Fund. The historical performance information shown below reflects, for the period prior to the Reorganization, the historical performance of the Predecessor Fund.

The bar chart that follows shows how the Fund performed for the calendar years shown. The table below the bar chart shows the Fund's average annual returns (before and after taxes). The bar chart and table provide an indication of the risks of investing in the Fund by showing the Fund's performance from year to year and by showing how the Fund's average annual returns for the one year and since inception periods compared with the Fund's benchmark index and a broad measure of market performance. All returns assume reinvestment of dividends and distributions. The Fund's past performance (before and after taxes) is not necessarily indicative of how the Fund will perform in the future. Updated performance information is available online at [www.vaneck.com](http://www.vaneck.com).

**Annual Total Returns (%) Calendar Years**

**Best Quarter:** 20.62% 2Q 16

**Worst Quarter:** -30.75% 3Q 15

**Average Annual Total Returns for the Periods Ended December 31, 2016**

The after-tax returns presented in the table below are calculated using the highest historical individual federal marginal income tax rates and do not reflect the impact of state and local taxes. Your actual after-tax returns will depend on your specific tax situation and may differ from those shown below. After-tax returns are not relevant to investors who hold Shares of the Fund through tax-deferred arrangements, such as 401(k) plans or individual retirement accounts.

	<b>Past One Year</b>	<b>Since Inception (3/12/2012)</b>
VanEck Vectors High Income MLP ETF (return before taxes)	25.64%	-16.01%
VanEck Vectors High Income MLP ETF (return after taxes on distributions)	19.30%	-19.61%
VanEck Vectors High Income MLP ETF (return after taxes on distributions and sale of Fund Shares)	13.65%	-11.60%
Solactive High Income MLP Index (reflects no deduction for fees, expenses or taxes)	25.15%	-15.04%

S&P 500® Index (reflects no deduction for fees, expenses or taxes)

11.96%

13.14%

**PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT**

**Investment Adviser.** Van Eck Associates Corporation.

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**Portfolio Managers.** The following individuals are primarily and jointly responsible for the day-to-day management of the Fund's portfolio:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title with Adviser</b>	<b>Date Began Managing the Fund</b>
Hao-Hung (Peter) Liao	Portfolio Manager	February 2016
George Chao	Portfolio Manager	February 2016

**PURCHASE AND SALE OF FUND SHARES**

For important information about the purchase and sale of Fund Shares and tax information, please turn to Summary Information About Purchases and Sales of Fund Shares, Taxes and Payments to Broker-Dealers and Other Financial Intermediaries on page 18 of this Prospectus.

**VANECK VECTORS™ HIGH INCOME INFRASTRUCTURE MLP ETF\*****SUMMARY INFORMATION****INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE**

VanEck Vectors™ High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF (the Fund) seeks to provide investment results that, before fees and expenses, correspond generally to the price and yield performance of the Solactive High Income Infrastructure MLP Index (the Infrastructure MLP Index).

**FUND FEES AND EXPENSES**

The following tables describe the fees and expenses that you may pay if you buy and hold shares of the Fund (Shares).

**Shareholder Fees** (*fees paid directly from your investment*) None

**Annual Fund Operating Expenses**

(*expenses that you pay each year as a percentage of the value of your investment*)

Management Fee	0.82%
Other Expenses <sup>(a)</sup>	0.00%
Deferred Income Tax Expense and Franchise Tax Expense <sup>(b)</sup>	0.00%

Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses 0.82%

<sup>(a)</sup> Van Eck Associates Corporation (the Adviser) will pay all expenses of the Fund, except for the fee payment under the investment management agreement, acquired fund fees and expenses, interest expense, offering costs, trading expenses, taxes (including accrued deferred tax liability) and extraordinary expenses.

<sup>(b)</sup> The Fund is classified for federal income tax purposes as a taxable regular corporation or Subchapter C corporation. As a C corporation, the Fund accrues deferred income tax liability for its future tax liability associated with the capital appreciation of its investments, with certain distributions received by the Fund on equity securities of Master Limited Partnerships (MLPs) considered to be return of capital, and with any net operating gains. The Fund's accrued deferred tax liability, if any, is reflected each day in the Fund's net asset value per share and may vary greatly from year to year depending on the nature of the Fund's investments, the performance of those investments and general market conditions. Therefore, any estimate of deferred income tax expense/(benefit) cannot be reliably predicted from year to year. State franchise taxes are separate and distinct from state income taxes. Due to the nature of the Fund's investments, the Fund may be required to file franchise tax returns in several states. The Fund is expected to absorb net operating losses and accrue net deferred tax expense primarily related to unrealized depreciation on investments and state franchise tax liability.

**EXPENSE EXAMPLE**

This example is intended to help you compare the cost of investing in the Fund with the cost of investing in other funds. This example does not take into account brokerage commissions that you pay when purchasing or selling Shares of the Fund.

The example assumes that you invest \$10,000 in the Fund for the time periods indicated and then redeem all of your Shares at the end of those periods. The example also assumes that your investment has a 5% annual return and that the

Fund's operating expenses remain the same. Although your actual costs may be higher or lower, based on these assumptions, your costs would be:

**YEAR EXPENSES**

1	\$	84
3	\$	262
5	\$	455
10	\$	1,014

**PORTFOLIO TURNOVER**

The Fund will pay transaction costs, such as commissions, when it purchases and sells securities (or turns over its portfolio). A higher portfolio turnover will cause the Fund to incur additional transaction costs and may result in higher taxes when Fund Shares are held in a taxable account. These costs, which are not reflected in annual fund operating expenses or in the example, may affect the Fund's performance. During the most recent fiscal year, the Fund's portfolio turnover rate was 42% of the average value of its portfolio.

\* Prior to  
May 1, 2016,  
the Fund's  
name was  
Market  
Vectors High  
Income  
Infrastructure  
MLP ETF.

## PRINCIPAL INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

The Fund will normally invest at least 80% of its total assets in securities that comprise the Fund's benchmark index. The Infrastructure MLP Index is a rules-based index designed to provide investors a means of tracking the performance of selected infrastructure master limited partnerships (MLPs); with an emphasis on current yield. Infrastructure MLP Index components are publicly traded on a U.S. securities exchange. Under normal circumstances, the Fund invests at least 80% of its net assets, plus the amount of any borrowings for investment purposes, in securities of MLPs. Each 80% investment policy is non-fundamental and may be changed without shareholder approval upon 60 days' prior written notice to shareholders.

The Infrastructure MLP Index consists of MLPs classified as Infrastructure MLPs. Infrastructure MLPs are a subset of the MLP universe that earn a majority of their cash flow from the transportation and storage of energy commodities. Infrastructure MLPs include all MLPs operating with one of the following as a substantial business segment:

- transportation, terminaling and storage of refined petroleum products (including gasoline, diesel, jet fuel, kerosene and heating oil);
- gathering, compressing, dehydrating, treating, processing, marketing of natural gas, and fractionation of natural gas liquids;
- transportation and/or storage of natural gas and natural gas liquids;
- transportation of crude oil, refined petroleum products, and/or other liquids; and
- operating as the general partner of an MLP which primarily engages in any of the businesses listed above.

As of December 31, 2016, the Infrastructure MLP Index included 25 MLPs and the U.S. dollar-denominated market capitalizations of the Infrastructure MLP Index components ranged from approximately \$651 million to approximately \$22.7 billion. These amounts are subject to change.

The Fund employs a passive management investment strategy in seeking to achieve its investment objective. The Fund generally will use a replication methodology, meaning it will invest in all of the securities comprising the Infrastructure MLP Index in proportion to the weightings in the Infrastructure MLP Index. However, the Fund may utilize a sampling methodology under various circumstances where it may not be possible or practicable to purchase all of the securities in the Infrastructure MLP Index.

MLPs are publicly traded partnerships engaged in the transportation, storage, processing, refining, marketing, exploration, production, and mining of minerals and natural resources. By confining their operations to these specific activities, their interests, or units, are able to trade on public securities exchanges exactly like the shares of a corporation, without entity level taxation.

An MLP consists of a general partner and limited partners (or in the case of MLPs organized as limited liability companies, a managing member and members). The general partner or managing member typically controls the operations and management of the MLP and has an ownership stake in the MLP. The limited partners or members, through their ownership of limited partner or member interests, provide capital to the entity, are intended to have no role in the operation and management of the entity, and receive cash distributions. The Fund will be a limited partner (or a member) in the MLPs in which it invests. MLPs are generally treated as partnerships for United States federal income tax purposes. Thus, the MLPs themselves generally do not pay United States federal income taxes, but investors (like the Fund) that hold interests in MLPs are generally subject to tax on their allocable shares of the MLPs income and gains. Currently, most MLPs operate in the energy and/or natural resources sectors.



To qualify as an MLP and to not be taxed as a corporation, a partnership must receive at least 90% of its income from qualifying sources as set forth in Section 7704(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the Code ). These qualifying sources include natural resource-based activities such as the processing, transportation and storage of mineral or natural resources and other commodities.

Partnerships eligible for inclusion in the Infrastructure MLP Index are subject to further market capitalization and liquidity screens before they may be included in the Infrastructure MLP Index.

The Fund is classified as a non-diversified fund and, therefore, may invest a greater percentage of its assets in a particular issuer. The Fund may concentrate its investments (*i.e.* hold 25% or more of its total assets) in a particular industry or group of industries to the extent that the Infrastructure MLP Index concentrates in an industry or group of industries. As of November 30, 2016, the Infrastructure MLP Index was concentrated in the energy infrastructure sector.

The Infrastructure MLP Index is calculated and administered by Solactive AG, which is not affiliated with the Fund or the Adviser. Solactive AG determines the components and the relative weightings of the securities in the Infrastructure MLP Index subject to the Infrastructure MLP Index rules and publishes information regarding the Infrastructure MLP Index. The

**VANECK VECTORS™ HIGH INCOME INFRASTRUCTURE MLP ETF (continued)**

Infrastructure MLP Index is rebalanced annually, but may be adjusted more frequently under extraordinary circumstances, consistent with the Infrastructure MLP Index's methodology.

**PRINCIPAL RISKS OF INVESTING IN THE FUND**

**Investors in the Fund should be willing to accept a high degree of volatility in the price of the Fund's Shares and the possibility of significant losses. An investment in the Fund involves a substantial degree of risk. An investment in the Fund is not a deposit with a bank and is not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other government agency. Therefore, you should consider carefully the following risks before investing in the Fund, each of which could significantly and adversely affect the value of an investment in the Fund.**

**MLP Risk.** Investments in common units of MLPs involve risks that differ from investments in common stock including risks inherent in the structure of MLPs, including (i) tax risks (described further below), (ii) risk related to limited control of management or the general partner or managing member (iii) limited rights to vote on matters affecting the MLP, except with respect to extraordinary transactions, and (iv) conflicts of interest between the general partner or managing member and its affiliates, on the one hand, and the limited partners or members, on the other hand, including those arising from incentive distribution payments or corporate opportunities, and cash flow risks, as described in more detail in this Prospectus.

MLP common units and other equity securities can be affected by macro-economic and other factors affecting the stock market in general, expectations of interest rates, investor sentiment towards MLPs or the energy sector, changes in a particular issuer's financial condition, or unfavorable or unanticipated poor performance of a particular issuer (in the case of MLPs, generally measured in terms of distributable cash flow). Prices of common units of individual MLPs and other equity securities also can be affected by fundamentals unique to the partnership or company, including cash flow growth, cash generating power and distribution coverage.

**MLP Tax Risk.** Much of the benefit the Fund derives from its investment in equity securities of MLPs is a result of MLPs generally being treated as partnerships for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Partnerships generally do not pay U.S. federal income tax at the partnership level. Rather, each partner is allocated a share of the partnership's income, gains, losses, deductions and expenses, and takes that share into account in calculating its own U.S. federal income tax liability. A change in current tax law, or a change in the business of a given MLP, could result in an MLP being treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes. As a result, the amount of cash available for distribution by the MLP could be reduced and the after-tax return to the Fund with respect to its investment in such MLPs could be materially reduced. Thus, if any of the MLPs owned by the Fund were treated as corporations for U.S. federal income tax purposes, it could result in a reduction in the value of your investment in the Fund and lower distributions.

Changes in tax laws or regulations, or future interpretations of such laws or regulations, could adversely affect the Fund or the MLPs in which the Fund invests. Legislation could also negatively impact the amount and tax characterization of dividends received by the Fund's shareholders. For example, Congress could take actions which would eliminate the tax benefits of depreciation, depletion and amortization deductions realized by MLPs. Alternatively, Congress could impose a tax on pass-through entities such as MLPs or eliminate the use of pass-through taxation entirely. The tax benefits of depreciation, depletion and amortization deductions realized by MLPs effectively defer the income of the MLPs and, in turn, the taxable income of the Fund. Without these benefits the Fund would be subject to current U.S. federal, state and local corporate income taxes on a greater proportion of its

allocable share of the income and gains of MLPs in which it invests, and the Fund's ability to pay distributions treated as return-of-capital distributions (for tax purposes). Imposing a tax on pass-through entities and/or eliminating the use of pass-through taxation entirely could result in three levels of tax at the MLP level, the Fund level and the shareholder level.

An MLP's distributions to the Fund generally will not be taxable unless the cash amount (or, in certain cases, the value of marketable securities) distributed exceeds the Fund's basis in its interest in the MLP. Distributions received by the Fund from an MLP will reduce the Fund's adjusted basis in its interest in the MLP, but not below zero. A reduced basis will generally result in an increase in the amount of gain (or decrease in the amount of loss) that will be recognized by the Fund for tax purposes on the sale of its interest in the MLP. Cash distributions from an MLP to the Fund (and, in certain cases, the value of marketable securities distributed by an MLP to the Fund) in excess of the Fund's basis in the MLP will generally be taxable to the Fund as capital gain. The Fund will not benefit from favorable federal income tax rates on long-term capital gains because it will be treated as a corporation for federal income tax purposes.

Depreciation or other cost recovery deductions passed through to the Fund from investments in MLPs in a given year will generally reduce the Fund's taxable income (and earnings and profits), but those deductions may be recaptured in the Fund's income (and earnings and profits) in subsequent years when the MLPs dispose of their assets or when the Fund disposes of its interests in the MLPs. When deductions are recaptured, the Fund may owe a tax (the payment of which will reduce the Fund's net assets) and distributions to the Fund's shareholders may be taxable, even though the shareholders at the time of

the recapture might not have held Shares in the Fund at the time the deductions were taken by the Fund, and even though the Fund does not have corresponding economic gain on its investment at the time of the recapture.

The tax treatment of all items allocated to the Fund each year by the MLPs will not be known until the Fund receives a schedule K-1 for that year with respect to each of its MLP investments. The Fund's tax liability will not be known until the Fund completes its annual tax return. The Fund's tax estimates could vary substantially from the actual liability and therefore the determination of the Fund's actual tax liability may have a material adverse effect on the value of an investment in the Fund. The payment of corporate income taxes imposed on the Fund will decrease cash available for distribution to shareholders.

**Energy Sector Risks.** To the extent that the Fund continues to be concentrated in the energy sector, the Fund will be sensitive to changes in, and its performance will depend to a greater extent on, the overall condition of the energy sector. Many MLPs operate within the energy sector. Therefore, a substantial portion of the MLPs in which the Fund invests are engaged in the energy sector of the economy. As a result, a downturn in the energy sector of the economy, adverse political, legislative or regulatory developments or other events could have a larger impact on the Fund than on an investment company that does not invest a substantial portion of its assets in the energy sector. At times, the performance of securities of companies in the energy sector may lag the performance of other sectors or the broader market as a whole. Recently, the price of oil, natural gas and other fossil fuels has declined significantly and experienced significant volatility, which has adversely impacted companies operating in the energy sector. There can be no assurance that the price of oil, natural gas and other fossil fuels will not decline further and have a further adverse affect. In addition, there are several specific risks associated with investments in the energy sector, including the following:

the energy sector is highly regulated. MLPs operating in the energy sector are subject to significant regulation of nearly every aspect of their operations by federal, state and local governmental agencies;

MLPs operating in the energy sector may be affected by fluctuations in the prices of energy commodities, including, for example, natural gas, natural gas liquids, crude oil and coal, in the short- and long-term;

MLPs engaged in the exploration, development, management or production of energy commodities face the risk that commodity reserves are depleted over time, with the potential associated effect of causing the market value of the MLP to decline over time;

MLPs operating in the energy sector could be adversely affected by reductions in the supply of or demand for energy commodities;

extreme weather or other natural disasters could impact the value of MLPs operating in the energy sector;

the abilities of MLPs operating in the energy sector to grow and to increase cash distributions to unitholders can be highly dependent on their ability to make acquisitions that result in an increase in cash flows;

rising interest rates which could adversely impact the financial performance and/or the present value of cash flow of MLPs operating in the energy sector; and

MLPs operating in the energy sector are subject to many dangers inherent in the production, exploration, management, transportation, processing and distribution of natural gas, natural gas liquids, crude oil, refined petroleum and petroleum products and other hydrocarbons. In addition, threats of attack by terrorists on energy assets could impact the market for MLPs operating in the energy sector.

**Industry Specific Risks.** To the extent that the Fund continues to be concentrated in the energy infrastructure sector, the Fund will be sensitive to changes in, and its performance will depend to a greater extent on, the overall condition of the energy infrastructure sector. Energy infrastructure MLPs are also subject to risks that are specific to the industry they serve.

**Midstream.** Midstream MLPs that provide crude oil, refined product and natural gas services are subject to supply and demand fluctuations in the markets they serve which may be impacted by a wide range of factors including fluctuating commodity prices, weather, increased conservation or use of alternative fuel sources, increased governmental or environmental regulation, depletion, rising interest rates, declines in domestic or foreign production, accidents or catastrophic events, increasing operating expenses and economic conditions, among others.

**Pipeline.** Pipeline MLPs are not subject to direct commodity price exposure because they do not own the underlying energy commodity. However, the MLP sector can be hurt by market perception that MLPs' performance and distributions are directly tied to commodity prices. Also, a significant decrease in the production of natural gas, oil, or other energy commodities, due to a decline in production from existing facilities, import supply disruption, or otherwise, would reduce revenue and operating income of MLPs and, therefore, the ability of MLPs to make distributions to partners.

A sustained decline in demand for crude oil, natural gas and refined petroleum products could adversely affect MLP revenues and cash flows. Factors that could lead to a decrease in market demand include a recession or other adverse

**VANECK VECTORS™ HIGH INCOME INFRASTRUCTURE MLP ETF (continued)**

economic conditions, an increase in the market price of the underlying commodity, higher taxes or other regulatory actions that increase costs, or a shift in consumer demand for such products. Demand may also be adversely impacted by consumer sentiment with respect to global warming and/ or by any state or federal legislation intended to promote the use of alternative energy sources, such as bio-fuels.

MLPs employ a variety of means of increasing cash flow, including increasing utilization of existing facilities, expanding operations through new construction, expanding operations through acquisitions, or securing additional long-term contracts. Thus, some MLPs may be subject to construction risk, acquisition risk or other risk factors arising from their specific business strategies. A significant slowdown in large energy companies' disposition of energy infrastructure assets and other merger and acquisition activity in the energy MLP industry could reduce the growth rate of cash flows received by the Fund from MLPs that grow through acquisitions.

**Geopolitical Risk.** Global political and economic instability could affect the operations of MLPs and energy companies in unpredictable ways, including through disruptions of natural resources supplies and markets and the resulting volatility in commodity prices. Recent political and military instability in a variety of countries throughout the Middle East and North Africa has heightened these risks.

**Tax Status of the Fund.** The Fund is treated as a regular corporation, or C corporation, for U.S. federal income tax purposes. This differs from most investment companies, which elect to be treated as regulated investment companies under the Code in order to avoid paying entity level income taxes. Under current law, the Fund is not eligible to elect treatment as a regulated investment company due to its investments primarily in MLPs. Accordingly, the Fund is subject to U.S. federal income tax on its taxable income at the graduated rates applicable to corporations (currently at a maximum rate of 35%) as well as state and local income taxes. As discussed below, the Fund expects that a portion of the distributions it receives from MLPs may be treated as a tax-deferred return of capital. The amount of taxes currently paid by the Fund will vary depending on the amount of income, gains, losses, and deductions the Fund is allocated from its MLP investments and on the amount of gains and losses derived from sales of MLP interests. Fund-level taxes will reduce your return from an investment in the Fund.

**Deferred Tax Risk.** For financial reporting (but not tax reporting) purposes, the Fund will accrue deferred income taxes for any future tax liability associated with (i) all or a portion of certain MLP distributions and any net operating gains as well as (ii) capital appreciation of its investments. The Fund's accrued deferred tax liability will be reflected each day in the Fund's net asset value (NAV). Increases in deferred tax liability will decrease NAV. Conversely, decreases in deferred tax liability will increase NAV. The Fund generally computes deferred income taxes based on the federal tax rate generally applicable to corporations, currently 35%, and an assumed rate attributable to state taxes. A change in the federal tax rate applicable to corporations and, consequently, any change in the deferred tax liability of the Fund, may have a significant impact on the NAV of the Fund. The Fund's current and deferred tax liability, if any, will depend upon the income, gains, losses, and deductions the Fund is allocated from its MLP investments, and on the Fund's realized and unrealized gains and losses, and therefore may vary greatly from year to year depending on the nature of the Fund's investments, the performance of these investments and general market conditions. The Fund will rely to a significant extent on information provided by the MLPs, which may not be timely, to estimate deferred tax liability for purposes of financial statement reporting and determining NAV. From time to time, Adviser may modify the estimates or assumptions regarding the Fund's deferred tax liability as new information becomes available.

The Fund estimates regarding its deferred tax liability are made in good faith; however, the daily estimate of the Fund's deferred tax liability used to calculate the Fund's NAV could vary dramatically from the Fund's actual tax

liability. The Fund's actual income tax expense, if any, may be deferred for many years, concentrated in a small number of years, or spread over many years depending on if, and when, investment gains and losses are realized, the timing of recapture income realized by an MLP or realized by the Fund on a sale of an MLP interest, and other factors. As a result, the determination of the Fund's actual tax liability may have a material impact on the Fund's NAV.

Although the Fund's NAV will take into account deferred tax liabilities, there can be no assurance that the purchase price you pay for Shares will take into account deferred tax liabilities. If you purchase Shares at a substantial premium to NAV, the value of the Shares may be adversely impacted by a recapture event that triggers a deferred tax liability not fully reflected in your purchase price or by the issuance of Creation Units at an NAV less than your purchase price. Shareholders who redeem their shares at a NAV that is based on estimates of the Fund's current taxes and deferred tax liability and/or asset balances may benefit at the expense of remaining shareholders (or remaining shareholders may benefit at the expense of redeeming shareholders) if the estimates are later revised or ultimately differ from the Fund's actual tax liability and/or asset balances.

In the event the Fund is in a net deferred tax asset position, the Fund will evaluate all available information and consider the criterion established by the Financial Accounting Standards Board Codification Topic 740, Income Taxes (formerly Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 109) in order to properly assess whether it is more likely than not that the deferred tax asset will be realized or whether a valuation allowance is required.

**Return of Capital Distributions From the Fund Reduce the Tax Basis of Fund Shares.** A portion of the Fund's distributions are expected to be treated as a return of capital for tax purposes. Return of capital distributions are not taxable income to you but reduce your tax basis in your Fund Shares. Such a reduction in tax basis will generally result in larger taxable gains and/or lower tax losses on a subsequent sale of Fund Shares. The Fund's return of capital distributions are not derived from the net income or earnings and profits of the Fund. Shareholders should not assume that all Fund distributions are derived from the net income or earnings and profits of the Fund.

**Liquidity Risk.** Although MLPs trade on national securities exchanges, certain MLP securities may trade less frequently than those of larger companies due to their smaller capitalizations. At times, due to limited trading volumes of certain MLPs, the prices of such MLPs may display abrupt or erratic movements. Moreover, it may be more difficult for the Fund to buy and sell significant amounts of such securities without an unfavorable impact on prevailing market prices. The Fund's investment in securities that are less actively traded or over time experience decreased trading volume may restrict its ability to take advantage of other market opportunities or to dispose of securities at a fair price at the times when the Adviser believes it is desirable to do so. This also may affect adversely the Fund's ability to make dividend distributions to you.

**Potential Substantial After-Tax Tracking Error From Index Performance.** As discussed above, the Fund will be subject to taxation on its taxable income. The Infrastructure MLP Index, however, is calculated without any deductions for taxes. As a result, the Fund's after tax performance could differ significantly from the Infrastructure MLP Index even if the pretax performance of the Fund and the performance of the Infrastructure MLP Index are closely correlated.

**Risk of Cash Transactions.** Unlike with respect to most exchange-traded funds (ETFs) that qualify for treatment as regulated investment companies under the Code, the Fund will be taxable as a C Corporation. As such, unlike with respect to such other ETFs, the Fund's redemptions will generally result in taxable income or loss to the Fund. Additionally, the Fund expects to effect its redemptions principally for cash, rather than in-kind securities. Therefore, it may be required to sell portfolio securities and subsequently recognize gains on such sales that the Fund might not have recognized if it were to distribute the portfolio securities in kind. As such, investments in Shares may be less tax-efficient than an investment in a conventional ETF that qualifies for treatment as a regulated investment company under the Code.

**Index Tracking Risk.** The Fund's return may not match the return of the Infrastructure MLP Index for a number of reasons, including due to the effects of taxes. For example, the Fund incurs a number of operating expenses not applicable to the Infrastructure MLP Index and incurs costs associated with buying and selling securities, especially when rebalancing the Fund's securities holdings to reflect changes in the composition of the Infrastructure MLP Index and raising cash to meet redemptions or deploying cash with newly created Creation Units (defined herein). The Fund also bears the costs and risks associated with buying and selling securities while such costs are not factored into the return of the Infrastructure MLP Index. The Fund may not be fully invested at times either as a result of cash flows into the Fund or reserves of cash held by the Fund to meet redemptions or pay expenses. Transaction costs, including brokerage costs, will decrease the Fund's NAV to the extent not offset by the transaction fee payable by an Authorized Participant (AP). Market disruptions and regulatory restrictions could have an adverse effect on the Fund's ability to adjust its exposure to the required levels in order to track the Infrastructure MLP Index. Errors in the Infrastructure MLP Index data, the Infrastructure MLP Index computations and/or the construction of the Infrastructure MLP Index in accordance with its methodology may occur from time to time and may not be identified and corrected by the Infrastructure MLP Index provider for a period of time or at all, which may have an adverse impact on the Fund and its shareholders. In addition, the Fund may not be able to invest in certain securities included in the Infrastructure MLP Index, or invest in them in the exact proportions they represent of the Infrastructure MLP Index, due to legal



restrictions or limitations or a lack of liquidity on stock exchanges in which such securities trade, potential adverse tax consequences or other regulatory reasons. The Fund may value certain of its investments based on fair value prices. Fair value pricing involves subjective judgments and it is possible that a fair value determination for a security or other asset is materially different than the value that could be realized upon the sale of such security or asset. In addition, fair value pricing could result in a difference between the prices used to calculate the Fund's NAV and the prices used by the Fund's Index. This may adversely affect the Fund's ability to track its Index. For tax efficiency purposes, the Fund may sell certain securities, and such sale may cause the Fund to realize a loss and deviate from the performance of the Infrastructure MLP Index. In light of the factors discussed above, the Fund's return may deviate significantly from the return of the Infrastructure MLP Index.

**Issuer-Specific Changes Risk.** The value of an individual security or particular type of security can be more volatile than the market as a whole and can perform differently from the value of the market as a whole, which may have a greater impact if the Fund's portfolio is concentrated in a country, group of countries, region, market, industry, group of industries, sector or asset class. The value of securities of smaller issuers can be more volatile than that of larger issuers.

**Market Risk.** The prices of the securities in the Fund are subject to the risks associated with investing in the securities market, including general economic conditions and sudden and unpredictable drops in value. An investment in the Fund may lose money.

**VANECK VECTORS™ HIGH INCOME INFRASTRUCTURE MLP ETF (continued)**

**Operational Risk.** The Fund is exposed to operational risk arising from a number of factors, including, but not limited to, human error, processing and communication errors, errors of the Fund's service providers, counterparties or other third-parties, failed or inadequate processes and technology or system failures.

**Non-Diversified Risk.** The Fund is classified as a non-diversified fund under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (the 1940 Act). Therefore, the Fund may invest a relatively high percentage of its assets in a smaller number of issuers or may invest a larger proportion of its assets in obligations of a single issuer. As a result, the gains and losses on a single investment may have a greater impact on the Fund's NAV and may make the Fund more volatile than more diversified funds. The Fund may be particularly vulnerable to this risk because the Infrastructure MLP Index it seeks to replicate is comprised of securities of a very limited number of companies.

**Fund Shares Trading, Premium/Discount Risk and Liquidity of Fund Shares.** The market price of the Shares may fluctuate in response to the Fund's NAV, the intraday value of the Fund's holdings and supply and demand for Shares. The Adviser cannot predict whether Shares will trade above, below, or at their most recent NAV. Disruptions to creations and redemptions, the existence of market volatility or potential lack of an active trading market for Shares (including through a trading halt), as well as other factors, may result in Shares trading at a significant premium or discount to NAV or to the intraday value of the Fund's holdings. If a shareholder purchases Shares at a time when the market price is at a premium to the NAV or sells Shares at a time when the market price is at a discount to the NAV, the shareholder may pay significantly more or receive significantly less than the underlying value of the Shares that were bought or sold. Additionally, in stressed market conditions, the market for the Fund's Shares may become less liquid in response to deteriorating liquidity in the markets for the Fund's underlying portfolio holdings.

**Replication Management Risk.** An investment in the Fund involves risks similar to those of investing in any fund of equity securities traded on an exchange, such as market fluctuations caused by such factors as economic and political developments, changes in interest rates and perceived trends in security prices. However, because the Fund is not actively managed, unless a specific security is removed from the Infrastructure MLP Index, the Fund generally would not sell a security because the security's issuer was in financial trouble. Therefore, the Fund's performance could be lower than funds that may actively shift their portfolio assets to take advantage of market opportunities or to lessen the impact of a market decline or a decline in the value of one or more issuers.

**No Guarantee of Active Trading Market.** While Shares are listed on NYSE Arca, there can be no assurance that an active trading market for the Shares will be maintained. Further, secondary markets may be subject to irregular trading activity, wide bid/ask spreads and extended trade settlement periods in times of market stress because market makers and APs may step away from making a market in the Shares and in executing creation and redemption orders, which could cause a material deviation in the Fund's market price from its NAV.

**Authorized Participant Concentration Risk.** The Fund may have a limited number of financial institutions that act as APs, none of which are obligated to engage in creation and/or redemption transactions. To the extent that those APs exit the business, or are unable to or choose not to process creation and/or redemption orders, and no other AP is able to step forward to create and redeem, there may be a significantly diminished trading market for Shares or Shares may trade like closed-end funds at a discount (or premium) to NAV and possibly face trading halts and/or de-listing. The AP concentration risk may be heightened in scenarios where APs have limited or diminished access to the capital required to post collateral.

**Trading Issues.** Trading in Shares on NYSE Arca may be halted due to market conditions or for reasons that, in the view of NYSE Arca, make trading in Shares inadvisable. In addition, trading in Shares on NYSE Arca is subject to trading halts caused by extraordinary market volatility pursuant to NYSE Arca's circuit breaker rules. There can be no assurance that the requirements of NYSE Arca necessary to maintain the listing of the Fund will continue to be met or will remain unchanged.

**Concentration Risk.** The Fund's assets may be concentrated in a particular sector or sectors or industry or group of industries to the extent the Infrastructure MLP Index concentrates in a particular sector or sectors or industry or group of industries. To the extent that the Fund continues to be concentrated in the energy infrastructure sector, the Fund will be subject to the risk that economic, political or other conditions that have a negative effect on that sector will negatively impact the Fund to a greater extent than if the Fund's assets were invested in a wider variety of sectors or industries.

## PERFORMANCE

Pursuant to an agreement and plan of reorganization between the VanEck Vectors ETF Trust (the "Trust"), on behalf of the Fund, and Exchange Traded Concepts Trust, on behalf of Yorkville High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF (the "Predecessor Fund"), on February 22, 2016 the Fund acquired all of the assets and liabilities of the Predecessor Fund in exchange for shares of beneficial interest of the Fund (the "Reorganization"). As a result of the Reorganization, the Fund is the accounting successor of the Predecessor Fund. The historical performance information shown below reflects, for the period prior to the Reorganization, the historical performance of the Predecessor Fund.

The bar chart that follows shows how the Fund performed for the calendar years shown. The table below the bar chart shows the Fund's average annual returns (before and after taxes). The bar chart and table provide an indication of the risks of investing in the Fund by showing the Fund's performance from year to year and by showing how the Fund's average annual returns for the one year and since inception periods compared with the Fund's benchmark index and a broad measure of market performance. All returns assume reinvestment of dividends and distributions. The Fund's past performance (before and after taxes) is not necessarily indicative of how the Fund will perform in the future. Updated performance information is available online at [www.vaneck.com](http://www.vaneck.com).

### Annual Total Returns (%) Calendar Years

**Best Quarter:** 28.07% 2Q 16

**Worst Quarter:** -25.96% 3Q 15

### Average Annual Total Returns for the Periods Ended December 31, 2016

The after-tax returns presented in the table below are calculated using the highest historical individual federal marginal income tax rates and do not reflect the impact of state and local taxes. Your actual after-tax returns will depend on your specific tax situation and may differ from those shown below. After-tax returns are not relevant to investors who hold Shares of the Fund through tax-deferred arrangements, such as 401(k) plans or individual retirement accounts.

	<b>Past One Year</b>	<b>Since Inception (2/11/2013)</b>
VanEck Vectors High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF (return before taxes)	36.64%	1.03%
VanEck Vectors High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF (return after taxes on distributions)	31.50%	-1.03%
VanEck Vectors High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF (return after taxes on distributions and sale of Fund Shares)	20.07%	-0.18%
Solactive High Income Infrastructure MLP Index (reflects no deduction for fees, expenses or taxes)	37.76%	3.07%
S&P 500® Index (reflects no deduction for fees, expenses or taxes)	11.96%	12.91%

### PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT

**Investment Adviser.** Van Eck Associates Corporation.

**Portfolio Managers.** The following individuals are primarily and jointly responsible for the day-to-day management of the Fund's portfolio:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title with Adviser</b>	<b>Date Began Managing the Fund</b>
Hao-Hung (Peter) Liao	Portfolio Manager	February 2016
George Chao	Portfolio Manager	February 2016

**PURCHASE AND SALE OF FUND SHARES**

For important information about the purchase and sale of Fund Shares and tax information, please turn to Summary Information About Purchases and Sales of Fund Shares, Taxes and Payments to Broker-Dealers and Other Financial Intermediaries on page 18 of this Prospectus.

**SUMMARY INFORMATION ABOUT PURCHASES AND SALES OF FUND SHARES, TAXES AND PAYMENTS TO BROKER-DEALERS AND OTHER FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES**

**PURCHASE AND SALE OF FUND SHARES**

Each Fund issues and redeems Shares at NAV only in a large specified number of Shares, each called a Creation Unit, or multiples thereof. A Creation Unit consists of 50,000 Shares.

Individual Shares of a Fund may only be purchased and sold in secondary market transactions through brokers. Shares of the Funds are listed on NYSE Arca and because Shares trade at market prices rather than NAV, Shares of the Funds may trade at a price greater than or less than NAV.

**TAX INFORMATION**

Each Fund's taxable distributions will generally be treated as ordinary income or qualified dividend income to the extent of each Fund's current and accumulated earnings and profits. Distributions exceeding such amount will be treated first as a return of capital to the extent of, and in reduction of, a shareholder's tax basis in his or her Shares and, after the shareholder's tax basis is reduced to zero, as gain on the sale or exchange of Shares. A reduction in a shareholder's tax basis will generally result in larger taxable gains and/or lower tax losses on a subsequent sale of Fund Shares. A portion of each Fund's distributions is expected to be treated as a return of capital for tax purposes, although no assurance can be provided in this regard. A Fund's return of capital distributions are not derived from the net income or earnings and profits of the Fund. Shareholders should not assume that all Fund distributions are derived from the net income or earnings and profits of each Fund. Additionally, a sale of Fund shares is a taxable event for shares held in a taxable account.

**PAYMENTS TO BROKER-DEALERS AND OTHER FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES**

The Adviser and its related companies may pay broker-dealers or other financial intermediaries (such as a bank) for the sale of the Fund Shares and related services. These payments may create a conflict of interest by influencing your broker-dealer or other intermediary or its employees or associated persons to recommend the Fund over another investment. Ask your financial adviser or visit your financial intermediary's website for more information.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE FUNDS INVESTMENT STRATEGIES AND RISKS**

### **PRINCIPAL INVESTMENT STRATEGIES**

The Adviser anticipates that, generally, each Fund will hold all of the securities that comprise its Index in proportion to their weightings in such Index. However, under various circumstances, it may not be possible or practicable to purchase all of those securities in those weightings. In these circumstances, a Fund may purchase a sample of securities in its Index. There also may be instances in which the Adviser may choose to underweight or overweight a security in a Fund's Index, purchase securities not in a Fund's Index that the Adviser believes are appropriate to substitute for certain securities in such Index or utilize various combinations of other available investment techniques in seeking to replicate as closely as possible, before fees and expenses, the price and yield performance of a Fund's Index. Each Fund may sell securities that are represented in its Index in anticipation of their removal from its Index or purchase securities not represented in its Index in anticipation of their addition to such Index.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT MLPs**

MLPs are publicly traded partnerships engaged in the transportation, storage, processing, refining, marketing, exploration, production, and mining of minerals and natural resources. By confining their operations to these specific activities, their interests, or units, are able to trade on public securities exchanges exactly like the shares of a corporation, without entity level taxation. Partnerships eligible for inclusion in an Index are subject to further liquidity screens before they may be included in an Index.

MLPs' disclosures are regulated by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and MLPs must file Form 10-Ks, Form 10-Qs, and notices of material changes like any publicly traded corporation. MLPs also must comply with certain requirements applicable to public companies under the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002.

To qualify as an MLP and to not be taxed as a corporation, a partnership must receive at least 90% of its income from qualifying sources as set forth in Section 7704(d) of the Code. These qualifying sources include natural resource-based activities such as the exploration, development, mining, production, processing, refining, transportation, storage and marketing of mineral or natural resources. An MLP consists of a general partner and limited partners (or in the case of MLPs organized as limited liability companies, a managing member and members). The general partner or managing member typically controls the operations and management of the MLP and has an ownership stake in the MLP. The limited partners or members, through their ownership of limited partner or member interests, provide capital to the entity, are intended to have no role in the operation and management of the entity, and receive cash distributions. The MLPs themselves generally do not pay United States federal income taxes, but investors (like a Fund) that hold interests in MLPs are generally subject to tax on their allocable shares of the income and gains of the MLPs. Thus, unlike investors in corporate securities, direct MLP investors are generally not subject to double taxation (*i.e.*, corporate level tax and tax on corporate dividends). Currently, most MLPs operate in the energy and/or natural resources sectors.

General partner or managing member interests receive cash distributions, typically in an amount of up to 2% of available cash, which is contractually defined in the partnership or limited liability company agreement. In addition, holders of general partner or managing member interests typically receive incentive distribution rights (IDRs), which provide them with an increasing share of the entity's aggregate cash distributions upon the payment of per common unit distributions that exceed specified threshold levels above the minimum quarterly distribution. Due to the IDRs, general partners of MLPs have higher distribution growth prospects than their underlying MLPs, but quarterly incentive distribution payments would also decline at a greater rate than the decline rate in quarterly distributions to

common and subordinated unit holders in the event of a reduction in the MLP's quarterly distribution. In addition, some MLPs permit the holder of IDRs to reset, under specified circumstances, the incentive distribution levels and receive compensation in exchange for the distribution rights given up in the reset.

#### **FUNDAMENTAL AND NON-FUNDAMENTAL POLICIES**

Each Fund's investment objective and each of its other investment policies are non-fundamental policies that may be changed by the Board of Trustees of the Trust (the Board of Trustees) without shareholder approval, except as noted in this Prospectus or the Statement of Additional Information (SAI) under the section entitled Investment Policies and Restrictions Investment Restrictions.

Each Fund may change its investment objective and underlying index without shareholder approval.

#### **RISKS OF INVESTING IN THE FUNDS**

The following section provides additional information regarding the principal risks identified under Principal Risks of Investing in the Fund in each Fund's Summary Information section followed by additional risk information. The risks listed below are applicable to each Fund unless otherwise noted.

**Investors in the Funds should be willing to accept a high degree of volatility in the price of the Funds' Shares and the possibility of significant losses. An investment in the Funds involves a substantial degree of risk. An investment**



**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE FUNDS INVESTMENT STRATEGIES AND RISKS  
(continued)**

**in the Funds is not a deposit with a bank and is not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other government agency. Therefore, you should consider carefully the following risks before investing in the Funds, each of which could significantly and adversely affect the value of an investment in a Fund.**

**MLP Risk.** An investment in MLP units involves risks that differ from a similar investment in equity securities, such as common stock, of a corporation. Holders of MLP units have the rights typically afforded to limited partners in a limited partnership. Holders of MLP units are subject to certain risks inherent in the structure of MLPs, including (i) tax risks (described further below), (ii) the limited ability to elect or remove management or the general partner or managing member, (iii) limited voting rights, except with respect to extraordinary transactions, and (iv) conflicts of interest between the general partner or managing member and its affiliates, on the one hand, and the limited partners or members, on the other hand, including those arising from incentive distribution payments or corporate opportunities. General partners typically have limited fiduciary duties to an MLP, which could allow a general partner to favor its own interests over the MLP's interests. In addition, general partners of MLPs often have limited call rights that may require unitholders to sell their common units at an undesirable time or price. MLPs may issue additional common units without unitholder approval, which would dilute the interests of existing unitholders, including a Fund's ownership interest.

MLP common units and other equity securities can be affected by macro-economic and other factors affecting the stock market in general, expectations of interest rates, investor sentiment towards MLPs or the energy sector, changes in a particular issuer's financial condition, or unfavorable or unanticipated poor performance of a particular issuer (in the case of MLPs, generally measured in terms of distributable cash flow). Certain MLP securities may trade in lower volumes due to their smaller capitalizations, and may be subject to more abrupt or erratic price movements and lower market liquidity. MLP securities are generally considered interest-rate sensitive investments. During periods of interest rate volatility, these investments may not provide attractive returns. Prices of common units of individual MLPs and other equity securities also can be affected by fundamentals unique to the partnership or company, including cash flow growth, cash generating power and distribution coverage.

The Funds derive a significant portion of their cash flow from investments in equity securities of MLPs. Therefore, the amount of cash that a Fund will have available to pay or distribute will depend on the ability of the MLPs that a Fund owns to make distributions to their partners and the tax character of those distributions. Neither the Funds nor the Adviser has control over the actions of underlying MLPs. MLPs are subject to various risks related to the underlying operating companies they control, including dependence upon specialized management skills and the risk that such companies may lack or have limited operating histories. The amount of cash that each individual MLP can distribute to its partners will depend on the amount of cash it generates from operations, which will vary from quarter to quarter depending on factors affecting the energy infrastructure market generally and on factors affecting the particular business lines of the MLP. Available cash will also depend on the MLPs' level of operating costs (including incentive distributions to the general partner), level of capital expenditures, debt service requirements, acquisition costs (if any), fluctuations in working capital needs and other factors. The Funds expect to generate significant investment income, and a Fund's investments may not distribute the expected or anticipated levels of cash, resulting in the risk that a Fund may not have the ability to make cash distributions as investors expect from MLP-focused investments.

**MLP Tax Risk.** The benefit Shareholders are expected to derive from the Funds' investment in MLPs depends largely on the MLPs being treated as partnerships for federal income tax purposes. Partnerships generally do not pay U.S. federal income tax at the partnership level. Rather, each partner of the MLP, in computing its U.S. federal income tax liability, must include its allocable share of the MLP's income, gains, losses, deductions and tax credits. If, as a result of a change in current law or a change in an MLP's underlying business mix, an MLP were treated as a corporation for federal income tax purposes, the MLP would be obligated to pay federal income tax on its income at the corporate tax rate (currently at a maximum rate of 35%). If an MLP were classified as a corporation for federal income tax purposes, the amount of cash available for distribution could be reduced and part or all of the distributions a Fund receives might be taxed entirely as dividend income. Therefore, treatment of one or more MLPs as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes could affect a Fund's ability to meet its investment objective and could reduce the amount of cash available to pay expenses or distribute to Shareholders.

Changes in tax laws or regulations, or future interpretations of such laws or regulations, could adversely affect the Funds or the MLPs in which the Funds invest. Legislation could also negatively impact the amount and tax characterization of dividends received by the Funds' shareholders. For example, Congress could take actions which would eliminate the tax benefits of depreciation, depletion and amortization deductions realized by MLPs. Alternatively, Congress could impose a tax on pass-through entities such as MLPs or eliminate the use of pass-through taxation entirely. The tax benefits of depreciation, depletion and amortization deductions realized by MLPs effectively defer the income of the MLPs and, in turn, the taxable income of the Funds. Without these benefits the Funds would be subject to current U.S. federal, state and local corporate income taxes on a greater proportion of their allocable share of the income and gains of MLPs in which they invest, and the

Funds' ability to pay distributions treated as return-of-capital distributions (for tax purposes). Imposing a tax on pass-through entities and/or eliminating the use of pass-through taxation entirely could result in three levels of tax at the MLP level, the Fund level and the shareholder level.

Each Fund will be a limited partner in the MLPs in which it invests. As a result, it will be allocated a pro rata share of income, gains, losses, deductions and expenses from those MLPs. Historically, a significant portion of income from such MLPs has been offset by tax deductions from those MLPs. A Fund will incur a current tax liability on that portion of an MLP's income and gains that is not offset by tax deductions and losses. The percentage of an MLP's income and gains which is offset by tax deductions and losses will fluctuate over time for various reasons. A significant slowdown in acquisition activity by MLPs in the Indexes could result in a reduction of accelerated depreciation generated by new acquisitions, which may result in increased current income tax liability to a Fund.

An MLP's distributions to a Fund generally will not be taxable unless the cash amount (or, in certain cases, the value of marketable securities) distributed exceeds the Fund's basis in its interest in the MLP. Distributions received by a Fund from an MLP will reduce the Fund's adjusted basis in its interest in the MLP, but not below zero. A reduced basis will generally result in an increase in the amount of gain (or decrease in the amount of loss) that will be recognized by a Fund for tax purposes on the sale of its interest in the MLP. Cash distributions from an MLP to a Fund (or, in certain cases, the value of marketable securities distributed by an MLP to a Fund) in excess of the Fund's basis in the MLP will generally be taxable to the Fund as capital gain. The Funds will not benefit from favorable federal income tax rates on long-term capital gains because they will be treated as corporations for federal income tax purposes.

Depreciation or other cost recovery deductions passed through to a Fund from investments in MLPs in a given year will generally reduce the Fund's taxable income (and earnings and profits), but those deductions may be recaptured in the Fund's income (and earnings and profits) in subsequent years when the MLPs dispose of their assets or when the Fund disposes of its interests in the MLPs. When deductions are recaptured, a Fund may owe a tax (the payment of which will reduce a Fund's net assets) and distributions to the Fund's shareholders may be taxable, even though the shareholders at the time of the recapture might not have held Shares in the Fund at the time the deductions were taken by the Fund, and even though the Fund does not have corresponding economic gain on its investment at the time of the recapture.

The tax treatment of all items allocated to a Fund each year by MLPs will not be known until the Fund receives a schedule K-1 for that year with respect to each of its MLP investments. A Fund's tax liability will not be known until the Fund completes its annual tax return. A Fund's tax estimates could vary substantially from the actual liability and therefore the determination of a Fund's actual tax liability may have a material adverse effect on the value of an investment in a Fund. The payment of corporate income taxes imposed on a Fund will decrease cash available for distribution to shareholders.

**Energy Sector Risks.** Many MLPs operate within the energy sector. Therefore, a substantial portion of the MLPs in which a Fund invests are engaged in the energy sector of the economy. To the extent an Index includes securities of issuers in the energy sector, a Fund will invest in companies in such sector. As such, a Fund will be sensitive to changes in, and its performance will depend to a greater extent on, the overall condition of the energy sector. At times, the performance of companies in the energy sector may lag the performance of other sectors or the broader market as a whole. Recently, the price of oil, natural gas and other fossil fuels has declined significantly and experienced significant volatility, which has adversely impacted companies operating in the energy sector. There can be no assurance that the price of oil, natural gas and other fossil fuels will not decline further and have a further adverse affect. In addition, there are several specific risks associated with investments in the energy sector, including, but not

limited to, the following:

**Regulatory Risk.** The energy sector is highly regulated. MLPs operating in the energy sector are subject to significant regulation of nearly every aspect of their operations by federal, state and local governmental agencies as well as import controls and international treaties. These include, for example, the federal Clean Air Act and comparable state laws and regulations that impose obligations related to air emissions; the federal Clean Water Act and comparable state laws and regulations that impose obligations related to discharges of pollutants into regulated bodies of water; the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and comparable state laws and regulations that impose requirements for the handling and disposal of waste from facilities; and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, also known as Superfund, and comparable state laws and regulations that regulate the cleanup of hazardous substances that may have been released at properties currently or previously owned or operated by energy companies or at locations to which they have sent waste for disposal. Such regulation can change rapidly or over time in both scope and intensity. For example, a particular by-product or process, including hydraulic fracturing, may be declared hazardous sometimes retroactively by a regulatory agency and unexpectedly increase production costs. Various governmental authorities have the power to enforce compliance with these regulations and the permits issued under them, and violators are subject to administrative, civil and criminal penalties, including civil fines, injunctions or both. Stricter laws, regulations or enforcement policies could be enacted in the future which would likely increase compliance

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE FUNDS INVESTMENT STRATEGIES AND RISKS**  
**(continued)**

costs and may materially adversely affect the financial performance of MLPs operating in the energy sector. There is an inherent risk that MLPs may incur material environmental costs and liabilities due to the nature of their businesses and the substances they handle, including substantial liabilities for environmental cleanup and restoration costs, claims made by neighboring landowners and other third parties for personal injury and property damage, and fines or penalties for related violations of environmental laws or regulations.

Voluntary initiatives and mandatory controls have been adopted or are being discussed both in the United States and worldwide to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, a by-product of burning fossil fuels, and methane, the major constituent of natural gas, which many scientists and policymakers believe contribute to global climate change. These measures and future measures could result in increased costs to certain companies in which a Fund may invest to operate and maintain facilities and administer and manage a greenhouse gas emissions program and may reduce demand for fuels that generate greenhouse gases and that are managed or produced by companies in which the Fund may invest.

Energy companies may also operate in or engage in transactions involving countries with less developed regulatory regimes or a history of expropriation, nationalization or other adverse policies.

In addition, a significant portion of revenues of energy companies depends on a relatively small number of customers, including governmental entities and utilities. As a result, governmental budget constraints may have a material adverse effect on the stock prices of companies in this industry.

**Commodity Price Risk.** MLPs operating in the energy sector may be affected by fluctuations in the prices of energy commodities, including, for example, natural gas, natural gas liquids, crude oil and coal, in the short- and long-term. Fluctuations in energy commodity prices would impact directly companies that own such energy commodities and could impact indirectly companies that engage in transportation, storage, processing, distribution or marketing of such energy commodities. Fluctuations in energy commodity prices can result from changes in general economic conditions or political circumstances (especially of key energy producing and consuming countries); market conditions; weather patterns; domestic production levels; volume of imports; energy conservation; domestic and foreign governmental regulation; international politics; policies of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries ( OPEC ); taxation; tariffs; and the availability and costs of local, intrastate and interstate transportation methods. The energy sector as a whole may also be impacted by the perception that the performance of energy sector companies is directly linked to commodity prices. High commodity prices may drive further energy conservation efforts, and a slowing economy may adversely impact energy consumption, which may adversely affect the performance of MLPs and other companies operating in the energy sector. Depressed commodity prices may result in a significant decrease in the production of energy commodities, which would reduce revenue and operating income of MLPs and other companies operating in the energy sector. Greater volatility of energy commodity prices may lead to increased volatility in the prices of equities in the energy infrastructure sector. Recent economic and market events have fueled concerns regarding potential liquidations of commodity futures and options positions.

**Depletion Risk.** MLPs engaged in the exploration, development, management or production of energy commodities face the risk that commodity reserves are depleted over time, with the potential associated effect of causing the market value of the MLP to decline over time. Such companies seek to increase their reserves through expansion of their current businesses, acquisitions, further development of their existing sources of energy commodities, exploration of new sources of energy commodities or by entering into long-term contracts for additional reserves; however, there are

risks associated with each of these potential strategies. If such companies fail to acquire additional reserves in a cost-effective manner and at a rate at least equal to the rate at which their existing reserves decline, their financial performance may suffer. Additionally, failure to replenish reserves could reduce the amount and affect the tax characterization of the distributions paid by such companies.

**Supply and Demand Risk.** MLPs operating in the energy sector could be adversely affected by reductions in the supply of or demand for energy commodities. The volume of production of energy commodities and the volume of energy commodities available for transportation, storage, processing or distribution could be affected by a variety of factors, including depletion of resources; depressed commodity prices; catastrophic events; labor relations; increased environmental or other governmental regulation; equipment malfunctions and maintenance difficulties; import volumes; international politics, policies of OPEC; and increased competition from alternative energy sources. Alternatively, a decline in demand for energy commodities could result from factors such as adverse economic conditions (especially in key energy-consuming countries); increased taxation; increased environmental or other governmental regulation; increased fuel economy; increased energy conservation or use of alternative energy sources; legislation intended to promote the use of alternative energy sources; or increased commodity prices.

**Weather Risks.** Weather conditions and the seasonality of weather patterns play a role in the cash flows of certain MLPs operating in the energy sector. MLPs in the propane industry; for example, rely on the winter heating season to generate almost all of their cash flow. In an unusually warm winter season, propane MLPs experience decreased demand for their product. Although most MLPs can reasonably predict seasonal weather demand based on normal weather patterns, extreme weather conditions, such as the hurricanes that severely damaged cities along the U.S. Gulf Coast in recent years, demonstrate that no amount of preparation can protect an MLP from the unpredictability of the weather. The damage done by extreme weather also may serve to increase insurance premiums for energy assets owned by MLPs, could significantly increase the volatility in the supply of energy-related commodities and could adversely affect such companies' financial condition and ability to pay distributions to shareholders.

**Acquisition Risk.** The abilities of MLPs operating in the energy sector to grow and to increase cash distributions to unitholders can be highly dependent on their ability to make acquisitions that result in an increase in cash flows. In the event that MLPs are unable to make such accretive acquisitions because they are unable to identify attractive acquisition candidates and negotiate acceptable purchase contracts, because they are unable to raise financing for such acquisitions on economically acceptable terms, or because they are outbid by competitors, their future growth and ability to raise distributions will be limited. Furthermore, even if MLPs do consummate acquisitions that they believe will be accretive, the acquisitions may instead result in a decrease in cash flow. Any acquisition involves risks, including, among other things: mistaken assumptions about revenues and costs, including synergies; the assumption of unknown liabilities; limitations on rights to indemnity from the seller; the diversion of management's attention from other business concerns; unforeseen difficulties operating in new product or geographic areas; and customer or key employee losses at the acquired businesses.

**Interest Rate Risk.** Rising interest rates could adversely impact the financial performance and/or the present value of cash flow of MLPs operating in the energy sector by increasing their costs of capital. This may reduce their ability to execute acquisitions or expansion projects in a cost-effective manner. MLP valuations are based on numerous factors, including sector and business fundamentals, management expertise, and expectations of future operating results. However, MLP yields are also susceptible in the short-term to fluctuations in interest rates and the prices of MLP securities may decline when interest rates rise.

**Catastrophic Event Risk.** MLPs operating in the energy sector are subject to many dangers inherent in the production, exploration, management, transportation, processing and distribution of natural gas, natural gas liquids, crude oil, refined petroleum products and other hydrocarbons. These dangers include leaks, fires, explosions, damage to facilities and equipment resulting from natural disasters, inadvertent damage to facilities and equipment (such as those suffered by BP's Deepwater Horizon drilling platform in 2010) and terrorist acts. Since the September 11th terrorist attacks, the U.S. government has issued warnings that energy assets, specifically U.S. pipeline infrastructure, may be targeted in future terrorist attacks. These dangers give rise to risks of substantial losses as a result of loss or destruction of reserves; damage to or destruction of property, facilities and equipment; pollution and environmental damage; and personal injury or loss of life. Any occurrence of such catastrophic events could bring about a limitation, suspension or discontinuation of the operations of certain assets owned by such MLP. MLPs operating in the energy sector may not be fully insured against all risks inherent in their business operations and, therefore, accidents and catastrophic events could adversely affect such companies' financial condition and ability to pay distributions to shareholders. We expect that increased governmental regulation to mitigate such catastrophic risk such as the recent oil spills referred to above, could increase insurance premiums and other operating costs for MLPs.

**Industry Specific Risks.** MLPs can be negatively impacted by market perception that MLPs' performance and distributions are directly tied to commodity prices. Furthermore, a significant decrease in the production of natural gas, oil or other energy commodities, due to a decline in production from existing facilities, import supply disruption

or otherwise, would reduce revenue and operating income of MLPs and, therefore, the ability of MLPs to make distributions to partners. Changes in demand for transportation of commodities over longer distances and supply of vessels to carry those commodities may materially affect revenues, profitability and cash flows.

**Energy Sector.** MLPs operating in the energy sector are also subject to risks that are specific to the industry they serve.

**Midstream.** MLPs that operate midstream assets are subject to supply and demand fluctuations in the markets they serve which may be impacted by a wide range of factors including fluctuating commodity prices, weather, increased conservation or use of alternative fuel sources, increased governmental or environmental regulation, depletion, rising interest rates, declines in domestic or foreign production, accidents or catastrophic events, increasing operating expenses and economic conditions, among others. Further, MLPs that operate gathering and processing assets are subject to natural declines in the production of the oil and gas fields they serve. In addition, some gathering and processing contracts subject the owner of such assets to direct commodity price risk.



**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE FUNDS INVESTMENT STRATEGIES AND RISKS**  
**(continued)**

**Downstream.** Downstream companies are businesses engaged in refining, marketing and other end-customer distribution activities relating to refined energy sources, such as: customer-ready natural gas, propane and gasoline; the production and manufacturing of petrochemicals including olefins, polyolefins, ethylene and similar co-products as well as intermediates and derivatives; and the generation, transmission and distribution of power and electricity. In addition to the other risks described herein, downstream companies may be more susceptible to risks associated with reduced customer demand for the products and services they provide.

**Exploration and production.** Exploration and production MLPs are particularly vulnerable to declines in the demand for and prices of crude oil and natural gas. Reductions in prices for crude oil and natural gas can cause a given reservoir to become uneconomic for continued production earlier than it would if prices were higher, resulting in the plugging and abandonment of, and cessation of production from, that reservoir. In addition, lower commodity prices not only reduce revenues but also can result in substantial downward adjustments in reserve estimates. The accuracy of any reserve estimate is a function of the quality of available data, the accuracy of assumptions regarding future commodity prices and future exploration and development costs and engineering and geological interpretations and judgments. Different reserve engineers may make different estimates of reserve quantities and related revenue based on the same data. Actual oil and gas prices, development expenditures and operating expenses will vary from those assumed in reserve estimates, and these variances may be significant. Any significant variance from the assumptions used could result in the actual quantity of reserves and future net cash flow being materially different from those estimated in reserve reports. In addition, results of drilling, testing and production and changes in prices after the date of reserve estimates may result in downward revisions to such estimates. Substantial downward adjustments in reserve estimates could have a material adverse effect on a given exploration and production company's financial position and results of operations. In addition, due to natural declines in reserves and production, exploration and production companies must economically find or acquire and develop additional reserves in order to maintain and grow their revenues and distributions. Exploration and production MLPs seek to reduce cash flow volatility associated with commodity prices by executing multiyear hedging strategies that fix the price of gas and oil produced. There can be no assurance that the hedging strategies currently employed by these MLPs are currently effective or will remain effective.

**Marine shipping.** Marine shipping MLPs are primarily marine transporters of natural gas, crude oil or refined petroleum products. Marine shipping companies are exposed to many of the same risks as other energy companies. In addition, the highly cyclical nature of the marine transportation industry may lead to volatile changes in charter rates and vessel values, which may adversely affect the revenues, profitability and cash flows of such companies. Fluctuations in charter rates result from changes in the supply and demand for vessel capacity and changes in the supply and demand for certain energy commodities. Changes in demand for transportation of commodities over longer distances and supply of vessels to carry those commodities may materially affect revenues, profitability and cash flows. The value of marine transportation vessels may fluctuate and could adversely affect the value of shipping company securities in a Fund's portfolio. Declining marine transportation values could affect the ability of shipping companies to raise cash by limiting their ability to refinance their vessels, thereby adversely impacting such company's liquidity. Shipping company vessels are at risk of damage or loss because of events such as mechanical failure, collision, human error, war, terrorism, piracy, cargo loss and bad weather. In addition, changing economic, regulatory and political conditions in some countries, including political and military conflicts, have from time to time resulted in attacks on vessels, mining of waterways, piracy, terrorism, labor strikes, boycotts and government requisitioning of vessels. These sorts of events could interfere with shipping lanes and result in market disruptions and a significant reduction in cash flow for the shipping companies.

**Propane.** Propane MLPs are distributors of propane to homeowners for space and water heating. MLPs with propane assets are subject to earnings variability based upon weather conditions in the markets they serve, fluctuating commodity prices, customer conservation and increased use of alternative fuels, increased governmental or environmental regulation, and accidents or catastrophic events, among others.

**Natural Resource.** MLPs with coal, timber, fertilizer and other mineral assets are subject to supply and demand fluctuations in the markets they serve, which will be impacted by a wide range of domestic and foreign factors including fluctuating commodity prices, the level of their customers' coal stockpiles, weather, increased conservation or use of alternative fuel sources, increased governmental or environmental regulation, depletion, declines in production, mining accidents or catastrophic events, health claims and economic conditions, among others. In light of increased state and federal regulation, it has been increasingly difficult to obtain and maintain the permits necessary to mine coal. Further, such permits, if obtained, have increasingly contained more stringent, and more difficult and costly to comply with, provisions relating to environmental protection.

**Geopolitical Risk.** Global political and economic instability could affect the operations of MLPs and energy companies in unpredictable ways, including through disruptions of natural resources supplies and markets and the resulting volatility

in commodity prices. Recent political and military instability in a variety of countries throughout the Middle East and North Africa has heightened these risks.

**Energy Infrastructure Sector.** Energy infrastructure MLPs are also subject to risks that are specific to the industry they serve.

**Midstream.** Midstream MLPs that provide crude oil, refined product and natural gas services are subject to supply and demand fluctuations in the markets they serve which may be impacted by a wide range of factors including fluctuating commodity prices, weather, increased conservation or use of alternative fuel sources, increased governmental or environmental regulation, depletion, rising interest rates, declines in domestic or foreign production, accidents or catastrophic events, increasing operating expenses and economic conditions, among others.

**Pipeline.** Pipeline MLPs are not subject to direct commodity price exposure because they do not own the underlying energy commodity. However, the MLP sector can be hurt by market perception that MLPs' performance and distributions are directly tied to commodity prices. Also, a significant decrease in the production of natural gas, oil, or other energy commodities, due to a decline in production from existing facilities, import supply disruption, or otherwise, would reduce revenue and operating income of MLPs and, therefore, the ability of MLPs to make distributions to partners.

A sustained decline in demand for crude oil, natural gas and refined petroleum products could adversely affect MLP revenues and cash flows. Factors that could lead to a decrease in market demand include a recession or other adverse economic conditions, an increase in the market price of the underlying commodity, higher taxes or other regulatory actions that increase costs, or a shift in consumer demand for such products. Demand may also be adversely impacted by consumer sentiment with respect to global warming and/ or by any state or federal legislation intended to promote the use of alternative energy sources, such as bio-fuels.

MLPs employ a variety of means of increasing cash flow, including increasing utilization of existing facilities, expanding operations through new construction, expanding operations through acquisitions, or securing additional long-term contracts. Thus, some MLPs may be subject to construction risk, acquisition risk or other risk factors arising from their specific business strategies. A significant slowdown in large energy companies' disposition of energy infrastructure assets and other merger and acquisition activity in the energy MLP industry could reduce the growth rate of cash flows received by a Fund from MLPs that grow through acquisitions.

**Risk of Investing in the Basic Materials Sector.** (VanEck Vectors High Income MLP ETF only.) To the extent that the basic materials sector continues to represent a significant portion of a Fund, the Fund will be sensitive to changes in, and its performance may depend to a greater extent on, the overall condition of the basic materials sector. Companies engaged in the production and distribution of basic materials may be adversely affected by changes in world events, political and economic conditions, energy conservation, environmental policies, commodity price volatility, changes in exchange rates, imposition of import controls, increased competition, depletion of resources and labor relations.

**Deferred Tax Asset Risk.** To the extent a Fund accrues a net deferred tax asset, consideration will be given as to whether or not a valuation allowance is required. The need to establish a valuation allowance for deferred tax assets will be assessed periodically by a Fund based on the criterion established by the Financial Accounting Standards Board Codification Topic 740, Income Taxes (formerly Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 109) ( ASC Topic 740 ) that it is more likely than not that some portion or all of the deferred tax asset will not be realized. In the assessment for a valuation allowance, consideration will be given to all positive and negative evidence related to the

realization of the deferred tax asset. This assessment will consider, among other matters, the nature, frequency and severity of current and cumulative losses, forecasts of future profitability (which are highly dependent on future MLP cash distributions), the duration of statutory carryforward periods and the associated risk that operating loss carryforwards may expire unused. If a valuation allowance is required to reduce the deferred tax asset in the future, it could have a material impact on a Fund's NAV and results of operations in the period it is recorded. To the extent a Fund accrues a net deferred tax asset in the future, such deferred tax assets may constitute a relatively high percentage of a Fund's NAV. Any valuation allowance required against such deferred tax assets or future adjustments to a valuation allowance may reduce a Fund's deferred tax assets and could have a material impact on a Fund's NAV and results of operations in the period the valuation allowance is recorded or adjusted.

**Liquidity Risk.** Although MLPs trade on national securities exchanges, certain MLP securities may trade less frequently than those of larger companies due to their smaller capitalizations. At times, due to limited trading volumes of certain MLPs, the prices of such MLPs may display abrupt or erratic movements. Moreover, it may be more difficult for a Fund to buy and sell significant amounts of such securities without an unfavorable impact on prevailing market prices. A Fund's investment in securities that are less actively traded or over time experience decreased trading volume may restrict its ability to take advantage of other market opportunities or to dispose of securities at a fair price at the times when the Adviser believes it is desirable to do so. This also may affect adversely a Fund's ability to make dividend distributions to you.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE FUNDS INVESTMENT STRATEGIES AND RISKS**  
(continued)

**Risk of Cash Transactions.** Unlike with respect to most ETFs that qualify for treatment as regulated investment companies under the Code, each Fund will be taxable as a C Corporation. As such, unlike with respect to such other ETFs, each Fund's redemptions will generally result in taxable income or loss to the Fund. Additionally, each Fund expects to effect its redemptions principally for cash, rather than in-kind securities. Therefore, it may be required to sell portfolio securities and subsequently recognize gains on such sales that the Fund might not have recognized if it were to distribute the portfolio securities in kind. As a result, investments in Shares may be less tax-efficient than an investment in a conventional ETF that qualifies for treatment as a regulated investment company under the Code.

Other such ETFs generally are able to make in-kind redemptions and avoid realizing gains in connection with transactions designed to raise cash to meet redemption requests. Because each Fund effects all or a portion of its redemptions for cash, rather than in-kind distributions, it may be required to sell portfolio securities in order to obtain the cash needed to distribute redemption proceeds, which involves transaction costs. If a Fund recognizes gain on these sales, or with respect to a distribution of portfolio securities in-kind, this generally will cause the Fund to recognize gain sooner than would otherwise be required. This strategy may cause a greater portion of the distributions to Fund shareholders to be treated as taxable dividend income.

**Index Tracking Risk.** Each Fund's return may not match the return of its Index for a number of reasons. For example, a Fund incurs a number of operating expenses not applicable to its Index and incurs costs associated with buying and selling securities, especially when rebalancing the Fund's securities holdings to reflect changes in the composition of its Index, which are not factored into the return of its Index. Transaction costs, including brokerage costs, will decrease a Fund's NAV to the extent not offset by the transaction fee payable by an AP. Market disruptions and regulatory restrictions could have an adverse effect on a Fund's ability to adjust its exposure to the required levels in order to track its Index. There is no assurance that the Index Provider or any agents that may act on its behalf will compile the Fund's Index accurately, or that each Index will be determined, composed or calculated accurately. Errors in respect of the quality, accuracy and completeness of the data used to compile an Index may occur from time to time and may not be identified and corrected by the Index Provider for a period of time or at all, particularly where the indices are less commonly used as benchmarks by funds or managers. Therefore, gains, losses or costs associated with errors of the Index Provider or its agents will generally be borne by the applicable Fund and its shareholders. For example, during a period where a Fund's Index contains incorrect constituents, each Fund would have market exposure to such constituents and would be underexposed to the Index's other constituents. Such errors may negatively or positively impact the Funds and their shareholders. Any gains due to the Index Provider's or others' errors will be kept by the Funds and their shareholders and any losses resulting from the Index Provider's or others' errors will be borne by the applicable Fund and its shareholders. A Fund may not be fully invested at times either as a result of cash flows into the Fund or reserves of cash held by the Fund to meet redemptions or pay expenses. In addition, a Fund may not be able to invest in certain securities included in its Index, or invest in them in the exact proportions they represent of the Fund's Index, due to legal restrictions or limitations, a lack of liquidity in securities exchanges in which such securities trade, potential adverse tax consequences or other regulatory reasons. Moreover, a Fund may be delayed in purchasing or selling securities included in its Index. For tax efficiency purposes, a Fund may sell certain securities, and such sale may cause the Fund to realize a loss and deviate from the performance of its Index.

Each Fund may fair value certain of the securities or other assets it holds. Fair value pricing involves subjective judgments and it is possible that a fair value determination for a security or other asset is materially different than the value that could be realized upon the sale of such security or asset. In addition, fair value pricing could result in a difference between the prices used to calculate a Fund's NAV and the prices used by such Fund's Index. This may

adversely affect a Fund's ability to track its Index. In addition, if a Fund utilizes depositary receipts and other derivative instruments that are not included in its Index, its return may not correlate as well with the returns of its Index as would be the case if the Fund purchased all the securities in its Index directly.

As discussed herein, the Funds will be subject to taxation on their taxable income. The NAV of Fund Shares will also be reduced by the accrual of any deferred tax liabilities. The Indexes, however, are calculated without any deductions for taxes except to the extent of withholding taxes on distributions of foreign securities as addressed in the Index methodology. As a result, a Fund's after tax performance could differ significantly from its Index even if the pretax performance of a Fund and the performance of its Index are closely correlated. In light of the above factors discussed above, each Fund's return may deviate significantly from the return of its Index.

Index tracking risk may be heightened during times of increased market volatility or other unusual market conditions. Errors in the construction or calculation of a Fund's Index may occur from time to time. Any such errors may not be identified or corrected by the Index Provider for some period of time, which may have an adverse effect on the Funds and its shareholders.

**Issuer-Specific Changes Risk.** The value of individual securities or particular types of securities in a Fund's portfolio can be more volatile than the market as a whole and can perform differently from the value of the market as a whole, which may have a greater impact if a Fund's portfolio is concentrated in a country, group of countries, region, market, industry, group of industries, sector or asset class. The value of securities of smaller issuers can be more volatile than that of larger issuers. A change in the financial condition, market perception or the credit rating of an issuer of securities included in a Fund's Index may cause the value of its securities to decline.

**Market Risk.** The prices of the securities in a Fund are subject to the risk associated with investing in the securities market, including general economic conditions and sudden and unpredictable drops in value. Overall securities values could decline generally or could underperform other investments. An investment in a Fund may lose money.

**Operational Risk.** Each Fund is exposed to operational risk arising from a number of factors, including, but not limited to, human error, processing and communication errors, errors of a Fund's service providers, counterparties or other third-parties, failed or inadequate processes and technology or system failures.

**Non-Diversified Risk.** Each Fund is a separate investment portfolio of VanEck Vectors ETF Trust (the Trust), which is an open-end investment company registered under the 1940 Act. Each Fund is classified as a non-diversified fund under the 1940 Act. As a result, each Fund is subject to the risk that it will be more volatile than a diversified fund because it may invest its assets in a smaller number of issuers or may invest a larger proportion of its assets in obligations of a single issuer. Moreover, the gains and losses on a single investment may have a greater impact on each Fund's NAV and may make the Fund more volatile than more diversified funds. Each Fund may be particularly vulnerable to this risk because its Index it seeks to replicate is comprised of securities of a very limited number of companies.

**Fund Shares Trading, Premium/Discount Risk and Liquidity of Fund Shares.** Disruptions to creations and redemptions, the existence of market volatility or potential lack of an active trading market for Shares (including through a trading halt), as well as other factors, may result in Shares trading at a significant premium or discount to NAV or to the intraday value of the Fund's holdings. The NAV of the Shares will fluctuate with changes in the market value of a Fund's securities holdings. The market prices of the Shares will fluctuate, in some cases materially, in accordance with changes in NAV and the intraday value of a Fund's holdings as well as supply and demand on NYSE Arca. The Adviser cannot predict whether Shares will trade below, at or above their most recent NAV. Given the fact that Shares can be created and redeemed by APs in Creation Units, the Adviser believes that large discounts or premiums to the NAV of Shares should not be sustained in the long-term. While the creation/redemption feature is designed to make it likely that Shares normally will trade close to the value of a Fund's holdings, market prices are not expected to correlate exactly to the Fund's NAV due to timing reasons, supply and demand imbalances and other factors. The price differences may be due, in large part, to the fact that supply and demand forces at work in the secondary trading market for Shares may be closely related to, but not necessarily identical to, the same forces influencing the prices of the securities of a Fund's portfolio of investments trading individually or in the aggregate at any point in time. If a shareholder purchases Shares at a time when the market price is at a premium to the NAV or sells Shares at a time when the market price is at a discount to the NAV, the shareholder may pay significantly more or receive significantly less than the underlying value of the Shares that were bought or sold. Any of these factors, discussed above and further below, may lead to the Shares trading at a premium or discount to a Fund's NAV. Additionally, in stressed market conditions, the market for a Fund's Shares may become less liquid in response to deteriorating liquidity in the markets for a Fund's underlying portfolio holdings.

When you buy or sell Shares of a Fund through a broker, you will likely incur a brokerage commission or other charges imposed by brokers. In addition, the market price of Shares, like the price of any exchange-traded security,

includes a bid/ask spread charged by the market makers or other participants that trade the particular security. The spread of a Fund's Shares varies over time based on a Fund's trading volume and market liquidity and may increase if a Fund's trading volume, the spread of a Fund's underlying securities, or market liquidity decrease. In times of severe market disruption, including when trading of a Fund's holdings may be halted, the bid/ask spread may increase significantly.

**Replication Management Risk.** Unlike many investment companies, the Funds are not actively managed. Therefore, unless a specific security is removed from the Index, a Fund generally would not sell a security because the security's issuer is in financial trouble. If a specific security is removed from a Fund's Index, a Fund may be forced to sell such security at an inopportune time or for prices other than at current market values. An investment in a Fund involves risks similar to those of investing in any fund that invests in equities or bonds, such as market fluctuations caused by such factors as economic and political developments, changes in interest rates and perceived trends in security prices. A Fund's Index may not contain the appropriate or a diversified mix of securities for any particular economic cycle. The timing of changes in the securities of a Fund's portfolio in seeking to replicate its Index could have a negative effect on the Fund. Unlike with an actively managed fund, the Adviser does not use techniques or defensive strategies designed to lessen the effects of market volatility or to reduce the impact of periods of market decline. This means that, based on market and economic conditions, a Fund's



**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE FUNDS INVESTMENT STRATEGIES AND RISKS**  
**(continued)**

performance could be lower than funds that may actively shift their portfolio assets to take advantage of market opportunities or to lessen the impact of a market decline or a decline in the value of one or more issuers.

**No Guarantee of Active Trading Market.** While Shares are listed on NYSE Arca, there can be no assurance that an active trading market for the Shares will be maintained. Further, secondary markets may be subject to irregular trading activity, wide bid/ask spreads and extended trade settlement periods in times of market stress because market makers and APs may step away from making a market in the Shares and in executing creation and redemption orders, which could cause a material deviation in the Fund's market price from its NAV. The Distributor does not maintain a secondary market in the Shares. Investors purchasing and selling shares in the secondary market may not experience investment results consistent with those experienced by those APs creating and redeeming directly with a Fund.

Decisions by market makers or APs to reduce their role or step away from these activities in times of market stress could inhibit the effectiveness of the arbitrage process in maintaining the relationship between the underlying value of a Fund's portfolio securities and a Fund's market price. This reduced effectiveness could result in Fund Shares trading at a price which differs materially from NAV and also in greater than normal intraday bid/ask spreads for Fund Shares.

**Authorized Participant Concentration Risk.** Each Fund may have a limited number of financial institutions that act as APs, none of which are obligated to engage in creation and/or redemption transactions. To the extent that those APs exit the business, or are unable to or choose not to process creation and/or redemption orders, and no other AP is able to step forward to create and redeem, there may be a significantly diminished trading market for Shares or Shares may trade like closed-end funds at a discount (or premium) to NAV and possibly face trading halts and/or de-listing. The AP concentration risk may be heightened in scenarios where APs have limited or diminished access to the capital required to post collateral.

**Trading Issues.** Trading in a Fund's Shares on NYSE Arca may be halted due to market conditions or for reasons that, in the view of NYSE Arca, make trading in Shares inadvisable. In addition, trading in Shares on NYSE Arca is subject to trading halts caused by extraordinary market volatility pursuant to NYSE Arca's circuit breaker rules. There can be no assurance that the requirements of NYSE Arca necessary to maintain the listing of a Fund will continue to be met or will remain unchanged.

**Concentration Risk.** A Fund's assets may be concentrated in a particular sector or sectors or industry or group of industries to the extent that its respective Index concentrates in a particular sector or sectors or industry or group of industries. The securities of many or all of the companies in the same sector or industry may decline in value due to developments adversely affecting such sector or industry. By concentrating its assets in a particular sector or sectors or industry or group of industries, a Fund is subject to the risk that economic, political or other conditions that have a negative effect on that sector or sectors or industry or group of industries will negatively impact the Fund to a greater extent than if the Fund's assets were invested in a wider variety of sectors or industries.

**ADDITIONAL NON-PRINCIPAL INVESTMENT STRATEGIES**

The Funds, using an indexing investment approach, seek to provide investment results that, before fees and expenses, correspond generally to the price and yield performance of its Index. A number of factors may affect a Fund's ability to achieve a high correlation with its Index, including the degree to which a Fund utilizes a sampling methodology.

There can be no guarantee that a Fund will achieve a high degree of correlation.

The Adviser may sell securities that are represented in an Index or purchase securities not yet represented in an Index, in anticipation of their removal from or addition to an Index. There may also be instances in which the Adviser may choose to overweight securities in an Index, thus causing it to purchase or sell securities not in an Index which the Adviser believes are appropriate to substitute for certain securities in a Fund's Index or utilize various combinations of other available investment techniques in seeking to track its Index. The Funds will not take defensive positions.

Each Fund may invest up to 20% of its total assets in cash, cash equivalents, such as money market instruments, or other types of investments that are not included in the Fund's underlying index, including in certain derivatives, to the extent that the Adviser believes such investments should help the Fund's overall portfolio track its underlying index.

### **BORROWING MONEY**

Each Fund may borrow money from a bank up to a limit of one-third of the market value of its assets. Each Fund has entered into a credit facility to borrow money for temporary, emergency or other purposes, including the funding of shareholder redemption requests and trade settlements. To the extent that a Fund borrows money, it may be leveraged; at such times, the Fund will appreciate or depreciate in value more rapidly than its Index. Leverage generally has the effect of increasing the amount of loss or gain a Fund might realize, and may increase volatility in the value of a Fund's investments.

## LENDING PORTFOLIO SECURITIES

Each Fund may lend its portfolio securities to brokers, dealers and other financial institutions desiring to borrow securities to complete transactions and for other purposes. In connection with such loans, a Fund receives liquid collateral equal to at least 102% of the value of the portfolio securities being loaned. This collateral is marked-to-market on a daily basis. Although a Fund will receive collateral in connection with all loans of its securities holdings, the Fund would be exposed to a risk of loss should a borrower fail to return the borrowed securities (*e.g.*, the Fund would have to buy replacement securities and the loaned securities may have appreciated beyond the value of the collateral held by the Fund) or become insolvent. A Fund may pay fees to the party arranging the loan of securities. In addition, a Fund will bear the risk of loss of any cash collateral that it invests.

## ADDITIONAL NON-PRINCIPAL RISKS

**Risk of Investing in Derivatives.** Derivatives are financial instruments whose values are based on the value of one or more reference assets or indicators, such as a security, currency, interest rate, or index. A Fund's use of derivatives involves risks different from, and possibly greater than, the risks associated with investing directly in securities and other more traditional investments. Moreover, although the value of a derivative is based on an underlying indicator, a derivative typically does not carry the same rights as would be the case if a Fund invested directly in the underlying securities, currencies or other assets.

Derivatives are subject to a number of risks, such as potential changes in value in response to market developments or, in the case of over-the-counter derivatives, as a result of a counterparty's credit quality and the risk that a derivative transaction may not have the effect the Adviser anticipated. Derivatives also involve the risk of mispricing or improper valuation and the risk that changes in the value of a derivative may not achieve the desired correlation with the underlying asset or indicator. Derivative transactions can create investment leverage, may be highly volatile, and a Fund could lose more than the amount it invests. The use of derivatives may increase the amount and affect the timing and character of taxes payable by shareholders of a Fund.

Many derivative transactions are entered into over-the-counter without a central clearing house; as a result, the value of such a derivative transaction will depend on, among other factors, the ability and the willingness of a Fund's counterparty to perform its obligations under the transaction. If a counterparty were to default on its obligations, a Fund's contractual remedies against such counterparty may be subject to bankruptcy and insolvency laws, which could affect a Fund's rights as a creditor (*e.g.*, a Fund may not receive the net amount of payments that it is contractually entitled to receive). A liquid secondary market may not always exist for a Fund's derivative positions at any time.

**Leverage Risk.** To the extent that a Fund borrows money or utilizes certain derivatives, it may be leveraged. Leveraging generally exaggerates the effect on NAV of any increase or decrease in the market value of a Fund's portfolio securities.

## PORTFOLIO HOLDINGS

A description of each Fund's policies and procedures with respect to the disclosure of each Fund's portfolio securities is available in the Fund's SAI.

## MANAGEMENT OF THE FUNDS

**Board of Trustees.** The Board of Trustees of the Trust has responsibility for the general oversight of the management of the Funds, including general supervision of the Adviser and other service providers, but is not involved in the day-to-day management of the Trust. A list of the Trustees and the Trust officers, and their present positions and principal occupations, is provided in the Funds' SAI.

**Investment Adviser.** Under the terms of an Investment Management Agreement between the Trust and Van Eck Associates Corporation with respect to each Fund (the "Investment Management Agreement"), Van Eck Associates Corporation serves as the adviser to each Fund and, subject to the supervision of the Board of Trustees, is responsible for the day-to-day investment management of the Funds. As of December 31, 2016, the Adviser managed approximately \$37.97 billion in assets. The Adviser has been an investment adviser since 1955 and also acts as adviser or sub-adviser to mutual funds, other exchange-traded funds, other pooled investment vehicles and separate accounts. The Adviser's principal business address is 666 Third Avenue, 9th Floor, New York, New York 10017. A discussion regarding the Board of Trustees' approval of the Investment Management Agreement is available in the Trust's annual report for the period ended November 30, 2016.

## MANAGEMENT OF THE FUNDS (continued)

For the services it provides to each Fund under the Investment Management Agreement, each Fund pays the Adviser an annual unitary management fee equal to 0.82% of the average daily net assets of each Fund. The Adviser is responsible for all expenses of each Fund, including the costs of transfer agency, custody, fund administration, legal, audit and other services, except for the fee payment under the Investment Management Agreement, acquired fund fees and expenses, interest expense, offering costs, trading expenses, taxes (including accrued deferred tax liability) and extraordinary expenses. Offering costs excluded from the annual unitary management fee are: (a) legal fees pertaining to a Fund's Shares offered for sale; (b) SEC and state registration fees; and (c) initial fees paid for Shares of a Fund to be listed on an exchange. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Adviser has agreed to pay all such offering costs until at least April 1, 2018.

**Manager of Managers Structure.** The Adviser and the Trust may rely on an exemptive order (the Order) from the SEC that permits the Adviser to enter into investment sub-advisory agreements with unaffiliated sub-advisers without obtaining shareholder approval. The Adviser, subject to the review and approval of the Board of Trustees, may select one or more sub-advisers for a Fund and supervise, monitor and evaluate the performance of each sub-adviser.

The Order also permits the Adviser, subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees, to replace sub-advisers and amend investment sub-advisory agreements, including applicable fee arrangements, without shareholder approval whenever the Adviser and the Board of Trustees believe such action will benefit a Fund and its shareholders. The Adviser thus would have the responsibility (subject to the oversight of the Board of Trustees) to recommend the hiring and replacement of sub-advisers as well as the discretion to terminate any sub-adviser and reallocate a Fund's assets for management among any other sub-adviser(s) and itself. This means that the Adviser would be able to reduce the sub-advisory fees and retain a larger portion of the management fee, or increase the sub-advisory fees and retain a smaller portion of the management fee. The Adviser would compensate each sub-adviser out of its management fee.

**Administrator, Sub-Administrator, Custodian and Transfer Agent.** Van Eck Associates Corporation is the administrator for the Funds (the Administrator), SEI Investments Global Funds Services is the sub-administrator for the Funds and provides fund accounting services to the Funds, and The Bank of New York Mellon is the custodian of the Funds' assets and provides transfer agency and fund accounting services to the Funds. The Administrator is responsible for certain clerical, recordkeeping and/or bookkeeping services which are required to be provided pursuant to the Investment Management Agreement.

**Distributor.** Van Eck Securities Corporation is the distributor of the Shares. The Distributor will not distribute Shares in less than Creation Units, and does not maintain a secondary market in the Shares. The Shares are traded in the secondary market.

## PORTFOLIO MANAGERS

The portfolio managers who currently share joint responsibility for the day-to-day management of each Fund's portfolio are Hao-Hung (Peter) Liao and George Chao. Mr. Liao has been employed by the Adviser since the summer of 2004. Mr. Chao has been employed by the Adviser since December 2007. Prior to joining the Adviser, he served as Controller of Operations Administrations Division and Corporate Safety (September 2006 to December 2007) for United Airlines. Messrs. Liao and Chao also serve as portfolio managers for certain other investment companies and pooled investment vehicles managed by the Adviser. See the Funds' SAI for additional information about the portfolio

managers' compensation, other accounts managed by the portfolio managers and their respective ownership of Shares of each Fund.

## **SHAREHOLDER INFORMATION**

### **DETERMINATION OF NAV**

The NAV per Share for each Fund is computed by dividing the value of the net assets of the Fund (*i.e.*, the value of its total assets less total liabilities) by the total number of Shares outstanding. Expenses and fees, including the management fee, are accrued daily and taken into account for purposes of determining NAV. The NAV of each Fund is determined each business day as of the close of trading (ordinarily 4:00 p.m., Eastern time) on the New York Stock Exchange.

The values of each Fund's portfolio securities are based on the securities' closing prices on the markets on which the securities trade, when available. In the absence of a last reported sales price, or if no sales were reported, and for other assets for which market quotes are not readily available, values may be based on quotes obtained from a quotation reporting system, established market makers or by an outside independent pricing service. Debt instruments with remaining maturities

of more than 60 days are valued at the evaluated mean price provided by an outside independent pricing service. If an outside independent pricing service is unable to provide a valuation, the instrument is valued at the mean of the highest bid and the lowest asked quotes obtained from one or more brokers or dealers selected by the Adviser. Prices obtained by an outside independent pricing service may use information provided by market makers or estimates of market values obtained from yield data related to investments or securities with similar characteristics and may use a computerized grid matrix of securities and its evaluations in determining what it believes is the fair value of the portfolio securities. Short-term debt instruments having a maturity of 60 days or less are valued at amortized cost. If a market quotation for a security or other asset is not readily available or the Adviser believes it does not otherwise accurately reflect the market value of the security or asset at the time a Fund calculates its NAV, the security or asset will be fair valued by the Adviser in accordance with the Trust's valuation policies and procedures approved by the Board of Trustees. Each Fund may also use fair value pricing in a variety of circumstances, including but not limited to, situations when the value of a security in the Fund's portfolio has been materially affected by events occurring after the close of the market on which the security is principally traded (such as a corporate action or other news that may materially affect the price of a security) or trading in a security has been suspended or halted.

Accordingly, a Fund's NAV may reflect certain portfolio securities' fair values rather than their market prices at the time the exchanges on which they principally trade close. Fair value pricing involves subjective judgments and it is possible that a fair value determination for a security or other asset is materially different than the value that could be realized upon the sale of such security or asset. In addition, fair value pricing could result in a difference between the prices used to calculate a Fund's NAV and the prices used by such Fund's Index. This may adversely affect a Fund's ability to track its Index.

## **INTRADAY VALUE**

The trading prices of the Funds' Shares in the secondary market generally differ from the Funds' daily NAV and are affected by market forces such as the supply of and demand for Fund Shares and underlying securities held by each Fund, economic conditions and other factors. Information regarding the intraday value of the Funds' Shares ( IIV ) is disseminated every 15 seconds throughout each trading day by NYSE Arca or by market data vendors or other information providers. The IIV is based on the current market value of the securities and/or cash required to be deposited in exchange for a Creation Unit. The IIV does not necessarily reflect the precise composition of the current portfolio of securities held by each Fund at a particular point in time or the best possible valuation of the current portfolio. Therefore, the IIV should not be viewed as a real-time update of the Funds' NAV, which is computed only once a day. The IIV is generally determined by using current market quotations and/or price quotations obtained from broker-dealers and other market intermediaries that may trade in the portfolio securities held by each Fund and valuations based on current market rates. Each Fund is not involved in, or responsible for, the calculation or dissemination of the IIV and makes no warranty as to its accuracy.

## **RULE 144A RESTRICTION AND OTHER UNREGISTERED SECURITIES**

An AP (*i.e.*, a person eligible to place orders with the Distributor to create or redeem Creation Units of a Fund) that is not a qualified institutional buyer, as such term is defined under Rule 144A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended ( Securities Act ), will not be able to receive, as part of a redemption, restricted securities eligible for resale under Rule 144A or other unregistered securities.

## **BUYING AND SELLING EXCHANGE-TRADED SHARES**

The Shares of the Funds are listed on NYSE Arca. If you buy or sell Shares in the secondary market, you will incur customary brokerage commissions and charges and may pay some or all of the spread, which is any difference between the bid price and the ask price. The spread varies over time for a Fund's Shares based on the Fund's trading volume and market liquidity, and is generally lower if the Funds have high trading volume and market liquidity, and generally higher if the Funds have little trading volume and market liquidity (which is often the case for funds that are newly launched or small in size). In times of severe market disruption or low trading volume in a Fund's Shares, this spread can increase significantly. It is anticipated that the Shares will trade in the secondary market at prices that may differ to varying degrees from the NAV of the Shares. During periods of disruptions to creations and redemptions or the existence of extreme market volatility, the market prices of Shares are more likely to differ significantly from the Shares' NAV.

The Depository Trust Company ( DTC ) serves as securities depository for the Shares. (The Shares may be held only in book-entry form; stock certificates will not be issued.) DTC, or its nominee, is the record or registered owner of all outstanding Shares. Beneficial ownership of Shares will be shown on the records of DTC or its participants (described below). Beneficial owners of Shares are not entitled to have Shares registered in their names, will not receive or be entitled to receive physical delivery of certificates in definitive form and are not considered the registered holder thereof. Accordingly, to exercise any rights of a holder of Shares, each beneficial owner must rely on the procedures of: (i) DTC; (ii) DTC Participants, *i.e.*, securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies, clearing corporations and certain other organizations, some of whom



## SHAREHOLDER INFORMATION (continued)

(and/or their representatives) own DTC; and (iii) Indirect Participants, *i.e.*, brokers, dealers, banks and trust companies that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a DTC Participant, either directly or indirectly, through which such beneficial owner holds its interests. The Trust understands that under existing industry practice, in the event the Trust requests any action of holders of Shares, or a beneficial owner desires to take any action that DTC, as the record owner of all outstanding Shares, is entitled to take, DTC would authorize the DTC Participants to take such action and that the DTC Participants would authorize the Indirect Participants and beneficial owners acting through such DTC Participants to take such action and would otherwise act upon the instructions of beneficial owners owning through them. As described above, the Trust recognizes DTC or its nominee as the owner of all Shares for all purposes. For more information, see the section entitled "Book Entry Only System" in the Funds' SAI.

The NYSE Arca is open for trading Monday through Friday and is closed on weekends and the following holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. Because non-U.S. exchanges may be open on days when a Fund does not price its Shares, the value of the securities in the Fund's portfolio may change on days when shareholders will not be able to purchase or sell the Fund's Shares.

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

**Market Timing and Related Matters.** The Funds impose no restrictions on the frequency of purchases and redemptions. The Board of Trustees considered the nature of each Fund (*i.e.*, a fund whose shares are expected to trade intraday), that the Adviser monitors the trading activity of APs for patterns of abusive trading, that the Funds reserve the right to reject orders that may be disruptive to the management of or otherwise not in the Funds' best interests, and that each Fund may fair value certain of its securities. Given this structure, the Board of Trustees determined that it is not necessary to impose restrictions on the frequency of purchases and redemptions for the Funds at the present time.

## DISTRIBUTIONS

The Funds intend to make distributions to investors at least quarterly.

Distributions in cash may be reinvested automatically in additional Shares of a Fund only if the broker through which you purchased Shares makes such option available.

## TAX INFORMATION

The following is a summary of some important tax issues that affect the Funds and their shareholders. The summary is based on current tax laws, which may be changed by legislative, judicial or administrative action. You should not consider this summary to be a detailed explanation of the tax treatment of the Funds, or the tax consequences of an investment in the Funds. More information about taxes is located in the SAI. You are urged to consult your tax adviser regarding specific questions as to foreign, federal, state and local taxes.

## **TAX STATUS OF THE FUNDS**

Each Fund is taxed as a regular corporation for federal income tax purposes and as such is obligated to pay federal and applicable state taxes on its taxable income. This differs from most investment companies, which elect to be treated as regulated investment companies under the Code in order to avoid paying entity level income taxes. Under current law, the Funds are not eligible to elect treatment as regulated investment companies due to their investments primarily in MLPs. As a result, each Fund, unlike investment companies that are eligible for the special tax regime applicable to regulated investment companies, will be obligated to pay federal and state taxes on its taxable income. The extent to which a Fund is required to pay U.S. federal, state or local corporate income, franchise, alternative minimum or other corporate taxes could materially reduce the Fund's cash available to make distributions on the Shares.

The amount of taxes currently paid by a Fund will vary depending on the amount of income, gains, losses, and deductions the Fund is allocated from its MLP investments and on the Fund's realized gains and losses. Such taxes will reduce your return from an investment in a Fund.

Each Fund invests its assets primarily in MLPs, which generally are treated as partnerships for federal income tax purposes. As a partner in MLPs, each Fund must report its allocable share of the MLPs' taxable income in computing the Fund's taxable income, regardless of the extent (if any) to which the MLPs make distributions. Based upon the Adviser's review of the historic results of the types of MLPs in which each Fund invests, the Adviser expects that the cash flow received by each Fund with respect to its MLP investments will generally exceed the net taxable income allocated to it. This excess cash flow will result primarily from tax deductions, such as depreciation, amortization and depletion, that will be allocated to each Fund.

from the MLPs. The excess cash flow generally will not be currently taxable to a Fund but, rather, will generally result in a reduction of the Fund's adjusted tax basis in the MLPs as described in the following paragraph. There is no assurance that the Adviser's expectation regarding the tax character of MLP distributions will be realized. If this expectation is not realized, there may be greater tax expense borne by the Funds and less cash available to distribute to you or to pay expenses.

Each Fund will also be subject to U.S. federal income tax at regular corporate tax rates on any gain recognized by the applicable Fund on any sale of equity securities of an MLP. Cash distributions from an MLP to a Fund that exceed such Fund's allocable share of such MLP's net taxable income will reduce such Fund's adjusted tax basis in the equity securities of the MLP. These reductions in a Fund's adjusted tax basis in the MLP equity securities will increase the amount of any taxable gain (or decrease the amount of any tax loss) recognized by the Fund on a subsequent sale of the securities.

Each Fund will accrue deferred income taxes for any future tax liability associated with (i) that portion of MLP distributions considered to be a tax-deferred return of capital as well as (ii) capital appreciation of its investments. A Fund's accrued deferred tax liability will be reflected each day in the Fund's NAV. Increases in deferred tax liability will decrease NAV. Conversely, decreases in deferred tax liability will increase NAV. The Funds generally compute deferred income taxes based on the federal tax rate generally applicable to corporations, currently 35%, and an assumed rate attributable to state taxes.

Each Fund's allocable share of certain percentage depletion deductions and intangible drilling costs of the MLPs in which each Fund invests may be treated as items of tax preference for purposes of calculating each Fund's alternative minimum taxable income. Such items may increase each Fund's alternative minimum taxable income and increase the likelihood that each Fund may be subject to the alternative minimum tax.

It is possible that a Fund may be liable for foreign, state and local taxes, such as state franchise taxes, payable in the country, state or locality in which it is a resident or doing business or in a country, state or locality in which an MLP in which a Fund invests conducts or is deemed to conduct business.

## **TAX STATUS OF DISTRIBUTIONS**

Distributions made to you by a Fund (other than certain distributions in redemption of shares) will generally constitute dividends to the extent of your allocable share of the Fund's current or accumulated earnings and profits, as calculated for federal income tax purposes. Generally, a corporation's earnings and profits are computed based upon net taxable income, with certain specified adjustments. As explained above, based upon the historic performance of the types of MLPs in which the Funds intend to invest, the Adviser anticipates that the distributed cash from the MLPs generally will exceed the Funds' shares of the MLPs' net taxable income. Because each Fund's earnings and profits will be based on its allocable share of net taxable income from MLPs (and not on distributions received from MLPs), the Adviser anticipates that only a portion of a Fund's distributions will be treated as dividend income to you. To the extent that distributions to you exceed your allocable share of a Fund's current and accumulated earnings and profits, your tax basis in the Fund's Shares with respect to which the distribution is made will be reduced, which will increase the amount of any taxable gain (or decrease the amount of any tax loss) realized upon a subsequent sale or redemption of such Shares. To the extent you hold such Shares as a capital asset and have no further basis in the Shares to offset the distribution, you will report the excess as capital gain.

Distributions treated as dividends under the foregoing rules generally will be taxable as ordinary income to you but may be treated as qualified dividend income. Qualified dividend income received by individuals and other

noncorporate shareholders is taxed at long-term capital gain rates. For a dividend to constitute qualified dividend income, the shareholder generally must hold the shares paying the dividend for more than 60 days during the 121-day period beginning 60 days before the ex-dividend date, although a longer period may apply if the shareholder engages in certain risk reduction transactions with respect to the common stock.

Dividends paid by the Funds are expected to be eligible for the dividends-received deduction available to corporate shareholders under Section 243 of the Code. However, corporate shareholders should be aware that certain limitations apply to the availability of the dividends received deduction, including rules which limit the deduction in cases where (i) certain holding period requirements are not met, (ii) the corporate shareholder is obligated (e.g., pursuant to a short sale) to make related payments with respect to positions in substantially similar or related property, or (iii) the corporate shareholder's investment in shares of a particular Fund is financed with indebtedness, in whole or in part. Corporate shareholders should consult their own tax advisors regarding the application of these limitations to their particular situations.

**Backup Withholding.** Each Fund may be required in certain cases to withhold at the applicable withholding rate and remit to the U.S. Treasury the withheld amount of taxable dividends paid to a shareholder who (1) fails to provide a correct taxpayer identification number certified under penalty of perjury; (2) is subject to withholding by the Internal Revenue Service 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). Backup withholding is not an additional tax and any amounts withheld may be credited against the shareholder's ultimate U.S. tax liability.

## SHAREHOLDER INFORMATION (continued)

**Taxes on the Sale or Cash Redemption of Exchange Listed Shares.** Currently, any capital gain or loss realized upon a sale of Shares is generally treated as long-term capital gain or loss if the Shares have been held for more than one year and as a short-term capital gain or loss if held for one year or less. The ability to deduct capital losses may be limited. To the extent that a Fund shareholder's Shares are redeemed for cash, this is normally treated as a sale for tax purposes.

**Taxes on Creations and Redemptions of Creation Units.** A person who exchanges securities for Creation Units generally will recognize a gain or loss. The gain or loss will be equal to the difference between the market value of the Creation Units at the time of exchange and the sum of the exchanger's aggregate basis in the securities surrendered and the amount of any cash paid for such Creation Units. A person who exchanges Creation Units for securities 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 the securities received. The Internal Revenue Service ( "IRS" ), however, may assert that a loss realized upon an exchange of primarily securities for Creation Units cannot be deducted currently under the rules governing wash sales, or on the basis that there has been no significant change in economic position. Persons exchanging securities for Creation Units or redeeming Creation Units should consult their own tax adviser with respect to whether wash sale rules apply and when a loss might be deductible and the tax treatment of any creation or redemption transaction.

Under current U.S. federal income tax laws, any capital gain or loss realized upon a redemption (or creation) of Creation Units is generally treated as long-term capital gain or loss if the Shares (or securities surrendered) have been held for more than one year and as a short-term capital gain or loss if the Shares (or securities surrendered) have been held for one year or less.

If you create or redeem Creation Units, you will be sent a confirmation statement showing how many Shares you created or sold and at what price.

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

**Non-U.S. Shareholders.** If you are not a citizen or resident alien of the United States or if you are a non-U.S. entity (a Non-U.S. Shareholder), each Fund's ordinary income dividends (which include distributions of net short-term capital gains) will generally be subject to a 30% U.S. withholding tax, unless a lower treaty rate applies or unless such income is effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business.

Any capital gain realized by a Non-U.S. Shareholder upon a sale of shares of a Fund will generally not be subject to U.S. federal income or withholding tax unless (i) the gain is effectively connected with the shareholder's trade or business in the U.S., or in the case of a shareholder who is a nonresident alien individual, the shareholder is present in the U.S. for 183 days or more during the taxable year and certain other conditions are met or (ii) a Fund is or has been a U.S. real property holding corporation, as defined below, at any time within the five-year period preceding the date of disposition of the Fund's Shares or, if shorter, within the period during which the Non-U.S. Shareholder has held the Shares. Generally, a corporation is a U.S. real property holding corporation if the fair market value of its U.S. real property interests, as defined in the Code and applicable regulations, equals or exceeds 50% of the aggregate fair

market value of its worldwide real property interests and its other assets used or held for use in a trade or business. A Fund may be, or may prior to a Non-U.S. Shareholder's disposition of Shares become, a U.S. real property holding corporation. If a Fund is or becomes a U.S. real property holding corporation, so long as the Fund's Shares are regularly traded on an established securities market, only a Non-U.S. Shareholder who holds or held (at any time during the shorter of the five year period preceding the date of disposition or the holder's holding period) more than 5% (directly or indirectly as determined under applicable attribution rules of the Code) of the Fund's Shares will be subject to United States federal income tax on the disposition of Shares.

Any Non-U.S. Shareholder who is described in one of the foregoing cases is urged to consult his, her or its own tax advisor regarding the U.S. federal income tax consequences of the redemption, sale, exchange or other disposition of shares of a Fund.

As part of the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act, ( FATCA ), each Fund may be required to withhold 30% on certain types of U.S. sourced income (e.g., dividends, interest, and other types of passive income) and, after January 1, 2019, proceeds from the sale or other disposition of property producing U.S. sourced income to (i) foreign financial institutions ( FFIs ), including non-U.S. investment funds, unless they agree to collect and disclose to the IRS information regarding their direct and indirect U.S. account holders and (ii) certain nonfinancial foreign entities ( NFFEs ), unless they certify certain information regarding their direct and indirect U.S. owners. To avoid possible withholding, FFIs will need to enter into agreements with the IRS which state that they will provide the IRS information, including the names, account numbers and balances, addresses and taxpayer identification numbers of U.S. account holders and comply with due diligence procedures with respect to the identification of U.S. accounts as well as agree to withhold tax on certain types of withholdable payments made to non-compliant foreign financial institutions or to applicable foreign account holders who fail to provide the required

information to the IRS, or similar account information and required documentation to a local revenue authority, should an applicable intergovernmental agreement be implemented. NFFEs will need to provide certain information regarding each substantial U.S. owner or certifications of no substantial U.S. ownership, unless certain exceptions apply, or agree to provide certain information to the IRS.

While some parts of the FATCA rules have not been finalized, the Funds may be subject to the FATCA withholding obligation, and also will be required to perform due diligence reviews to classify foreign entity investors for FATCA purposes. Investors are required to agree to provide information necessary to allow a Fund to comply with the FATCA rules. If a Fund is required to withhold amounts from payments pursuant to FATCA, investors will receive distributions that are reduced by such withholding amounts.

Non-U.S. Shareholders are advised to consult their tax advisors with respect to the particular tax consequences to them of an investment in the Funds, including the possible applicability of the U.S. estate tax.

The foregoing discussion summarizes some of the consequences under current U.S. federal income tax law of an investment in the Funds. It is not a substitute for personal tax advice. Consult your own tax advisor about the potential tax consequences of an investment in the Funds under all applicable tax laws.

#### **INDEX PROVIDER**

The Indices are published by Solactive AG (the Index Provider ). The Index Provider does not sponsor, endorse, or promote the Funds and bears no liability with respect to the Funds or any security.

## **SOLACTIVE HIGH INCOME MLP INDEX**

The MLP Index is a rules-based index designed to provide investors a means of tracking the performance of selected MLPs which are publicly traded on a U.S. securities exchange. The MLP Index is comprised of MLPs that meet certain criteria relating to current yield, coverage ratio and distribution growth as determined by Solactive. Market capitalization and liquidity screens will be applied in addition to the fundamental screens for current yield, coverage ratio and distribution growth to ensure sufficient market size and liquidity of the MLP Index components.

To be eligible for inclusion in the MLP Index, a company must be structured as an MLP and be classified as a High Income MLP. High Income MLPs include all MLPs operating with one of the following as a substantial business segment: exploration and production of oil and/or natural gas; sale, distribution and retail and wholesale marketing of propane, natural gas liquids, gasoline and other fuels; marine transportation of one or more of the following: crude oil, dry bulk, refined products, liquefied natural gas ( LNG ), and other commodities; direct mining, production and marketing of natural resources, including timber, fertilizers, coal and other minerals; energy services to the oil and gas industry; oil refining; leasing of mineral reserves; and operating as the general partner of any business listed above. As of December 31, 2016 the MLP Index was concentrated in the energy sector and the MLP Index included 20 MLPs. Constituent securities of the MLP Index must have a market capitalization of at least \$400 million on a rebalancing date to be eligible for inclusion in the MLP Index. Securities whose market capitalizations that fall below \$400 million between rebalancings will not be removed from the MLP Index, but will be evaluated for eligibility upon rebalancing. Securities whose market capitalizations fall below \$400 million upon the rebalancing of the MLP Index will no longer be eligible for inclusion in the MLP Index. As of December 31, 2016, the weighted average market capitalization of companies included in the MLP Index was \$1.3 billion. Rebalancing occurs annually, but index adjustments may occur more frequently under extraordinary circumstances including a company's merger, takeover bid, delisting, nationalization, insolvency, or suspension of its distributions. Securities must have a three-month average daily trading volume value of at least \$1 million to be eligible for the MLP Index. An MLP must have a Minimum Quarterly Distribution policy in place, meaning that it intends to pay a minimum distribution to its common and subordinated unit holders upon initial public offering (assuming the MLP is able to generate sufficient cash flow from its operations after the payment of fees and expenses and other expenditures). Additionally, the MLP must have paid at least one distribution to shareholders to be eligible for inclusion in the MLP Index. Only securities whose shares trade on a recognized U.S. securities exchange will be eligible for inclusion in the MLP Index.

The MLP Index was created and is maintained by Solactive. Solactive is a leading company in the structuring and indexing business for institutional clients. More information about the MLP Index, including a list of constituents may be reviewed on Solactive's website: [www.solactive.com](http://www.solactive.com).



## **SOLACTIVE HIGH INCOME INFRASTRUCTURE MLP INDEX**

The Infrastructure MLP Index is a rules-based index designed to provide investors a means of tracking the performance of selected MLPs which are publicly traded on a U.S. securities exchange. The Infrastructure MLP Index is comprised of MLPs that meet certain criteria relating to current yield, coverage ratio and distribution growth as determined by Solactive. Market capitalization and liquidity screens will be applied in addition to fundamental screens for current yield, coverage ratio and distribution growth to ensure sufficient market size and liquidity of the Infrastructure MLP Index components.

To be eligible for inclusion in the Infrastructure MLP Index, a company must be structured as an MLP and be classified as an Infrastructure MLP. Infrastructure MLPs earn a majority of their cash flow from the transportation and storage of energy commodities and include all MLPs operating with one of the following as a substantial business segment: transportation, terminaling and storage of refined petroleum products (including gasoline, diesel, jet fuel, kerosene and heating oil); gathering, compressing, dehydrating, treating, processing, marketing of natural gas, and fractionation of natural gas liquids; transportation and/or storage of natural gas and natural gas liquids; transportation of crude oil, refined petroleum products and/or other liquids; and operating as the general partner of an MLP which primarily engages in any of the aforementioned businesses. As of December 31, 2016, the Infrastructure MLP Index was concentrated in the energy infrastructure sector and included 25 MLPs.

Constituent securities of the Infrastructure MLP Index must have a market capitalization of at least \$400 million on a selection date to be eligible for inclusion in the Infrastructure MLP Index. Securities with market capitalizations that fall below \$400 million between rebalancings will not be removed from the Infrastructure MLP Index, but will be evaluated for eligibility upon rebalancing. Securities with market capitalizations that fall below \$400 million upon the rebalancing of the Infrastructure MLP Index will no longer be eligible for inclusion in the Infrastructure MLP Index. As of December 31, 2016, the weighted average market capitalization of companies included in the Infrastructure MLP Index was \$8.1 billion. Rebalancing occurs annually, but index adjustments may occur more frequently under extraordinary circumstances including a company's merger, takeover bid, delisting, nationalization, insolvency, or suspension of its distributions. Securities must have a most recent three-month average daily trading volume of at least \$4 million to be eligible for the Infrastructure MLP Index. An MLP must have at least one distribution paid out to shareholders to be eligible for inclusion in the Infrastructure MLP Index. Only securities whose shares trade on a recognized U.S. securities exchange will be eligible for inclusion in the Infrastructure MLP Index.

The Infrastructure MLP Index was created and is maintained by Solactive. Solactive is a leading company in the structuring and indexing business for institutional clients. More information about the Infrastructure MLP Index, including a list of constituents may be reviewed on Solactive's website: [www.solactive.com](http://www.solactive.com).

## **LICENSE AGREEMENT AND DISCLAIMERS**

The Adviser has entered into a licensing agreement with the Index Provider to use each Index. Each Fund is entitled to its Index pursuant to a sub-licensing arrangement with the Adviser.

The Funds are not sponsored, promoted, sold or supported in any other manner by Solactive AG nor does Solactive AG offer any express or implicit guarantee or assurance either with regard to the results of using the Indexes and/or its trade mark or its price at any time or in any other respect. The Indexes are calculated and published by Solactive AG. Solactive AG uses its best efforts to ensure that each Index is calculated correctly. Solactive AG has no obligation to point out errors in the Indexes to third parties including but not limited to investors and/or financial intermediaries of the Funds. Neither the publication of the Indexes by Solactive AG nor the licensing of the Indexes or Index trade marks for the purpose of use in connection with the Funds constitutes a recommendation by Solactive AG to invest capital in a Funds nor does it in any way represent an assurance or opinion of Solactive AG with regard to any investment in a Fund. Solactive AG is not responsible for fulfilling the legal requirements concerning the accuracy and completeness of a Fund's Prospectus.

## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

On February 22, 2016, the Funds acquired all of the assets and liabilities of the respective Predecessor Fund in exchange for shares of beneficial interest of each Fund. As a result of the Reorganization, the Funds adopted the financial and performance history of the respective Predecessor Fund.

The financial highlights tables which follow are intended to help you understand the Funds' financial performance since each Fund's inception. Certain information reflects financial results for a single Fund share. The total returns in the table represent that rate that an investor would have earned (or lost) on an investment in a Fund (assuming reinvestment of all dividends and distributions).

The information below has been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, the Trust's independent registered public accounting firm whose report, along with the Funds' financial statements, are included in the Funds' Annual Report, which is available upon request. The information for all periods prior to the Reorganization on February 22, 2016 was audited by the independent registered public accounting firm for the Predecessor Funds (Predecessor Accounting Firm), which is a different firm from the Trust's independent registered public accounting firm. The reports of the Predecessor Accounting Firm, along with the Predecessor Funds' financial statements (which have been adopted by the Trust), are included in the annual reports of Predecessor Funds, which are available upon request.

**FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS (continued)****For a Share Outstanding Throughout the Period:**

	<b>High Income MLP ETF #</b>				
	<b>For the Years Ended November 30,</b>				<b>For the Period</b>
	<b>2016</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>March 12,</b>
					<b>2012(d) through</b>
					<b>November 30,</b>
					<b>2012</b>
Net asset value, beginning of period	\$ 31.30	\$ 74.05	\$ 89.95	\$ 89.35	\$ 100.00
Income from investment operations:					
Net investment income (loss)*	(0.02)	0.10	(0.20)	(0.15)	0.15
Return of capital	0.75	5.75	7.20	7.35	5.65
Net realized and unrealized gain (loss) on investments	(4.06)	(41.90)	(15.15)	1.60(e)	(10.40)
Total from investment operations	(3.33)	(36.05)	(8.15)	8.80	(4.60)
Less distribution from:					
Net investment income (loss)			(1.40)		(0.10)
Return of capital	(2.54)	(6.70)	(6.35)	(8.20)	(5.95)
Total distributions	(2.54)	(6.70)	(7.75)	(8.20)	(6.05)
Net asset value, end of period	\$ 25.43	\$ 31.30	\$ 74.05	\$ 89.95	\$ 89.35
Total return (a)	(8.40)%	(51.42)%	(10.17)%	9.98%	(4.51)% (h)
<b>Ratios/Supplemental Data</b>					
Net assets, end of period (000 s)	\$ 94,563	\$ 124,034	\$ 285,134	\$ 253,705	\$ 89,340
Ratio of expenses, excluding income tax benefit/(expense), to	0.88%(g)	0.85%(g)	0.83%(g)	0.82%	0.82%(f)

average net assets					
Ratio of total expenses to average net assets (b)	0.88%	0.56%	(1.34)%	4.65%	0.82%(f)
Ratio of net investment income/(loss) excluding income tax benefit/(expense) to average net assets	(0.34)%	(0.10)%	(0.23)%	(0.24)%	0.25%(f)
Ratio of net investment income/(loss) to average net assets (c)	(0.34)%	0.19%	(0.19)%	(0.17)%	0.25%(f)
Portfolio turnover rate (i)	46%	62%	44%	37%	2%(h)

The financial highlights include the financial information of the Predecessor Funds through February 21, 2016.

# On June 29, 2016, the Fund effected a 1 for 5 reverse share split. Per share data has been adjusted to reflect the share split.

\* Per share data calculated using average shares method.

- (a) Total return is calculated assuming an initial investment made at the net asset value at the beginning of period, reinvestment of any dividends and distributions at net asset value on the dividend/distributions payment date (ex-date for periods prior to February 21, 2016) and a redemption at the net asset value on the last day of the period. The return does not reflect the deduction of taxes that a shareholder would pay on Fund dividends/distributions or the redemption of Fund shares.
- (b) Net income tax expense for the ratio calculation is derived from net investment income (loss) and realized and unrealized gains (losses).
- (c) Income tax benefit/(expense) for the ratio calculation is derived from net investment income (loss) only.
- (d) Commencement of operations.
- (e) Realized and unrealized gains and losses per share may not reconcile with the aggregate gains and losses in the Statement of Operations due to timing of purchases and sales during the period.
- (f) Annualized.
- (g) Includes franchise tax expenses. Without franchise tax expenses, the net ratio would be 0.82%.
- (h) Not annualized.
- (i) Portfolio turnover rates exclude securities received as a result of processing in-kind capital share transactions.

## For a Share Outstanding Throughout the Period:

## High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF

For the Years Ended November 30,

For the Period  
February 11,  
2013(d) through  
November 30,  
2013

	2016	2015	2014	2013
Net asset value, beginning of period	\$ 13.36	\$ 21.75	\$ 21.15	\$ 20.00
Income from investment operations:				
Net investment income (loss)*	(0.25)	(0.10)	(0.12)	(0.09)
Return of capital	1.17	1.22	1.27	1.08
Net realized and unrealized gain (loss) on investments	1.77	(8.31)	1.01	1.15
Total from investment operations	2.69	(7.19)	2.16	2.14
Less distributions from:				
Net investment income (loss)			(0.72)	
Return of capital	(1.13)	(1.20)	(0.84)	(0.99)
Total distributions	(1.13)	(1.20)	(1.56)	(0.99)
Net asset value, end of period	\$ 14.92	\$ 13.36	\$ 21.75	\$ 21.15
Total return (a)	22.08%	(34.18)%	10.53%	11.00%(g)
<b>Ratios/Supplemental Data</b>				
Net assets, end of period (000 s)	\$ 35,070	\$ 34,056	\$ 46,760	\$ 33,841
Ratio of expenses, excluding income tax benefit/(expense), to average net assets	0.82%	0.84%(f)	0.84%(f)	0.82%(e)
Ratio of total expenses to average net assets (b)	0.71%	(4.69)%	5.91%	6.92%(e)
Ratio of net investment income/(loss) excluding income tax benefit/(expense) to average net assets	(0.82)%	(0.84)%	(0.84)%	(0.82)%(e)
Ratio of net investment income/(loss) to average net assets (c)	(1.85)%	(0.54)%	(0.54)%	(0.53)%(e)
Portfolio turnover rate (h)	42%	38%	47%	0.00%(g)

The financial highlights include the financial information of the Predecessor Funds through February 21, 2016.

\* Per share data calculated using average shares method.

(a)

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Total return is calculated assuming an initial investment made at the net asset value at the beginning of period, reinvestment of any dividends and distributions at net asset value on the dividend/distributions payment date (ex-date for periods prior to February 21, 2016) and a redemption at the net asset value on the last day of the period. The return does not reflect the deduction of taxes that a shareholder would pay on Fund dividends/distributions or the redemption of Fund shares.

- (b) Net income tax expense for the ratio calculation is derived from net investment income (loss) and realized and unrealized gains (losses).
- (c) Income tax benefit/(expense) for the ratio calculation is derived from net investment income (loss) only.
- (d) Commencement of operations.
- (e) Annualized.
- (f) Includes franchise tax expenses. Without franchise tax expenses, the net ratio would be 0.82%.
- (g) Not annualized.
- (h) Portfolio turnover rates exclude securities received as a result of processing in-kind capital share transactions.

## **PREMIUM/DISCOUNT INFORMATION**

Information regarding how often the closing trading price of the Shares of each Fund was above (*i.e.*, at a premium) or below (*i.e.*, at a discount) the NAV of the Fund for the most recently completed year and the most recently completed quarter(s), as well as for each of the four previous calendar quarters, when available, can be found at [www.vaneck.com](http://www.vaneck.com).

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **CONTINUOUS OFFERING**

The method by which Creation Units are created and traded may raise certain issues under applicable securities laws. Because new Creation Units are issued and sold by the Trust on an ongoing basis, at any point a distribution, as such term is used in the Securities Act may occur at any point. Broker dealers and other persons are cautioned that some activities on their part may, depending on the circumstances, result in their being deemed participants in a distribution in a manner which could render them statutory underwriters and subject them to the prospectus delivery and liability provisions of the Securities Act.

For example, a broker dealer firm or its client may be deemed a statutory underwriter if it takes Creation Units after placing an order with the Distributor, breaks them down into constituent Shares, and sells such Shares directly to customers, or if it chooses to couple the creation of a supply of new Shares with an active selling effort involving solicitation of secondary market demand for Shares. A determination of whether one is an underwriter for purposes of the Securities Act must take into account all the facts and circumstances pertaining to the activities of the broker dealer or its client in the particular case, and the examples mentioned above should not be considered a complete description of all the activities that could lead to a categorization as an underwriter.

Broker dealers who are not underwriters but are participating in a distribution (as contrasted to ordinary secondary trading transactions), and thus dealing with Shares that are part of an unsold allotment within the meaning of Section 4(3)(C) of the Securities Act, would be unable to take advantage of the prospectus delivery exemption provided by Section 4(3) of the Securities Act. This is because the prospectus delivery exemption in Section 4(3) of the Securities Act is not available in respect of such transactions as a result of Section 24(d) of the 1940 Act. As a result, broker dealer firms should note that dealers who are not underwriters but are participating in a distribution (as contrasted with ordinary secondary market transactions) and thus dealing with the Shares that are part of an overallotment within the meaning of Section 4(3)(A) of the Securities Act would be unable to take advantage of the prospectus delivery exemption provided by Section 4(3) of the Securities Act. Firms that incur a prospectus delivery obligation with respect to Shares are reminded that, under Rule 153 of the Securities Act, a prospectus delivery obligation under Section 5(b)(2) of the Securities Act owed to an exchange member in connection with a sale on NYSE Arca is satisfied by the fact that the prospectus is available at NYSE Arca upon request. The prospectus delivery mechanism provided in Rule 153 is only available with respect to transactions on an exchange.

In addition, certain affiliates of the Funds and the Adviser may purchase and resell Fund shares pursuant to this Prospectus.

## **OTHER INFORMATION**



The Trust was organized as a Delaware statutory trust on March 15, 2001. Its Declaration of Trust currently permits the Trust to issue an unlimited number of Shares of beneficial interest. If shareholders are required to vote on any matters, each Share outstanding would be entitled to one vote. Annual meetings of shareholders will not be held except as required by the 1940 Act and other applicable law. See the Funds' SAI for more information concerning the Trust's form of organization. Section 12(d)(1) of the 1940 Act restricts investments by investment companies in the securities of other investment companies, including Shares of a Fund. Registered investment companies are permitted to invest in a Fund beyond the limits set forth in Section 12(d)(1) subject to certain terms and conditions set forth in an SEC exemptive order issued to the Trust, including that such investment companies enter into an agreement with the Funds.

The Prospectus, SAI and any other Fund communication do not create any contractual obligations between the Funds shareholders and the Trust, the Funds, the Adviser and/or the Trustees. Further, shareholders are not intended third-party beneficiaries of any contracts entered into by (or on behalf of) the Funds, including contracts with the Adviser or other parties who provide services to the Funds.

Dechert LLP serves as counsel to the Trust, including the Funds. Ernst & Young LLP serves as the Trust's independent registered public accounting firm and audits the Funds' financial statements annually.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

This Prospectus does not contain all the information included in the Registration Statement filed with the SEC with respect to each of the Fund's Shares. Information about the Funds can be reviewed and copied at the SEC's Public Reference Room and information on the operation of the Public Reference Room may be obtained by calling the SEC at 1.202.551.8090. The Funds' Registration Statement, including this Prospectus, the Funds' SAI and the exhibits may be examined at the offices of the SEC (100 F Street, NE, Washington, DC 20549) or on the EDGAR database at the SEC's website (<http://www.sec.gov>), and copies may be obtained, after paying a duplicating fee, by electronic request at the following email address: [publicinfo@sec.gov](mailto:publicinfo@sec.gov), or by writing the SEC's Public Reference Section, Washington, DC 20549-1520. These documents and other information concerning the Trust also may be inspected at the offices of NYSE Arca (20 Broad Street, New York, New York 10005).

The SAI for the Funds, which has been filed with the SEC, provides more information about the Funds. The SAI for the Funds is incorporated herein by reference and is legally part of this Prospectus. Additional information about each Fund's investments will be available in that Fund's annual and semi-annual reports to shareholders. In each Fund's annual report, you will find a discussion of the market conditions and investment strategies that significantly affected the Fund's performance during its last fiscal year. The SAI and the Funds' annual and semi-annual reports may be obtained without charge by writing to the Fund at Van Eck Securities Corporation, the Fund's distributor, at 666 Third Avenue, 9th Floor, New York, New York 10017 or by calling the distributor at the following number: Investor Information: 800.826.2333.

Shareholder inquiries may be directed to the Funds in writing to 666 Third Avenue, 9th Floor, New York, New York 10017 or by calling 800.826.2333.

The Funds' SAI is available at [www.vaneck.com](http://www.vaneck.com).

(Investment Company Act file no. 811-10325)

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For more detailed information about the Funds, see the SAI dated April 1, 2017, which is incorporated by reference into this Prospectus. Additional information about each of the Funds' investments is available in each Fund's annual and semi-annual reports to shareholders. In each Fund's annual report, you will find a discussion of the market conditions and investment strategies that significantly affected each Fund's performance during its last fiscal year.

Call VanEck at 800.826.2333 to request, free of charge, the annual or semi-annual reports, the SAI, or other information about the Funds or to make shareholder inquiries. You may also obtain the SAI or a Fund's annual or semi-annual reports, by visiting the VanEck website at [www.vaneck.com](http://www.vaneck.com).

Information about the Funds (including the SAI) can also be reviewed and copied at the SEC Public Reference Room in Washington, D.C. Information about the operation of the Public Reference Room may be obtained by calling 202.551.8090.

Reports and other information about the Funds are available on the EDGAR Database on the SEC's internet site at <http://www.sec.gov>. In addition, copies of this information may be obtained, after paying a duplicating fee, by electronic request at the following email address: [publicinfo@sec.gov](mailto:publicinfo@sec.gov), or by writing the SEC's Public Reference Section, Washington, DC 20549-0102.

Transfer Agent: The Bank of New York Mellon  
SEC Registration Number: 333-123257  
1940 Act Registration Number: 811-10325  
MLPPRO

**800.826.2333**  
**[www.vaneck.com](http://www.vaneck.com)**

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**VANECK VECTORS ETF TRUST**

**STATEMENT OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**Date April 1, 2017**

This Statement of Additional Information (“SAI”) is not a prospectus. It should be read in conjunction with the Prospectus dated April 1, 2017 (the “Prospectus”) for the VanEck Vectors ETF Trust (the “Trust”), relating to each of the series of the Trust listed below, as it may be revised from time to time.

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Principal U.S. Listing Exchange</b>	<b>Ticker</b>
VanEck Vectors High Income MLP ETF	NYSE Arca, Inc.	YMLP
VanEck Vectors High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF	NYSE Arca, Inc.	YMLI

A copy of the Prospectus may be obtained without charge by writing to the Trust or the Distributor. The Trust’s address is 666 Third Avenue, 9th Floor, New York, New York 10017. Capitalized terms used herein that are not defined have the same meaning as in the Prospectus, unless otherwise noted.

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## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE TRUST

The Trust<sup>1</sup> is an open-end management investment company. The Trust currently consists of 59 investment portfolios. This SAI relates to two investment portfolios, VanEck Vectors High Income MLP ETF and VanEck Vectors High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF (each, a “Fund” and, together, the “Funds”). Each Fund is classified as a non-diversified fund under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (“1940 Act”), and, as a result, is not required to meet certain diversification requirements under the 1940 Act. The Trust was organized as a Delaware statutory trust on March 15, 2001. The shares of each Fund are referred to herein as “Shares.”

The Funds offer and issue Shares at their net asset value (“NAV”) only in aggregations of a specified number of Shares (each, a “Creation Unit”). Similarly, Shares are redeemable by the Funds only in Creation Units. Creation Units of each Fund are issued generally in exchange for specified securities held by each Fund included in each Fund’s Index (defined herein). Creation Units of each Fund are redeemed principally for cash. The Shares of the Funds are listed on NYSE Arca, Inc. (“NYSE Arca” or the “Exchange”). Shares of each Fund trade in the secondary market at market prices that may differ from the Shares’ NAV. A Creation Unit with respect to each Fund consists of 50,000 Shares. The Trust reserves the right to permit or require a “cash” option for creations and redemptions of Shares (subject to applicable legal requirements) to the extent Shares are not created or redeemed in cash.

<sup>1</sup> Prior to May 1, 2016, the Trust’s name was Market Vectors ETF Trust.

## INVESTMENT POLICIES AND RESTRICTIONS

### Repurchase Agreements

The Funds may invest in repurchase agreements with commercial banks, brokers or dealers to generate income from their excess cash balances and to invest securities lending cash collateral. A repurchase agreement is an agreement under which a Fund acquires a money market instrument (generally 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 a 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 at least equal to the value of the repurchase agreement and are held by the Trust's custodian bank until repurchased. In addition, the Trust's Board of Trustees ("Board" or "Trustees") has established guidelines and standards for review of the creditworthiness of any bank, broker or dealer counterparty to a repurchase agreement with each Fund. No more than an aggregate of 15% of each Fund's net assets will be invested in repurchase agreements having maturities longer than seven days.

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, the Funds 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 Bankruptcy Code or other laws, a court may determine that the underlying security is collateral not within the control of a Fund and, therefore, the Fund may incur delays in disposing of the security and/or 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.

### Futures Contracts and Options

Futures contracts generally provide for the future purchase or sale of a specified instrument, index or commodity at a specified future time and at a specified price. Stock index futures contracts and other types of futures contracts are settled daily with a payment by one party to the other of a cash amount based on the difference between the level of the stock index or other underlying instrument specified in the contract from one day to the next. Futures contracts are standardized as to maturity date and underlying instrument and are traded on futures exchanges. The Funds may use futures contracts and options on futures contracts based on other indexes or combinations of indexes that Van Eck Associates Corporation (the "Adviser") believes to be representative of each Fund's respective benchmark index (each, an "Index").



An option is a contract that provides the holder of the option the right to buy or sell shares or other assets at a fixed price, within a specified period of time. An American call option gives the option holder the right to buy the underlying security from the option writer at the option exercise price at any time prior to the expiration of the option. A European call option gives the option holder the right to buy the underlying security from the option writer only on the option expiration date. An American put option gives the option holder the right to sell the underlying security to the option writer at the option exercise price at any time prior to the expiration of the option. A European put option gives the option holder the right to sell the underlying security to the option writer at the option exercise price only on the option expiration date.

Although futures contracts (other than cash settled futures contracts including most stock index futures contracts) by their terms call for actual delivery or acceptance of the underlying instrument or commodity, in most cases the contracts are closed out before the maturity date without the making or taking of delivery. Closing out an open futures position is done by taking an opposite position (buying the same contract which was previously sold or selling the same contract previously purchased) in an identical contract to terminate the position. Brokerage commissions are incurred when a futures contract position is opened or closed.

Futures traders are required to make a margin deposit (typically in cash or government securities) with a broker or custodian to initiate and maintain open positions in futures contracts. A margin deposit is intended to assure completion of the contract (delivery or acceptance of the underlying instrument or commodity or payment of the cash settlement amount) if it is not terminated prior to the specified delivery date. Brokers may establish deposit requirements that are higher than the exchange minimums. Futures contracts are customarily purchased and sold on margin deposits which may range upward from less than 5% of the value of the contract being traded.

After a futures contract position is opened, the value of the contract is marked-to-market daily. If the futures contract price changes to the extent that the margin on deposit does not satisfy margin requirements, payment of additional "variation" margin will be required.

Conversely, a change in the contract value may reduce the required margin, resulting in a repayment of excess margin to the contract holder. Variation margin payments are made to and from the futures broker for as long as the contract remains open. The Funds expect to earn interest income on their margin deposits in the form of cash.

The Funds may use futures contracts and options thereon, together with positions in cash and money market instruments, to simulate full investment in each Fund's respective Index. Under such circumstances, the Adviser may seek to utilize other instruments that it believes to be correlated to each Fund's respective Index components or a subset of the components. Liquid futures contracts may not be currently available for the Index of each Fund.

Positions in futures contracts and options may be closed out only on an exchange that provides a secondary market therefor. However, there can be no assurance that a liquid secondary market will exist for any particular futures contract or option at any specific time. Thus, it may not be possible to close a futures or options position. In the event of adverse price movements, the Funds would continue to be required to make daily cash payments to maintain its required margin. In such situations, if a Fund has insufficient cash, it may have to sell portfolio securities to meet daily margin requirements at a time when it may be disadvantageous to do so. In addition, the Funds may be required to make delivery of the instruments underlying futures contracts they have sold.

The Funds will seek to minimize the risk that they will be unable to close out a futures or options contract by only entering into futures and options for which there appears to be a liquid secondary market.

The risk of loss in trading futures contracts or uncovered call options in some strategies (*e.g.*, selling uncovered stock index futures contracts) is potentially unlimited. The Funds do not plan to use futures and options contracts in this way. The risk of a futures position may still be large as traditionally measured due to the low margin deposits required. In many cases, a relatively small price movement in a futures contract may result in immediate and substantial loss or gain to the investor relative to the size of a required margin deposit.

Utilization of futures transactions by the Funds involves the risk of imperfect or even negative correlation to each Fund's respective Index if the index underlying the futures contracts differs from the Index. There is also the risk of loss by the Funds of margin deposits in the event of the bankruptcy or other similar insolvency with respect to a broker with whom a Fund has an open position in the futures contract or option.

Certain financial futures exchanges limit the amount of fluctuation permitted in futures contract prices during a single trading day. The daily limit establishes the maximum amount that the price of a futures contract may vary either up or down from the previous day's settlement price at the end of a trading session. Once the daily limit has been reached in a particular type of contract, no trades may be made on that day at a price beyond that limit. The daily limit governs only price movements during a particular trading day and therefore does not limit potential losses, because the limit may prevent the liquidation of unfavorable positions. Futures contract prices have occasionally moved to the daily limit for several consecutive trading days with little or no trading, thereby preventing prompt liquidation of future positions and subjecting some futures traders to substantial losses.

Except as otherwise specified in the Funds' Prospectus or this SAI, there are no limitations on the extent to which the Funds may engage in transactions involving futures and options thereon. The Funds will take steps to prevent their futures positions from "leveraging" their securities holdings. When a Fund has a long futures position requiring physical settlement, it will maintain with its custodian bank, cash or liquid securities having a value equal to the notional value of the contract (less any margin deposited in connection with the position). When a Fund has a short futures position requiring physical settlement, the Fund will maintain with its custodian bank assets substantially identical to those underlying the contract or cash and liquid securities (or a combination of the foregoing) having a value equal to the net obligation of the Fund under the contract (less the value of any margin deposits in connection with the position).

## Swaps

Over-the-counter ("OTC") swap agreements are contracts between parties in which one party agrees to make payments to the other party based on the change in market value or level of a specified index or asset. In return, the other party agrees to make payments to the first party based on the return of a different specified index or asset, usually an interest rate. Although OTC swap agreements entail the risk that a party will default on its payment obligations thereunder, each Fund seeks to reduce this risk generally by receiving (or paying) collateral daily and entering into agreements that involve payments no less frequently than quarterly. The net amount of the excess, if any, of a Fund's obligations over its entitlements with respect to each swap is accrued on a daily basis and an amount of cash or highly liquid securities having an aggregate value at least equal to the accrued excess is maintained in an account at the Trust's custodian bank.

The Funds may enter into interest rate swaps and credit default swaps. Interest rate swaps are typically exchange-traded contracts in which a party agrees to make periodic payments on certain referenced interest rates (e.g., a fixed rate or a floating rate) applied to a specified notional amount. A credit default swap on a security is a bilateral contract that enables an investor to buy or sell protection against a defined-issuer credit event. Credit default swaps referencing fixed income indices are generally traded on exchanges. The Funds may enter into credit default swap agreements either as a buyer or a seller. The Funds may buy protection to attempt to mitigate the risk of default or

credit quality deterioration in one or more of its individual holdings or in a segment of the fixed income securities market to which it has exposure, or to take a “short” position in individual bonds or market segments which it does not own. The Funds may sell protection in an attempt to gain exposure to the credit quality characteristics of particular bonds or market segments without investing directly in those bonds or market segments. As the protection seller in a credit default swap, the Funds effectively adds economic leverage

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to its portfolio because, in addition to being subject to investment exposure on its total net assets, the Funds are subject to investment exposure on the notional amount of the swap.

The use of such swap agreements involves certain risks. For example, if the counterparty under an OTC swap agreement defaults on its obligation to make payments due from it as a result of its bankruptcy or otherwise, the Funds may lose such payments altogether or collect only a portion thereof, which collection could involve costs or delays.

The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (the “Dodd-Frank Act”) and related regulatory developments require the clearing and exchange-trading of certain standardized OTC derivative instruments that the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (“CFTC”) and Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC”) defined as “swaps” and “security-based swaps,” respectively. Mandatory exchange-trading and clearing is occurring on a phased-in basis based on the type of market participant and CFTC approval of contracts for central clearing and exchange trading. In a cleared swap, a Fund’s ultimate counterparty is a central clearinghouse rather than a swap dealer, bank or other financial institution. A Fund enters into cleared swaps through an executing broker. Such transactions are then submitted for clearing and, if cleared, will be held at regulated futures commission merchants (“FCMs”) that are members of the clearinghouse that serves as the central counterparty. When a Fund enters into a cleared swap, it must deliver to the central counterparty (via an FCM) an amount referred to as “initial margin.” Initial margin requirements are determined by the central counterparty, but an FCM may require additional initial margin above the amount required by the central counterparty. During the term of the swap agreement, a “variation margin” amount may also be required to be paid by a Fund or may be received by the Fund in accordance with margin controls set for such accounts, depending upon changes in the price of the underlying reference asset subject to the swap agreement. At the conclusion of the term of the swap agreement, if a Fund has a loss equal to or greater than the margin amount, the margin amount is paid to the FCM along with any loss in excess of the margin amount. If a Fund has a loss of less than the margin amount, the excess margin is returned to the Fund. If a Fund has a gain, the full margin amount and the amount of the gain is paid to the Fund.

Central clearing is designed to reduce counterparty credit risk compared to uncleared swaps because central clearing interposes the central clearinghouse as the counterparty to each participant’s swap, but it does not eliminate those risks completely. There is also a risk of loss by a Fund of the initial and variation margin deposits in the event of bankruptcy of the FCM with which the Fund has an open position in a swap contract. The assets of a Fund may not be fully protected in the event of the bankruptcy of the FCM or central counterparty because the Fund might be limited to recovering only a pro rata share of all available funds and margin segregated on behalf of an FCM’s customers or central counterparty’s clearing members. If the FCM does not provide accurate reporting, a Fund is also subject to the risk that the FCM could use the Fund’s assets, which are held in an omnibus account with assets belonging to the FCM’s other customers, to satisfy its own financial obligations or the payment obligations of another customer to the central counterparty. Certain swaps have begun trading on exchanges called swap execution facilities. Exchange-trading is expected to, but may not necessarily, increase the liquidity of swaps trading.

In addition, with respect to cleared swaps, a Fund may not be able to obtain as favorable terms as it would be able to negotiate for an uncleared swap. In addition, an FCM may unilaterally impose position limits or additional margin requirements for certain types of swaps in which a Fund may invest. Central counterparties and FCMs generally can require termination of existing cleared swap transactions at any time, and can also require increases in margin above the margin that is required at the initiation of the swap agreement. Margin requirements for cleared swaps vary on a

number of factors, and the margin required under the rules of the clearinghouse and FCM may be in excess of the collateral required to be posted by a Fund to support its obligations under a similar uncleared swap. However, regulators recently

adopted rules imposing certain margin requirements, including minimums, on uncleared swaps. The Funds are also subject to the risk that, after entering into a cleared swap with an executing broker, no FCM or central counterparty is willing or able to clear the transaction. In such an event, the central counterparty would void the trade. Before a Fund can enter into a new trade, market conditions may become less favorable to the Fund.

The Adviser will continue to monitor developments regarding trading and execution of cleared swaps on exchanges, particularly to the extent regulatory changes affect a Fund's ability to enter into swap agreements and the costs and risks associated with such investments.

### Warrants and Subscription Rights

Warrants are equity securities in the form of options issued by a corporation which give the holder the right, but not the obligation, to purchase stock, usually at a price that is higher than the market price at the time the warrant is issued. A purchaser takes the risk that the warrant may expire worthless because the market price of the common stock fails to rise above the price set by the warrant.

### Currency Forwards

A currency forward transaction is a contract to buy or sell a specified quantity of currency at a specified date in the future at a specified price which may be any fixed number of days from the date of the contract agreed upon by the parties. Currency forward contracts may be used to increase or reduce exposure to currency price movements.

The use of currency forward transactions involves certain risks. For example, if the counterparty under the contract defaults on its obligation to make payments due from it as a result of its bankruptcy or otherwise, a Fund may lose such payments altogether or collect only a portion thereof, which collection could involve costs or delays.

### Convertible Securities

A convertible security is a bond, debenture, note, preferred stock, right, warrant or other security that may be converted into or exchanged for a prescribed amount of common stock or other security of the same or a different issuer or into cash within a particular period of time at a specified price or formula. A convertible security generally entitles the holder to receive interest paid or accrued on debt securities or the dividend paid on preferred stock until the convertible security matures or is redeemed, converted or exchanged. Before conversion, convertible securities generally have characteristics similar to both debt and equity securities. The value of convertible securities tends to decline as interest rates rise and, because of the conversion feature, tends to vary with fluctuations in the market value



of the underlying securities. Convertible securities ordinarily provide a stream of income with generally higher yields than those of common stock of the same or similar issuers. Convertible securities generally rank senior to common stock in a corporation's capital structure but are usually subordinated to comparable nonconvertible securities. Convertible securities generally do not participate directly in any dividend increases or decreases of the underlying securities although the market prices of convertible securities may be affected by any dividend changes or other changes in the underlying securities.

#### Structured Notes

A structured note is a derivative security for which the amount of principal repayment and/or interest payments is based on the movement of one or more "factors." These factors include, but are not limited to, currency exchange rates, interest rates (such as the prime lending rate or LIBOR), referenced

bonds and stock indices. Some of these factors may or may not correlate to the total rate of return on one or more underlying instruments referenced in such notes. Investments in structured notes involve risks including interest rate risk, credit risk and market risk. Depending on the factor(s) used and the use of multipliers or deflators, changes in interest rates and movement of such factor(s) may cause significant price fluctuations. Structured notes may be less liquid than other types of securities and more volatile than the reference factor underlying the note.

### Participation Notes

Participation notes (“P-Notes”) are issued by banks or broker-dealers and are designed to offer a return linked to the performance of a particular underlying equity security or market. P-Notes can have the characteristics or take the form of various instruments, including, but not limited to, certificates or warrants. The holder of a P-Note that is linked to a particular underlying security is entitled to receive any dividends paid in connection with the underlying security. However, the holder of a P-Note generally does not receive voting rights as it would if it directly owned the underlying security. P-Notes constitute direct, general and unsecured contractual obligations of the banks or broker-dealers that issue them, which therefore subject a Fund to counterparty risk, as discussed below. Investments in P-Notes involve certain risks in addition to those associated with a direct investment in the underlying foreign securities or foreign securities markets whose return they seek to replicate. For instance, there can be no assurance that the trading price of a P-Note will equal the value of the underlying foreign security or foreign securities market that it seeks to replicate. As the purchaser of a P-Note, a Fund is relying on the creditworthiness of the counterparty issuing the P-Note and has no rights under a P-Note against the issuer of the underlying security. Therefore, if such counterparty were to become insolvent, a Fund would lose its investment. The risk that a Fund may lose its investments due to the insolvency of a single counterparty may be amplified to the extent the Fund purchases P-Notes issued by one issuer or a small number of issuers. P-Notes also include transaction costs in addition to those applicable to a direct investment in securities. In addition, a Fund’s use of P-Notes may cause the Fund’s performance to deviate from the performance of the portion of the Index to which the Fund is gaining exposure through the use of P-Notes.

Due to liquidity and transfer restrictions, the secondary markets on which P-Notes are traded may be less liquid than the markets for other securities, which may lead to the absence of readily available market quotations for securities in a Fund’s portfolio and may cause the value of the P-Notes to decline. The ability of a Fund to value its securities becomes more difficult and the Adviser’s judgment in the application of fair value procedures may play a greater role in the valuation of a Fund’s securities due to reduced availability of reliable objective pricing data. Consequently, while such determinations will be made in good faith, it may nevertheless be more difficult for a Fund to accurately assign a daily value to such securities.

### Future Developments

The Funds may take advantage of opportunities in the area of options, futures contracts, options on futures contracts, warrants, swaps and any other investments which are not presently contemplated for use or which are not currently available, but which may be developed, to the extent such investments are considered suitable for a Fund by the Adviser.

## Investment Restrictions

The Trust has adopted the following investment restrictions as fundamental policies with respect to each Fund. These restrictions cannot be changed without the approval of the holders of a majority of each Fund's outstanding voting securities. For purposes of the 1940 Act, a majority of the outstanding voting securities of a Fund means the vote, at an annual or a special meeting of the security holders of the

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Trust, of the lesser of (1) 67% or more of the voting securities of the Fund present at such meeting, if the holders of more than 50% of the outstanding voting securities of the Fund are present or represented by proxy, or (2) more than 50% of the outstanding voting securities of the Fund. Under these restrictions, each Fund may not:

1. Concentrate its investments in an industry or group of industries (i.e., hold 25% or more of its total assets in the stocks of a particular industry or group of industries), except that the Fund will concentrate to approximately the same extent that its Index concentrates in the stocks of such particular industry or group of 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 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, the rules and regulations thereunder or any exemption therefrom, as such statute, rules or regulations may be amended or interpreted from time to time.

3. Make loans, except to the extent permitted under the 1940 Act, the rules and regulations thereunder or any exemption therefrom, as such statute, rules or regulations may be amended or interpreted from time to time.

4. Purchase or sell commodities or real estate, except to the extent permitted under the 1940 Act, the rules and regulations thereunder or any exemption therefrom, as such statute, rules or regulations may be amended or interpreted from time to time.

5. Underwrite securities issued by other persons, except to the extent permitted under the 1940 Act, the rules and regulations thereunder or any exemption therefrom, as such statute, rules or regulations may be amended or interpreted from time to time.

In addition to the investment restrictions adopted as fundamental policies as set forth above, each Fund observes the following restrictions, which may be changed by the Board without a shareholder vote. Under these restrictions:

1. Each Fund will not invest in securities which are “illiquid” securities if the result is that more than 15% of a Fund’s net assets would be invested in such securities.

2. Under normal circumstances, the Fund will not invest less than 80% of its net assets, plus the amount of any borrowings for investment purposes, in securities of Master Limited Partnerships (“MLPs”). Prior to any change in this 80% investment policy, the Fund will provide shareholders with 60 days’ written notice.

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 described above in fundamental restriction 2 will be

continuously complied with.

With respect to fundamental restriction 2, the 1940 Act permits a Fund to borrow money from banks in an amount up to one-third of its total assets (including the amount borrowed) less its liabilities (not including any borrowings but including the fair market value at the time of computation of any other senior securities then outstanding). A Fund may also borrow an additional 5% of its total assets without

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regard to the foregoing limitation for temporary purposes such as clearance of portfolio transactions. Practices and investments that may involve leverage but are not considered to be borrowings are not subject to the policy.

With respect to fundamental restriction 2, the 1940 Act prohibits a Fund from issuing senior securities, except that a Fund may borrow money in amounts of up to one-third of the Fund's total assets from banks for any purpose. A Fund may also borrow money or engage in economically similar transactions if those transactions do not constitute "senior securities" under the 1940 Act. The policy above will be interpreted not to prevent collateral arrangements with respect to swaps, options, forward or futures contracts or other derivatives, or the posting of initial or variation margin.

Each Fund may invest its remaining assets in securities not included in each Fund's respective Index, which may include but may not be limited to money market instruments or funds which reinvest exclusively in money market instruments, in stocks that are in the relevant market but not in each Fund's respective Index, and/or in combinations of certain stock index futures contracts, options on such futures contracts, stock options, stock index options, options on the Shares, and stock index swaps and swaptions, each with a view towards providing each Fund with exposure to the securities in each Fund's respective Index. These investments may be made to invest uncommitted cash balances or, in limited circumstances, to assist in meeting shareholder redemptions of Creation Units. The Funds will not invest in money market instruments as part of a temporary defensive strategy to protect against potential stock market declines.

## SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RISKS

A discussion of the risks associated with an investment in each Fund is contained in each Fund's Prospectus under the headings "Summary Information—Principal Risks of Investing in the Fund" with respect to the applicable Fund, and "Additional Information About the Funds' Investment Strategies and Risks—Risks of Investing in the Funds." The discussion below supplements, and should be read in conjunction with, such sections of the Prospectus.

### General

Investment in each Fund should be made with an understanding that the value of the Fund's portfolio securities may fluctuate in accordance with changes in the financial condition of the issuers of the portfolio securities, the value of securities generally and other factors.

An investment in each Fund should also 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 the portfolio securities and thus 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 in and perceptions of their issuers 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 and banking crises.

Holdings of common stocks incur more risk than holdings of preferred stocks and debt obligations because common stockholders, as owners of the issuer, have generally inferior rights to receive payments from the issuer in comparison with the rights of creditors of, or holders of debt obligations or preferred stocks issued by, the issuer. Further, unlike debt securities which typically have a stated principal amount payable at maturity (whose value, however, will be 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.

In the event that the securities in a Fund's Index are not listed on a national securities exchange, the principal trading market for some may be in the over-the-counter market. 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 a Fund's Shares will be adversely affected if trading markets for the Fund's portfolio securities are limited or absent or if bid/ask spreads are wide.

Shares of each Fund are subject to the risks of an investment in a portfolio of equity securities in an economic sector or industry in which each Fund's Index is highly concentrated. In addition, because it is the policy of each Fund to generally invest in the securities that comprise the Fund's respective Index, the portfolio of securities held by such Fund ("Fund Securities") also will be concentrated in that economic sector or industry.

The Funds are not actively managed by traditional methods, and therefore the adverse financial condition of any one issuer will not result in the elimination of its securities from the securities held by a Fund unless the securities of such issuer are removed from its respective Index.



An investment in each Fund should also be made with an understanding that the Fund will not be able to replicate exactly the performance of its respective Index because the total return generated by the securities will be reduced by transaction costs incurred in adjusting the actual balance of the securities and other Fund expenses, whereas such transaction costs and expenses are not included in the calculation of its respective Index. It is also possible that for periods of time, a Fund may not fully replicate the performance of its respective Index due to the temporary unavailability of certain Index securities in the secondary market or due to other extraordinary circumstances.

Regulatory developments affecting the exchange-traded and OTC derivatives markets may impair a Fund's ability to manage or hedge its investment portfolio through the use of derivatives. The Dodd-Frank Act and the rules promulgated thereunder may limit the ability of a Fund to enter into one or more exchange-traded or OTC derivatives transactions.

The Trust, on behalf of the Funds, has filed a notice of eligibility with the National Futures Association claiming an exclusion from the definition of the term "commodity pool operator" ("CPO") pursuant to CFTC Regulation 4.5, as promulgated under the Commodity Exchange Act ("CEA"), with respect to the Funds' operations. Therefore, neither the Funds nor the Adviser (with respect to the Funds) is subject to registration or regulation as a commodity pool or CPO under the CEA. If a Fund becomes subject to these requirements, a Fund may incur additional compliance and other expenses.

With respect to investments in swap transactions, commodity futures, commodity options or certain other derivatives used for purposes other than bona fide hedging purposes, an investment company must meet one of the following tests under the amended regulations in order to claim an exemption from being considered a "commodity pool" or CPO. First, the aggregate initial margin and premiums required to establish an investment company's positions in such investments may not exceed five percent (5%) of the liquidation value of the investment company's portfolio (after accounting for unrealized profits and unrealized losses on any such investments). Alternatively, the aggregate net notional value of such instruments, determined at the time of the most recent position established, may not exceed one hundred percent (100%) of the liquidation value of the investment company's portfolio (after accounting for unrealized profits and unrealized losses on any such positions). In addition to meeting one of the foregoing trading limitations, the investment company may not market itself as a commodity pool or otherwise as a vehicle for trading in the commodity futures, commodity options or swaps and derivatives markets. In the event that the Adviser is required to register as a CPO, the disclosure and operations of the Funds would need to comply with all applicable CFTC regulations. Compliance with these additional registration and regulatory requirements would increase operational expenses. Other potentially adverse regulatory initiatives could also develop.

### **Concentration Considerations**

To the extent that a Fund's investments are concentrated in a particular sector or sectors or industry or group of industries, the Fund will be subject to the risk that economic, political or other conditions that have a negative effect on that sector or industry will negatively impact the Fund to a greater extent than if the Fund's assets were invested in a wider variety of sectors or industries. The securities of state and municipal governments and their political subdivisions are not considered to be issued by members of any industry.

## **Cyber Security**

The Funds, their service providers, the NYSE Arca and Authorized Participants (defined below) are susceptible to cyber security risks that include, among other things, theft, unauthorized monitoring, release, misuse, loss, destruction or corruption of confidential and highly restricted data; denial of service

attacks; unauthorized access to relevant systems, compromises to networks or devices that the Funds and their service providers use to service the Funds' operations; or operational disruption or failures in the physical infrastructure or operating systems that support the Funds and their service providers. Cyber attacks against or security breakdowns of the Funds, their service providers, the NYSE Arca or Authorized Participants may adversely impact the Funds and their shareholders, potentially resulting in, among other things, financial losses; the inability of Fund shareholders to transact business and the Funds to process transactions; inability to calculate the Funds' NAVs; violations of applicable privacy and other laws; regulatory fines, penalties, reputational damage, reimbursement or other compensation costs; and/or additional compliance costs. The Funds may incur additional costs for cyber security risk management and remediation purposes. In addition, cyber security risks may also impact issuers of securities in which the Funds invest, which may cause the Funds' investment in such issuers to lose value. There can be no assurance that the Funds, their service providers, the NYSE Arca or Authorized Participants will not suffer losses relating to cyber attacks or other information security breaches in the future.

## EXCHANGE LISTING AND TRADING

A discussion of exchange listing and trading matters associated with an investment in each Fund is contained in each Fund's Prospectus under the headings "Summary Information—Principal Risks of Investing in the Fund" with respect to the applicable Fund, "Additional Information About the Funds' Investment Strategies and Risks—Risks of Investing in the Funds," "Shareholder Information—Determination of NAV" and "Shareholder Information—Buying and Selling Exchange-Traded Shares." The discussion below supplements, and should be read in conjunction with, such sections of the Prospectus.

The Shares of each Fund are listed on NYSE Arca, and trade in the secondary market at prices that may differ to some degree from their NAV. The Exchange may but is not required to remove the Shares of the Funds from listing if: (1) following the initial twelve-month period beginning upon the commencement of trading of the Funds, there are fewer than 50 beneficial holders of the Shares for 30 or more consecutive trading days, (2) the value of a Fund's respective Index or portfolio of securities on which the Fund is based is no longer calculated or available or (3) such other event shall occur or condition exists that, in the opinion of the Exchange, makes further dealings on the Exchange inadvisable. In addition, the Exchange will remove the Shares from listing and trading upon termination of the Trust. There can be no assurance that the requirements of the Exchange necessary to maintain the listing of Shares of the Funds will continue to be met.

As in the case of other securities traded on the Exchange, brokers' commissions on secondary market transactions in Shares of each of the Funds will be based on negotiated commission rates at customary levels.

In order to provide investors with a basis to gauge whether the market price of the Shares on the Exchange is approximately consistent with the current value of the assets of the Funds on a per Share basis, an updated value of the Funds' Shares is disseminated intra-day ("IIV" and also known as the Indicative Optimized Portfolio Value) through the facilities of the Consolidated Tape Association's Network B. IIVs are disseminated every 15 seconds during regular Exchange trading hours. The Funds are not involved in or responsible for the calculation or dissemination of the IIVs and make no warranty as to the accuracy of the IIVs.

The IIV has a securities component and a cash component reflecting cash and other assets that may be held by the Funds. The securities values included in the IIV are the values of the Deposit Securities (as defined below under the heading "Creation and Redemption of Creation Units—Fund Deposit") for the Funds. While the IIV reflects the approximate current value of the Deposit Securities required to be deposited in connection with the purchase of a Creation Unit, it does not necessarily reflect the precise composition of the current portfolio of securities held by the Funds at a particular point in time because the current portfolio of each Fund may include securities that are not a part of the current Deposit Securities. Therefore, each Fund's IIV disseminated during the Exchange trading hours should not be viewed as a real-time update of the Fund's NAV, which is calculated only once a day.

The cash component included in the IIV could consist of estimated accrued interest, dividends and other income, less expenses. If applicable, the IIV also reflects changes in currency exchange rates between the U.S. dollar and the applicable currency.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE TRUST

Trustees and Officers of the Trust

The Board of the Trust consists of five Trustees, four of whom are not “interested persons” (as defined in the 1940 Act), of the Trust (the “Independent Trustees”). Mr. David H. Chow, an Independent Trustee, serves as Chairman of the Board. The Board is responsible for overseeing the management and operations of the Trust, including general supervision of the duties performed by the Adviser and other service providers to the Trust. The Adviser is responsible for the day-to-day administration and business affairs of the Trust.

The Board believes that each Trustee’s experience, qualifications, attributes or skills on an individual basis and in combination with those of the other Trustees lead to the conclusion that the Board possesses the requisite skills and attributes to carry out its oversight responsibilities with respect to the Trust. The Board believes that the Trustees’ ability to review, critically evaluate, question and discuss information provided to them, to interact effectively with the Adviser, other service providers, counsel and independent auditors, and to exercise effective business judgment in the performance of their duties, support this conclusion. The Board also has considered the following experience, qualifications, attributes and/or skills, among others, of its members in reaching its conclusion: such person’s character and integrity; length of service as a board member of the Trust; such person’s willingness to serve and willingness and ability to commit the time necessary to perform the duties of a Trustee; and as to each Trustee other than Mr. van Eck, his status as not being an “interested person” (as defined in the 1940 Act) of the Trust. In addition, the following specific experience, qualifications, attributes and/or skills apply as to each Trustee: Mr. Chow, significant business and financial experience, particularly in the investment management industry, experience with trading and markets through his involvement with the Pacific Stock Exchange, and service as a chief executive officer, board member, partner or executive officer of various businesses and non-profit organizations; Mr. Short, business and financial experience, particularly in the investment management industry, and service as a president, board member or executive officer of various businesses; Mr. Sidebottom, business and financial experience, particularly in the investment management industry, and service as partner and/or executive officer of various businesses; Mr. Stamberger, business and financial experience and service as the president and chief executive officer of SmartBrief Inc., a media company; and Mr. van Eck, business and financial experience, particularly in the investment management industry, and service as a president, executive officer and/or board member of various businesses, including the Adviser, Van Eck Securities Corporation, and Van Eck Absolute Return Advisers Corporation. References to the experience, qualifications, attributes and skills of Trustees are pursuant to requirements of the SEC, do not constitute holding out of the Board or any Trustee as having any special expertise or experience, and shall not impose any greater responsibility or liability on any such person or on the Board by reason thereof.

The Trustees of the Trust, their addresses, positions with the Trust, year of birth, term of office and length of time served, principal occupations during the past five years, the number of portfolios in the Fund Complex overseen by each Trustee and other directorships, if any, held by the Trustees, are set forth below.

Independent Trustees

Name, Address <sup>1</sup> and Year of Birth	Position(s) and Held with the Trust	Term of Office <sup>2</sup> Length of Time Served	Principal Occupation(s) During Past Five Years	Number of Other Portfolios in Fund Complex <sup>3</sup> Overseen	Directorships Held By Trustee During Past Five Years
David H. Chow, 1957*†	Chairman  Trustee	Since 2008  Since 2006	Founder and CEO, DanCourt Management LLC (financial/strategy consulting firm and Registered Investment Adviser), March 1999 to present.		Director, Forward Management LLC and Audit Committee Chairman, May 2008 to June 2015; Trustee, Berea College of Kentucky and Vice-Chairman of the Investment Committee, May 2009 to present; Member of the Governing Council of the Independent Directors Council, October 2012 to present; President, July 2013 to present, and Board Member of the CFA  Society of Stamford, July 2009  to present; Advisory Board member, MainStay Fund Complex <sup>4</sup> , June 2015 to December 2015; Trustee, MainStay Fund Complex <sup>4</sup> , January 2016 to present.

Name, Address <sup>1</sup> and Year of Birth	Position(s) Held with the Trust	Term of Office <sup>2</sup> and Length of Time Served	Principal Occupation(s) During Past Five Years	Number of Other Portfolios in Fund Complex <sup>3</sup> Overseen	Directorships Held By Trustee During Past Five Years
R. Alastair Short, 1953*†	Trustee	Since 2006	President, Apex Capital Corporation (personal investment vehicle), January 1988 to present; Vice Chairman, W.P. Stewart & Co., Inc. (asset management firm), September 2007 to September 2008; and Managing Director, The GlenRock Group, LLC (private equity investment firm), May 2004 to September 2007.	71	Chairman and Independent Director, EULAV Asset Management, January 2011 to present; Independent Director, Tremont offshore funds, June 2009 to present; Director, Kenyon Review.
Peter J. Sidebottom, 1962*†	Trustee	Since 2012	Partner, PWC/Strategy & Financial Services Advisory, February 2015 to present; Founder and Board Member, AspenWoods Risk Solutions, September 2013 to February 2016; Independent consultant, June 2013 to February 2015; Partner, Bain & Company (management consulting firm), April 2012 to December 2013; Executive Vice President and Senior Operating Committee Member, TD Ameritrade (on-line brokerage firm), February 2009 to January 2012.	59	Board Member, Special Olympics, New Jersey, November 2011 to September 2013; Director, The Charlotte Research Institute, December 2000 to present; Board Member, Social Capital Institute, University of North Carolina Charlotte, November 2004 to January 2012; Board Member, NJ-CAN, July 2014 to present.
Richard D. Stamberger, 1959*†	Trustee	Since 2006	Director, President and CEO, SmartBrief, Inc. (media company).	71	Director, Food and Friends, Inc., 2013 to present.

1 The address for each Trustee and officer is 666 Third Avenue, 9th Floor, New York, New York 10017.

2 Each Trustee serves until resignation, death, retirement or removal. Officers are elected yearly by the Trustees.

3 The Fund Complex consists of the VanEck Funds, VanEck VIP Trust and the Trust.

The MainStay Fund Complex consists of MainStay Funds Trust, MainStay Funds, MainStay VP Funds Trust,

4 Private Advisors Alternative Strategies Master Fund, Private Advisors Alternative Strategies Fund and MainStay DefinedTerm Municipal Opportunities Fund.

\*Member of the Audit Committee.

†Member of the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee.





Interested Trustee

<b>Name, Address<sup>1</sup> and Year of Birth</b>	<b>Position(s) Held with the Trust</b>	<b>Term of Office<sup>2</sup> and Length of Time Served</b>	<b>Principal Occupation(s) During Past Five Years</b>	<b>Number of Portfolios in Fund Complex<sup>3</sup> Overseen</b>	<b>Other Directorships Held By Trustee During Past Five Years</b>
Jan F. van Eck, 1963 <sup>4</sup>	Trustee, President and Chief Executive Officer	Trustee (Since 2006); President and Chief Executive Officer (Since 2009)	Director, President, Chief Executive Officer and Owner of the Adviser, Van Eck Associates Corporation; Director, President and Chief Executive Officer, Van Eck Securities Corporation (“VESC”); Director, President and Chief Executive Officer, Van Eck Absolute Return Advisers Corp. (“VEARA”).	59	Director, National Committee on US-China Relations.

1 The address for each Trustee and officer is 666 Third Avenue, 9th Floor, New York, New York 10017.

2 Each Trustee serves until resignation, death, retirement or removal. Officers are elected yearly by the Trustees.

3 The Fund Complex consists of the VanEck Funds, VanEck VIP Trust and the Trust.

4 “Interested person” of the Trust within the meaning of the 1940 Act. Mr. van Eck is an officer of the Adviser.

Officer Information

The Officers of the Trust, their addresses, positions with the Trust, year of birth and principal occupations during the past five years are set forth below.

<b>Officer’s Name, Address<sup>1</sup> and Year of Birth</b>	<b>Position(s) Held with the Trust</b>	<b>Term of Office<sup>2</sup> and Length of Time</b>	<b>Principal Occupation(s) During The Past Five Years</b>
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**Served**

Matthew A. Babinsky, 1983	Assistant Vice President and Assistant Secretary	Since 2016	Assistant Vice President and Assistant General Counsel of the Adviser, VESC and VEARA (since 2016); Associate, Clifford Chance US LLP (October 2011 to April 2016); Officer of other investment companies advised by the Adviser.
Russell G. Brennan, 1964	Assistant Vice President and Assistant Treasurer	Since 2008	Assistant Vice President and Assistant Treasurer of the Adviser (since 2008); Manager (Portfolio Administration) of the Adviser, September 2005 to October 2008; Officer of other investment companies advised by the Adviser.
Charles T. Cameron, 1960 17	Vice President	Since 2006	Director of Trading (since 1995) and Portfolio Manager (since 1997) for the Adviser; Officer of other investment companies advised by the Adviser.

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<b>Officer's Name, Address<sup>1</sup> and Year of Birth</b>	<b>Position(s) Held with the Trust</b>	<b>Term of Office<sup>2</sup> and Length of Time Served</b>	<b>Principal Occupation(s) During The Past Five Years</b>
Simon Chen, 1971	Assistant Vice President	Since 2012	Greater China Director of the Adviser (since January 2012); General Manager, SinoMarkets Ltd. (June 2007 to December 2011).
John J. Crimmins, 1957	Vice President, Treasurer, Chief Financial Officer and Principal Accounting Officer	Vice President, Chief Financial Officer and Principal Accounting Officer (Since 2012); Treasurer (Since 2009)	Vice President of Portfolio Administration of the Adviser, June 2009 to present; Vice President of VESC and VEARA, June 2009 to present; Chief Financial, Operating and Compliance Officer, Kern Capital Management LLC, September 1997 to February 2009; Officer of other investment companies advised by the Adviser.
Uwe Eberle, 1965	Vice President	Since 2016	Managing Director of Van Eck Switzerland AG (since 2010).
Eduardo Escario, 1975	Vice President	Since 2012	Regional Director, Business Development/Sales for Southern Europe and South America of the Adviser (since July 2008); Regional Director (Spain, Portugal, South America and Africa) of Dow Jones Indexes and STOXX Ltd. (May 2001 – July 2008).
Susan C. Lashley, 1955	Vice President	Since 2006	Vice President of the Adviser and VESC; Officer of other investment companies advised by the Adviser.
Laura I. Martínez, 1980	Vice President and Assistant Secretary	Vice President (Since 2016) and Assistant Secretary (Since 2008)	Vice President (since 2016), Associate General Counsel and Assistant Secretary (since 2008) and Assistant Vice President (2008 to 2016) of the Adviser, VESC and VEARA; Associate, Davis Polk & Wardwell (October 2005 to June 2008); Officer of other investment companies advised by the Adviser.
Ferat Oeztuerk, 1983	Assistant Vice President	Since 2012	Sales Associate, VanEck (Europe) GmbH (since November 2011); Account Manager, Vodafone Global Enterprise Limited (January 2011 to October 2011).
James Parker, 1969	Assistant Treasurer	Since June 2014	Manager (Portfolio Administration) of the Adviser (since June 2010); Vice President of JPMorgan Chase & Co. (April 1999 to January 2010).

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Philipp Schlegel, 1974	Vice President	Since 2016	Senior Director of Van Eck Switzerland AG (since 2010).
Jonathan R. Simon, 1974	Senior Vice President, Secretary and Chief Legal Officer	Senior Vice President (Since 2016) and Secretary and Chief Legal Officer (Since 2014)	Senior Vice President (since 2016), General Counsel and Secretary (since 2014) and Vice President (2006 to 2016) of the Adviser, VESC and VEARA; Officer of other investment companies advised by the Adviser.

<b>Officer's Name, Address<sup>1</sup> and Year of Birth</b>	<b>Position(s) Held with the Trust</b>	<b>Term of Office<sup>2</sup> and Length of Time Served</b>	<b>Principal Occupation(s) During The Past Five Years</b>
Bruce J. Smith, 1955	Senior Vice President	Since 2006	Senior Vice President, Chief Financial Officer, Treasurer and Controller of the Adviser, VESC and VEARA (since 1997); Director of the Adviser, VESC and VEARA (since October 2010); Officer of other investment companies advised by the Adviser.
Janet Squitieri, 1961	Chief Compliance Officer	Since September 2013	Vice President, Global Head of Compliance of the Adviser, VESC and VEARA (since September 2013); Chief Compliance Officer and Senior Vice President North America of HSBC Global Asset Management NA (August 2010 to September 2013); Chief Compliance Officer North America of Babcock & Brown LP (July 2008 to June 2010).

<sup>1</sup>The address for each Officer is 666 Third Avenue, 9th Floor, New York, New York 10017.

<sup>2</sup>Officers are elected yearly by the Trustees.

The Board of the Trust met five times during the fiscal year ended November 30, 2016.

The Board has an Audit Committee consisting of four Trustees who are Independent Trustees. Messrs. Chow, Short, Sidebottom and Stamberger currently serve as members of the Audit Committee and each of Messrs. Chow, Short, Sidebottom and Stamberger has been designated as an “audit committee financial expert” as defined under Item 407 of Regulation S-K of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the “Exchange Act”). Mr. Short is the Chairman of the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee has the responsibility, among other things, to: (i) oversee the accounting and financial reporting processes of the Trust and its internal control over financial reporting; (ii) oversee the quality and integrity of the Trust’s financial statements and the independent audit thereof; (iii) oversee or, as appropriate, assist the Board’s oversight of the Trust’s compliance with legal and regulatory requirements that relate to the Trust’s accounting and financial reporting, internal control over financial reporting and independent audit; (iv) approve prior to appointment the engagement of the Trust’s independent registered public accounting firm and, in connection therewith, to review and evaluate the qualifications, independence and performance of the Trust’s independent registered public accounting firm; and (v) act as a liaison between the Trust’s independent registered public accounting firm and the full Board. The Audit Committee met three times during the fiscal year ended November 30, 2016.

The Board also has a Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee consisting of four Independent Trustees. Messrs. Chow, Short, Sidebottom and Stamberger currently serve as members of the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee. Mr. Stamberger is the Chairman of the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee. The Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee has the responsibility, among other things, to: (i) evaluate, as necessary, the composition of the Board, its committees and sub-committees and make such recommendations to the Board as deemed appropriate by the Committee; (ii) review and define Independent Trustee qualifications; (iii) review the qualifications of individuals serving as Trustees on the Board and its committees; (iv) evaluate, recommend and

nominate qualified individuals for election or appointment as members of the Board and recommend the appointment of members and chairs of each Board committee and subcommittee; and (v) review and assess, from time to time, the performance of the committees and subcommittees of the Board

and report the results to the Board. The Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee did not meet during the fiscal year ended November 30, 2016.

The Board has determined that its leadership structure is appropriate given the business and nature of the Trust. In connection with its determination, the Board considered that the Chairman of the Board is an Independent Trustee. The Chairman of the Board can play an important role in setting the agenda of the Board and also serves as a key point person for dealings between management and the other Independent Trustees. The Independent Trustees believe that the Chairman's independence facilitates meaningful dialogue between the Adviser and the Independent Trustees. The Board also considered that the Chairman of each Board committee is an Independent Trustee, which yields similar benefits with respect to the functions and activities of the various Board committees. The Independent Trustees also regularly meet outside the presence of management and are advised by independent legal counsel. The Board has determined that its committees help ensure that the Trust has effective and independent governance and oversight. The Board also believes that its leadership structure facilitates the orderly and efficient flow of information to the Independent Trustees from management of the Trust, including the Adviser. The Board reviews its structure on an annual basis.

As an integral part of its responsibility for oversight of the Trust in the interests of shareholders, the Board, as a general matter, oversees risk management of the Trust's investment programs and business affairs. The function of the Board with respect to risk management is one of oversight and not active involvement in, or coordination of, day-to-day risk management activities for the Trust. The Board recognizes that not all risks that may affect the Trust can be identified, 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 the Trust'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 Trustees that may relate to risk management matters are typically summaries of the relevant information.

The Board exercises oversight of the risk management process primarily through the Audit Committee, and through oversight by the Board itself. The Trust faces a number of risks, such as investment-related and compliance risks. The Adviser's personnel seek 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 the Trust. Under the overall supervision of the Board or the applicable Committee of the Board, the Trust, the Adviser, and the affiliates of the Adviser employ a variety of processes, procedures and controls to identify such possible 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. Different processes, procedures and controls are employed with respect to different types of risks. Various personnel, including the Trust's Chief Compliance Officer, as well as various personnel of the Adviser and other service providers such as the Trust's independent accountants, may report to the Audit Committee and/or to the Board with respect to various aspects of risk management, as well as events and circumstances that have arisen and responses thereto.

The officers and Trustees of the Trust, in aggregate, own less than 1% of the Shares of each Fund as of the date of this SAI.



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For each Trustee, the dollar range of equity securities beneficially owned (including ownership through the Trust's Deferred Compensation Plan) by the Trustee in the Trust and in all registered investment companies advised by the Adviser ("Family of Investment Companies") that are overseen by the Trustee is shown below.

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<b>Name of Trustee</b>	<b>Dollar Range of Equity Securities in Market Vectors High Income MLP ETF (As of December 31, 2016)</b>	<b>Dollar Range of Equity Securities in Market Vectors High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF (As of December 31, 2016)</b>	<b>Aggregate Dollar Range of Equity Securities in all Registered Investment Companies Overseen By Trustee in Family of Investment Companies (As of December 31, 2016)</b>
David H. Chow	None	None	Over \$100,000
R. Alastair Short	None	None	None
Peter J. Sidebottom	None	None	None
Richard D. Stamberger	None	None	Over \$100,000
Jan F. van Eck	None	None	Over \$100,000

As to each Independent Trustee and his immediate family members, no person owned beneficially or of record securities in an investment manager or principal underwriter of the Funds, or a person (other than a registered investment company) directly or indirectly controlling, controlled by or under common control with the investment manager or principal underwriter of the Funds.

#### Remuneration of Trustees

The Trust pays each Independent Trustee an annual retainer of \$80,000, a per meeting fee of \$15,000 for scheduled quarterly meetings of the Board and each special meeting of the Board and a per meeting fee of \$7,500 for telephonic meetings. Additionally, the Trust pays the Chairman of the Board an annual retainer of \$45,500, the Chairman of the Audit Committee an annual retainer of \$19,500 and the Chairman of the Governance Committee an annual retainer of \$13,000. The Trust also reimburses each Trustee for travel and other out-of-pocket expenses incurred in attending such meetings. No pension or retirement benefits are accrued as part of Trustee compensation.

The table below shows the compensation paid to the Trustees by the Trust for the fiscal year ended November 30, 2016. Annual Trustee fees may be reviewed periodically and changed by the Trust's Board.

<b>Name of Trustee</b>	<b>Aggregate Compensation From the Trust</b>	<b>Deferred Compensation From the Trust</b>	<b>Pension or Retirement Benefits Accrued as Part of the Trust's Expenses</b>	<b>Estimated Annual Benefits Upon Retirement</b>	<b>Total Compensation From the Trust and the Fund Complex<sup>(1)</sup> Paid to Trustee</b>
David H. Chow	\$ 177,896	\$ 0	N/A	N/A	\$ 177,896
R. Alastair Short	\$ 157,125	\$ 0	N/A	N/A	\$ 268,375

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Peter J. Sidebottom	\$ 127,500	\$ 0	N/A	N/A	\$ 127,500
Richard D. Stamberger	\$ 123,892	\$ 13,725	N/A	N/A	\$ 260,117
Jan F. van Eck <sup>(2)</sup>	\$ 0	\$ 0	N/A	N/A	\$ 0

(1)The “Fund Complex” consists of VanEck Funds, VanEck VIP Trust and the Trust.

(2)“Interested person” under the 1940 Act.

PORTFOLIO HOLDINGS DISCLOSURE

Each Fund’s portfolio holdings are publicly disseminated each day the Fund is open for business through financial reporting and news services, including publicly accessible Internet web sites. In addition, a basket composition file, which includes the security names and share quantities to deliver in exchange for Creation Units, together with estimates and actual cash components is publicly disseminated daily prior to the opening of the Exchange via the National Securities Clearing Corporation (the “NSCC”), a clearing agency that is registered with the SEC. The basket represents one Creation Unit of

each Fund. The Trust, Adviser, Custodian and Distributor will not disseminate non-public information concerning the Trust.

#### QUARTERLY PORTFOLIO SCHEDULE

The Trust is required to disclose, after its first and third fiscal quarters, the complete schedule of the Funds' portfolio holdings with the SEC on Form N-Q. Form N-Q for the Funds is available on the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. The Funds' Form N-Q may also be reviewed and copied at the SEC's Public Reference Room in Washington, D.C. and information on the operation of the Public Reference Room may be obtained by calling 202.551.8090. The Funds' Form N-Q is available through the Funds' website, at [www.vaneck.com](http://www.vaneck.com) or by writing to 666 Third Avenue, 9th Floor, New York, New York 10017.

#### POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Adviser (and its principals, affiliates or employees) may serve as investment adviser to other client accounts and conduct investment activities for their own accounts. Such "Other Clients" may have investment objectives or may implement investment strategies similar to those of the Funds, or may track the same index a Fund tracks. When the Adviser implements investment strategies for Other Clients that are similar or directly contrary to the positions taken by a Fund, the prices of the Fund's securities may be negatively affected. For example, when purchase or sales orders for a Fund are aggregated with those of other funds and/or Other Clients and allocated among them, the price that the Fund pays or receives may be more in the case of a purchase or less in a sale than if the Adviser served as adviser to only the Fund. When Other Clients are selling a security that a Fund owns, the price of that security may decline as a result of the sales. The compensation that the Adviser receives from Other Clients may be higher than the compensation paid by a Fund to the Adviser. The Adviser has implemented procedures to monitor trading across the Funds and its Other Clients.

#### CODE OF ETHICS

The Funds, the Adviser and the Distributor have each adopted a Code of Ethics pursuant to Rule 17j-1 under the 1940 Act ("Rule 17j-1"). Such Codes of Ethics require, among other things, that "access persons" (as defined in Rule 17j-1) conduct personal securities transactions in a manner that avoids any actual or potential conflict of interest or any abuse of a position of trust and responsibility. The Codes of Ethics allow such access persons to invest in securities that may be purchased and held by a Fund, provided such investments are done consistently with the provisions of the Codes of Ethics.

#### PROXY VOTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Funds' proxy voting record is available upon request and on the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. Proxies for each Fund's portfolio securities are voted in accordance with the Adviser's proxy voting policies and procedures, which are set forth in Appendix A to this SAI.

The Trust is required to disclose annually each Fund's complete proxy voting record on Form N-PX covering the period July 1 through June 30 and file it with the SEC no later than August 31. Form N-PX for the Funds is available through the Funds' website, at [www.vaneck.com](http://www.vaneck.com), or by writing to 666 Third Avenue, 9th Floor, New York, New York 10017. The Funds' Form N-PX is also available on the SEC's website at [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov).

## MANAGEMENT

The following information supplements and should be read in conjunction with the section in the Prospectus entitled “Management of the Funds.”

### Investment Adviser

Van Eck Associates Corporation acts as investment adviser to the Trust and, subject to the general supervision of the Board, is responsible for the day-to-day investment management of the Funds. The Adviser is a private company with headquarters in New York and manages numerous pooled investment vehicles and separate accounts. The Adviser has been wholly owned by members of the van Eck family since its founding in 1955 and its shares are held by the Adviser’s Chief Executive Officer, Jan van Eck, and his family. Mr. van Eck’s positions with the Trust and the Adviser are discussed above.

The Adviser serves as investment adviser to the Funds pursuant to an investment management agreement between the Trust and the Adviser (the “Investment Management Agreement”). Under the Investment Management Agreement, the Adviser, subject to the supervision of the Board and in conformity with the stated investment policies of each Fund, manages the investment of the Funds’ assets. The Adviser is responsible for placing purchase and sale orders and providing continuous supervision of the investment portfolio of the Funds.

*Indemnification.* Pursuant to the Investment Management Agreement, the Trust has agreed to indemnify the Adviser for certain liabilities, including certain liabilities arising under the federal securities laws, unless such loss or liability results from willful misfeasance, bad faith or gross negligence in the performance of its duties or the reckless disregard of its obligations and duties.

*Compensation.* As compensation for its services under the Investment Management Agreement, each Fund has agreed to pay the Adviser an annual unitary management fee equal to 0.82% of the Fund’s average daily net assets. The Adviser is responsible for all expenses of the Funds, including the costs of transfer agency, custody, fund administration, legal, audit and other services, except for the fee payment under the Investment Management Agreement, acquired fund fees and expenses, interest expense, offering costs, trading expenses, taxes (including accrued deferred tax liability) and extraordinary expenses. Offering costs excluded from the annual unitary management fee are: (a) legal fees pertaining to a Fund’s Shares offered for sale; (b) SEC and state registration fees; and (c) initial fees paid for Shares of a Fund to be listed on an exchange. Notwithstanding the forgoing, the Adviser has agreed to pay all such offering costs until at least April 1, 2018.

The management fees paid by each Fund during the Funds’ fiscal years ended November 30, 2014, November 30, 2015 and November 30, 2016, are set forth in the chart below.

Fund	Management Fees Paid During the Fiscal Year Ended November 30,		
	2014 <sup>(1)</sup>	2015 <sup>(1)</sup>	2016 <sup>(2)</sup>
VanEck Vectors High Income MLP ETF	\$231,094	\$239,035	\$720,974
VanEck Vectors High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF	\$19,373	\$16,485	\$252,416

Pursuant to an agreement and plan of reorganization between the Trust, on behalf of the Funds, and Exchange Traded Concepts Trust, on behalf of Yorkville High Income MLP ETF and Yorkville High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF (the “Predecessor Funds”), on February 22, 2016 the Funds acquired all of the assets and liabilities of the (1) respective Predecessor Funds in exchange for shares of beneficial interest of the respective Funds (the “Reorganization”). As a result of the Reorganization, each Fund is the accounting successor of its Predecessor Fund. The information shown for the fiscal years ended November 30, 2014 and November 30, 2015 reflects the management fees paid by each Predecessor Fund to its former investment adviser.

- (2) The management fees paid prior to February 22, 2016 were paid by the respective Predecessor Funds to their former investment adviser.

*Term.* The Investment Management Agreement is subject to annual approval by (1) the Board or (2) a vote of a majority of the outstanding voting securities (as defined in the 1940 Act) of each Fund, *provided* that in either event such continuance also is approved by a majority of the Board who are not interested persons (as defined in the 1940 Act) of the Trust by a vote cast in person at a meeting called for the purpose of voting on such approval. The Investment Management Agreement is terminable without penalty, on 60 days' notice, by the Board or by a vote of the holders of a majority (as defined in the 1940 Act) of a Fund's outstanding voting securities. The Investment Management Agreement is also terminable upon 60 days' notice by the Adviser and will terminate automatically in the event of its assignment (as defined in the 1940 Act).

#### The Administrator

Van Eck Associates Corporation also serves as administrator for the Trust pursuant to the Investment Management Agreement. Under the Investment Management Agreement, the Adviser is obligated on a continuous basis to provide such administrative services as the Board of the Trust reasonably deems necessary for the proper administration of the Trust and the Funds. The Adviser will generally assist in all aspects of the Trust's and the Funds' operations; supply and maintain office facilities, statistical and research data, data processing services, clerical, bookkeeping and record keeping services (including without limitation the maintenance of such books and records as are required under the 1940 Act and the rules thereunder, except as maintained by other agents), internal auditing, executive and administrative services, and stationery and office supplies; prepare reports to shareholders or investors; prepare and file tax returns; supply financial information and supporting data for reports to and filings with the SEC and various state Blue Sky authorities; supply supporting documentation for meetings of the Board; provide monitoring reports and assistance regarding compliance with the Declaration of Trust, by-laws, investment objectives and policies and with federal and state securities laws; arrange for appropriate insurance coverage; calculate NAVs, net income and realized capital gains or losses; and negotiate arrangements with, and supervise and coordinate the activities of, agents and others to supply services. The Administrator has hired a sub-administrator to assist in the provision of administrative and accounting services. Van Eck Associates Corporation owns 100% of the common stock of Van Eck Securities Corporation (the "Distributor").

*Sub-Administrator.* Under an agreement between the Administrator and SEI Investments Global Funds Services (the "Sub-Administrator"), the Sub-Administrator provides certain administrative and accounting services to the Funds. The Administrator supervises and monitors the administrative and accounting services provided by the Sub-Administrator. For its services under the Sub-Administration Agreement, the Sub-Administrator is entitled to a fee, based on assets under management, subject to a minimum fee.

#### Custodian and Transfer Agent



The Bank of New York Mellon (“The Bank of New York”), located at 101 Barclay Street, New York, New York 10286, serves as custodian for the Funds pursuant to a Custodian Agreement. As Custodian, The Bank of New York holds the Funds’ assets. As compensation for these custodial services, The Bank of New York receives, among other items, transaction fees, asset-based safe keeping fees and overdraft charges and may be reimbursed by a Fund for its out-of-pocket expenses. The Bank of New York serves as the Funds’ transfer agent (in such capacity, the “Transfer Agent”) pursuant to a Transfer Agency Agreement. In addition, The Bank of New York provides various accounting services to each of the Funds pursuant to a fund accounting agreement.

The Distributor

Van Eck Securities Corporation is the principal underwriter and distributor of Shares. Its principal address is 666 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10017 and investor information can be obtained by calling 800-826-2333. The Distributor has entered into an agreement with the Trust which will continue from its effective date unless terminated by either party upon 60 days' prior written notice to the other party by the Trust and the Adviser, or by the Distributor, or until termination of the Trust or each Fund offering its Shares, and which is renewable annually thereafter (the "Distribution Agreement"), pursuant to which it distributes Shares. Shares will be continuously offered for sale by the Trust through the Distributor only in Creation Units, as described below under "Creation and Redemption of Creation Units—Procedures for Creation of Creation Units." Shares in less than Creation Units are not distributed by the Distributor. The Distributor will deliver a prospectus to persons purchasing Shares in Creation Units and will maintain records of both orders placed with it and confirmations of acceptance furnished by it. The Distributor is a broker-dealer registered under the Exchange Act and a member of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority ("FINRA"). The Distributor has no role in determining the investment policies of the Trust or which securities are to be purchased or sold by the Trust.

The Distributor may also enter into sales and investor services agreements with broker-dealers or other persons that are Participating Parties and DTC Participants (as defined below) to provide distribution assistance, including broker-dealer and shareholder support and educational and promotional services but must pay such broker-dealers or other persons, out of its own assets.

The Distribution Agreement provides that it may be terminated at any time, without the payment of any penalty: (i) by vote of a majority of the Independent Trustees or (ii) by vote of a majority (as defined in the 1940 Act) of the outstanding voting securities of the Funds, on at least 60 days' written notice to the Distributor. The Distribution Agreement is also terminable upon 60 days' notice by the Distributor and will terminate automatically in the event of its assignment (as defined in the 1940 Act).

Other Accounts Managed by the Portfolio Managers

As of the date indicated below, Messrs. Liao and Chao managed the following other accounts:

<b>Name of Portfolio Manager</b>	<b>Other Accounts Managed (As of November 30, 2016)</b>	<b>Accounts with respect to which the advisory fee is based on the performance of the account</b>
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	Category of Account	Number of Accounts in Category	Total Assets in Accounts in Category	Number of Accounts in Category	Total Assets in Accounts in Category
Hao-Hung (Peter) Liao	Registered investment companies	39	\$21,372.08 million	0	\$0
	Other pooled investment vehicles	3	\$158.91 million	0	\$0
	Other accounts	0	\$0	0	\$0
George Chao	Registered investment companies	39	\$21,372.08 million	0	\$0
	Other pooled investment vehicles	3	\$158.91 million	0	\$0
	Other accounts	0	\$0	0	\$0

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Although the funds in the Trust that are managed by Messrs. Liao and Chao may have different investment strategies, each has an investment objective of seeking to replicate as closely as possible, before fees and expenses, the price and yield performance of its respective underlying index. The Adviser does not believe that management of the various accounts presents a material conflict of interest for Messrs. Liao and Chao or the Adviser.

### Portfolio Manager Compensation

The portfolio managers are paid a fixed base salary and a bonus. The bonus is based upon the quality of investment analysis and the management of the funds. The quality of management of the funds includes issues of replication, rebalancing, portfolio monitoring and efficient operation, among other factors. Portfolio managers who oversee accounts with significantly different fee structures are generally compensated by discretionary bonus rather than a set formula to help reduce potential conflicts of interest. At times, the Adviser and its affiliates manage accounts with incentive fees. The portfolio managers may serve as portfolio managers to other clients. Such “Other Clients” may have investment objectives or may implement investment strategies similar to those of the Fund, or may track the same index the Fund tracks. When the portfolio managers implement investment strategies for Other Clients that are similar or directly contrary to the positions taken by the Fund, the prices of the Fund’s securities may be negatively affected. The compensation that the Fund’s portfolio managers receive for managing other client accounts may be higher than the compensation the portfolio managers receive for managing the Fund. The Adviser has implemented procedures to monitor trading across funds and its Other Clients.

### Portfolio Manager Share Ownership

The portfolio holdings of Messrs. Liao and Chao, as of November 30, 2016 of the Funds are shown below.

Fund	None	\$1 to	\$10,001 to	\$50,001 to	\$100,001 to	\$500,001 to	Over
		\$10,000	\$50,000	\$100,000	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
<b>Peter Liao</b>							
VanEck Vectors							
High Income	X						
MLP ETF							
VanEck Vectors							
High Income Infrastructure	X						
MLP ETF							
<b>George Chao</b>							
VanEck Vectors							
High Income	X						
MLP ETF							
VanEck Vectors							
High Income Infrastructure	X						
MLP ETF							



## BROKERAGE TRANSACTIONS

When selecting brokers and dealers to handle the purchase and sale of portfolio securities, the Adviser looks for prompt execution of the order at a favorable price. Generally, the Adviser works with recognized dealers in these securities, except when a better price and execution of the order can be obtained elsewhere. The Funds will not deal with affiliates in principal transactions unless permitted by exemptive order or applicable rule or regulation. The Adviser owes a duty to its clients to seek best execution on trades effected. Since the investment objective of each Fund is investment performance that corresponds to that of an Index, the Adviser does not intend to select brokers and dealers for the purpose of receiving research services in addition to a favorable price and prompt execution either from that broker or an unaffiliated third party.

The Adviser assumes general supervision over placing orders on behalf of the Trust for the purchase or sale of portfolio securities. If purchases or sales of portfolio securities of the Trust and one or more other investment companies or clients supervised by the 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 to all by the Adviser. In some cases, this procedure could have a detrimental effect on the price or volume of the security so far as the Trust 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 the Trust. The primary consideration is best execution.

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, additional taxable income at a Fund level and additional taxable distributions. The overall reasonableness of brokerage commissions is evaluated by the Adviser based upon its knowledge of available information as to the general level of commissions paid by other institutional investors for comparable services.

The aggregate brokerage commissions paid by each Fund during the Fund's fiscal years ended November 30, 2014, November 30, 2015 and November 30, 2016, as applicable, are set forth in the chart below.

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Brokerage Commissions Paid During the Fiscal Year Ended November 30,</b>		
	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
VanEck Vectors High Income MLP ETF	\$231,094	\$239,035	\$55,684
VanEck Vectors High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF	\$19,373	\$16,485	\$19,667

BOOK ENTRY ONLY SYSTEM

The following information supplements and should be read in conjunction with the section in the Prospectus entitled “Shareholder Information—Buying and Selling Exchange-Traded Shares.”

The Depository Trust Company (“DTC”) acts as securities depository for the Shares. Shares of the Funds are represented by securities registered in the name of DTC or its nominee and deposited with, or on behalf of, DTC. Certificates will not be issued for Shares.

DTC, a limited-purpose trust company, was created to hold securities of 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. More specifically, DTC is owned by a number of its DTC Participants and by the New York Stock Exchange (“NYSE”) and FINRA. Access to the DTC system is also available to others such as banks, brokers, dealers and trust companies that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a DTC Participant, either directly or indirectly (the “Indirect Participants”).

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

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

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

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



DTC may determine to discontinue providing its service with respect to the Shares at any time by giving reasonable notice to the Trust and discharging its responsibilities with respect thereto under applicable law. Under such circumstances, the Trust shall take action either to find a replacement for DTC to perform its functions at a comparable cost or, if such a replacement is unavailable, to issue and

deliver printed certificates representing ownership of Shares, unless the Trust makes other arrangements with respect thereto satisfactory to the Exchange.

## CREATION AND REDEMPTION OF CREATION UNITS

### General

The Funds issue and sell Shares only in Creation Units on a continuous basis through the Distributor, without an initial sales load, at their NAV next determined after receipt, on any Business Day (as defined herein), of an order in proper form. An Authorized Participant (defined below) that is not a “qualified institutional buyer,” as such term is defined under Rule 144A of the Securities Act of 1933, will not be able to receive, as part of a redemption, restricted securities eligible for resale under Rule 144A.

A “Business Day” with respect to the Funds is any day on which the NYSE is open for business. As of the date of the Prospectus, the NYSE observes the following holidays: New Year’s Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President’s Day (Washington’s Birthday), Good Friday, Memorial Day (observed), Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

### Fund Deposit

The consideration for a purchase of Creation Units generally consists of the in-kind deposit of a designated portfolio of equity securities (the “Deposit Securities”) that comprise each Fund’s respective Index and an amount of cash computed as described below (the “Cash Component”) or, as permitted or required by the Fund, of cash. The Cash Component together with the Deposit Securities, as applicable, are referred to as the “Fund Deposit,” which represents the minimum initial and subsequent investment amount for Shares.

The Cash Component represents the difference between the NAV of a Creation Unit and the market value of Deposit Securities and may include a Dividend Equivalent Payment. The “Dividend Equivalent Payment” enables each Fund to make a complete distribution of dividends on the next dividend payment date, and is an amount equal, on a per Creation Unit basis, to the dividends on all the securities held by the Fund (“Fund Securities”) with ex-dividend dates within the accumulation period for such distribution (the “Accumulation Period”), net of expenses and liabilities for such period, as if all of the Fund Securities had been held by the Trust for the entire Accumulation Period. The Accumulation Period begins on the ex-dividend date for each Fund and ends on the next ex-dividend date.

The Administrator, through the NSCC, makes available on each Business Day, immediately 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 to be included in the current Fund Deposit (based on information at the end of the previous Business Day) as well as the Cash Component for each Fund. Such Fund Deposit is applicable, subject to any adjustments as described below, in order to effect creations of Creation Units of each Fund until such time as the next-announced Fund Deposit composition is made available.

The identity and number of shares of the Deposit Securities required for a Fund Deposit for each Fund changes as rebalancing adjustments and corporate action events are reflected from time to time by the Adviser with a view to the investment objective of the applicable Fund. The composition of the Deposit Securities may also change in response to adjustments to the weighting or composition of the securities constituting each Fund's respective Index. In addition, the Trust reserves the right to accept a basket of securities or cash that differs from Deposit Securities or to permit or require the substitution of an amount of cash (i.e., a "cash in lieu" amount) to be added to the Cash Component to replace any Deposit Security which may, among other reasons, not be available in sufficient quantity for delivery, not be permitted to be re-registered in the name of the Trust as a result of an in-kind creation order pursuant

to local law or market convention or which may not be eligible for transfer through the Clearing Process (described below), or which may not be eligible for trading by a Participating Party (defined below). In light of the foregoing, in order to seek to replicate the in-kind creation order process, the Trust expects to purchase the Deposit Securities represented by the cash in lieu amount in the secondary market (“Market Purchases”). In such cases where the Trust makes Market Purchases because a Deposit Security may not be permitted to be re-registered in the name of the Trust as a result of an in-kind creation order pursuant to local law or market convention, or for other reasons, the Authorized Participant will reimburse the Trust for, among other things, any difference between the market value at which the securities were purchased by the Trust and the cash in lieu amount (which amount, at the Adviser’s discretion, may be capped), applicable registration fees and taxes. Brokerage commissions incurred in connection with the Trust’s acquisition of Deposit Securities will be at the expense of each Fund and will affect the value of all Shares of the Fund; but the Adviser may adjust the transaction fee to the extent the composition of the Deposit Securities changes or cash in lieu is added to the Cash Component to protect ongoing shareholders. The adjustments described above will reflect changes, known to the Adviser on the date of announcement to be in effect by the time of delivery of the Fund Deposit, in the composition of the relevant Index or resulting from stock splits and other corporate actions.

In addition to the list of names and numbers of securities constituting the current Deposit Securities of a Fund Deposit, the Administrator, through the NSCC, also makes available (i) on each Business Day, the Dividend Equivalent Payment, if any, and the estimated Cash Component effective through and including the previous Business Day, per outstanding Shares of the Fund, and (ii) on a continuous basis throughout the day, the Indicative Per Share Portfolio Value.

#### Procedures for Creation of Creation Units

To be eligible to place orders with the Distributor to create Creation Units of the Funds, an entity or person either must be (1) a “Participating Party,” *i.e.*, a broker-dealer or other participant in the Clearing Process through the Continuous Net Settlement System of the NSCC; or (2) a DTC Participant (see “Book Entry Only System”); and, in either case, must have executed an agreement with the Distributor and the Transfer Agent with respect to creations and redemptions of Creation Units (as it may be amended from time to time in accordance with its terms) (“Participant Agreement”) (discussed below). A Participating Party and DTC Participant are collectively referred to as an “Authorized Participant.” All Creation Units of the Funds, however created, will be entered on the records of the Depository in the name of Cede & Co. for the account of a DTC Participant.

All orders to create Creation Units must be placed in multiples of 50,000 Shares of a Fund (*i.e.*, a Creation Unit). All orders to create Creation Units, whether through the Clearing Process or outside the Clearing Process, must be received by the Distributor no later than the closing time of the regular trading session on NYSE Arca (“Closing Time”) (ordinarily 4:00 p.m. Eastern time) on the date such order is placed in order for creation of Creation Units to be effected based on the NAV of a Fund as determined on such date. A “Custom Order” may be placed by an Authorized Participant in the event that the Trust permits or requires the substitution of an amount of cash to be added to the Cash Component to replace any Deposit Security which may not be available in sufficient quantity for delivery or which may not be eligible for trading by such Authorized Participant or the investor for which it is acting, or other relevant reason. The Business Day on which a creation order (or order to redeem as discussed below) is placed is herein

referred to as the “Transmittal Date.” Orders must be transmitted by telephone or other transmission method acceptable to the Distributor pursuant to procedures set forth in the Participant Agreement, as described below (see “—Placement of Creation Orders Using Clearing Process”). Severe economic or market disruptions or changes, or telephone or other communication failure, may impede the ability to reach the Distributor, a Participating Party or a DTC Participant.

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

Orders to create Creation Units of a Fund shall be placed with a Participating Party or DTC Participant, as applicable, in the form required by such Participating Party or DTC Participant. Investors should be aware that their particular broker may not have executed a Participant Agreement, and that, therefore, orders to create Creation Units of the Funds may have to be placed by the investor's broker through a Participating Party or a DTC Participant who has executed a Participant Agreement. At any given time there may be only a limited number of broker-dealers that have executed a Participant Agreement. Those placing orders to create Creation Units of a Fund through the Clearing Process should afford sufficient time to permit proper submission of the order to the Distributor prior to the Closing Time on the Transmittal Date.

Orders for creation that are effected outside the Clearing Process are likely to require transmittal by the DTC Participant earlier on the Transmittal Date than orders effected using the Clearing Process. Those persons placing orders outside the Clearing Process should ascertain the deadlines applicable to DTC and the Federal Reserve Bank wire system by contacting the operations department of the broker or depository institution effectuating such transfer of Deposit Securities and Cash Component.

#### Placement of Creation Orders Using Clearing Process

Fund Deposits created through the Clearing Process, if available, must be delivered through a Participating Party that has executed a Participant Agreement.

The Participant Agreement authorizes the Distributor to transmit to NSCC on behalf of the Participating Party such trade instructions as are necessary to effect the Participating Party's creation order. Pursuant to such trade instructions from the Distributor to NSCC, the Participating Party agrees to transfer the requisite Deposit Securities (or contracts to purchase such Deposit Securities that are expected to be delivered in a "regular way" manner by the third (3rd) Business Day) and the Cash Component to the Trust, together with such additional information as may be required by the Distributor. An order to create Creation Units of a Fund through the Clearing Process is deemed received by the Distributor on the Transmittal Date if (i) such order is received by the Distributor not later than the Closing Time on such Transmittal Date and (ii) all other procedures set forth in the Participant Agreement are properly followed.

Placement of Creation Orders Outside Clearing Process

Fund Deposits created outside the Clearing Process must be delivered through a DTC Participant that has executed a Participant Agreement. A DTC Participant who wishes to place an order creating Creation Units of the Funds to be effected outside the Clearing Process need not be a Participating Party, but such orders must state that the DTC Participant is not using the Clearing Process and that the creation of Creation Units will instead be effected through a transfer of securities and cash. The Fund Deposit transfer must be ordered by the DTC Participant in a timely fashion so as to ensure the delivery of the



requisite number of Deposit Securities through DTC to the account of the Trust by no later than 11:00 a.m. Eastern time, of the next Business Day immediately following the Transmittal Date. All questions as to the number of Deposit Securities to be delivered, and the validity, form and eligibility (including time of receipt) for the deposit of any tendered securities, will be determined by the Trust, whose determination shall be final and binding. The cash equal to the Cash Component must be transferred directly to the Distributor through the Federal Reserve wire system in a timely manner so as to be received by the Distributor no later than 2:00 p.m. Eastern time, on the next Business Day immediately following the Transmittal Date. An order to create Creation Units of a Fund outside the Clearing Process is deemed received by the Distributor on the Transmittal Date if (i) such order is received by the Distributor not later than the Closing Time on such Transmittal Date; and (ii) all other procedures set forth in the Participant Agreement are properly followed. However, if the Distributor does not receive both the requisite Deposit Securities and the Cash Component in a timely fashion on the next Business Day immediately following the Transmittal Date, such order will be cancelled. Upon written notice to the Distributor, such cancelled order may be resubmitted the following Business Day using a Fund Deposit as newly constituted to reflect the current NAV of the applicable Fund. The delivery of Creation Units so created will occur no later than the third (3rd) Business Day following the day on which the creation order is deemed received by the Distributor.

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

#### Acceptance of Creation Orders

The Trust reserves the absolute right to reject a creation order transmitted to it by the Distributor if, for any reason, (a) the order is not in proper form; (b) the creator or creators, upon obtaining the Shares, would own 80% or more of the currently outstanding Shares of a Fund; (c) the Deposit Securities delivered are not as specified by the Administrator, as described above; (d) the acceptance of the Deposit Securities would have certain adverse tax consequences to a Fund; (e) the acceptance of the Fund Deposit would, in the opinion of counsel, be unlawful; (f) the acceptance of the Fund Deposit would otherwise, in the discretion of the Trust or the Adviser, have an adverse effect on the Trust or the rights of beneficial owners; or (g) in the event that circumstances outside the control of the Trust, the Distributor and the Adviser make it for all practical purposes impossible to process creation orders. Examples of such circumstances include, without limitation, acts of God or public service or utility problems such as earthquakes, fires, floods, extreme weather conditions and power outages resulting in telephone, telecopy and computer failures; wars; civil or military disturbances, including acts of civil or military authority or governmental actions; terrorism; sabotage; epidemics; riots; labor disputes; market conditions or activities causing trading halts; systems failures involving computer or other information systems affecting the Trust, the Adviser, the Distributor, DTC, the NSCC or any other participant in the creation process, and similar extraordinary events. The Transfer Agent will notify a prospective creator of its rejection of the order of such person. The Trust, the Custodian, any subcustodian, the Distributor and the Transfer Agent are under no duty, however, to give notification of any defects or irregularities in the delivery of Fund Deposits to Authorized Participants nor shall any of them incur any liability to Authorized Participants for the failure to give any such notification.

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 Trust, and the Trust's determination shall be final and binding.

## Creation Transaction Fee

A fixed creation transaction fee of \$500 payable to the Custodian is imposed on each creation transaction regardless of the number of Creation Units purchased in the transaction. In addition, a variable charge for cash creations or for creations outside the Clearing Process currently of up to four times the basic creation transaction fee may be imposed. In the case of cash creations or where the Trust permits or requires a creator to substitute cash in lieu of depositing a portion of the Deposit Securities, the creator may be assessed an additional variable charge to compensate the Funds for the costs associated with purchasing the applicable securities. (See “Fund Deposit” section above.) As a result, in order to seek to replicate the in-kind creation order process, the Trust expects to purchase, in the secondary market or otherwise gain exposure to, the portfolio securities that could have been delivered as a result of an in-kind creation order pursuant to local law or market convention, or for other reasons (“Market Purchases”). In such cases where the Trust makes Market Purchases, the Authorized Participant will reimburse the Trust for, among other things, any difference between the market value at which the securities and/or financial instruments were purchased by the Trust and the cash in lieu amount (which amount, at the Adviser’s discretion, may be capped), applicable registration fees, brokerage commissions and certain taxes. The Adviser may adjust the transaction fee to the extent the composition of the creation securities changes or cash in lieu is added to the Cash Component to protect ongoing shareholders. Creators of Creation Units are responsible for the costs of transferring the securities constituting the Deposit Securities to the account of the Trust.

## Redemption of Creation Units

Shares may be redeemed only in Creation Units at their NAV next determined after receipt of a redemption request in proper form by the Distributor, only on a Business Day and only through a Participating Party or DTC Participant who has executed a Participant Agreement. **The Trust will not redeem Shares in amounts less than Creation Units.** Beneficial Owners also may sell Shares in the secondary market, but must accumulate enough Shares to constitute a Creation Unit in order to have such Shares redeemed by the Trust. There can be no assurance, however, that there will be sufficient liquidity in the public trading market at any time to permit assembly of a Creation Unit. Investors should expect to incur brokerage and other costs in connection with assembling a sufficient number of Shares to constitute a redeemable Creation Unit. See with respect to each Fund the section entitled “Summary Information—Principal Risks of Investing in the Fund” and “Additional Information About the Funds’ Investment Strategies and Risks—Risks of Investing in the Funds” in the Prospectus.

The Administrator, through NSCC, makes available immediately prior to the opening of business on the Exchange (currently 9:30 a.m., Eastern time) on each day that the Exchange is open for business, the Fund Securities that will be applicable (subject to possible amendment or correction) to redemption requests received in proper form (as defined below) on that day. An Authorized Participant submitting a redemption request is deemed to represent to the Trust that it (or its client) (i) owns outright or has full legal authority and legal beneficial right to tender for redemption the requisite number of Fund Shares to be redeemed and can receive the entire proceeds of the redemption, and (ii) the Fund Shares to be redeemed have not been loaned or pledged to another party nor are they the subject of a repurchase agreement, securities lending agreement or such other arrangement that would preclude the delivery of such Fund Shares to the Trust. The Trust reserves the right to verify these representations at its discretion, but will typically require verification with respect to a redemption request from a Fund in connection with higher levels of redemption activity and/or short interest in the Fund. If the Authorized Participant, upon receipt of a verification request, does not

provide sufficient verification of its representations as determined by the Trust, the redemption request will not be considered to have been received in proper form and may be rejected by the Trust.

Cash redemptions are generally required by each Fund. To the extent the Funds permit redemptions of Creation Units in-kind, the redemption proceeds for a Creation Unit generally consist of Fund Securities as announced by the Administrator on the Business Day of the request for redemption, plus cash in an amount equal to the difference between the NAV of the Shares being redeemed, as next determined after a receipt of a request in proper form, and the value of the Fund Securities, less the redemption transaction fee and variable fees described below. Should the Fund Securities have a value greater than the NAV of the Shares being redeemed, a compensating cash payment to the Trust equal to the differential plus the applicable redemption transaction fee will be required to be arranged for by or on behalf of the redeeming shareholder. Each Fund reserves the right to honor a redemption request by delivering a basket of securities or cash that differs from the Fund Securities.

### Redemption Transaction Fee

The basic redemption transaction fee of \$500 is the same no matter how many Creation Units are being redeemed pursuant to any one redemption request. An additional charge up to four times the redemption transaction fee will be charged with respect to cash redemptions or redemptions outside of the Clearing Process. An additional variable charge for cash redemptions or partial cash redemptions (when cash redemptions are permitted or required for a Fund) may also be imposed to compensate each applicable Fund for the costs associated with selling the applicable securities. As a result, in order to seek to replicate the in-kind redemption order process, the Trust expects to sell, in the secondary market, the portfolio securities or settle any financial instruments that may not be permitted to be re-registered in the name of the Participating Party as a result of an in-kind redemption order pursuant to local law or market convention, or for other reasons ("Market Sales"). In such cases where the Trust makes Market Sales, the Authorized Participant will reimburse the Trust for, among other things, any difference between the market value at which the securities and/or financial instruments were sold or settled by the Trust and the cash in lieu amount (which amount, at the Adviser's discretion, may be capped), applicable registration fees, brokerage commissions and certain taxes ("Transaction Costs"). The Adviser may adjust the transaction fee to the extent the composition of the redemption securities changes or cash in lieu is added to the Cash Component to protect ongoing shareholders. In no event will fees charged by a Fund in connection with a redemption exceed 2% of the value of each Creation Unit. Investors who use the services of a broker or other such intermediary may be charged a fee for such services. To the extent a Fund cannot recoup the amount of Transaction Costs incurred in connection with a redemption from the redeeming shareholder because of the 2% cap or otherwise, those Transaction Costs will be borne by the Fund's remaining shareholders and negatively affect the Fund's performance.

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

Orders to redeem Creation Units of a Fund through the Clearing Process, if available, must be delivered through a Participating Party that has executed a Participant Agreement. An order to redeem Creation Units of a Fund using the Clearing Process is deemed received on the Transmittal Date if (i) such order is received by the Distributor not later than 4:00 p.m. Eastern time on such Transmittal Date; and (ii) all other procedures set forth in the Participant Agreement are properly followed; such order will be effected based on the NAV of the applicable Fund as next determined. An order to redeem Creation Units of a Fund using the Clearing Process made in proper form but received by the Fund after 4:00 p.m. Eastern time, will be deemed received on the next Business Day immediately following the Transmittal Date. The requisite Fund Securities (or contracts to purchase such Fund Securities which are expected to be delivered in a “regular way” manner) and the applicable cash payment will be transferred by the third (3rd) Business Day following the date on which such request for redemption is deemed received.

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

Orders to redeem Creation Units of a Fund outside the Clearing Process must be delivered through a DTC Participant that has executed a Participant Agreement. A DTC Participant who wishes to place an order for redemption of Creation Units of a Fund to be effected outside the Clearing Process need not be a Participating Party, but such orders must state that the DTC Participant is not using the Clearing Process and that redemption of Creation Units of the Fund will instead be effected through transfer of Creation Units of the Fund directly through DTC. An order to redeem Creation Units of a Fund outside the Clearing Process is deemed received by the Administrator on the Transmittal Date if (i) such order is received by the Administrator not later than 4:00 p.m. Eastern time on such Transmittal Date; (ii) such order is preceded or accompanied by the requisite number of Shares of Creation Units specified in such order, which delivery must be made through DTC to the Administrator no later than 11:00 a.m. Eastern time, on such Transmittal Date (the “DTC Cut-Off-Time”); and (iii) all other procedures set forth in the Participant Agreement are properly followed.

After the Administrator has deemed an order for redemption outside the Clearing Process received, the Administrator will initiate procedures to transfer the requisite Fund Securities (or contracts to purchase such Fund Securities) which are expected to be delivered within three Business Days and the cash redemption payment to the redeeming Beneficial Owner by the third Business Day following the Transmittal Date on which such redemption order is deemed received by the Administrator. An additional variable redemption transaction fee of up to four times the basic transaction fee is applicable to redemptions outside the Clearing Process.

## **DETERMINATION OF NET ASSET VALUE**

The following information supplements and should be read in conjunction with the section in each Fund's Prospectus entitled "Shareholder Information—Determination of NAV."

The NAV per Share for each Fund is computed by dividing the value of the net assets of the Fund (i.e., the value of its total assets less total liabilities) by the total number of Shares outstanding. Expenses and fees, including the management fee, are accrued daily and taken into account for purposes of determining NAV. The NAV of each Fund is determined each business day as of the close of trading (ordinarily 4:00 p.m., Eastern time) on the New York Stock Exchange.

The values of each Fund's portfolio securities are based on the securities' closing prices on the markets on which the securities trade, when available. In the absence of a last reported sales price, or if no sales were reported, and for other assets for which market quotes are not readily available, values may be based on quotes obtained from a quotation reporting system, established market makers or by an outside independent pricing service. Debt instruments with remaining maturities of more than 60 days are valued at the evaluated mean price provided by an outside independent pricing service. If an outside independent pricing service is unable to provide a valuation, the instrument is valued at the mean of the highest bid and lowest asked quotes obtained from one or more brokers or dealers selected by the Adviser. Prices obtained by an outside independent pricing service may use information provided by market makers or estimates of market values obtained from yield data related to investments or securities with similar characteristics and may use a computerized grid matrix of securities and its evaluations in determining what it believes is the fair value of the portfolio securities. Short-term debt instruments having a maturity of 60 days or less are valued at amortized cost. If a market quotation for a security or other asset is not readily available or the Adviser believes it does not otherwise accurately reflect the market value of the security or asset at the time a Fund calculates its NAV, the security or asset will be fair valued by the Adviser in accordance with the Trust's valuation policies and procedures approved by the Board of Trustees. Each Fund may also use fair value pricing in a variety of circumstances, including but not limited to, situations when the value of a security in the Fund's portfolio has been materially affected by events occurring after the close of the market on which the security is principally traded (such as a corporate action or other news that may materially affect the price of a security) or trading in a security has been suspended or halted.

Accordingly, a Fund's NAV is expected to reflect certain portfolio securities' fair values rather than their market prices at the time the exchanges on which they principally trade close. Fair value pricing involves subjective judgments and it is possible that a fair value determination for a security or other asset is materially different than the value that could be realized upon the sale of the security or asset. In addition, fair value pricing could result in a difference between the prices used to calculate a Fund's NAV and the prices used by the Index. This may adversely affect a Fund's ability to track its Index.

## **DIVIDENDS AND DISTRIBUTIONS**

The following information supplements and should be read in conjunction with the section in the Prospectus entitled “Shareholder Information—Distributions.”

### General Policies

Dividends from net investment income, if any, are declared and paid quarterly by the Funds.

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.

### DIVIDEND REINVESTMENT SERVICE

No reinvestment service is provided by the Trust. 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. If this service is used, dividend distributions of both income and realized gains will be automatically reinvested in additional whole Shares of the Funds. Beneficial Owners should contact their broker to determine the availability and costs of the service and the details of participation therein. Brokers may require Beneficial Owners to adhere to specific procedures and timetables. Distributions reinvested in additional Shares of the Funds will nevertheless be taxable to Beneficial Owners acquiring such additional Shares to the same extent as if such distributions had been received in cash.

### CONTROL PERSONS AND PRINCIPAL SHAREHOLDERS

Although the Trust does not have information concerning the beneficial ownership of shares held in the names of DTC Participants, as of February 28, 2017, the name and percentage ownership of each DTC Participant that owned of record 5% or more of the outstanding shares of a Fund were as follows:

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Participant Name and Address</b>	<b>Percentage of Ownership</b>
VanEck Vectors High Income MLP ETF	Raymond James & Associates Inc. 880 Carillon Parkway	16.47%



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St. Petersburg, FL 33716	
Charles Schwab & Co., Inc.	
2423 East Lincoln Drive	14.13%
Phoenix, AZ 85016	
National Financial Services, LLC	
200 Liberty Street	
One World Financial Centre	13.30%
5 <sup>th</sup> Floor	
New York, NY 10281-1003	
Pershing, LLC	
One Pershing Plaza	12.60%
Grove Street PATH Station	
Jersey City, NJ 07399	

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	TD Ameritrade	
	200 South 108th Avenue	7.47%
	Omaha, NE 68154-2631	
	Raymond James & Associates Inc.	
	880 Carillon Parkway	28.64%
	St. Petersburg, FL 33716	
	Pershing, LLC	
	One Pershing Plaza	27.80%
	Grove Street PATH Station	
	Jersey City, NJ 07399	
VanEck Vectors High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF	Charles Schwab & Co., Inc.	
	2423 East Lincoln Drive	10.37%
	Phoenix, AZ 85016	
	National Financial Services, LLC	
	200 Liberty Street	
	One World Financial Centre	10.08%
	5 <sup>th</sup> Floor	
	New York, NY 10281-1003	

## TAXES

The following information also supplements and should be read in conjunction with the section in the Prospectus entitled “Shareholder Information—Tax Information” and the section in this Statement of Additional Information entitled “Special Considerations and Risks.” The following summary of certain relevant tax provisions is subject to change, and does not constitute legal or tax advice.

The following general discussion of certain federal income tax consequences is based on provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (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 foreign, federal, state, or local taxes.

Each Fund is taxed as a regular corporation under Subchapter C of the Code for federal income tax purposes and as such is obligated to pay federal and applicable state taxes on its taxable income. This differs from most investment companies, which elect to be treated as “regulated investment companies” under the Code in order to avoid paying entity level income taxes. Under current law, the Funds are not eligible to elect treatment as regulated investment companies due to their investments primarily in MLPs. As a result, each Fund, unlike investment companies that utilize the special tax regime applicable to regulated investment companies, will be obligated to pay federal and state taxes on its

taxable income, whether or not distributed to shareholders. The extent to which a Fund is required to pay U.S. federal, state or local corporate income, franchise, alternative minimum or other corporate taxes could materially reduce the Fund's cash available to make distributions on the Shares.

The Funds invest primarily in MLPs, which generally are treated as partnerships for federal income tax purposes. MLPs are publicly traded partnerships under the Code. The Code generally requires publicly traded partnerships to be treated as corporations for U.S. federal income tax purposes. If, however, a publicly traded partnership satisfies certain requirements, it will be treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Specifically, if a publicly traded partnership receives 90 percent or more of its income from qualifying sources, such as interest, dividends, real estate rents, gain from the sale or disposition of real property, income and gain from certain mineral or natural resources activities, income and gain from the transportation or storage of certain fuels, gain from the sale or disposition of a capital asset held for the production of such income, and, in certain circumstances, income and gain from commodities or futures, forwards and options with respect to commodities, then the publicly traded partnership will be treated as a partnership for federal income tax purposes. Mineral or natural resources activities include exploration, development, production, mining, processing, refining, marketing and transportation (including pipelines), of oil and gas, minerals, geothermal energy, fertilizers, timber or industrial source carbon dioxide. The MLPs in which the Funds will invest are expected to be treated as partnerships for tax purposes under these rules.

As a partner in MLPs, each Fund must take into account its allocable share of the MLPs' taxable income in computing its taxable income, regardless of the extent (if any) to which the MLPs make distributions. Based upon the Adviser's review of the historic results of the types of MLPs in which the Funds invest, the Adviser expects that the cash flow received by the Fund with respect to its MLP investments will generally exceed the net taxable income allocated to the Funds. This excess cash flow will result primarily from tax deductions, such as depreciation, amortization and depletion, that will be allocated to the Funds from the MLPs. The excess cash flow generally will not be currently taxable to a Fund but, rather, will generally result in a reduction of the Fund's adjusted tax basis in each MLP as described in the following paragraph. There is no assurance that the Adviser's expectation regarding the tax character of MLP distributions will be realized. If this expectation is not realized, there may be greater tax expense borne by the Funds and less cash available to distribute to you or to pay expenses.

Although any distribution by an MLP to a Fund in excess of the Fund's allocable share of such MLP's net taxable income may create a temporary economic benefit to the Fund, such distribution will decrease the Fund's tax basis in its MLP investment and will therefore increase the amount of gain (or decrease the amount of loss) that will be recognized on the sale of an equity security in the MLP by the Fund. A portion of any gain or loss recognized by a Fund on a disposition of an MLP equity security (or by an MLP on a disposition of an underlying asset) may be separately computed and taxed as ordinary income or loss under the Code to the extent attributable to assets of the MLP that give rise to depreciation recapture, intangible drilling and development cost recapture, or other "unrealized receivables" or "inventory items" under the Code. Any such gain may exceed net taxable gain realized on the disposition and will be recognized even if there is a net taxable loss on the disposition. As a corporation, each Fund will be subject to tax on its capital gains at ordinary income rates, so treatment of gains as ordinary income will not cause the gains to be taxed at a higher rate. Nevertheless, a Fund's net capital losses may only be used to offset capital gains and therefore cannot be used to offset gains that are treated as ordinary income. Thus, a Fund could recognize both gain that is treated as ordinary income and a capital loss on a disposition of an MLP equity security (or on an MLP's disposition of an underlying asset) and would not be able to use the capital loss to offset that gain.

Each Fund will recognize gain or loss on the sale, exchange or other taxable disposition of its portfolio assets, including equity securities of MLPs, equal to the difference between the amount realized by the Fund on the sale, exchange or other taxable disposition and the Fund's adjusted tax basis in such assets. Any such gain will be subject to U.S. federal income tax at regular corporate rates, regardless of how long the applicable Fund has held such assets. The amount realized by a Fund in any case generally will be the amount paid by the purchaser of the asset plus, in the

case of MLP equity securities, the

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Fund's allocable share, if any, of the MLP's debt that will be allocated to the purchaser as a result of the sale, exchange or other taxable disposition. A Fund's tax basis in its equity securities in an MLP is generally equal to the amount the Fund paid for the equity securities, (x) increased by the Fund's allocable share of the MLP's net taxable income and certain MLP debt, if any, and (y) decreased by the Fund's allocable share of the MLP's net losses and any distributions received by the Fund from the MLP.

Any capital losses that a Fund recognizes on a disposition of an equity security of an MLP can only be used to offset capital gains that the Fund recognizes. Any capital losses that a Fund is unable to use may be carried back for three taxable years and forward for five taxable years to reduce the Fund's capital gains in such years. Because (i) the periods for which capital losses may be carried back and forward are limited and (ii) the disposition of an equity security of an MLP may be treated, in significant part, as ordinary income, capital losses incurred by the Fund may expire without being utilized.

The amount of taxes currently paid by a Fund will vary depending on the amount of income, gains, losses and deductions the Fund is allocated from its MLP investments, and on the Fund's realized gains and losses, and such taxes will reduce your return from an investment in a Fund.

A Fund's allocable share of certain percentage depletion deductions and intangible drilling costs of the MLPs in which the Fund invests may be treated as items of tax preference for purposes of calculating the Fund's alternative minimum taxable income. Such items may increase the Fund's alternative minimum taxable income and increase the likelihood that the Fund may be subject to the alternative minimum tax.

Distributions made to you by a Fund (other than certain distributions in redemption of shares) will generally constitute dividends to the extent of your allocable share of the Fund's current or accumulated earnings and profits, as calculated for federal income tax purposes. Generally, a corporation's earnings and profits are computed based upon net taxable income, with certain specified adjustments. Based upon the historic performance of the types of MLPs in which the Fund intend to invest, the Adviser anticipates that the distributed cash from the MLPs generally will exceed the Fund's share of the MLPs' net taxable income. Because each Fund's earnings and profits will be based on its allocable share of net taxable income from MLPs (and not on distributions received from MLPs), the Adviser anticipates that only a portion of a Fund's distributions will be treated as dividend income to shareholders. To the extent that distributions to a shareholder exceed the shareholder's allocable share of the Fund's current and accumulated earnings and profits, the shareholder's tax basis in the Fund's Shares with respect to which the distribution is made will be reduced (but not below zero), which will increase the amount of any taxable gain (or decrease the amount of any tax loss) realized upon a subsequent sale or redemption of such Shares. To the extent a shareholder holds Shares as a capital asset and has no further basis in the Shares, the shareholder will report distributions in excess of earnings and profits as capital gain.

Distributions treated as dividends under the foregoing rules generally will be taxable as ordinary income to you but may be treated as "qualified dividend income." Qualified dividend income received by individuals and other noncorporate shareholders is taxed at long-term capital gain rates. For a dividend to constitute qualified dividend income, the shareholder generally must hold the shares paying the dividend for more than 60 days during the 121-day period beginning 60 days before the ex-dividend date, although a longer period may apply if the shareholder engages

in certain risk reduction transactions with respect to the common stock.

Dividends paid by the Funds are expected to be eligible for the dividends-received deduction available to corporate shareholders under Section 243 of the Code. However, corporate shareholders should be aware that certain limitations apply to the availability of the dividends received deduction,

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including rules which limit the deduction in cases where (i) certain holding period requirements are not met, (ii) the corporate shareholder is obligated (e.g., pursuant to a short sale) to make related payments with respect to positions in substantially similar or related property, or (iii) the corporate shareholder's investment in shares of a particular Fund is financed, in whole or in part, with indebtedness. Corporate shareholders should consult their own tax advisors regarding the application of these limitations to their particular situations.

A sale or exchange of Shares in a Fund may give rise to a gain or loss. In general, any gain or loss realized upon a taxable disposition of Shares will be treated as long-term capital gain or loss if the Shares have been held for more than one year. Otherwise, the gain or loss on the taxable disposition of Shares will be treated as short-term capital gain or loss. All or a portion of any loss realized upon a taxable disposition of Shares will be disallowed if substantially identical shares of the Funds are purchased (through reinvestment of dividends or otherwise) within 30 days before or after the disposition. In such a case, the basis of the newly purchased shares will be adjusted to reflect the disallowed loss.

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 (i) the sum of the market value of the Creation Units at the time of the exchange and any net amount of cash received by the Authorized Participant in the exchange and (ii) the sum of the Authorized Participant's aggregate basis in the securities surrendered therefor and any net 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 Internal Revenue Service, however, may assert that a loss realized upon an exchange of securities for Creation Units cannot be deducted currently under the rules governing "wash sales," or on the basis that there has been no significant change in economic position.

Any capital gain or loss realized upon the creation of Creation Units will generally be treated as long-term capital gain or loss if the securities exchanged for such Creation Units have been held for more than one year. Any capital gain or loss realized upon the redemption of Creation Units will generally be treated as long-term capital gain or loss if the Creation Units have been held for more than one year. Otherwise, such capital gains or losses will be treated as short-term capital gains or losses.

The Trust on behalf of the Funds has the right to reject an order for a purchase of shares of the Trust if the purchaser (or group of purchasers) would, upon obtaining the shares so ordered, own 80% or more of the outstanding shares of the Funds and if, pursuant to Section 351 of the Code, the Funds would have a basis in the securities different from the market value of such securities on the date of deposit. The Trust also has the right to require information necessary to determine beneficial share ownership for purposes of the 80% determination.

Persons purchasing or redeeming Creation Units should consult their own tax advisors with respect to the tax treatment of any creation or redemption transaction.



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

Foreign Investments. Income received by the Funds from sources within foreign countries (including, for example, dividends or interest on stock or securities of non-U.S. issuers) may be subject to

withholding and other taxes imposed by such countries. Tax treaties between such countries and the U.S. may reduce or eliminate such taxes. Foreign taxes paid by the Funds will reduce the return from the Funds' investments.

**Back-Up Withholding.** The Funds will be required in certain cases to withhold at the applicable withholding rate and remit to the U.S. Treasury the withheld amount of taxable dividends paid to a shareholder who (1) fails to provide a correct taxpayer identification number certified under penalty of perjury; (2) is subject to withholding by the Internal Revenue Service 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). Backup withholding is not an additional tax and any amounts withheld may be credited against the shareholder's ultimate U.S. tax liability.

**Non-U.S. Shareholders.** If you are not a citizen or resident alien of the United States or if you are a non-U.S. entity (a "Non-U.S. Shareholder"), the Fund's ordinary income dividends (which include distributions of net short-term capital gains) will generally be subject to a 30% U.S. withholding tax, unless a lower treaty rate applies or unless such income is effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business.

Any capital gain realized by a Non-U.S. Shareholder upon a sale of shares of a Fund will generally not be subject to U.S. federal income or withholding tax unless (i) the gain is effectively connected with the shareholder's trade or business in the U.S., or in the case of a shareholder who is a nonresident alien individual, the shareholder is present in the U.S. for 183 days or more during the taxable year and certain other conditions are met or (ii) a Fund is or has been a U.S. real property holding corporation, as defined below, at any time within the five-year period preceding the date of disposition of the Fund's Shares or, if shorter, within the period during which the Non-U.S. Shareholder has held the Shares. Generally, a corporation is a U.S. real property holding corporation if the fair market value of its U.S. real property interests, as defined in the Code and applicable regulations, equals or exceeds 50% of the aggregate fair market value of its worldwide real property interests and its other assets used or held for use in a trade or business. A Fund may be, or may prior to a Non-U.S. Shareholder's disposition of Shares become, a U.S. real property holding corporation. If a Fund is or becomes a U.S. real property holding corporation, so long as the Fund's Shares are regularly traded on an established securities market, only a Non-U.S. Shareholder who holds or held (at any time during the shorter of the five year period preceding the date of disposition or the holder's holding period) more than 5% (directly or indirectly as determined under applicable attribution rules of the Code) of the Fund's Shares will be subject to United States federal income tax on the disposition of Shares.

Any Non-U.S. Shareholder who is described in one of the foregoing cases is urged to consult his, her or its own tax advisor regarding the U.S. federal income tax consequences of the redemption, sale, exchange or other disposition of shares of a Fund.

As part of the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act, ("FATCA"), a Fund may be required to withhold 30% on certain types of U.S. sourced income (e.g., dividends, interest, and other types of passive income) and after January 1, 2019, proceeds from the sale or other disposition of property producing U.S. sourced income to (i) foreign financial institutions ("FFIs"), including non-U.S. investment funds, unless they agree to collect and disclose to the Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") information regarding their direct and indirect U.S. account holders and (ii) certain

nonfinancial foreign entities (“NFFEs”), unless they certify certain information regarding their direct and indirect U.S. owners. To avoid possible withholding, FFIs will need to enter into agreements with the IRS which state that they will provide the IRS information, including the names, account numbers and balances, addresses and taxpayer identification numbers of U.S. account holders and comply with due diligence procedures with

respect to the identification of U.S. accounts as well as agree to withhold tax on certain types of withholdable payments made to non-compliant foreign financial institutions or to applicable foreign account holders who fail to provide the required information to the IRS, or similar account information and required documentation to a local revenue authority, should an applicable intergovernmental agreement be implemented. NFFE's will need to provide certain information regarding each substantial U.S. owner or certifications of no substantial U.S. ownership, unless certain exceptions apply, or agree to provide certain information to the IRS.

While some parts of the FATCA rules have not been finalized, the Funds may be subject to the FATCA withholding obligation, and also will be required to perform due diligence reviews to classify foreign entity investors for FATCA purposes. Investors are required to agree to provide information necessary to allow the Funds to comply with the FATCA rules. If a Fund is required to withhold amounts from payments pursuant to FATCA, investors will receive distributions that are reduced by such withholding amounts.

Non-U.S. Shareholders are advised to consult their tax advisors with respect to the particular tax consequences to them of an investment in the Fund, including the possible applicability of the U.S. estate tax.

Other Issues. The Funds may be subject to tax or taxes in certain states where MLPs do business. Furthermore, in those states which have income tax laws, the tax treatment of the Funds and of Fund shareholders with respect to distributions by the Funds may differ from federal tax treatment.

The foregoing discussion is based on federal tax laws and regulations which are in effect on the date of this Statement of Additional Information. Such laws and regulations may be changed by legislative or administrative action. Shareholders are advised to consult their tax advisors concerning their specific situations and the application of federal, state, local and foreign taxes.

## **CAPITAL STOCK AND SHAREHOLDER REPORTS**

The Trust currently is comprised of 59 investment portfolios. The Trust issues Shares of beneficial interest with no par value. The Board may designate additional funds of the Trust.

Each Share issued by the Trust has a pro rata interest in the assets of the corresponding Fund. Shares have no pre-emptive, exchange, subscription or conversion rights and are freely transferable. Each Share is entitled to participate equally in dividends and distributions declared by the Board with respect to the relevant Fund, and in the net distributable assets of such Fund on liquidation. A Fund may liquidate and terminate at any time and for any reason, including as a result of the termination of the license agreement between the Adviser and the Index Provider,

without shareholder approval.

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 and each fractional Share has a proportional fractional vote. Shares of all funds 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. Under Delaware law, the Trust is not required to hold an annual meeting of shareholders unless required to do so under the 1940 Act. The policy of the Trust is not to hold an annual meeting of shareholders unless required to do so under the 1940 Act. All Shares of the Trust have noncumulative voting rights for the election of Trustees. Under Delaware law, Trustees of the Trust may be removed by vote of the shareholders.

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Under Delaware law, the shareholders of a Fund are not generally subject to liability for the debts or obligations of the Trust. Similarly, Delaware law provides that a Fund will not be liable for the debts or obligations of any other series of the Trust. However, no similar statutory or other authority limiting statutory trust shareholder liability may exist in other states. As a result, to the extent that a Delaware statutory trust or a shareholder is subject to the jurisdiction of courts of such other states, the courts may not apply Delaware law and may thereby subject the Delaware statutory trust's shareholders to liability for the debts or obligations of the Trust. The Trust's Amended and Restated Declaration of Trust (the "Declaration of Trust") provides for indemnification by the relevant Fund for all loss suffered by a shareholder as a result of an obligation of the Fund. The Declaration of Trust also provides that a Fund shall, upon request, assume the defense of any claim made against any shareholder for any act or obligation of the Fund and satisfy any judgment thereon.

The Trust will issue through DTC Participants to its shareholders semi-annual reports containing unaudited financial statements and annual reports containing financial statements audited by an independent auditor approved by the Trust's Trustees and by the shareholders when meetings are held and such other information as may be required by applicable laws, rules and regulations. Beneficial Owners also receive annually notification as to the tax status of the Trust's distributions.

Shareholder inquiries may be made by writing to the Trust, c/o Van Eck Associates Corporation, 666 Third Avenue, 9th Floor, New York, New York 10017.

#### **COUNSEL AND INDEPENDENT REGISTERED PUBLIC ACCOUNTING FIRM**

Dechert LLP, 1095 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10036, is counsel to the Trust and has passed upon the validity of each Fund's Shares.

Ernst & Young LLP, 5 Times Square, New York, New York 10036, is the Trust's independent registered public accounting firm and audits the Funds' financial statements and performs other related audit services.

#### **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

Pursuant to an agreement and plan of reorganization between the Trust, on behalf of the Funds, and Exchange Traded Concepts Trust, on behalf of Yorkville High Income MLP ETF and Yorkville High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF (the "Predecessor Funds"), on February 22, 2016 the Funds acquired all of the assets and liabilities of the respective Predecessor Fund in exchange for shares of beneficial interest of each Fund (the "Reorganization"). As a result of the Reorganization, the Funds adopted the financial and performance history of the respective Predecessor Fund.

The audited financial statements of each Fund, including the financial highlights, the report of the Predecessor Funds' independent registered public accounting firm, and the report of Ernst & Young LLP, appearing in the Trust's Annual Report to shareholders for the fiscal year ended November 30, 2016 and filed electronically with the SEC, are incorporated by reference and made part of this SAI. You may request a copy of the Trust's Annual Report and Semi-Annual Report for the Funds at no charge by calling 800-826-2333 during normal business hours.

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## **LICENSE AGREEMENT AND DISCLAIMERS**

The Indexes are calculated and administered by Solactive AG, formerly, Structured Solutions AG (“Solactive”). Solactive is not affiliated with the Trust, the Adviser, the Funds’ administrator, custodian, transfer agent or distributor, or any of their respective affiliates. The Adviser has entered into a license agreement with Solactive pursuant to which the Adviser pays a fee to use the Indexes. The Adviser is sub-licensing rights to the Indexes to the Funds at no charge.

Shares of the Trust are not sponsored, promoted, sold or supported in any other manner by Solactive nor does Solactive offer any express or implicit guarantee or assurance either with regard to the results of using an Index and/or Index trade mark or an Index price at any time or in any other respect. The Indexes are calculated and published by Solactive. Solactive uses its best efforts to ensure that each Index is calculated correctly. Irrespective of its obligations towards the Trust, Solactive has no obligation to point out errors in the Indexes to third parties including but not limited to investors and/or financial intermediaries of the financial instrument. Neither publication of the Indexes by Solactive nor the licensing of the Indexes or Index trademarks for the purpose of use in connection with Shares of the Trust constitutes a recommendation by Solactive to invest capital in Shares of the Trust nor does it in any way represent an assurance or opinion of Solactive with regard to any investment in Shares of the Trust.



APPENDIX A

VANECK PROXY VOTING POLICIES

VanEck (the “Adviser”) has adopted the following policies and procedures which are reasonably designed to ensure that proxies are voted in a manner that is consistent with the best interests of its clients in accordance with its fiduciary duties and Rule 206(4)-6 under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. When an adviser has been granted proxy voting authority by a client, the adviser owes its clients the duties of care and loyalty in performing this service on their behalf. The duty of care requires the adviser to monitor corporate actions and vote client proxies. The duty of loyalty requires the adviser to cast the proxy votes in a manner that is consistent with the best interests of the client.

Rule 206(4)-6 also requires the Adviser to disclose information about the proxy voting procedures to its clients and to inform clients how to obtain information about how their proxies were voted. Additionally, Rule 204-2 under the Advisers Act requires the Adviser to maintain certain proxy voting records.

An adviser that exercises voting authority without complying with Rule 206(4)-6 will be deemed to have engaged in a “fraudulent, deceptive, or manipulative” act, practice or course of business within the meaning of Section 206(4) of the Advisers Act.

The Adviser intends to vote all proxies in accordance with applicable rules and regulations, and in the best interests of clients without influence by real or apparent conflicts of interest. To assist in its responsibility for voting proxies and the overall voting process, the Adviser has engaged an independent third party proxy voting specialist, Glass Lewis & Co., LLC. The services provided by Glass Lewis include in-depth research, global issuer analysis, and voting recommendations as well as vote execution, reporting and recordkeeping.

**Resolving Material Conflicts of Interest**

When a material conflict of interest exists, proxies will be voted in the following manner:

1. Strict adherence to the Glass Lewis guidelines , or
2. The potential conflict will be disclosed to the client:
  - a. with a request that the client vote the proxy,
  - b. with a recommendation that the client engage another party to determine how the proxy should be voted or

c. if the foregoing are not acceptable to the client, disclosure of how VanEck intends to vote and a written consent to that vote by the client.

Any deviations from the foregoing voting mechanisms must be approved by the Chief Compliance Officer with a written explanation of the reason for the deviation.

A **material conflict of interest** means the existence of a business relationship between a portfolio company or an affiliate and the Adviser, any affiliate or subsidiary, or an “affiliated person” of a VanEck mutual fund. Examples of when a material conflict of interest exists include a situation where the adviser provides significant investment advisory, brokerage or other services to a company whose management is soliciting proxies; an officer of the Adviser serves on the board of a charitable organization that receives charitable contributions from the portfolio company and the charitable organization is a client of the Adviser; a portfolio company that is a significant selling agent of the Adviser’s products and services solicits proxies; a broker-dealer or insurance company that controls 5% or more of the Adviser’s assets

solicits proxies; the Adviser serves as an investment adviser to the pension or other investment account of the portfolio company; the Adviser and the portfolio company have a lending relationship. In each of these situations voting against management may cause the Adviser a loss of revenue or other benefit.

## Client Inquiries

All inquiries by clients as to how the Adviser has voted proxies must immediately be forwarded to Portfolio Administration.

## Disclosure to Clients

### 1. Notification of Availability of Information

Client Brochure - The Client Brochure or Part II of Form ADV will inform clients that they can obtain information from the Adviser on how their proxies were voted. The Client Brochure or Part II of Form ADV will be mailed to each client annually. The Legal Department will be responsible for coordinating the mailing with Sales/Marketing Departments.

### 2. Availability of Proxy Voting Information

At the client's request or if the information is not available on the Adviser's website, a hard copy of the account's proxy votes will be mailed to each client.

## Recordkeeping Requirements

1. VanEck will retain the following documentation and information for each matter relating to a portfolio security with respect to which a client was entitled to vote:

- a. proxy statements received;
- b. identifying number for the portfolio security;
- c. shareholder meeting date;
- d. brief identification of the matter voted on;
- e. whether the vote was cast on the matter;
- f. how the vote was cast (e.g., for or against proposal, or abstain; for or withhold regarding election of directors);
- g. records of written client requests for information on how the Adviser voted proxies on behalf of the client; a copy of written responses from the Adviser to any written or oral client request for information on how the
- h. Adviser voted proxies on behalf of the client; and any documents prepared by the Adviser that were material to the decision on how to vote or that memorialized the basis for the decision, if such documents were prepared.

Copies of proxy statements filed on EDGAR, and proxy statements and records of proxy votes maintained with a third party (i.e., proxy voting service) need not be maintained. The third party must agree in writing to provide a copy of the documents promptly upon request.

3. If applicable, any document memorializing that the costs of voting a proxy exceed the benefit to the client or any other decision to refrain from voting, and that such abstention was in the client's best interest.

4. Proxy voting records will be maintained in an easily accessible place for five years, the first two at the office of the Adviser. Proxy statements on file with EDGAR or maintained by a third

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party and proxy votes maintained by a third party are not subject to these particular retention requirements.

### **Voting Foreign Proxies**

At times the Adviser may determine that, in the best interests of its clients, a particular proxy should not be voted. This may occur, for example, when the cost of voting a foreign proxy (translation, transportation, etc.) would exceed the benefit of voting the proxy or voting the foreign proxy may cause an unacceptable limitation on the sale of the security. Any such instances will be documented by the Portfolio Manager and reviewed by the Chief Compliance Officer.

### **Securities Lending**

Certain portfolios managed by the Adviser participate in securities lending programs to generate additional revenue. Proxy voting rights generally pass to the borrower when a security is on loan. The Adviser will use its best efforts to recall a security on loan and vote such securities if the Portfolio Manager determines that the proxy involves a material event.

### **Proxy Voting Policy**

The Adviser has reviewed the Glass Lewis Proxy Guidelines (“Guidelines”) and has determined that the Guidelines are consistent with the Adviser’s proxy voting responsibilities and its fiduciary duty with respect to its clients. The Adviser will review any material amendments to the Guidelines.

While it is the Adviser’s policy to generally follow the Guidelines, the Adviser retains the right, on any specific proxy, to vote differently from the Guidelines, if the Adviser believes it is in the best interests of its clients. Any such exceptions will be documented by the Adviser and reviewed by the Chief Compliance Officer.

The portfolio manager or analyst covering the security is responsible for making proxy voting decisions. Portfolio Administration, in conjunction with the portfolio manager and the custodian, is responsible for monitoring corporate actions and ensuring that corporate actions are timely voted.

**2017**

**PROXY PAPER™**

**GUIDELINES**

**AN OVERVIEW OF THE GLASS LEWIS  
APPROACH TO PROXY ADVICE**

**UNITED STATES**

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III

## **Guidelines Introduction**

Glass Lewis evaluates these guidelines on an ongoing basis and formally updates them on an annual basis. This year we've made noteworthy revisions in the following areas, which are summarized below but discussed in greater detail in the relevant section of this document:

### **SUMMARY OF CHANGES FOR THE 2017 UNITED STATES POLICY GUIDELINES**

#### **DIRECTOR OVERBOARDING POLICY**

The 2017 guidelines codify the policies outlined in last year's update. Glass Lewis will generally recommend voting against a director who serves as an executive officer of any public company while serving on a total of more than two public company boards and any other director who serves on a total of more than five public company boards.

When determining whether a director's service on an excessive number of boards may limit the ability of the director to devote sufficient time to board duties, we may consider relevant factors such as the size and location of the other companies where the director serves on the board, the director's board duties at the companies in question, whether the director serves on the board of any large privately-held companies, the director's tenure on the boards in question, and the director's attendance record at all companies.

We may also refrain from recommending against certain directors if the company provides sufficient rationale for their continued board service. The rationale should allow shareholders to evaluate the scope of the directors' other commitments as well as their contributions to the board including specialized knowledge of the company's industry, strategy or key markets, the diversity of skills, perspective and background they provide, and other relevant factors.

Because we believe that executives will primarily devote their attention to executive duties, we generally will not recommend that shareholders vote against overcommitted directors at the companies where they serve as an executive.

#### **GOVERNANCE FOLLOWING AN IPO OR SPIN-OFF**

We clarified how we approach corporate governance at newly-public entities. While we generally believe that such companies should be allowed adequate time to fully comply with marketplace listing requirements and meet basic governance standards, Glass Lewis will also review the terms of the company's governing documents in order to determine whether shareholder rights are being severely restricted from the outset.

In cases where we believe the board has approved governing documents that significantly restrict the ability of shareholders to effect change, we will consider recommending that shareholders vote against the members of the governance committee or the directors that served at the time of the governing documents' adoption, depending on the severity of the concern.

The new guidelines outline which specific areas of governance we review. These areas include anti-takeover mechanisms, supermajority vote requirements, and general shareholder rights such as the ability of shareholders to remove directors and call special meetings.

## **BOARD EVALUATION AND REFRESHMENT**

We have clarified our approach to board evaluation, succession planning and refreshment. Generally speaking, Glass Lewis believes a robust board evaluation process — one focused on the assessment and alignment of director skills with company strategy — is more effective than solely relying on age or tenure limits.

**I. A Board of Directors that Serves  
Shareholder Interest**

**ELECTION OF DIRECTORS**

The purpose of Glass Lewis' proxy research and advice is to facilitate shareholder voting in favor of governance structures that will drive performance, create shareholder value and maintain a proper tone at the top. Glass Lewis looks for talented boards with a record of protecting shareholders and delivering value over the medium- and long-term. We believe that a board can best protect and enhance the interests of shareholders if it is sufficiently independent, has a record of positive performance, and consists of individuals with diverse backgrounds and a breadth and depth of relevant experience.

**INDEPENDENCE**

The independence of directors, or lack thereof, is ultimately demonstrated through the decisions they make. In assessing the independence of directors, we will take into consideration, when appropriate, whether a director has a track record indicative of making objective decisions. Likewise, when assessing the independence of directors we will also examine when a director's track record on multiple boards indicates a lack of objective decision-making. Ultimately, we believe the determination of whether a director is independent or not must take into consideration both compliance with the applicable independence listing requirements as well as judgments made by the director.

We look at each director nominee to examine the director's relationships with the company, the company's executives, and other directors. We do this to evaluate whether personal, familial, or financial relationships (not including director compensation) may impact the director's decisions. We believe that such relationships make it difficult for a director to put shareholders' interests above the director's or the related party's interests. We also believe that a director who owns more than 20% of a company can exert disproportionate influence on the board, and therefore believe such a director's independence may be hampered, in particular when serving on the audit committee.

Thus, we put directors into three categories based on an examination of the type of relationship they have with the company:

**Independent Director** — An independent director has no material financial, familial or other current relationships with the company, its executives, or other board members, except for board service and standard fees paid for that service. Relationships that existed within three to five years<sup>1</sup> before the inquiry are usually considered "current" for purposes of this test.

**Affiliated Director** — An affiliated director has, (or within the past three years, had) a material financial, familial or other relationship with the company or its executives, but is not an employee of the company.<sup>2</sup> This includes directors whose employers have a material financial relationship with the company.<sup>3</sup> In addition, we view a director who either owns or controls 20% or more of the company’s voting stock, or is an employee or affiliate of an entity that controls such amount, as an affiliate.<sup>4</sup>

1 NASDAQ originally proposed a five-year look-back period but both it and the NYSE ultimately settled on a three-year look-back prior to finalizing their rules. A five-year standard is more appropriate, in our view, because we believe that the unwinding of conflicting relationships between former management and board members is more likely to be complete and final after five years. However, Glass Lewis does not apply the five-year look-back period to directors who have previously served as executives of the company on an interim basis for less than one year.

2 If a company does not consider a non-employee director to be independent, Glass Lewis will classify that director as an affiliate.

3 We allow a five-year grace period for former executives of the company or merged companies who have consulting agreements with the surviving company. (We do not automatically recommend voting against directors in such cases for the first five years.) If the consulting agreement persists after this five-year grace period, we apply the materiality thresholds outlined in the definition of “material.”

4 This includes a director who serves on a board as a representative (as part of his or her basic responsibilities) of an investment firm with greater than 20% ownership. However, while we will generally consider him/her to be affiliated, we will not recommend voting against unless (i) the investment firm has disproportionate board representation or (ii) the director serves on the audit committee.

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We view 20% shareholders as affiliates because they typically have access to and involvement with the management of a company that is fundamentally different from that of ordinary shareholders. More importantly, 20% holders may have interests that diverge from those of ordinary holders, for reasons such as the liquidity (or lack thereof) of their holdings, personal tax issues, etc.

Glass Lewis applies a three-year look back period to all directors who have an affiliation with the company other than former employment, for which we apply a five-year look back.

Definition of “**Material**”: A material relationship is one in which the dollar value exceeds:

- \$50,000 (or where no amount is disclosed) for directors who are paid for a service they have agreed to perform for the company, outside of their service as a director, including professional or other services; or
- \$120,000 (or where no amount is disclosed) for those directors employed by a professional services firm such as a law firm, investment bank, or consulting firm and the company pays the firm, not the individual, for services.<sup>5</sup> This dollar limit would also apply to charitable contributions to schools where a board member is a professor; or charities where a director serves on the board or is an executive;<sup>6</sup> and any aircraft and real estate dealings between the company and the director’s firm; or
- 1% of either company’s consolidated gross revenue for other business relationships (e.g., where the director is an executive officer of a company that provides services or products to or receives services or products from the company).<sup>7</sup>

Definition of “**Familial**” — Familial relationships include a person’s spouse, parents, children, siblings, grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, nieces, nephews, in-laws, and anyone (other than domestic employees) who shares such person’s home. A director is an affiliate if: i) he or she has a family member who is employed by the company and receives more than \$120,000 in annual compensation; or, ii) he or she has a family member who is employed by the company and the company does not disclose this individual’s compensation.

Definition of “**Company**” — A company includes any parent or subsidiary in a group with the company or any entity that merged with, was acquired by, or acquired the company.

**Inside Director** — An inside director simultaneously serves as a director and as an employee of the company. This category may include a board chair who acts as an employee of the company or is paid as an employee of the company. In our view, an inside director who derives a greater amount of income as a result of affiliated transactions with the company rather than through compensation paid by the company (i.e., salary, bonus, etc. as a company employee) faces a conflict between making decisions that are in the best interests of the company versus those in the director’s own best interests. Therefore, we will recommend voting against such a director.

Additionally, we believe a director who is currently serving in an interim management position should be considered an insider, while a director who previously served in an interim management position for less than one year and is no longer serving in such capacity is considered independent. Moreover, a director who previously served in an interim management position for over one year and is no longer serving in such capacity is considered an affiliate for five years following the date of his/her resignation or departure from the interim management position.

5 We may deem such a transaction to be immaterial where the amount represents less than 1% of the firm's annual revenues and the board provides a compelling rationale as to why the director's independence is not affected by the relationship.

6 We will generally take into consideration the size and nature of such charitable entities in relation to the company's size and industry along with any other relevant factors such as the director's role at the charity. However, unlike for other types of related party transactions, Glass Lewis generally does not apply a look-back period to affiliated relationships involving charitable contributions; if the relationship between the director and the school or charity ceases, or if the company discontinues its donations to the entity, we will consider the director to be independent.

7 This includes cases where a director is employed by, or closely affiliated with, a private equity firm that profits from an acquisition made by the company. Unless disclosure suggests otherwise, we presume the director is affiliated.

## **VOTING RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE BASIS OF BOARD INDEPENDENCE**

Glass Lewis believes a board will be most effective in protecting shareholders' interests if it is at least two-thirds independent. We note that each of the Business Roundtable, the Conference Board, and the Council of Institutional Investors advocates that two-thirds of the board be independent. Where more than one-third of the members are affiliated or inside directors, we typically<sup>8</sup> recommend voting against some of the inside and/ or affiliated directors in order to satisfy the two-thirds threshold.

In the case of a less than two-thirds independent board, Glass Lewis strongly supports the existence of a presiding or lead director with authority to set the meeting agendas and to lead sessions outside the insider chair's presence.

In addition, we scrutinize avowedly "independent" chairmen and lead directors. We believe that they should be unquestionably independent or the company should not tout them as such.

## **COMMITTEE INDEPENDENCE**

We believe that only independent directors should serve on a company's audit, compensation, nominating, and governance committees.<sup>9</sup> We typically recommend that shareholders vote against any affiliated or inside director seeking appointment to an audit, compensation, nominating, or governance committee, or who has served in that capacity in the past year.

Pursuant to Section 952 of the Dodd-Frank Act, as of January 11, 2013, the SEC approved new listing requirements for both the NYSE and NASDAQ which require that boards apply enhanced standards of independence when making an affirmative determination of the independence of compensation committee members. Specifically, when making this determination, in addition to the factors considered when assessing general director independence, the board's considerations must include: (i) the source of compensation of the director, including any consulting, advisory or other compensatory fee paid by the listed company to the director (the "Fees Factor"); and (ii) whether the director is affiliated with the listing company, its subsidiaries, or affiliates of its subsidiaries (the "Affiliation Factor").

Glass Lewis believes it is important for boards to consider these enhanced independence factors when assessing compensation committee members. However, as discussed above in the section titled Independence, we apply our own standards when assessing the independence of directors, and these standards also take into account consulting and advisory fees paid to the director, as well as the director's affiliations with the company and its subsidiaries and affiliates. We may recommend voting against compensation committee members who are not independent based on our standards.



## **INDEPENDENT CHAIR**

Glass Lewis believes that separating the roles of CEO (or, more rarely, another executive position) and chair creates a better governance structure than a combined CEO/chair position. An executive manages the business according to a course the board charts. Executives should report to the board regarding their performance in achieving goals set by the board. This is needlessly complicated when a CEO chairs the board, since a CEO/ chair presumably will have a significant influence over the board.

While many companies have an independent lead or presiding director who performs many of the same functions of an independent chair (e.g., setting the board meeting agenda), we do not believe this alternate form of independent board leadership provides as robust protection for shareholders as an independent chair.

8 With a staggered board, if the affiliates or insiders that we believe should not be on the board are not up for election, we will express our concern regarding those directors, but we will not recommend voting against the other affiliates or insiders who are up for election just to achieve two-thirds independence. However, we will consider recommending voting against the directors subject to our concern at their next election if the issue giving rise to the concern is not resolved.

9 We will recommend voting against an audit committee member who owns 20% or more of the company's stock, and we believe that there should be a maximum of one director (or no directors if the committee is comprised of less than three directors) who owns 20% or more of the company's stock on the compensation, nominating, and governance committees.

It can become difficult for a board to fulfill its role of overseer and policy setter when a CEO/chair controls the agenda and the boardroom discussion. Such control can allow a CEO to have an entrenched position, leading to longer-than-optimal terms, fewer checks on management, less scrutiny of the business operation, and limitations on independent, shareholder-focused goal-setting by the board.

A CEO should set the strategic course for the company, with the board's approval, and the board should enable the CEO to carry out the CEO's vision for accomplishing the board's objectives. Failure to achieve the board's objectives should lead the board to replace that CEO with someone in whom the board has confidence.

Likewise, an independent chair can better oversee executives and set a pro-shareholder agenda without the management conflicts that a CEO and other executive insiders often face. Such oversight and concern for shareholders allows for a more proactive and effective board of directors that is better able to look out for the interests of shareholders.

Further, it is the board's responsibility to select a chief executive who can best serve a company and its shareholders and to replace this person when his or her duties have not been appropriately fulfilled. Such a replacement becomes more difficult and happens less frequently when the chief executive is also in the position of overseeing the board.

Glass Lewis believes that the installation of an independent chair is almost always a positive step from a corporate governance perspective and promotes the best interests of shareholders. Further, the presence of an independent chair fosters the creation of a thoughtful and dynamic board, not dominated by the views of senior management. Encouragingly, many companies appear to be moving in this direction—one study indicates that only 10 percent of incoming CEOs in 2014 were awarded the chair title, versus 48 percent in 2002.<sup>10</sup> Another study finds that 48 percent of S&P 500 boards now separate the CEO and chair roles, up from 37 percent in 2009, although the same study found that only 29 percent of S&P 500 boards have truly independent chairs.<sup>11</sup>

We do not recommend that shareholders vote against CEOs who chair the board. However, we typically recommend that our clients support separating the roles of chair and CEO whenever that question is posed in a proxy (typically in the form of a shareholder proposal), as we believe that it is in the long-term best interests of the company and its shareholders.

Further, where the company has neither an independent chair nor independent lead director, we will recommend voting against the chair of the governance committee.

## **PERFORMANCE**

The most crucial test of a board's commitment to the company and its shareholders lies in the actions of the board and its members. We look at the performance of these individuals as directors and executives of the company and of other companies where they have served.

We find that a director's past conduct is often indicative of future conduct and performance. We often find directors with a history of overpaying executives or of serving on boards where avoidable disasters have occurred serving on the boards of companies with similar problems. Glass Lewis has a proprietary database of directors serving at over 8,000 of the most widely held U.S. companies. We use this database to track the performance of directors across companies.

### **VOTING RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE BASIS OF PERFORMANCE**

We typically recommend that shareholders vote against directors who have served on boards or as executives of companies with records of poor performance, inadequate risk oversight, excessive compensation, auditor accounting-related issues, and/or other indicators of mismanagement or actions against the interests of

10 Ken Favaro, Per-Ola Karlsson and Gary L. Nelson. "The \$112 Billion CEO Succession Problem." (*Strategy+Business*, Issue 79, Summer 2015).

11 Spencer Stuart Board Index, 2015, p.20.

shareholders. We will reevaluate such directors based on, among other factors, the length of time passed since the incident giving rise to the concern, shareholder support for the director, the severity of the issue, the director's role (e.g., committee membership), director tenure at the subject company, whether ethical lapses accompanied the oversight lapse, and evidence of strong oversight at other companies.

Likewise, we examine the backgrounds of those who serve on key board committees to ensure that they have the required skills and diverse backgrounds to make informed judgments about the subject matter for which the committee is responsible.

We believe shareholders should avoid electing directors who have a record of not fulfilling their responsibilities to shareholders at any company where they have held a board or executive position. We typically recommend voting against:

1. A director who fails to attend a minimum of 75% of board and applicable committee meetings, calculated in the aggregate.<sup>12</sup>
2. A director who belatedly filed a significant form(s) 4 or 5, or who has a pattern of late filings if the late filing was the director's fault (we look at these late filing situations on a case-by-case basis).
3. A director who is also the CEO of a company where a serious and material restatement has occurred after the CEO had previously certified the pre-restatement financial statements.
4. A director who has received two against recommendations from Glass Lewis for identical reasons within the prior year at different companies (the same situation must also apply at the company being analyzed).
5. All directors who served on the board if, for the last three years, the company's performance has been in the bottom quartile of the sector and the directors have not taken reasonable steps to address the poor performance.

## **BOARD RESPONSIVENESS**

Glass Lewis believes that any time 25% or more of shareholders vote contrary to the recommendation of management, the board should, depending on the issue, demonstrate some level of responsiveness to address the concerns of shareholders. These include instances when 25% or more of shareholders (excluding abstentions and broker non-votes): WITHHOLD votes from (or vote AGAINST) a director nominee, vote AGAINST a management-sponsored proposal, or vote FOR a shareholder proposal. In our view, a 25% threshold is significant enough to warrant a close examination of the underlying issues and an evaluation of whether or not a board response was warranted and, if so, whether the board responded appropriately following the vote. While the 25% threshold alone will not automatically generate a negative vote recommendation from Glass Lewis on a future proposal (e.g., to recommend against a director nominee, against a say-on-pay proposal, etc.), it may be a contributing factor to our recommendation to vote against management's recommendation in the event we determine that the board did not respond appropriately.

As a general framework, our evaluation of board responsiveness involves a review of publicly available disclosures (e.g., the proxy statement, annual report, 8-Ks, company website, etc.) released following the date of the company's last annual meeting up through the publication date of our most current Proxy Paper. Depending on the specific issue, our focus typically includes, but is not limited to, the following:

• At the board level, any changes in directorships, committee memberships, disclosure of related party transactions, meeting attendance, or other responsibilities;

12 However, where a director has served for less than one full year, we will typically not recommend voting against for failure to attend 75% of meetings. Rather, we will note the poor attendance with a recommendation to track this issue going forward. We will also refrain from recommending to vote against directors when the proxy discloses that the director missed the meetings due to serious illness or other extenuating circumstances.

- Any revisions made to the company's articles of incorporation, bylaws or other governance documents;
  - Any press or news releases indicating changes in, or the adoption of, new company policies, business practices or special reports; and
- Any modifications made to the design and structure of the company's compensation program, as well as an
- assessment of the company's engagement with shareholders on compensation issues as discussed in the CD&A, particularly following a material vote against a company's say-on-pay.

Our Proxy Paper analysis will include a case-by-case assessment of the specific elements of board responsiveness that we examined along with an explanation of how that assessment impacts our current voting recommendations.

### **THE ROLE OF A COMMITTEE CHAIR**

Glass Lewis believes that a designated committee chair maintains primary responsibility for the actions of his or her respective committee. As such, many of our committee-specific voting recommendations are against the applicable committee chair rather than the entire committee (depending on the seriousness of the issue). However, in cases where we would ordinarily recommend voting against a committee chair but the chair is not specified, we apply the following general rules, which apply throughout our guidelines:

If there is no committee chair, we recommend voting against the longest-serving committee member or, if the

- longest-serving committee member cannot be determined, the longest-serving board member serving on the committee (i.e., in either case, the "senior director"); and

- If there is no committee chair, but multiple senior directors serving on the committee, we recommend voting against both (or all) such senior directors.

In our view, companies should provide clear disclosure of which director is charged with overseeing each committee. In cases where that simple framework is ignored and a reasonable analysis cannot determine which committee member is the designated leader, we believe shareholder action against the longest serving committee member(s) is warranted. Again, this only applies if we would ordinarily recommend voting against the committee chair but there is either no such position or no designated director in such role.

On the contrary, in cases where there is a designated committee chair and the recommendation is to vote against the committee chair, but the chair is not up for election because the board is staggered, we do not recommend voting against any members of the committee who are up for election; rather, we will note the concern with regard to the committee chair.

### **AUDIT COMMITTEES AND PERFORMANCE**

Audit committees play an integral role in overseeing the financial reporting process because “[v]ibrant and stable capital markets depend on, among other things, reliable, transparent, and objective financial information to support an efficient and effective capital market process. The vital oversight role audit committees play in the process of producing financial information has never been more important.”<sup>13</sup>

When assessing an audit committee’s performance, we are aware that an audit committee does not prepare financial statements, is not responsible for making the key judgments and assumptions that affect the financial statements, and does not audit the numbers or the disclosures provided to investors. Rather, an audit committee member monitors and oversees the process and procedures that management and auditors perform. The 1999 Report and Recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Improving the Effectiveness of Corporate Audit Committees stated it best:

13 Audit Committee Effectiveness – What Works Best.” PricewaterhouseCoopers. The Institute of Internal Auditors Research Foundation. 2005.

*A proper and well-functioning system exists, therefore, when the three main groups responsible for financial reporting — the full board including the audit committee, financial management including the internal auditors, and the outside auditors — form a ‘three legged stool’ that supports responsible financial disclosure and active participatory oversight. However, in the view of the Committee, the audit committee must be ‘first among equals’ in this process, since the audit committee is an extension of the full board and hence the ultimate monitor of the process.*

## **STANDARDS FOR ASSESSING THE AUDIT COMMITTEE**

For an audit committee to function effectively on investors’ behalf, it must include members with sufficient knowledge to diligently carry out their responsibilities. In its audit and accounting recommendations, the Conference Board Commission on Public Trust and Private Enterprise said “members of the audit committee must be independent and have both knowledge and experience in auditing financial matters.”<sup>14</sup>

We are skeptical of audit committees where there are members that lack expertise as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), Chief Financial Officer (CFO) or corporate controller, or similar experience. While we will not necessarily recommend voting against members of an audit committee when such expertise is lacking, we are more likely to recommend voting against committee members when a problem such as a restatement occurs and such expertise is lacking.

Glass Lewis generally assesses audit committees against the decisions they make with respect to their oversight and monitoring role. The quality and integrity of the financial statements and earnings reports, the completeness of disclosures necessary for investors to make informed decisions, and the effectiveness of the internal controls should provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements are materially free from errors. The independence of the external auditors and the results of their work all provide useful information by which to assess the audit committee.

When assessing the decisions and actions of the audit committee, we typically defer to its judgment and generally recommend voting in favor of its members. However, we will consider recommending that shareholders vote against the following:<sup>15</sup>

All members of the audit committee when options were backdated, there is a lack of adequate controls in place,  
1. there was a resulting restatement, and disclosures indicate there was a lack of documentation with respect to the option grants.

The audit committee chair, if the audit committee does not have a financial expert or the committee’s financial  
2. expert does not have a demonstrable financial background sufficient to understand the financial issues unique to public companies.

3. The audit committee chair, if the audit committee did not meet at least four times during the year.



4. The audit committee chair, if the committee has less than three members.

5. Any audit committee member who sits on more than three public company audit committees, unless the audit committee member is a retired CPA, CFO, controller or has similar experience, in which case the limit shall be four committees, taking time and availability into consideration including a review of the audit committee member's attendance at all board and committee meetings.<sup>16</sup>

14 Commission on Public Trust and Private Enterprise. The Conference Board. 2003.

15 As discussed under the section labeled "Committee Chair," where the recommendation is to vote against the committee chair but the chair is not up for election because the board is staggered, we do not recommend voting against the members of the committee who are up for election; rather, we will note the concern with regard to the committee chair.

16 Glass Lewis may exempt certain audit committee members from the above threshold if, upon further analysis of relevant factors such as the director's experience, the size, industry-mix and location of the companies involved and the director's attendance at all the companies, we can reasonably determine that the audit committee member is likely not hindered by multiple audit committee commitments.

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6. All members of an audit committee who are up for election and who served on the committee at the time of the audit, if audit and audit-related fees total one-third or less of the total fees billed by the auditor.
7. The audit committee chair when tax and/or other fees are greater than audit and audit-related fees paid to the auditor for more than one year in a row (in which case we also recommend against ratification of the auditor).

All members of an audit committee where non-audit fees include fees for tax services (including, but not limited to, such things as tax avoidance or shelter schemes) for senior executives of the company. Such services are prohibited by the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (“PCAOB”).

9. All members of an audit committee that reappointed an auditor that we no longer consider to be independent for reasons unrelated to fee proportions.
10. All members of an audit committee when audit fees are excessively low, especially when compared with other companies in the same industry.

The audit committee chair<sup>17</sup> if the committee failed to put auditor ratification on the ballot for shareholder approval. However, if the non-audit fees or tax fees exceed audit plus audit-related fees in either the current or the prior year, then Glass Lewis will recommend voting against the entire audit committee.

12. All members of an audit committee where the auditor has resigned and reported that a section 10A<sup>18</sup> letter has been issued.

13. All members of an audit committee at a time when material accounting fraud occurred at the company.<sup>19</sup>

14. All members of an audit committee at a time when annual and/or multiple quarterly financial statements had to be restated, and any of the following factors apply:

- The restatement involves fraud or manipulation by insiders;
- The restatement is accompanied by an SEC inquiry or investigation;
- The restatement involves revenue recognition;
- The restatement results in a greater than 5% adjustment to costs of goods sold, operating expense, or operating cash flows; or
- The restatement results in a greater than 5% adjustment to net income, 10% adjustment to assets or shareholders equity, or cash flows from financing or investing activities.

All members of an audit committee if the company repeatedly fails to file its financial reports in a timely fashion. 15. For example, the company has filed two or more quarterly or annual financial statements late within the last five quarters.

17 As discussed under the section labeled “Committee Chair,” in all cases, if the chair of the committee is not specified, we recommend voting against the director who has been on the committee the longest.

18 Auditors are required to report all potential illegal acts to management and the audit committee unless they are clearly inconsequential in nature. If the audit committee or the board fails to take appropriate action on an act that has been determined to be a violation of the law, the independent auditor is required to send a section 10A letter to the SEC. Such letters are rare and therefore we believe should be taken seriously.

19 Research indicates that revenue fraud now accounts for over 60% of SEC fraud cases, and that companies that engage in fraud experience significant negative abnormal stock price declines—facing bankruptcy, delisting, and material asset sales at much higher rates than do non-fraud firms (Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission. “Fraudulent Financial Reporting: 1998-2007.” May 2010).

16. All members of an audit committee when it has been disclosed that a law enforcement agency has charged the company and/or its employees with a violation of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA).
17. All members of an audit committee when the company has aggressive accounting policies and/or poor disclosure or lack of sufficient transparency in its financial statements.
18. All members of the audit committee when there is a disagreement with the auditor and the auditor resigns or is dismissed (e.g., the company receives an adverse opinion on its financial statements from the auditor).
19. All members of the audit committee if the contract with the auditor specifically limits the auditor's liability to the company for damages.<sup>20</sup>

All members of the audit committee who served since the date of the company's last annual meeting, and when, since the last annual meeting, the company has reported a material weakness that has not yet been corrected, or, when the company has an ongoing material weakness from a prior year that has not yet been corrected.

We also take a dim view of audit committee reports that are boilerplate, and which provide little or no information or transparency to investors. When a problem such as a material weakness, restatement or late filings occurs, we take into consideration, in forming our judgment with respect to the audit committee, the transparency of the audit committee report.

## COMPENSATION COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE

Compensation committees have a critical role in determining the compensation of executives. This includes deciding the basis on which compensation is determined, as well as the amounts and types of compensation to be paid. This process begins with the hiring and initial establishment of employment agreements, including the terms for such items as pay, pensions and severance arrangements. It is important in establishing compensation arrangements that compensation be consistent with, and based on the long-term economic performance of, the business's long-term shareholders returns.

Compensation committees are also responsible for the oversight of the transparency of compensation. This oversight includes disclosure of compensation arrangements, the matrix used in assessing pay for performance, and the use of compensation consultants. In order to ensure the independence of the board's compensation consultant, we believe the compensation committee should only engage a compensation consultant that is not also providing any services to the company or management apart from their contract with the compensation committee. It is important to investors that they have clear and complete disclosure of all the significant terms of compensation arrangements in order to make informed decisions with respect to the oversight and decisions of the compensation committee.

Finally, compensation committees are responsible for oversight of internal controls over the executive compensation process. This includes controls over gathering information used to determine compensation, establishment of equity award plans, and granting of equity awards. For example, the use of a compensation consultant who maintains a business relationship with company management may cause the committee to make decisions based on information

that is compromised by the consultant's conflict of interests. Lax controls can also contribute to improper awards of compensation such as through granting of backdated or spring-loaded options, or granting of bonuses when triggers for bonus payments have not been met.

Central to understanding the actions of a compensation committee is a careful review of the Compensation Discussion and Analysis ("CD&A") report included in each company's proxy. We review the CD&A in our evaluation of the overall compensation practices of a company, as overseen by the compensation committee.

20 The Council of Institutional Investors. "Corporate Governance Policies," p. 4, April 5, 2006; and "Letter from Council of Institutional Investors to the AICPA," November 8, 2006.

The CD&A is also integral to the evaluation of compensation proposals at companies, such as advisory votes on executive compensation, which allow shareholders to vote on the compensation paid to a company's top executives.

When assessing the performance of compensation committees, we will consider recommending that shareholders vote against the following:<sup>21</sup>

All members of a compensation committee during whose tenure the committee failed to address shareholder concerns following majority shareholder rejection of the say-on-pay proposal in the previous year. Where the proposal was approved but there was a significant shareholder vote (i.e., greater than 25% of votes cast) against

1. the say-on-pay proposal in the prior year, if the board did not respond sufficiently to the vote including actively engaging shareholders on this issue, we will also consider recommending voting against the chair of the compensation committee or all members of the compensation committee, depending on the severity and history of the compensation problems and the level of shareholder opposition.

All members of the compensation committee who are up for election and served when the company failed to align

2. pay with performance if shareholders are not provided with an advisory vote on executive compensation at the annual meeting.<sup>22</sup>

Any member of the compensation committee who has served on the compensation committee of at least two other

3. public companies that have consistently failed to align pay with performance and whose oversight of compensation at the company in question is suspect.

4. All members of the compensation committee (during the relevant time period) if the company entered into excessive employment agreements and/or severance agreements.

All members of the compensation committee when performance goals were changed (i.e., lowered) when

5. employees failed or were unlikely to meet original goals, or performance-based compensation was paid despite goals not being attained.

6. All members of the compensation committee if excessive employee perquisites and benefits were allowed.

7. The compensation committee chair if the compensation committee did not meet during the year.

8. All members of the compensation committee when the company repriced options or completed a "self tender offer" without shareholder approval within the past two years.

9. All members of the compensation committee when vesting of in-the-money options is accelerated.

10. All members of the compensation committee when option exercise prices were backdated. Glass Lewis will recommend voting against an executive director who played a role in and participated in option backdating.

11. All members of the compensation committee when option exercise prices were spring-loaded or otherwise timed around the release of material information.

21 As discussed under the section labeled “Committee Chair,” where the recommendation is to vote against the committee chair and the chair is not up for election because the board is staggered, we do not recommend voting against any members of the committee who are up for election; rather, we will note the concern with regard to the committee chair.

22 If a company provides shareholders with a say-on-pay proposal, we will initially only recommend voting against the company’s say-on-pay proposal and will not recommend voting against the members of the compensation committee unless there is a pattern of failing to align pay and performance and/or the company exhibits egregious compensation practices. However, if the company repeatedly fails to align pay and performance, we will then recommend against the members of the compensation committee in addition to recommending voting against the say-on-pay proposal. For cases in which the disconnect between pay and performance is marginal and the company has outperformed its peers, we will consider not recommending against compensation committee members.

All members of the compensation committee when a new employment contract is given to an executive that does not include a clawback provision and the company had a material restatement, especially if the restatement was due to fraud.

The chair of the compensation committee where the CD&A provides insufficient or unclear information about performance metrics and goals, where the CD&A indicates that pay is not tied to performance, or where the compensation committee or management has excessive discretion to alter performance terms or increase amounts of awards in contravention of previously defined targets.

All members of the compensation committee during whose tenure the committee failed to implement a shareholder proposal regarding a compensation-related issue, where the proposal received the affirmative vote of a majority of the voting shares at a shareholder meeting, and when a reasonable analysis suggests that the compensation committee (rather than the governance committee) should have taken steps to implement the request.<sup>23</sup>

## NOMINATING AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE

The nominating and governance committee, as an agent for the shareholders, is responsible for the governance by the board of the company and its executives. In performing this role, the committee is responsible and accountable for selection of objective and competent board members. It is also responsible for providing leadership on governance policies adopted by the company, such as decisions to implement shareholder proposals that have received a majority vote. (At most companies, a single committee is charged with these oversight functions; at others, the governance and nominating responsibilities are apportioned among two separate committees.)

Consistent with Glass Lewis' philosophy that boards should have diverse backgrounds and members with a breadth and depth of relevant experience, we believe that nominating and governance committees should consider diversity when making director nominations within the context of each specific company and its industry. In our view, shareholders are best served when boards make an effort to ensure a constituency that is not only reasonably diverse on the basis of age, race, gender and ethnicity, but also on the basis of geographic knowledge, industry experience, board tenure and culture.

Regarding the committee responsible for governance, we will consider recommending that shareholders vote against the following:<sup>24</sup>

All members of the governance committee<sup>25</sup> during whose tenure a shareholder proposal relating to important shareholder rights received support from a majority of the votes cast (excluding abstentions and broker non-votes) and the board has not begun to implement or enact the proposal's subject matter:<sup>26</sup> Examples of such shareholder proposals include those seeking a declassified board structure, a majority vote standard for director elections, or a right to call a special meeting. In determining whether a board has sufficiently implemented such a proposal, we will examine the quality of the right enacted or proffered by the board for any conditions that may unreasonably interfere with the shareholders' ability to exercise the right (e.g., overly restrictive procedural requirements for calling a special meeting).



23 In all other instances (i.e., a non-compensation-related shareholder proposal should have been implemented) we recommend that shareholders vote against the members of the governance committee.

24 As discussed in the guidelines section labeled “Committee Chair,” where we would recommend to vote against the committee chair but the chair is not up for election because the board is staggered, we do not recommend voting against any members of the committee who are up for election; rather, we will note the concern with regard to the committee chair.

25 If the board does not have a committee responsible for governance oversight and the board did not implement a shareholder proposal that received the requisite support, we will recommend voting against the entire board. If the shareholder proposal at issue requested that the board adopt a declassified structure, we will recommend voting against all director nominees up for election.

26 Where a compensation-related shareholder proposal should have been implemented, and when a reasonable analysis suggests that the members of the compensation committee (rather than the governance committee) bear the responsibility for failing to implement the request, we recommend that shareholders only vote against members of the compensation committee.

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2. The governance committee chair,<sup>27</sup> when the chair is not independent and an independent lead or presiding director has not been appointed.<sup>28</sup>

3. In the absence of a nominating committee, the governance committee chair when there are less than five or the whole nominating committee when there are more than 20 members on the board.

4. The governance committee chair, when the committee fails to meet at all during the year.

The governance committee chair, when for two consecutive years the company provides what we consider to be “inadequate” related party transaction disclosure (i.e., the nature of such transactions and/or the monetary amounts involved are unclear or excessively vague, thereby preventing a shareholder from being able to reasonably interpret the independence status of multiple directors above and beyond what the company maintains is compliant with SEC or applicable stock exchange listing requirements).

5. The governance committee chair, when during the past year the board adopted a forum selection clause (i.e., an exclusive forum provision)<sup>29</sup> without shareholder approval, or, if the board is currently seeking shareholder approval of a forum selection clause pursuant to a bundled bylaw amendment rather than as a separate proposal.

All members of the governance committee during whose tenure the board adopted, without shareholder approval, provisions in its charter or bylaws that, through rules on director compensation, may inhibit the ability of shareholders to nominate directors.

In addition, we may recommend that shareholders vote against the chair of the governance committee, or the entire committee, where the board has amended the company’s governing documents to reduce or remove important shareholder rights, or to otherwise impede the ability of shareholders to exercise such right, and has done so without seeking shareholder approval. Examples of board actions that may cause such a recommendation include: the elimination of the ability of shareholders to call a special meeting or to act by written consent; an increase to the ownership threshold required for shareholders to call a special meeting; an increase to vote requirements for charter or bylaw amendments; the adoption of provisions that limit the ability of shareholders to pursue full legal recourse—such as bylaws that require arbitration of shareholder claims or that require shareholder plaintiffs to pay the company’s legal expenses in the absence of a court victory (i.e., “fee-shifting” or “loser pays” bylaws); the adoption of a classified board structure; and the elimination of the ability of shareholders to remove a director without cause.

Regarding the nominating committee, we will consider recommending that shareholders vote against the following:<sup>30</sup>

All members of the nominating committee, when the committee nominated or renominated an individual who had a significant conflict of interest or whose past actions demonstrated a lack of integrity or inability to represent shareholder interests.

2. The nominating committee chair, if the nominating committee did not meet during the year.

<sup>27</sup> As discussed in the guidelines section labeled “Committee Chair,” if the committee chair is not specified, we recommend voting against the director who has been on the committee the longest. If the longest-serving committee member cannot be determined, we will recommend voting against the longest-serving board member serving on the

committee.

28 We believe that one independent individual should be appointed to serve as the lead or presiding director. When such a position is rotated among directors from meeting to meeting, we will recommend voting against the governance committee chair as we believe the lack of fixed lead or presiding director means that, effectively, the board does not have an independent board leader.

29 A forum selection clause is a bylaw provision stipulating that a certain state, typically where the company is incorporated, which is most often Delaware, shall be the exclusive forum for all intra-corporate disputes (e.g., shareholder derivative actions, assertions of claims of a breach of fiduciary duty, etc.). Such a clause effectively limits a shareholder's legal remedy regarding appropriate choice of venue and related relief offered under that state's laws and rulings.

30 As discussed in the guidelines section labeled "Committee Chair," where we would recommend to vote against the committee chair but the chair is not up for election because the board is staggered, we do not recommend voting against any members of the committee who are up for election; rather, we will note the concern with regard to the committee chair.

3. In the absence of a governance committee, the nominating committee chair<sup>31</sup> when the chair is not independent, and an independent lead or presiding director has not been appointed.<sup>32</sup>
4. The nominating committee chair, when there are less than five or the whole nominating committee when there are more than 20 members on the board.<sup>33</sup>
5. The nominating committee chair, when a director received a greater than 50% against vote the prior year and not only was the director not removed, but the issues that raised shareholder concern were not corrected.<sup>34</sup>

In addition, we may consider recommending shareholders vote against the chair of the nominating committee where the board's failure to ensure the board has directors with relevant experience, either through periodic director assessment or board refreshment, has contributed to a company's poor performance.

## **BOARD-LEVEL RISK MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT**

Glass Lewis evaluates the risk management function of a public company board on a strictly case-by-case basis. Sound risk management, while necessary at all companies, is particularly important at financial firms which inherently maintain significant exposure to financial risk. We believe such financial firms should have a chief risk officer reporting directly to the board and a dedicated risk committee or a committee of the board charged with risk oversight. Moreover, many non-financial firms maintain strategies which involve a high level of exposure to financial risk. Similarly, since many non-financial firms have complex hedging or trading strategies, those firms should also have a chief risk officer and a risk committee.

Our views on risk oversight are consistent with those expressed by various regulatory bodies. In its December 2009 Final Rule release on Proxy Disclosure Enhancements, the SEC noted that risk oversight is a key competence of the board and that additional disclosures would improve investor and shareholder understanding of the role of the board in the organization's risk management practices. The final rules, which became effective on February 28, 2010, now explicitly require companies and mutual funds to describe (while allowing for some degree of flexibility) the board's role in the oversight of risk.

When analyzing the risk management practices of public companies, we take note of any significant losses or writedowns on financial assets and/or structured transactions. In cases where a company has disclosed a sizable loss or writedown, and where we find that the company's board-level risk committee's poor oversight contributed to the loss, we will recommend that shareholders vote against such committee members on that basis. In addition, in cases where a company maintains a significant level of financial risk exposure but fails to disclose any explicit form of board-level risk oversight (committee or otherwise)<sup>35</sup>, we will consider recommending to vote against the board chair on that basis. However, we generally would not recommend voting against a combined chair/CEO, except in egregious cases.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RISK OVERSIGHT**

Companies face significant financial, legal and reputational risks resulting from poor environmental and social practices, or negligent oversight thereof. Therefore, Glass Lewis views the identification, mitigation

31 As discussed under the section labeled “Committee Chair,” if the committee chair is not specified, we will recommend voting against the director who has been on the committee the longest. If the longest-serving committee member cannot be determined, we will recommend voting against the longest-serving board member on the committee.

32 In the absence of both a governance and a nominating committee, we will recommend voting against the board chair on this basis, unless if the chair also serves as the CEO, in which case we will recommend voting against the longest-serving director.

33 In the absence of both a governance and a nominating committee, we will recommend voting against the board chair on this basis, unless if the chair also serves as the CEO, in which case we will recommend voting against the the longest-serving director.

34 Considering that shareholder discontent clearly relates to the director who received a greater than 50% against vote rather than the nominating chair, we review the severity of the issue(s) that initially raised shareholder concern as well as company responsiveness to such matters, and will only recommend voting against the nominating chair if a reasonable analysis suggests that it would be most appropriate. In rare cases, we will consider recommending against the nominating chair when a director receives a substantial (i.e., 25% or more) vote against based on the same analysis.

35 A committee responsible for risk management could be a dedicated risk committee, the audit committee, or the finance committee, depending on a given company’s board structure and method of disclosure. At some companies, the entire board is charged with risk management.

and management of environmental and social risks as integral components when evaluating a company's overall risk exposure. We believe boards should ensure that management conducts a complete risk analysis of company operations, including those that have environmental and social implications. Directors should monitor management's performance in managing and mitigating these environmental and social risks in order to eliminate or minimize the risks to the company and its shareholders. In cases where the board or management has failed to sufficiently identify and manage a material environmental or social risk that did or could negatively impact shareholder value, we will recommend shareholders vote against directors responsible for risk oversight in consideration of the nature of the risk and the potential effect on shareholder value.

## **DIRECTOR COMMITMENTS**

We believe that directors should have the necessary time to fulfill their duties to shareholders. In our view, an overcommitted director can pose a material risk to a company's shareholders, particularly during periods of crisis. In addition, recent research indicates that the time commitment associated with being a director has been on a significant upward trend in the past decade.<sup>36</sup> As a result, we generally recommend that shareholders vote against a director who serves as an executive officer of any public company while serving on more than two public company boards and any other director who serves on more than five public company boards.

Because we believe that executives will primarily devote their attention to executive duties, we generally will not recommend that shareholders vote against overcommitted directors at the companies where they serve as an executive.

When determining whether a director's service on an excessive number of boards may limit the ability of the director to devote sufficient time to board duties, we may consider relevant factors such as the size and location of the other companies where the director serves on the board, the director's board roles at the companies in question, whether the director serves on the board of any large privately-held companies, the director's tenure on the boards in question, and the director's attendance record at all companies.

We may also refrain from recommending against certain directors if the company provides sufficient rationale for their continued board service. The rationale should allow shareholders to evaluate the scope of the directors' other commitments, as well as their contributions to the board including specialized knowledge of the company's industry, strategy or key markets, the diversity of skills, perspective and background they provide, and other relevant factors. We will also generally refrain from recommending to vote against a director who serves on an excessive number of boards within a consolidated group of companies or a director that represents a firm whose sole purpose is to manage a portfolio of investments which include the company.

## **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

In addition to the three key characteristics – independence, performance, experience – that we use to evaluate board members, we consider conflict-of-interest issues as well as the size of the board of directors when making voting recommendations.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

We believe board members should be wholly free of identifiable and substantial conflicts of interest, regardless of the overall level of independent directors on the board. Accordingly, we recommend that shareholders vote against the following types of directors:

A CFO who is on the board: In our view, the CFO holds a unique position relative to financial reporting and disclosure to shareholders. Due to the critical importance of financial disclosure and reporting, we believe the CFO should report to the board and not be a member of it.

<sup>36</sup> For example, the 2015-2016 NACD Public Company Governance Survey states that, on average, directors spent a total of 248.2 hours annual on board-related matters during the past year, which it describes as a “historically high level” that is significantly above the average hours recorded in 2006. Additionally, the 2015 Spencer Stuart Board Index indicates that the average number of outside board seats held by CEOs of S&P 500 companies is 0.6, down from 0.7 in 2009 and 0.9 in 2004.

A director who provides — or a director who has an immediate family member who provides — material consulting or other material professional services to the company. These services may include legal, consulting, or financial services. We question the need for the company to have consulting relationships with its directors. We view such relationships as creating conflicts for directors, since they may be forced to weigh their own interests against shareholder interests when making board decisions. In addition, a company’s decisions regarding where to turn for the best professional services may be compromised when doing business with the professional services firm of one of the company’s directors.

3. A director, or a director who has an immediate family member, engaging in airplane, real estate, or similar deals, including perquisite-type grants from the company, amounting to more than \$50,000. Directors who receive these sorts of payments from the company will have to make unnecessarily complicated decisions that may pit their interests against shareholder interests.

4. Interlocking directorships: CEOs or other top executives who serve on each other’s boards create an interlock that poses conflicts that should be avoided to ensure the promotion of shareholder interests above all else.<sup>37</sup>

5. All board members who served at a time when a poison pill with a term of longer than one year was adopted without shareholder approval within the prior twelve months.<sup>38</sup> In the event a board is classified and shareholders are therefore unable to vote against all directors, we will recommend voting against the remaining directors the next year they are up for a shareholder vote. If a poison pill with a term of one year or less was adopted without shareholder approval, and without adequate justification, we will consider recommending that shareholders vote against all members of the governance committee. If the board has, without seeking shareholder approval, and without adequate justification, extended the term of a poison pill by one year or less in two consecutive years, we will consider recommending that shareholders vote against the entire board.

## Size of the Board of Directors

While we do not believe there is a universally applicable optimum board size, we do believe boards should have at least five directors to ensure sufficient diversity in decision-making and to enable the formation of key board committees with independent directors. Conversely, we believe that boards with more than 20 members will typically suffer under the weight of “too many cooks in the kitchen” and have difficulty reaching consensus and making timely decisions. Sometimes the presence of too many voices can make it difficult to draw on the wisdom and experience in the room by virtue of the need to limit the discussion so that each voice may be heard.

To that end, we typically recommend voting against the nominating committee chair (or the governance committee, in the absence of a nominating committee) at a board with fewer than five directors or more than 20 directors.<sup>39</sup>

## CONTROLLED COMPANIES

We believe controlled companies warrant certain exceptions to our independence standards. The board’s function is to protect shareholder interests; however, when an individual, entity (or group of shareholders party to a formal agreement) owns more than 50% of the voting shares, the interests of the majority of shareholders are the interests of



that entity or individual. Consequently, Glass Lewis does not apply our usual two-thirds board independence rule and therefore we will not recommend voting against boards whose composition reflects the makeup of the shareholder population.

37 We do not apply a look-back period for this situation. The interlock policy applies to both public and private companies. We will also evaluate multiple board interlocks among non-insiders (i.e., multiple directors serving on the same boards at other companies), for evidence of a pattern of poor oversight.

38 Refer to Section V. Governance Structure and the Shareholder Franchise for further discussion of our policies regarding anti-takeover measures, including poison pills.

39 The Conference Board, at p. 23 in its May 2003 report “Corporate Governance Best Practices, Id.,” quotes one of its roundtable participants as stating, “[w]hen you’ve got a 20 or 30 person corporate board, it’s one way of assuring that nothing is ever going to happen that the CEO doesn’t want to happen.”

## Independence Exceptions

The independence exceptions that we make for controlled companies are as follows:

1. We do not require that controlled companies have boards that are at least two-thirds independent. So long as the insiders and/or affiliates are connected with the controlling entity, we accept the presence of non-independent board members.
2. The compensation committee and nominating and governance committees do not need to consist solely of independent directors.

We believe that standing nominating and corporate governance committees at controlled companies are unnecessary. Although having a committee charged with the duties of searching for, selecting, and nominating independent directors can be beneficial, the unique composition of a controlled company's shareholder base makes such committees weak and irrelevant.

Likewise, we believe that independent compensation committees at controlled companies are unnecessary. Although independent directors are the best choice for approving and monitoring senior executives' pay, controlled companies serve a unique shareholder population whose voting power ensures the protection of its interests. As such, we believe that having affiliated directors on a controlled company's compensation committee is acceptable. However, given that a controlled company has certain obligations to minority shareholders we feel that an insider should not serve on the compensation committee. Therefore, Glass Lewis will recommend voting against any insider (the CEO or otherwise) serving on the compensation committee.

3. Controlled companies do not need an independent chair or an independent lead or presiding director. Although an independent director in a position of authority on the board – such as chair or presiding director — can best carry out the board's duties, controlled companies serve a unique shareholder population whose voting power ensures the protection of its interests.

## Size of the Board of Directors

We have no board size requirements for controlled companies.

## Audit Committee Independence

Despite a controlled company's status, unlike for the other key committees, we nevertheless believe that audit committees should consist solely of independent directors. Regardless of a company's controlled status, the interests of all shareholders must be protected by ensuring the integrity and accuracy of the company's financial statements. Allowing affiliated directors to oversee the preparation of financial reports could create an insurmountable conflict of interest.

## **SIGNIFICANT SHAREHOLDERS**

Where an individual or entity holds between 20-50% of a company's voting power, we believe it is reasonable to allow proportional representation on the board and committees (excluding the audit committee) based on the individual or entity's percentage of ownership.

## **GOVERNANCE FOLLOWING AN IPO OR SPIN-OFF**

We believe companies that have recently completed an initial public offering ("IPO") or spin-off should be allowed adequate time to fully comply with marketplace listing requirements and meet basic corporate governance standards. Generally speaking, Glass Lewis refrains from making recommendations on the basis of governance standards (e.g., board independence, committee membership and structure, meeting attendance, etc.) during the one-year period following an IPO.

However, some cases warrant shareholder action against the board of a company that have completed an IPO or spin-off within the past year. When evaluating companies that have recently gone public, Glass Lewis will review the terms of the applicable governing documents in order to determine whether shareholder rights are being severely restricted indefinitely. We believe boards that approve highly restrictive governing documents have demonstrated that they may subvert shareholder interests following the IPO. In conducting this evaluation, Glass Lewis will consider:

1. The adoption of anti-takeover provisions such as a poison pill or classified board
2. Supermajority vote requirements to amend governing documents
3. The presence of exclusive forum or fee-shifting provisions
4. Whether shareholders can call special meetings or act by written consent
5. The voting standard provided for the election of directors
6. The ability of shareholders to remove directors without cause
7. The presence of evergreen provisions in the Company's equity compensation arrangements

In cases where a board adopts an anti-takeover provision preceding an IPO, we will consider recommending to vote against the members of the board who served when it was adopted if the board: (i) did not also commit to submit the anti-takeover provision to a shareholder vote at the company's first shareholder meeting following the IPO; or (ii) did not provide a sound rationale or sunset provision for adopting the anti-takeover provision in question.

In our view, adopting an anti-takeover device unfairly penalizes future shareholders who (except for electing to buy or sell the stock) are unable to weigh in on a matter that could potentially negatively impact their ownership interest. This notion is strengthened when a board adopts a classified board with an infinite duration or a poison pill with a five- to ten-year term immediately prior to going public, thereby insulated management for a substantial amount of time.

In addition, shareholders should be wary of companies that adopt supermajority voting requirements before their IPO. Absent explicit provisions in the articles or bylaws stipulating that certain policies will be phased out over a certain period of time, long-term shareholders could find themselves in the predicament of having to attain a supermajority vote to approve future proposals seeking to eliminate such policies.

## **DUAL-LISTED OR FOREIGN-INCORPORATED COMPANIES**

For companies that trade on multiple exchanges or are incorporated in foreign jurisdictions but trade only in the U.S., we will apply the governance standard most relevant in each situation. We will consider a number of factors in

determining which Glass Lewis country-specific policy to apply, including but not limited to: (i) the corporate governance structure and features of the company including whether the board structure is unique to a particular market; (ii) the nature of the proposals; (iii) the location of the company's primary listing, if one can be determined; (iv) the regulatory/governance regime that the board is reporting against; and (v) the availability and completeness of the company's SEC filings.

## **MUTUAL FUND BOARDS**

Mutual funds, or investment companies, are structured differently from regular public companies (i.e., operating companies). Typically, members of a fund's adviser are on the board and management takes on a different role from that of regular public companies. Thus, we focus on a short list of requirements, although many of our guidelines remain the same.

The following mutual fund policies are similar to the policies for regular public companies:

1. **Size of the board of directors** — The board should be made up of between five and twenty directors.
2. **The CFO on the board** — Neither the CFO of the fund nor the CFO of the fund’s registered investment adviser should serve on the board.
3. **Independence of the audit committee** — The audit committee should consist solely of independent directors.
4. **Audit committee financial expert** — At least one member of the audit committee should be designated as the audit committee financial expert.

The following differences from regular public companies apply at mutual funds:

1. **Independence of the board** — We believe that three-fourths of an investment company’s board should be made up of independent directors. This is consistent with a proposed SEC rule on investment company boards. The Investment Company Act requires 40% of the board to be independent, but in 2001, the SEC amended the Exemptive Rules to require that a majority of a mutual fund board be independent. In 2005, the SEC proposed increasing the independence threshold to 75%. In 2006, a federal appeals court ordered that this rule amendment be put back out for public comment, putting it back into “proposed rule” status. Since mutual fund boards play a vital role in overseeing the relationship between the fund and its investment manager, there is greater need for independent oversight than there is for an operating company board.

2. **When the auditor is not up for ratification** — We do not recommend voting against the audit committee if the auditor is not up for ratification. Due to the different legal structure of an investment company compared to an operating company, the auditor for the investment company (i.e., mutual fund) does not conduct the same level of financial review for each investment company as for an operating company.

3. **Non-independent chair** — The SEC has proposed that the chair of the fund board be independent. We agree that the roles of a mutual fund’s chair and CEO should be separate. Although we believe this would be best at all companies, we recommend voting against the chair of an investment company’s nominating committee as well as the board chair if the chair and CEO of a mutual fund are the same person and the fund does not have an independent lead or presiding director. Seven former SEC commissioners support the appointment of an independent chair and we agree with them that “an independent board chair would be better able to create conditions favoring the long-term interests of fund shareholders than would a chair who is an executive of the adviser.” (See the comment letter sent to the SEC in support of the proposed rule at <http://www.sec.gov/news/studies/indchair.pdf>)

4. **Multiple funds overseen by the same director** — Unlike service on a public company board, mutual fund boards require much less of a time commitment. Mutual fund directors typically serve on dozens of other mutual fund boards, often within the same fund complex. The Investment Company Institute’s (“ICI”) Overview of Fund Governance Practices, 1994–2012, indicates that the average number of funds served by an independent director in 2012 was 53. Absent evidence that a specific director is hindered from being an effective board member at a fund due to service on other funds’ boards, we refrain from maintaining a cap on the number of outside mutual fund boards that we believe a director can serve on.

**DECLASSIFIED BOARDS**

Glass Lewis favors the repeal of staggered boards and the annual election of directors. We believe staggered boards are less accountable to shareholders than boards that are elected annually. Furthermore, we feel the annual election of directors encourages board members to focus on shareholder interests.

Empirical studies have shown: (i) staggered boards are associated with a reduction in a firm's valuation; and (ii) in the context of hostile takeovers, staggered boards operate as a takeover defense, which entrenches management, discourages potential acquirers, and delivers a lower return to target shareholders.

In our view, there is no evidence to demonstrate that staggered boards improve shareholder returns in a takeover context. Some research has indicated that shareholders are worse off when a staggered board blocks a transaction; further, when a staggered board negotiates a friendly transaction, no statistically significant difference in premium occurs.<sup>40</sup> Additional research found that charter-based staggered boards “reduce the market value of a firm by 4% to 6% of its market capitalization” and that “staggered boards bring about and not merely reflect this reduction in market value.”<sup>41</sup> A subsequent study reaffirmed that classified boards reduce shareholder value, finding “that the ongoing process of dismantling staggered boards, encouraged by institutional investors, could well contribute to increasing shareholder wealth.”<sup>42</sup>

Shareholders have increasingly come to agree with this view. In 2013, 91% of S&P 500 companies had declassified boards, up from approximately 40% a decade ago.<sup>43</sup> Management proposals to declassify boards are approved with near unanimity and shareholder proposals on the topic also receive strong shareholder support; in 2014, shareholder proposals requesting that companies declassify their boards received average support of 84% (excluding abstentions and broker non-votes), whereas in 1987, only 16.4% of votes cast favored board declassification.<sup>44</sup> Further, a growing number of companies, nearly half of all those targeted by shareholder proposals requesting that all directors stand for election annually, either recommended shareholders support the proposal or made no recommendation, a departure from the more traditional management recommendation to vote against shareholder proposals.

Given our belief that declassified boards promote director accountability, the empirical evidence suggesting staggered boards reduce a company's value and the established shareholder opposition to such a structure, Glass Lewis supports the declassification of boards and the annual election of directors.

## **BOARD EVALUATION AND REFRESHMENT**

Glass Lewis strongly supports routine director evaluation, including independent external reviews, and periodic board refreshment to foster the sharing of diverse perspectives in the boardroom and the generation of new ideas and business strategies. Further, we believe the board should evaluate the need for changes to board composition based on an analysis of skills and experience necessary for the company, as well as the results of the director evaluations, as opposed to relying solely on age or tenure limits. When necessary, shareholders can address concerns regarding proper board composition through director elections.

In our view, a director's experience can be a valuable asset to shareholders because of the complex, critical issues that boards face. This said, we recognize that in rare circumstances, a lack of refreshment can contribute to a lack of board responsiveness to poor company performance.



On occasion, age or term limits can be used as a means to remove a director for boards that are unwilling to police their membership and enforce turnover. Some shareholders support term limits as a way to force change in such circumstances.

While we understand that age limits can aid board succession planning, the long-term impact of age limits restricts experienced and potentially valuable board members from service through an arbitrary means. We believe that shareholders are better off monitoring the board's overall composition, including its diversity of skill sets, the alignment of the board's areas of expertise with a company's strategy, the board's approach to corporate governance, and its stewardship of company performance, rather than imposing inflexible rules that don't necessarily correlate with returns or benefits for shareholders.

40 Lucian Bebchuk, John Coates IV, Guhan Subramanian, "The Powerful Antitakeover Force of Staggered Boards: Further Findings and a Reply to Symposium Participants," 55 *Stanford Law Review* 885-917 (2002).

41 Lucian Bebchuk, Alma Cohen, "The Costs of Entrenched Boards" (2004).

42 Lucian Bebchuk, Alma Cohen and Charles C.Y. Wang, "Staggered Boards and the Wealth of Shareholders: Evidence from a Natural Experiment," SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1706806> (2010), p. 26.

43 Spencer Stuart Board Index, 2013, p. 4

44 Lucian Bebchuk, John Coates IV and Guhan Subramanian, "The Powerful Antitakeover Force of Staggered Boards: Theory, Evidence, and Policy".

However, if a board adopts term/age limits, it should follow through and not waive such limits. If the board waives its term/age limits, Glass Lewis will consider recommending shareholders vote against the nominating and/or governance committees, unless the rule was waived with sufficient explanation, such as consummation of a corporate transaction like a merger.

## **PROXY ACCESS**

In lieu of running their own contested election, proxy access would not only allow certain shareholders to nominate directors to company boards but the shareholder nominees would be included on the company's ballot, significantly enhancing the ability of shareholders to play a meaningful role in selecting their representatives. Glass Lewis generally supports affording shareholders the right to nominate director candidates to management's proxy as a means to ensure that significant, long-term shareholders have an ability to nominate candidates to the board.

Companies generally seek shareholder approval to amend company bylaws to adopt proxy access in response to shareholder engagement or pressure, usually in the form of a shareholder proposal requesting proxy access, although some companies may adopt some elements of proxy access without prompting. Glass Lewis considers several factors when evaluating whether to support proposals for companies to adopt proxy access including the specified minimum ownership and holding requirement for shareholders to nominate one or more directors, as well as company size, performance and responsiveness to shareholders.

For a discussion of recent regulatory events in this area, along with a detailed overview of the Glass Lewis approach to Shareholder Proposals regarding Proxy Access, refer to Glass Lewis' *Proxy Paper Guidelines for Shareholder Initiatives*, available at [www.glasslewis.com](http://www.glasslewis.com).

## **MAJORITY VOTE FOR THE ELECTION OF DIRECTORS**

Majority voting for the election of directors is fast becoming the de facto standard in corporate board elections. In our view, the majority voting proposals are an effort to make the case for shareholder impact on director elections on a company-specific basis.

While this proposal would not give shareholders the opportunity to nominate directors or lead to elections where shareholders have a choice among director candidates, if implemented, the proposal would allow shareholders to have a voice in determining whether the nominees proposed by the board should actually serve as the overseer-representatives of shareholders in the boardroom. We believe this would be a favorable outcome for shareholders.

The number of shareholder proposals requesting that companies adopt a majority voting standard has declined significantly during the past decade, largely as a result of widespread adoption of majority voting or director resignation policies at U.S. companies. In 2015, 86% of the S&P 500 Index had implemented a resignation policy for directors failing to receive majority shareholder support, compared to 71% in 2010.<sup>45</sup>

## **THE PLURALITY VOTE STANDARD**

Today, most US companies still elect directors by a plurality vote standard. Under that standard, if one shareholder holding only one share votes in favor of a nominee (including that director, if the director is a shareholder), that nominee “wins” the election and assumes a seat on the board. The common concern among companies with a plurality voting standard is the possibility that one or more directors would not receive a majority of votes, resulting in “failed elections.”

## **ADVANTAGES OF A MAJORITY VOTE STANDARD**

If a majority vote standard were implemented, a nominee would have to receive the support of a majority of the shares voted in order to be elected. Thus, shareholders could collectively vote to reject a director they

<sup>45</sup> Spencer Stuart Board Index, 2015, p. 12.

believe will not pursue their best interests. Given that so few directors (less than 100 a year) do not receive majority support from shareholders, we think that a majority vote standard is reasonable since it will neither result in many failed director elections nor reduce the willingness of qualified, shareholder-focused directors to serve in the future. Further, most directors who fail to receive a majority shareholder vote in favor of their election do not step down, underscoring the need for true majority voting.

We believe that a majority vote standard will likely lead to more attentive directors. Although shareholders only rarely fail to support directors, the occasional majority vote against a director's election will likely deter the election of directors with a record of ignoring shareholder interests. Glass Lewis will therefore generally support proposals calling for the election of directors by a majority vote, excepting contested director elections.

In response to the high level of support majority voting has garnered, many companies have voluntarily taken steps to implement majority voting or modified approaches to majority voting. These steps range from a modified approach requiring directors that receive a majority of withheld votes to resign (i.e., a resignation policy) to actually requiring a majority vote of outstanding shares to elect directors.

We feel that the modified approach does not go far enough because requiring a director to resign is not the same as requiring a majority vote to elect a director and does not allow shareholders a definitive voice in the election process. Further, under the modified approach, the corporate governance committee could reject a resignation and, even if it accepts the resignation, the corporate governance committee decides on the director's replacement. And since the modified approach is usually adopted as a policy by the board or a board committee, it could be altered by the same board or committee at any time.

## **CONFLICTING PROPOSALS**

On January 16, 2015, the SEC announced that for the 2015 proxy season it would not opine on the application of Rule 14a-8(i)(9) that allows companies to exclude shareholder proposals, including those seeking proxy access, that conflict with a management proposal on the same issue. While the announcement did not render the rule ineffective, a number of companies opted not to exclude a shareholder proposal but rather to allow shareholders a vote on both management and shareholder proposals on the same issue, generally proxy access. The management proposals typically imposed more restrictive terms than the shareholder proposal in order to exercise the particular shareholder right at issue, e.g., a higher proxy access ownership threshold. On October 22, 2015, the SEC issued Staff Legal Bulletin No. 14H ("SLB 14H") clarifying its rule concerning the exclusion of certain shareholder proposals when similar items are also on the ballot. SLB 14H increases the burden on companies to prove to SEC staff that a conflict exists; therefore, some companies may still choose to place management proposals alongside similar shareholder proposals in the coming year.

When Glass Lewis reviews conflicting management and shareholder proposals, we will consider the following:

- The nature of the underlying issue;
- The benefit to shareholders from implementation of the proposal;
- The materiality of the differences between the terms of the shareholder proposal and management proposal;
- The appropriateness of the provisions in the context of a company's shareholder base, corporate structure and other relevant circumstances; and
- A company's overall governance profile and, specifically, its responsiveness to shareholders as evidenced by a company's response to previous shareholder proposals and its adoption of progressive shareholder rights provisions.

## II. **Transparency and Integrity in Financial Reporting**

### **AUDITOR RATIFICATION**

The auditor's role as gatekeeper is crucial in ensuring the integrity and transparency of the financial information necessary for protecting shareholder value. Shareholders rely on the auditor to ask tough questions and to do a thorough analysis of a company's books to ensure that the information provided to shareholders is complete, accurate, fair, and that it is a reasonable representation of a company's financial position. The only way shareholders can make rational investment decisions is if the market is equipped with accurate information about a company's fiscal health. As stated in the October 6, 2008 Final Report of the Advisory Committee on the Auditing Profession to the U.S. Department of the Treasury:

*"The auditor is expected to offer critical and objective judgment on the financial matters under consideration, and actual and perceived absence of conflicts is critical to that expectation. The Committee believes that auditors, investors, public companies, and other market participants must understand the independence requirements and their objectives, and that auditors must adopt a mindset of skepticism when facing situations that may compromise their independence."*

As such, shareholders should demand an objective, competent and diligent auditor who performs at or above professional standards at every company in which the investors hold an interest. Like directors, auditors should be free from conflicts of interest and should avoid situations requiring a choice between the auditor's interests and the public's interests. Almost without exception, shareholders should be able to annually review an auditor's performance and to annually ratify a board's auditor selection. Moreover, in October 2008, the Advisory Committee on the Auditing Profession went even further, and recommended that "to further enhance audit committee oversight and auditor accountability .... disclosure in the company proxy statement regarding shareholder ratification [should] include the name(s) of the senior auditing partner(s) staffed on the engagement."<sup>6</sup>

On August 16, 2011, the PCAOB issued a Concept Release seeking public comment on ways that auditor independence, objectivity and professional skepticism could be enhanced, with a specific emphasis on mandatory audit firm rotation. The PCAOB convened several public roundtable meetings during 2012 to further discuss such matters. Glass Lewis believes auditor rotation can ensure both the independence of the auditor and the integrity of the audit; we will typically recommend supporting proposals to require auditor rotation when the proposal uses a reasonable period of time (usually not less than 5-7 years), particularly at companies with a history of accounting problems.

### **VOTING RECOMMENDATIONS ON AUDITOR RATIFICATION**

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We generally support management's choice of auditor except when we believe the auditor's independence or audit integrity has been compromised. Where a board has not allowed shareholders to review and ratify an auditor, we typically recommend voting against the audit committee chair. When there have been material restatements of annual financial statements or material weaknesses in internal controls, we usually recommend voting against the entire audit committee.

Reasons why we may not recommend ratification of an auditor include:

1. When audit fees plus audit-related fees total less than the tax fees and/or other non-audit fees.
2. Recent material restatements of annual financial statements, including those resulting in the reporting

46 "Final Report of the Advisory Committee on the Auditing Profession to the U.S. Department of the Treasury." p. VIII:20, October 6, 2008.

of material weaknesses in internal controls and including late filings by the company where the auditor bears some responsibility for the restatement or late filing.<sup>47</sup>

3. When the auditor performs prohibited services such as tax-shelter work, tax services for the CEO or CFO, or contingent-fee work, such as a fee based on a percentage of economic benefit to the company.
4. When audit fees are excessively low, especially when compared with other companies in the same industry.
5. When the company has aggressive accounting policies.
6. When the company has poor disclosure or lack of transparency in its financial statements.
7. Where the auditor limited its liability through its contract with the company or the audit contract requires the corporation to use alternative dispute resolution procedures without adequate justification.
8. We also look for other relationships or concerns with the auditor that might suggest a conflict between the auditor's interests and shareholder interests.

## **PENSION ACCOUNTING ISSUES**

A pension accounting question occasionally raised in proxy proposals is what effect, if any, projected returns on employee pension assets should have on a company's net income. This issue often arises in the executive-compensation context in a discussion of the extent to which pension accounting should be reflected in business performance for purposes of calculating payments to executives.

Glass Lewis believes that pension credits should not be included in measuring income that is used to award performance-based compensation. Because many of the assumptions used in accounting for retirement plans are subject to the company's discretion, management would have an obvious conflict of interest if pay were tied to pension income. In our view, projected income from pensions does not truly reflect a company's performance.

<sup>47</sup> An auditor does not audit interim financial statements. Thus, we generally do not believe that an auditor should be opposed due to a restatement of interim financial statements unless the nature of the misstatement is clear from a reading of the incorrect financial statements.



**III. The Link Between Compensation and Performance**

Glass Lewis carefully reviews the compensation awarded to senior executives, as we believe that this is an important area in which the board's priorities are revealed. Glass Lewis strongly believes executive compensation should be linked directly with the performance of the business the executive is charged with managing. We believe the most effective compensation arrangements provide for an appropriate mix of performance-based short- and long-term incentives in addition to fixed pay elements while promoting a prudent and sustainable level of risk-taking.

Glass Lewis believes that comprehensive, timely and transparent disclosure of executive pay is critical to allowing shareholders to evaluate the extent to which pay is aligned with company performance. When reviewing proxy materials, Glass Lewis examines whether the company discloses the performance metrics used to determine executive compensation. We recognize performance metrics must necessarily vary depending on the company and industry, among other factors, and may include a wide variety of financial measures as well as industry-specific performance indicators. However, we believe companies should disclose why the specific performance metrics were selected and how the actions they are designed to incentivize will lead to better corporate performance.

Moreover, it is rarely in shareholders' interests to disclose competitive data about individual salaries below the senior executive level. Such disclosure could create internal personnel discord that would be counterproductive for the company and its shareholders. While we favor full disclosure for senior executives and we view pay disclosure at the aggregate level (e.g., the number of employees being paid over a certain amount or in certain categories) as potentially useful, we do not believe share-holders need or will benefit from detailed reports about individual management employees other than the most senior executives.

**ADVISORY VOTE ON EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION ("SAY-ON-PAY")**

The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (the "Dodd-Frank Act") required companies to hold an advisory vote on executive compensation at the first shareholder meeting that occurs six months after enactment of the bill (January 21, 2011).

This practice of allowing shareholders a non-binding vote on a company's compensation report is standard practice in many non-US countries, and has been a requirement for most companies in the United Kingdom since 2003 and in Australia since 2005. Although say-on-pay proposals are non-binding, a high level of "against" or "abstain" votes indicates substantial shareholder concern about a company's compensation policies and procedures.

Given the complexity of most companies' compensation programs, Glass Lewis applies a highly nuanced approach when analyzing advisory votes on executive compensation. We review each company's compensation on a case-by-case basis, recognizing that each company must be examined in the context of industry, size, maturity,

performance, financial condition, its historic pay for performance practices, and any other relevant internal or external factors.

We believe that each company should design and apply specific compensation policies and practices that are appropriate to the circumstances of the company and, in particular, will attract and retain competent executives and other staff, while motivating them to grow the company's long-term shareholder value.

Where we find those specific policies and practices serve to reasonably align compensation with performance, and such practices are adequately disclosed, Glass Lewis will recommend supporting the company's approach. If, however, those specific policies and practices fail to demonstrably link compensation with performance, Glass Lewis will generally recommend voting against the say-on-pay proposal.

Glass Lewis reviews say-on-pay proposals on both a qualitative basis and a quantitative basis, with a focus on several main areas:

- The overall design and structure of the company's executive compensation programs including selection and challenging nature of performance metrics;
- The implementation and effectiveness of the company's executive compensation programs including pay mix and use of performance metrics in determining pay levels;
- The quality and content of the company's disclosure;
- The quantum paid to executives; and
- The link between compensation and performance as indicated by the company's current and past pay-for-performance grades.

We also review any significant changes or modifications, and the rationale for such changes, made to the company's compensation structure or award amounts, including base salaries.

#### **SAY-ON-PAY VOTING RECOMMENDATIONS**

In cases where we find deficiencies in a company's compensation program's design, implementation or management, we will recommend that shareholders vote against the say-on-pay proposal. Generally such instances include evidence of a pattern of poor pay-for-performance practices (i.e., deficient or failing pay for performance grades), unclear or questionable disclosure regarding the overall compensation structure (e.g., limited information regarding benchmarking processes, limited rationale for bonus performance metrics and targets, etc.), questionable adjustments to certain aspects of the overall compensation structure (e.g., limited rationale for significant changes to performance targets or metrics, the payout of guaranteed bonuses or sizable retention grants, etc.), and/or other egregious compensation practices.

Although not an exhaustive list, the following issues when weighed together may cause Glass Lewis to recommend voting against a say-on-pay vote:

- Inappropriate peer group and/or benchmarking issues;
- Inadequate or no rationale for changes to peer groups;
- Egregious or excessive bonuses, equity awards or severance payments, including golden handshakes and golden parachutes;

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- Problematic contractual payments, such as guaranteed bonuses;
- Targeting overall levels of compensation at higher than median without adequate justification;
- Performance targets not sufficiently challenging, and/or providing for high potential payouts;
- Performance targets lowered without justification;
- Discretionary bonuses paid when short- or long-term incentive plan targets were not met;
- Executive pay high relative to peers not justified by outstanding company performance; and
- The terms of the long-term incentive plans are inappropriate (please see “Long-Term Incentives” on page 29).

In instances where a company has simply failed to provide sufficient disclosure of its policies, we may recommend shareholders vote against this proposal solely on this basis, regardless of the appropriateness of compensation levels.

Where we identify egregious compensation practices, we may also recommend voting against the compensation committee based on the practices or actions of its members during the year. Such practices may include: approving large one-off payments, the inappropriate, unjustified use of discretion, or sustained poor pay for performance practices.

## **COMPANY RESPONSIVENESS**

At companies that received a significant level of shareholder opposition (25% or greater) to their say-on-pay proposal at the previous annual meeting, we believe the board should demonstrate some level of engagement and responsiveness to the shareholder concerns behind the discontent, particularly in response to shareholder engagement. While we recognize that sweeping changes cannot be made to a compensation program without due consideration and that a majority of shareholders voted in favor of the proposal, given that the average approval rate for say-on-pay proposals is about 90% we believe the compensation committee should provide some level of response to a significant vote against, including engaging with large shareholders to identify their concerns. In the absence of any evidence that the board is actively engaging shareholders on these issues and responding accordingly, we may recommend holding compensation committee members accountable for failing to adequately respond to shareholder opposition, giving careful consideration to the level of shareholder protest and the severity and history of compensation problems.

## **PAY FOR PERFORMANCE**

Glass Lewis believes an integral part of a well-structured compensation package is a successful link between pay and performance. Our proprietary pay-for-performance model was developed to better evaluate the link between pay and performance of the top five executives at US companies. Our model benchmarks these executives' pay and company performance against peers selected using Equilar's market-based peer groups and across five performance metrics. By measuring the magnitude of the gap between two weighted-average percentile rankings (executive compensation and performance), we grade companies based on a school letter system: "A", "B", "F", etc. The grades guide our evaluation of compensation committee effectiveness and we generally recommend voting against compensation committee of companies with a pattern of failing our pay-for-performance analysis.

We also use this analysis to inform our voting decisions on say-on-pay proposals. As such, if a company receives a failing grade from our proprietary model, we are more likely to recommend that shareholders vote against the say-on-pay proposal. However, other qualitative factors such as an effective overall incentive structure, the relevance of selected performance metrics, significant forthcoming enhancements or reasonable long-term payout levels may give us cause to recommend in favor of a proposal even when we have identified a disconnect between pay and performance.

## **SHORT-TERM INCENTIVES**

A short-term bonus or incentive (“STI”) should be demonstrably tied to performance. Whenever possible, we believe a mix of corporate and individual performance measures is appropriate. We would normally expect performance measures for STIs to be based on company-wide or divisional financial measures as well as non-financial factors such as those related to safety, environmental issues, and customer satisfaction. While we recognize that companies operating in different sectors or markets may seek to utilize a wide range of metrics, we expect such measures to be appropriately tied to a company’s business drivers.

Further, the target and potential maximum awards that can be achieved under STI awards should be disclosed. Shareholders should expect stretching performance targets for the maximum award to be achieved. Any increase in the potential target and maximum award should be clearly justified to shareholders.

Glass Lewis recognizes that disclosure of some measures may include commercially confidential information. Therefore, we believe it may be reasonable to exclude such information in some cases as long as the company provides sufficient justification for non-disclosure. However, where a short-term bonus has been paid, companies should disclose the extent to which performance has been achieved against relevant targets, including disclosure of the actual target achieved.

Where management has received significant STIs but short-term performance over the previous year prima facie appears to be poor or negative, we believe the company should provide a clear explanation of why these significant short-term payments were made. In addition, we believe that where companies use non-GAAP or bespoke metrics, clear reconciliations between these figures and GAAP figures in audited financial statement should be provided.

## **LONG-TERM INCENTIVES**

Glass Lewis recognizes the value of equity-based incentive programs, which are often the primary long-term incentive for executives. When used appropriately, they can provide a vehicle for linking an executive's pay to company performance, thereby aligning their interests with those of shareholders. In addition, equity-based compensation can be an effective way to attract, retain and motivate key employees.

There are certain elements that Glass Lewis believes are common to most well-structured long-term incentive ("LTI") plans. These include:

- No re-testing or lowering of performance conditions;
- Performance metrics that cannot be easily manipulated by management;
- Two or more performance metrics;
- At least one relative performance metric that compares the company's performance to a relevant peer group or index;
- Performance periods of at least three years;
- Stretching metrics that incentivize executives to strive for outstanding performance while not encouraging excessive risk-taking; and
- Individual limits expressed as a percentage of base salary.

Performance measures should be carefully selected and should relate to the specific business/industry in which the company operates and, especially, the key value drivers of the company's business. As with short-term incentive plans, the basis for any adjustments to metrics or results should be clearly explained.

While cognizant of the inherent complexity of certain performance metrics, Glass Lewis generally believes that measuring a company's performance with multiple metrics serves to provide a more complete picture of the company's performance than a single metric; further, reliance on just one metric may focus too much management attention on a single target and is therefore more susceptible to manipulation. When utilized for relative measurements, external benchmarks such as a sector index or peer group should be disclosed and transparent. The rationale behind the selection of a specific index or peer group should also be disclosed. Internal benchmarks should also be disclosed and transparent, unless a cogent case for confidentiality is made and fully explained. Similarly, actual performance and vesting levels for previous grants earned during the fiscal year should be disclosed.

We also believe shareholders should evaluate the relative success of a company's compensation programs, particularly with regard to existing equity-based incentive plans, in linking pay and performance when evaluating new LTI plans to determine the impact of additional stock awards. We will therefore review the company's



pay-for-performance grade (see below for more information) and specifically the proportion of total compensation that is stock-based.

## **TRANSITIONAL AND ONE-OFF AWARDS**

Glass Lewis believes shareholders should generally be wary of awards granted outside of the standard incentive schemes outlined above, as such awards have the potential to undermine the integrity of a company's regular incentive plans, the link between pay and performance or both. We generally believe that if the existing incentive programs fail to provide adequate incentives to executives, companies should redesign their compensation programs rather than make additional grants.

However, we recognize that in certain circumstances, additional incentives may be appropriate. In these cases, companies should provide a thorough description of the awards, including a cogent and convincing explanation of their necessity and why existing awards do not provide sufficient motivation. Further, such awards should be tied to future service and performance whenever possible.

Similarly, we acknowledge that there may be certain costs associated with transitions at the executive level. We believe that sign-on arrangements should be clearly disclosed and accompanied by a meaningful explanation of the payments and the process by which the amounts are reached. Furthermore, the details of and basis for any "make-whole" payments (which are paid as compensation for forfeited awards from a previous employer) should be provided.

While in limited circumstances such deviations may not be inappropriate, we believe shareholders should be provided with a meaningful explanation of any additional benefits agreed upon outside of the regular arrangements. For severance or sign-on arrangements, we may consider the executive's regular target compensation levels or the sums paid to other executives (including the recipient's predecessor, where applicable) in evaluating the appropriateness of such an arrangement.

Additionally, we believe companies making supplemental or one-time awards should also describe if and how the regular compensation arrangements will be affected by these additional grants. In reviewing a company's use of supplemental awards, Glass Lewis will evaluate the terms and size of the grants in the context of the company's overall incentive strategy and granting practices, as well as the current operating environment.

## **RECOUPMENT PROVISIONS ("CLAWBACKS")**

We believe it is prudent for boards to adopt detailed and stringent bonus recoupment policies to prevent executives from retaining performance-based awards that were not truly earned. We believe such “clawback” policies should be triggered in the event of a restatement of financial results or similar revision of performance indicators upon which bonuses were based. Such policies would allow the board to review all performance-related bonuses and awards made to senior executives during the period covered by a restatement and would, to the extent feasible, allow the company to recoup such bonuses in the event that performance goals were not actually achieved. We further believe clawback policies should be subject to only limited discretion to ensure the integrity of such policies.

Section 954 of the Dodd-Frank Act requires the SEC to create a rule requiring listed companies to adopt policies for recouping certain compensation during a three-year look-back period. The rule applies to incentive-based compensation paid to current or former executives if the company is required to prepare an accounting restatement due to erroneous data resulting from material non-compliance with any financial reporting requirements under the securities laws. However, the SEC has yet to finalize the relevant rules.

These recoupment provisions are more stringent than under Section 304 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act in three respects: (i) the provisions extend to current or former executive officers rather than only to the CEO and CFO; (ii) it has a three-year look-back period (rather than a twelve-month look-back period); and (iii) it allows for recovery of compensation based upon a financial restatement due to erroneous data, and therefore does not require misconduct on the part of the executive or other employees.

## **HEDGING OF STOCK**

Glass Lewis believes that the hedging of shares by executives in the shares of the companies where they are employed severs the alignment of interests of the executive with shareholders. We believe companies should adopt strict policies to prohibit executives from hedging the economic risk associated with their shareownership in the company.

## **PLEDGING OF STOCK**

Glass Lewis believes that shareholders should examine the facts and circumstances of each company rather than apply a one-size-fits-all policy regarding employee stock pledging. Glass Lewis believes that shareholders benefit when employees, particularly senior executives have “skin-in-the-game” and therefore recognizes the benefits of measures designed to encourage employees to both buy shares out of their own pocket and to retain shares they have been granted; blanket policies prohibiting stock pledging may discourage executives and employees from doing either.

However, we also recognize that the pledging of shares can present a risk that, depending on a host of factors, an executive with significant pledged shares and limited other assets may have an incentive to take steps to avoid a forced sale of shares in the face of a rapid stock price decline. Therefore, to avoid substantial losses from a forced sale to meet the terms of the loan, the executive may have an incentive to boost the stock price in the short term in a manner that is unsustainable, thus hurting shareholders in the long-term. We also recognize concerns regarding pledging may not apply to less senior employees, given the latter group’s significantly more limited influence over a company’s stock price. Therefore, we believe that the issue of pledging shares should be reviewed in that context, as should polices that distinguish between the two groups.

Glass Lewis believes that the benefits of stock ownership by executives and employees may outweigh the risks of stock pledging, depending on many factors. As such, Glass Lewis reviews all relevant factors in evaluating proposed policies, limitations and prohibitions on pledging stock, including:

- The number of shares pledged;
- The percentage executives’ pledged shares are of outstanding shares;
- The percentage executives’ pledged shares are of each executive’s shares and total assets;
- Whether the pledged shares were purchased by the employee or granted by the company;
- Whether there are different policies for purchased and granted shares;
- Whether the granted shares were time-based or performance-based;

- The overall governance profile of the company;
- The volatility of the company's stock (in order to determine the likelihood of a sudden stock price drop);
- The nature and cyclicalness, if applicable, of the company's industry;
- The participation and eligibility of executives and employees in pledging;
- The company's current policies regarding pledging and any waiver from these policies for employees and executives;  
and
- Disclosure of the extent of any pledging, particularly among senior executives.

## **COMPENSATION CONSULTANT INDEPENDENCE**

As mandated by Section 952 of the Dodd-Frank Act, as of January 11, 2013, the SEC approved new listing requirements for both the NYSE and NASDAQ which require compensation committees to consider six factors in assessing compensation advisor independence. These factors include: (1) provision of other services to the company; (2) fees paid by the company as a percentage of the advisor's total annual revenue; (3) policies and procedures of the advisor to mitigate conflicts of interests; (4) any business or personal relationships of the consultant with any member of the compensation committee; (5) any company stock held by the consultant; and (6) any business or personal relationships of the consultant with any executive officer of the company. According to the SEC, "no one factor should be viewed as a determinative factor." Glass Lewis believes this six-factor assessment is an important process for every compensation committee to undertake but believes companies employing a consultant for board compensation, consulting and other corporate services should provide clear disclosure beyond just a reference to examining the six points to allow shareholders to review the specific aspects of the various consultant relationships.

We believe compensation consultants are engaged to provide objective, disinterested, expert advice to the compensation committee. When the consultant or its affiliates receive substantial income from providing other services to the company, we believe the potential for a conflict of interest arises and the independence of the consultant may be jeopardized. Therefore, Glass Lewis will, when relevant, note the potential for a conflict of interest when the fees paid to the advisor or its affiliates for other services exceeds those paid for compensation consulting.

## **FREQUENCY OF SAY-ON-PAY**

The Dodd-Frank Act also requires companies to allow shareholders a non-binding vote on the frequency of say-on-pay votes, i.e. every one, two or three years. Additionally, Dodd-Frank requires companies to hold such votes on the frequency of say-on-pay votes at least once every six years.

We believe companies should submit say-on-pay votes to shareholders every year. We believe that the time and financial burdens to a company with regard to an annual vote are relatively small and incremental and are outweighed by the benefits to shareholders through more frequent accountability. Implementing biannual or triennial votes on executive compensation limits shareholders' ability to hold the board accountable for its compensation practices through means other than voting against the compensation committee. Unless a company provides a compelling rationale or unique circumstances for say-on-pay votes less frequent than annually, we will generally recommend that shareholders support annual votes on compensation.

## **VOTE ON GOLDEN PARACHUTE ARRANGEMENTS**

The Dodd-Frank Act also requires companies to provide shareholders with a separate non-binding vote on approval of golden parachute compensation arrangements in connection with certain change-in-control transactions. However, if the golden parachute arrangements have previously been subject to a say-on-pay vote which shareholders approved, then this required vote is waived.

Glass Lewis believes the narrative and tabular disclosure of golden parachute arrangements benefits all shareholders. Glass Lewis analyzes each golden parachute arrangement on a case-by-case basis, taking into account, among other items: the nature of the change-in-control transaction, the ultimate value of the payments particularly compared to the value of the transaction, any excise tax gross-up obligations, the tenure and position of the executives in question before and after the transaction, any new or amended employment agreements entered into in connection with the transaction, and the type of triggers involved (i.e., single vs. double).

### **EQUITY-BASED COMPENSATION PLAN PROPOSALS**

We believe that equity compensation awards, when not abused, are useful for retaining employees and providing an incentive for them to act in a way that will improve company performance. Glass Lewis recognizes

that equity-based compensation plans are critical components of a company's overall compensation program and we analyze such plans accordingly based on both quantitative and qualitative factors.

Our quantitative analysis assesses the plan's cost and the company's pace of granting utilizing a number of different analyses, comparing the program with absolute limits we believe are key to equity value creation and with a carefully chosen peer group. In general, our model seeks to determine whether the proposed plan is either absolutely excessive or is more than one standard deviation away from the average plan for the peer group on a range of criteria, including dilution to shareholders and the projected annual cost relative to the company's financial performance. Each of the analyses (and their constituent parts) is weighted and the plan is scored in accordance with that weight.

We compare the program's expected annual expense with the business's operating metrics to help determine whether the plan is excessive in light of company performance. We also compare the plan's expected annual cost to the enterprise value of the firm rather than to market capitalization because the employees, managers and directors of the firm contribute to the creation of enterprise value but not necessarily market capitalization (the biggest difference is seen where cash represents the vast majority of market capitalization). Finally, we do not rely exclusively on relative comparisons with averages because, in addition to creeping averages serving to inflate compensation, we believe that some absolute limits are warranted.

We then consider qualitative aspects of the plan such as plan administration, the method and terms of exercise, repricing history, express or implied rights to reprice, and the presence of evergreen provisions. We also closely review the choice and use of, and difficulty in meeting, the awards' performance metrics and targets, if any. We believe significant changes to the terms of a plan should be explained for shareholders and clearly indicated. Other factors such as a company's size and operating environment may also be relevant in assessing the severity of concerns or the benefits of certain changes. Finally, we may consider a company's executive compensation practices in certain situations, as applicable.

We evaluate equity plans based on certain overarching principles:

- Companies should seek more shares only when needed;
- Requested share amounts should be small enough that companies seek shareholder approval every three to four years (or more frequently);
- If a plan is relatively expensive, it should not grant options solely to senior executives and board members;
- Dilution of annual net share count or voting power, along with the "overhang" of incentive plans, should be limited;
- Annual cost of the plan (especially if not shown on the income statement) should be reasonable as a percentage of financial results and should be in line with the peer group;
- The expected annual cost of the plan should be proportional to the business's value;

- The intrinsic value that option grantees received in the past should be reasonable compared with the business's financial results;
- Plans should not permit re-pricing of stock options;
- Plans should not contain excessively liberal administrative or payment terms;
- Plans should not count shares in ways that understate the potential dilution, or cost, to common shareholders. This refers to "inverse" full-value award multipliers;



- Selected performance metrics should be challenging and appropriate, and should be subject to relative performance measurements; and
- Stock grants should be subject to minimum vesting and/or holding periods sufficient to ensure sustainable performance and promote retention.

## **OPTION EXCHANGES**

Glass Lewis views option repricing plans and option exchange programs with great skepticism. Shareholders have substantial risk in owning stock and we believe that the employees, officers, and directors who receive stock options should be similarly situated to align their interests with shareholder interests.

We are concerned that option grantees who believe they will be “rescued” from underwater options will be more inclined to take unjustifiable risks. Moreover, a predictable pattern of repricing or exchanges substantially alters a stock option’s value because options that will practically never expire deeply out of the money are worth far more than options that carry a risk of expiration.

In short, repricings and option exchange programs change the bargain between shareholders and employees after the bargain has been struck.

There is one circumstance in which a repricing or option exchange program may be acceptable: if macroeconomic or industry trends, rather than specific company issues, cause a stock’s value to decline dramatically and the repricing is necessary to motivate and retain employees. In this circumstance, we think it fair to conclude that option grantees may be suffering from a risk that was not foreseeable when the original “bargain” was struck. In such a circumstance, we will recommend supporting a repricing if the following conditions are true:

- Officers and board members cannot participate in the program;
- The stock decline mirrors the market or industry price decline in terms of timing and approximates the decline in magnitude;
- The exchange is value-neutral or value-creative to shareholders using very conservative assumptions and with a recognition of the adverse selection problems inherent in voluntary programs; and
- Management and the board make a cogent case for needing to motivate and retain existing employees, such as being in a competitive employment market.

## **OPTION BACKDATING, SPRING-LOADING AND BULLET-DODGING**

Glass Lewis views option backdating, and the related practices of spring-loading and bullet-dodging, as egregious actions that warrant holding the appropriate management and board members responsible. These practices are similar to re-pricing options and eliminate much of the downside risk inherent in an option grant that is designed to induce recipients to maximize shareholder return.

Backdating an option is the act of changing an option's grant date from the actual grant date to an earlier date when the market price of the underlying stock was lower, resulting in a lower exercise price for the option. Since 2006, Glass Lewis has identified over 270 companies that have disclosed internal or government investigations into their past stock-option grants.

Spring-loading is granting stock options while in possession of material, positive information that has not been disclosed publicly. Bullet-dodging is delaying the grants of stock options until after the release of material, negative information. This can allow option grants to be made at a lower price either before the release of positive news or following the release of negative news, assuming the stock's price will move up or down in response to the information. This raises a concern similar to that of insider trading, or the trading on material non-public information.

The exercise price for an option is determined on the day of grant, providing the recipient with the same market risk as an investor who bought shares on that date. However, where options were backdated, the executive or the board (or the compensation committee) changed the grant date retroactively. The new date may be at or near the lowest price for the year or period. This would be like allowing an investor to look back and select the lowest price of the year at which to buy shares.

A 2006 study of option grants made between 1996 and 2005 at 8,000 companies found that option backdating can be an indication of poor internal controls. The study found that option backdating was more likely to occur at companies without a majority independent board and with a long-serving CEO; both factors, the study concluded, were associated with greater CEO influence on the company's compensation and governance practices:<sup>48</sup>

Where a company granted backdated options to an executive who is also a director, Glass Lewis will recommend voting against that executive/director, regardless of who decided to make the award. In addition, Glass Lewis will recommend voting against those directors who either approved or allowed the backdating. Glass Lewis feels that executives and directors who either benefited from backdated options or authorized the practice have breached their fiduciary responsibility to shareholders.

Given the severe tax and legal liabilities to the company from backdating, Glass Lewis will consider recommending voting against members of the audit committee who served when options were backdated, a restatement occurs, material weaknesses in internal controls exist and disclosures indicate there was a lack of documentation. These committee members failed in their responsibility to ensure the integrity of the company's financial reports.

When a company has engaged in spring-loading or bullet-dodging, Glass Lewis will consider recommending voting against the compensation committee members where there has been a pattern of granting options at or near historic lows. Glass Lewis will also recommend voting against executives serving on the board who benefited from the spring-loading or bullet-dodging.

## **DIRECTOR COMPENSATION PLANS**

Glass Lewis believes that non-employee directors should receive reasonable and appropriate compensation for the time and effort they spend serving on the board and its committees. However, a balance is required. Fees should be competitive in order to retain and attract qualified individuals, but excessive fees represent a financial cost to the company and potentially compromise the objectivity and independence of non-employee directors. We will consider recommending supporting compensation plans that include option grants or other equity-based awards that help to align the interests of outside directors with those of shareholders. However, equity grants to directors should not be performance-based to ensure directors are not incentivized in the same manner as executives but rather serve as a check on imprudent risk-taking in executive compensation plan design.

Glass Lewis uses a proprietary model and analyst review to evaluate the costs of equity plans compared to the plans of peer companies with similar market capitalizations. We use the results of this model to guide our voting recommendations on stock-based director compensation plans.

## **EMPLOYEE STOCK PURCHASE PLANS**

Glass Lewis believes that employee stock purchase plans (“ESPPs”) can provide employees with a sense of ownership in their company and help strengthen the alignment between the interests of employees and shareholders. We evaluate ESPPs by assessing the expected discount, purchase period, expected purchase activity (if previous activity has been disclosed) and whether the plan has a “lookback” feature. Except for the most extreme cases, Glass Lewis will generally support these plans given the regulatory purchase limit of \$25,000 per employee per year, which we believe is reasonable. We also look at the number of shares requested to see if a ESPP will significantly contribute to overall shareholder dilution or if shareholders will not

48 Lucian Bebchuk, Yaniv Grinstein and Urs Peyer. “LUCKY CEOs.” November, 2006.

have a chance to approve the program for an excessive period of time. As such, we will generally recommend against ESPPs that contain “evergreen” provisions that automatically increase the number of shares available under the ESPP each year.

#### **EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION TAX DEDUCTIBILITY (IRS 162(M) COMPLIANCE)**

Section 162(m) of the Internal Revenue Code allows companies to deduct compensation in excess of \$1 million for the CEO and the next three most highly compensated executive officers, excluding the CFO, if the compensation is performance-based and is paid under shareholder-approved plans. Companies therefore submit incentive plans for shareholder approval to take advantage of the tax deductibility afforded under 162(m) for certain types of compensation.

We believe the best practice for companies is to provide robust disclosure to shareholders so that they can make fully-informed judgments about the reasonableness of the proposed compensation plan. To allow for meaningful shareholder review, we prefer that disclosure should include specific performance metrics, a maximum award pool, and a maximum award amount per employee. We also believe it is important to analyze the estimated grants to see if they are reasonable and in line with the company’s peers.

We typically recommend voting against a 162(m) proposal where: (i) a company fails to provide at least a list of performance targets; (ii) a company fails to provide one of either a total maximum or an individual maximum; or (iii) the proposed plan or individual maximum award limit is excessive when compared with the plans of the company’s peers.

The company’s record of aligning pay with performance (as evaluated using our proprietary pay-for-performance model) also plays a role in our recommendation. Where a company has a record of setting reasonable pay relative to business performance, we generally recommend voting in favor of a plan even if the plan caps seem large relative to peers because we recognize the value in special pay arrangements for continued exceptional performance.

As with all other issues we review, our goal is to provide consistent but contextual advice given the specifics of the company and ongoing performance. Overall, we recognize that it is generally not in shareholders’ best interests to vote against such a plan and forgo the potential tax benefit since shareholder rejection of such plans will not curtail the awards; it will only prevent the tax deduction associated with them.

**IV. Governance Structure and the Shareholder Franchise**

**ANTI-TAKEOVER MEASURES**

**POISON PILLS (SHAREHOLDER RIGHTS PLANS)**

Glass Lewis believes that poison pill plans are not generally in shareholders' best interests. They can reduce management accountability by substantially limiting opportunities for corporate takeovers. Rights plans can thus prevent shareholders from receiving a buy-out premium for their stock. Typically we recommend that shareholders vote against these plans to protect their financial interests and ensure that they have an opportunity to consider any offer for their shares, especially those at a premium.

We believe boards should be given wide latitude in directing company activities and in charting the company's course. However, on an issue such as this, where the link between the shareholders' financial interests and their right to consider and accept buyout offers is substantial, we believe that shareholders should be allowed to vote on whether they support such a plan's implementation. This issue is different from other matters that are typically left to board discretion. Its potential impact on and relation to shareholders is direct and substantial. It is also an issue in which management interests may be different from those of shareholders; thus, ensuring that shareholders have a voice is the only way to safeguard their interests.

In certain circumstances, we will support a poison pill that is limited in scope to accomplish a particular objective, such as the closing of an important merger, or a pill that contains what we believe to be a reasonable qualifying offer clause. We will consider supporting a poison pill plan if the qualifying offer clause includes each of the following attributes:

- The form of offer is not required to be an all-cash transaction;
- The offer is not required to remain open for more than 90 business days;
- The offeror is permitted to amend the offer, reduce the offer, or otherwise change the terms;
- There is no fairness opinion requirement; and
- There is a low to no premium requirement.

Where these requirements are met, we typically feel comfortable that shareholders will have the opportunity to voice their opinion on any legitimate offer.

## **NOL POISON PILLS**

Similarly, Glass Lewis may consider supporting a limited poison pill in the event that a company seeks shareholder approval of a rights plan for the express purpose of preserving Net Operating Losses (NOLs). While companies with NOLs can generally carry these losses forward to offset future taxable income, Section 382 of the Internal Revenue Code limits companies' ability to use NOLs in the event of a "change of ownership."<sup>49</sup> In this case, a company may adopt or amend a poison pill ("NOL pill") in order to prevent an inadvertent change of ownership by multiple investors purchasing small chunks of stock at the same time, and thereby preserve the ability to carry the NOLs forward. Often such NOL pills have trigger thresholds much lower than the common 15% or 20% thresholds, with some NOL pill triggers as low as 5%.

<sup>49</sup> Section 382 of the Internal Revenue Code refers to a "change of ownership" of more than 50 percentage points by one or more 5% shareholders within a three-year period. The statute is intended to deter the "trafficking" of net operating losses.

Glass Lewis evaluates NOL pills on a strictly case-by-case basis taking into consideration, among other factors, the value of the NOLs to the company, the likelihood of a change of ownership based on the size of the holding and the nature of the larger shareholders, the trigger threshold and whether the term of the plan is limited in duration (i.e., whether it contains a reasonable “sunset” provision) or is subject to periodic board review and/ or shareholder ratification. However, we will recommend that shareholders vote against a proposal to adopt or amend a pill to include NOL protective provisions if the company has adopted a more narrowly tailored means of preventing a change in control to preserve its NOLs. For example, a company may limit share transfers in its charter to prevent a change of ownership from occurring.

Furthermore, we believe that shareholders should be offered the opportunity to vote on any adoption or renewal of a NOL pill regardless of any potential tax benefit that it offers a company. As such, we will consider recommending voting against those members of the board who served at the time when an NOL pill was adopted without shareholder approval within the prior twelve months and where the NOL pill is not subject to shareholder ratification.

## **FAIR PRICE PROVISIONS**

Fair price provisions, which are rare, require that certain minimum price and procedural requirements be observed by any party that acquires more than a specified percentage of a corporation’s common stock. The provision is intended to protect minority shareholder value when an acquirer seeks to accomplish a merger or other transaction which would eliminate or change the interests of the minority stockholders. The provision is generally applied against the acquirer unless the takeover is approved by a majority of “continuing directors” and holders of a majority, in some cases a supermajority as high as 80%, of the combined voting power of all stock entitled to vote to alter, amend, or repeal the above provisions.

The effect of a fair price provision is to require approval of any merger or business combination with an “interested stockholder” by 51% of the voting stock of the company, excluding the shares held by the interested stockholder. An interested stockholder is generally considered to be a holder of 10% or more of the company’s outstanding stock, but the trigger can vary.

Generally, provisions are put in place for the ostensible purpose of preventing a back-end merger where the interested stockholder would be able to pay a lower price for the remaining shares of the company than he or she paid to gain control. The effect of a fair price provision on shareholders, however, is to limit their ability to gain a premium for their shares through a partial tender offer or open market acquisition which typically raise the share price, often significantly. A fair price provision discourages such transactions because of the potential costs of seeking shareholder approval and because of the restrictions on purchase price for completing a merger or other transaction at a later time.

Glass Lewis believes that fair price provisions, while sometimes protecting shareholders from abuse in a takeover situation, more often act as an impediment to takeovers, potentially limiting gains to shareholders from a variety of transactions that could significantly increase share price. In some cases, even the independent directors of the board



cannot make exceptions when such exceptions may be in the best interests of shareholders. Given the existence of state law protections for minority shareholders such as Section 203 of the Delaware Corporations Code, we believe it is in the best interests of shareholders to remove fair price provisions.

## **REINCORPORATION**

In general, Glass Lewis believes that the board is in the best position to determine the appropriate jurisdiction of incorporation for the company. When examining a management proposal to reincorporate to a different state or country, we review the relevant financial benefits, generally related to improved corporate tax treatment, as well as changes in corporate governance provisions, especially those relating to shareholder rights, resulting from the change in domicile. Where the financial benefits are de minimis and there is a decrease in shareholder rights, we will recommend voting against the transaction.

However, costly, shareholder-initiated reincorporations are typically not the best route to achieve the furtherance of shareholder rights. We believe shareholders are generally better served by proposing specific shareholder resolutions addressing pertinent issues which may be implemented at a lower cost, and perhaps even with board approval. However, when shareholders propose a shift into a jurisdiction with enhanced shareholder rights, Glass Lewis examines the significant ways would the company benefit from shifting jurisdictions including the following:

- Is the board sufficiently independent?
- Does the company have anti-takeover protections such as a poison pill or classified board in place?
- Has the board been previously unresponsive to shareholders (such as failing to implement a shareholder proposal that received majority shareholder support)?
- Do shareholders have the right to call special meetings of shareholders?
- Are there other material governance issues of concern at the company?
- Has the company's performance matched or exceeded its peers in the past one and three years?
- How has the company ranked in Glass Lewis' pay-for-performance analysis during the last three years?
- Does the company have an independent chair?

We note, however, that we will only support shareholder proposals to change a company's place of incorporation in exceptional circumstances.

#### **EXCLUSIVE FORUM AND FEE-SHIFTING BYLAW PROVISIONS**

Glass Lewis recognizes that companies may be subject to frivolous and opportunistic lawsuits, particularly in conjunction with a merger or acquisition, that are expensive and distracting. In response, companies have sought ways to prevent or limit the risk of such suits by adopting bylaws regarding where the suits must be brought or shifting the burden of the legal expenses to the plaintiff, if unsuccessful at trial.

Glass Lewis believes that charter or bylaw provisions limiting a shareholder's choice of legal venue are not in the best interests of shareholders. Such clauses may effectively discourage the use of shareholder claims by increasing their associated costs and making them more difficult to pursue. As such, shareholders should be wary about approving any limitation on their legal recourse including limiting themselves to a single jurisdiction (e.g., Delaware) without compelling evidence that it will benefit shareholders.

For this reason, we recommend that shareholders vote against any bylaw or charter amendment seeking to adopt an exclusive forum provision unless the company: (i) provides a compelling argument on why the provision would directly benefit shareholders; (ii) provides evidence of abuse of legal process in other, non-favored jurisdictions; (iii) narrowly tailors such provision to the risks involved; and (iv) maintains a strong record of good corporate governance practices.

Moreover, in the event a board seeks shareholder approval of a forum selection clause pursuant to a bundled bylaw amendment rather than as a separate proposal, we will weigh the importance of the other bundled provisions when determining the vote recommendation on the proposal. We will nonetheless recommend voting against the governance committee chair or bundling disparate proposals into a single proposal (refer to our discussion of nominating and governance committee performance in Section I of the guidelines).

Similarly, some companies have adopted bylaws requiring plaintiffs who sue the company and fail to receive a judgment in their favor pay the legal expenses of the company. These bylaws, also known as “fee-shifting” or “loser pays” bylaws, will likely have a chilling effect on even meritorious shareholder lawsuits as shareholders would face an strong financial disincentive not to sue a company. Glass Lewis therefore strongly opposes the adoption of such fee-shifting bylaws and, if adopted without shareholder approval, will recommend voting against the governance committee. While we note that in June of 2015 the State of Delaware banned the adoption of fee-shifting bylaws, such provisions could still be adopted by companies incorporated in other states.

## AUTHORIZED SHARES

Glass Lewis believes that adequate capital stock is important to a company’s operation. When analyzing a request for additional shares, we typically review four common reasons why a company might need additional capital stock:

1. **Stock Split** — We typically consider three metrics when evaluating whether we think a stock split is likely or necessary: The historical stock pre-split price, if any; the current price relative to the company’s most common trading price over the past 52 weeks; and some absolute limits on stock price that, in our view, either always make a stock split appropriate if desired by management or would almost never be a reasonable price at which to split a stock.
2. **Shareholder Defenses** — Additional authorized shares could be used to bolster takeover defenses such as a poison pill. Proxy filings often discuss the usefulness of additional shares in defending against or discouraging a hostile takeover as a reason for a requested increase. Glass Lewis is typically against such defenses and will oppose actions intended to bolster such defenses.
3. **Financing for Acquisitions** — We look at whether the company has a history of using stock for acquisitions and attempt to determine what levels of stock have typically been required to accomplish such transactions. Likewise, we look to see whether this is discussed as a reason for additional shares in the proxy.
4. **Financing for Operations** — We review the company’s cash position and its ability to secure financing through borrowing or other means. We look at the company’s history of capitalization and whether the company has had to use stock in the recent past as a means of raising capital.

Issuing additional shares can dilute existing holders in limited circumstances. Further, the availability of additional shares, where the board has discretion to implement a poison pill, can often serve as a deterrent to interested suitors. Accordingly, where we find that the company has not detailed a plan for use of the proposed shares, or where the number of shares far exceeds those needed to accomplish a detailed plan, we typically recommend against the authorization of additional shares. Similar concerns may also lead us to recommend against a proposal to conduct a reverse stock split if the board does not state that it will reduce the number of authorized common shares in a ratio proportionate to the split.

While we think that having adequate shares to allow management to make quick decisions and effectively operate the business is critical, we prefer that, for significant transactions, management come to shareholders to justify their use of

additional shares rather than providing a blank check in the form of a large pool of unallocated shares available for any purpose.

### **ADVANCE NOTICE REQUIREMENTS**

We typically recommend that shareholders vote against proposals that would require advance notice of shareholder proposals or of director nominees.

These proposals typically attempt to require a certain amount of notice before shareholders are allowed to place proposals on the ballot. Notice requirements typically range between three to six months prior to the

annual meeting. Advance notice requirements typically make it impossible for a shareholder who misses the deadline to present a shareholder proposal or a director nominee that might be in the best interests of the company and its shareholders.

We believe shareholders should be able to review and vote on all proposals and director nominees. Shareholders can always vote against proposals that appear with little prior notice. Shareholders, as owners of a business, are capable of identifying issues on which they have sufficient information and ignoring issues on which they have insufficient information. Setting arbitrary notice restrictions limits the opportunity for shareholders to raise issues that may come up after the window closes.

## **VOTING STRUCTURE**

### **CUMULATIVE VOTING**

Cumulative voting increases the ability of minority shareholders to elect a director by allowing shareholders to cast as many shares of the stock they own multiplied by the number of directors to be elected. As companies generally have multiple nominees up for election, cumulative voting allows shareholders to cast all of their votes for a single nominee, or a smaller number of nominees than up for election, thereby raising the likelihood of electing one or more of their preferred nominees to the board. It can be important when a board is controlled by insiders or affiliates and where the company's ownership structure includes one or more shareholders who control a majority-voting block of company stock.

Glass Lewis believes that cumulative voting generally acts as a safeguard for shareholders by ensuring that those who hold a significant minority of shares can elect a candidate of their choosing to the board. This allows the creation of boards that are responsive to the interests of all shareholders rather than just a small group of large holders.

We review cumulative voting proposals on a case-by-case basis, factoring in the independence of the board and the status of the company's governance structure. But we typically find these proposals on ballots at companies where independence is lacking and where the appropriate checks and balances favoring shareholders are not in place. In those instances we typically recommend in favor of cumulative voting.

Where a company has adopted a true majority vote standard (i.e., where a director must receive a majority of votes cast to be elected, as opposed to a modified policy indicated by a resignation policy only), Glass Lewis will recommend voting against cumulative voting proposals due to the incompatibility of the two election methods. For companies that have not adopted a true majority voting standard but have adopted some form of majority voting, Glass Lewis will also generally recommend voting against cumulative voting proposals if the company has not adopted antitakeover protections and has been responsive to shareholders.

Where a company has not adopted a majority voting standard and is facing both a shareholder proposal to adopt majority voting and a shareholder proposal to adopt cumulative voting, Glass Lewis will support only the majority voting proposal. When a company has both majority voting and cumulative voting in place, there is a higher likelihood of one or more directors not being elected as a result of not receiving a majority vote. This is because shareholders exercising the right to cumulate their votes could unintentionally cause the failed election of one or more directors for whom shareholders do not cumulate votes.

## **SUPERMAJORITY VOTE REQUIREMENTS**

Glass Lewis believes that supermajority vote requirements impede shareholder action on ballot items critical to shareholder interests. An example is in the takeover context, where supermajority vote requirements can strongly limit the voice of shareholders in making decisions on such crucial matters as selling the business. This in turn degrades share value and can limit the possibility of buyout premiums to shareholders. Moreover, we believe that a supermajority vote requirement can enable a small group of shareholders to overrule the will of the majority shareholders. We believe that a simple majority is appropriate to approve all matters presented to shareholders.

## **TRANSACTION OF OTHER BUSINESS**

We typically recommend that shareholders not give their proxy to management to vote on any other business items that may properly come before an annual or special meeting. In our opinion, granting unfettered discretion is unwise.

## **ANTI-GREENMAIL PROPOSALS**

Glass Lewis will support proposals to adopt a provision preventing the payment of greenmail, which would serve to prevent companies from buying back company stock at significant premiums from a certain shareholder. Since a large or majority shareholder could attempt to compel a board into purchasing its shares at a large premium, the anti-greenmail provision would generally require that a majority of shareholders other than the majority shareholder approve the buyback.

## **MUTUAL FUNDS: INVESTMENT POLICIES AND ADVISORY AGREEMENTS**

Glass Lewis believes that decisions about a fund's structure and/or a fund's relationship with its investment advisor or sub-advisors are generally best left to management and the members of the board, absent a showing of egregious or illegal conduct that might threaten shareholder value. As such, we focus our analyses of such proposals on the following main areas:

- The terms of any amended advisory or sub-advisory agreement;
- Any changes in the fee structure paid to the investment advisor; and
- Any material changes to the fund's investment objective or strategy.

We generally support amendments to a fund's investment advisory agreement absent a material change that is not in the best interests of shareholders. A significant increase in the fees paid to an investment advisor would be reason for us to consider recommending voting against a proposed amendment to an investment advisory agreement. However, in certain cases, we are more inclined to support an increase in advisory fees if such increases result from being performance-based rather than asset-based. Furthermore, we generally support sub-advisory agreements between a fund's advisor and sub-advisor, primarily because the fees received by the sub-advisor are paid by the advisor, and not by the fund.

In matters pertaining to a fund's investment objective or strategy, we believe shareholders are best served when a fund's objective or strategy closely resembles the investment discipline shareholders understood and selected when they



initially bought into the fund. As such, we generally recommend voting against amendments to a fund's investment objective or strategy when the proposed changes would leave shareholders with stakes in a fund that is noticeably different than when originally purchased, and which could therefore potentially negatively impact some investors' diversification strategies.

## **REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUSTS**

The complex organizational, operational, tax and compliance requirements of Real Estate Investment Trusts ("REITs") provide for a unique shareholder evaluation. In simple terms, a REIT must have a minimum of 100 shareholders (the "100 Shareholder Test") and no more than 50% of the value of its shares can be held by five or fewer individuals (the "5/50 Test"). At least 75% of a REITs' assets must be in real estate, it must derive 75% of its gross income from rents or mortgage interest, and it must pay out 90% of its taxable earnings as dividends. In addition, as a publicly traded security listed on a stock exchange, a REIT must comply with the same general listing requirements as a publicly traded equity.

In order to comply with such requirements, REITs typically include percentage ownership limitations in their organizational documents, usually in the range of 5% to 10% of the REITs outstanding shares. Given the

complexities of REITs as an asset class, Glass Lewis applies a highly nuanced approach in our evaluation of REIT proposals, especially regarding changes in authorized share capital, including preferred stock.

## **PREFERRED STOCK ISSUANCES AT REITS**

Glass Lewis is generally against the authorization of preferred shares that allows the board to determine the preferences, limitations and rights of the preferred shares (known as “blank-check preferred stock”). We believe that granting such broad discretion should be of concern to common shareholders, since blank-check preferred stock could be used as an antitakeover device or in some other fashion that adversely affects the voting power or financial interests of common shareholders. However, given the requirement that a REIT must distribute 90% of its net income annually, it is inhibited from retaining capital to make investments in its business. As such, we recognize that equity financing likely plays a key role in a REIT’s growth and creation of shareholder value. Moreover, shareholder concern regarding the use of preferred stock as an anti-takeover mechanism may be allayed by the fact that most REITs maintain ownership limitations in their certificates of incorporation. For these reasons, along with the fact that REITs typically do not engage in private placements of preferred stock (which result in the rights of common shareholders being adversely impacted), we may support requests to authorize shares of blank-check preferred stock at REITs.

## **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COMPANIES**

Business Development Companies (“BDCs”) were created by the U.S. Congress in 1980; they are regulated under the Investment Company Act of 1940 and are taxed as regulated investment companies (“RICs”) under the Internal Revenue Code. BDCs typically operate as publicly traded private equity firms that invest in early stage to mature private companies as well as small public companies. BDCs realize operating income when their investments are sold off, and therefore maintain complex organizational, operational, tax and compliance requirements that are similar to those of REITs—the most evident of which is that BDCs must distribute at least 90% of their taxable earnings as dividends.

## **AUTHORIZATION TO SELL SHARES AT A PRICE BELOW NET ASSET VALUE**

Considering that BDCs are required to distribute nearly all their earnings to shareholders, they sometimes need to offer additional shares of common stock in the public markets to finance operations and acquisitions. However, shareholder approval is required in order for a BDC to sell shares of common stock at a price below Net Asset Value (“NAV”). Glass Lewis evaluates these proposals using a case-by-case approach, but will recommend supporting such requests if the following conditions are met:

- The authorization to allow share issuances below NAV has an expiration date of one year or less from the date that shareholders approve the underlying proposal (i.e. the meeting date);

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- The proposed discount below NAV is minimal (ideally no greater than 20%);
- The board specifies that the issuance will have a minimal or modest dilutive effect (ideally no greater than 25% of the company's then-outstanding common stock prior to the issuance); and
- A majority of the company's independent directors who do not have a financial interest in the issuance approve the sale.

In short, we believe BDCs should demonstrate a responsible approach to issuing shares below NAV, by proactively addressing shareholder concerns regarding the potential dilution of the requested share issuance, and explaining if and how the company's past below-NAV share issuances have benefitted the company.

## V. Compensation, Environmental, Social and Governance Shareholder Initiatives

Glass Lewis generally believes decisions regarding day-to-day management and policy decisions, including those related to social, environmental or political issues, are best left to management and the board as they in almost all cases have more and better information about company strategy and risk. However, when there is a clear link between the subject of a shareholder proposal and value enhancement or risk mitigation, Glass Lewis will recommend in favor of a reasonable, well-crafted shareholder proposal where the company has failed to or inadequately addressed the issue.

We believe that shareholders should not attempt to micromanage a company, its businesses or its executives through the shareholder initiative process. Rather, we believe shareholders should use their influence to push for governance structures that protect shareholders and promote director accountability. Shareholders should then put in place a board they can trust to make informed decisions that are in the best interests of the business and its owners, and hold directors accountable for management and policy decisions through board elections. However, we recognize that support of appropriately crafted shareholder initiatives may at times serve to promote or protect shareholder value.

To this end, Glass Lewis evaluates shareholder proposals on a case-by-case basis. We generally recommend supporting shareholder proposals calling for the elimination of, as well as to require shareholder approval of, antitakeover devices such as poison pills and classified boards. We generally recommend supporting proposals likely to increase and/or protect shareholder value and also those that promote the furtherance of shareholder rights. In addition, we also generally recommend supporting proposals that promote director accountability and those that seek to improve compensation practices, especially those promoting a closer link between compensation and performance, as well as those that promote more and better disclosure of relevant risk factors where such disclosure is lacking or inadequate.

For a detailed review of our policies concerning compensation, environmental, social and governance shareholder initiatives, please refer to our comprehensive *Proxy Paper Guidelines for Shareholder Initiatives*, available at [www.glasslewis.com](http://www.glasslewis.com).

**DISCLAIMER**

This document is intended to provide an overview of Glass Lewis' proxy voting policies and guidelines. It is not intended to be exhaustive and does not address all potential voting issues. Additionally, none of the information contained herein should be relied upon as investment advice. The content of this document has been developed based on Glass Lewis' experience with proxy voting and corporate governance issues, engagement with clients and issuers and review of relevant studies and surveys, and has not been tailored to any specific person.

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**2017**

PROXY PAPER™

GUIDELINES

AN OVERVIEW OF THE GLASS LEWIS  
APPROACH TO PROXY ADVICE

**INTERNATIONAL**



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I

## I. Election of Directors

Boards are put in place to represent shareholders and protect their interests. Glass Lewis seeks boards with a proven record of protecting shareholders and delivering value over the medium- and long-term. In our view, boards working to protect and enhance the best interests of shareholders typically include some independent directors (the percentage will vary by local market practice and regulations), boast a record of positive performance, have directors with diverse backgrounds, and appoint directors with a breadth and depth of experience.

## BOARD COMPOSITION

When companies disclose sufficient relevant information, we look at each individual on the board and examine his or her relationships with the company, the company's executives and with other board members. The purpose of this inquiry is to determine whether pre-existing personal, familial or financial relationships are likely to impact the decisions of that board member. Where the company does not disclose the names and backgrounds of director nominees with sufficient time in advance of the shareholder meeting to evaluate their independence and performance, we will recommend voting against the election of the unidentified directors. Further, when a board fails to meet legal requirements or the best practice standard prevalent in the market regarding board gender diversity and has not disclosed any cogent explanation or plan to do so, we will recommend voting against the nominating committee chair.

We support governance structures that will drive positive performance and enhance shareholder value. The most crucial test of a board's commitment to the company and to its shareholders is the performance of the board and its members. The performance of directors in their capacity as board members and as executives of the company, when applicable, and in their roles at other companies where they serve is critical to this evaluation.

We believe a director is independent if he or she has no material financial, familial or other current relationships with the company, its executives or other board members except for service on the board and standard fees paid for that service. Relationships that have existed within the three-five years prior to the inquiry are usually considered to be "current" for purposes of this test.

In our view, a director is affiliated if he or she has a material financial, familial or other relationship with the company or its executives, but is not an employee of the company. This includes directors whose employers have a material financial relationship with the Company. This also includes a director who owns or controls 10-20% or more of the company's voting stock.

We define an inside director as one who simultaneously serves as a director and as an employee of the company. This category may include a board chair who acts as an employee of the company or is paid as an employee of the company.

Although we typically vote for the election of directors, we will recommend voting against directors for the following reasons:

- A director who attends less than 75% of the board and applicable committee meetings.
- A director who is also the CEO of a company where a serious restatement has occurred after the CEO certified the pre-restatement financial statements.

We also feel that the following conflicts of interest may hinder a director's performance and therefore may recommend voting against a:

- CFO who presently sits on the board.
- Director who presently sits on an excessive number of boards.
- Director, or a director whose immediate family member, provides material professional services to the company at any time during the past five years.
- Director, or a director whose immediate family member, engages in airplane, real estate or other similar deals, including perquisite type grants from the company.
- Director with an interlocking directorship.

## **SLATE ELECTIONS**

In some countries, companies elect their board members as a slate, thereby preventing shareholders from voting on individual director since shareholder can only vote for or against the board as a whole. If there are significant concerns with one or more of the nominees or in markets where directors are not generally elected individually, we will recommend voting against the entire slate of directors.

## **BOARD COMMITTEE COMPOSITION**

We believe that independent directors should serve on a company's audit, compensation, nominating and governance committees. We will support boards with such a structure and encourage change where this is not the case.

## **REVIEW OF RISK MANAGEMENT CONTROLS**

We believe companies, particularly financial firms, should have a committee of the board charged with risk oversight. In addition, companies should appoint a chief risk officer who reports directly to that committee, not to the CEO or another executive. In cases where a company has disclosed a sizable loss or writedown, and there is reasonable evidence that the company's board-level risk committee lack of oversight resulted in or contributed to the loss, we will recommend that shareholders vote against such committee members on that basis. In addition, in cases where a company is exposed to a significant level of financial risk but does not have (or fails to disclose the establishment of) an explicit board-level risk oversight (committee or otherwise), we will consider recommending to vote against the chairman of the board.

**CLASSIFIED BOARDS**

Glass Lewis favors the repeal of staggered boards in favor of the annual election of directors. We believe that staggered boards are less accountable to shareholders than annually elected boards.

## II. Financial Reporting

### ACCOUNTS AND REPORTS

Many countries require companies to submit the annual financial statements, director reports and independent auditors' reports to shareholders at a general meeting. We will usually recommend voting in favor of these proposals except when there are concerns about the integrity of the statements/reports. However, should the audited financial statements, auditor's report and/or annual report not be published at the writing of our report, we will recommend that shareholders abstain from voting on this proposal.

### INCOME ALLOCATION (DISTRIBUTION OF DIVIDEND)

In many countries, companies must submit the allocation of income for shareholder approval. We will generally recommend voting for such a proposal. However, we will give particular scrutiny to cases where the company's dividend payout ratio is exceptionally low or excessively high relative to its peers and the company has not provided a satisfactory explanation.

### APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS AND AUTHORITY TO SET FEES

We believe that role of the auditor is crucial in protecting shareholder value. Like directors, auditors should be free from conflicts of interest and should assiduously avoid situations that require them to make choices between their own interests and the interests of the shareholders.

We generally support management's recommendation regarding the selection of an auditor and support granting the board the authority to fix auditor fees except in cases where we believe the independence of an incumbent auditor or the integrity of the audit has been compromised.

However, we recommend voting against ratification of the auditor and/or authorizing the board to set auditor fees for the following reasons:

- When audit fees added to audit-related fees total less than one-half of total fees.
- When there have been any recent restatements or late filings by the company where the auditor bears some responsibility for the restatement or late filing (e.g., a restatement due to a reporting error).

- When the company has aggressive accounting policies.
- When the company has poor disclosure or lack of transparency in financial statements.
- When there are other relationships or issues of concern with the auditor that might suggest a conflict between the interest of the auditor and the interests of shareholders.
- When the company is changing auditors as a result of a disagreement between the company and the auditor on a matter of accounting principles or practices, financial statement disclosure or auditing scope or procedures.



### III. Compensation

#### COMPENSATION REPORT/COMPENSATION POLICY

We closely review companies' remuneration practices and disclosure as outlined in company filings to evaluate management-submitted advisory compensation report and policy vote proposals. In evaluating these proposals, which can be binding or non-binding depending on the country, we examine how well the company has disclosed information pertinent to its compensation programs, the extent to which overall compensation is tied to performance, the performance metrics selected by the company and the levels of remuneration in comparison to company performance and that of its peers.

We will usually recommend voting against approval of the compensation report or policy when the following occur:

- Gross disconnect between pay and performance;
- Performance goals and metrics are inappropriate or insufficiently challenging;
- Lack of disclosure regarding performance metrics and goals as well as the extent to which the performance metrics, targets and goals are implemented to enhance company performance and encourage prudent risk-taking;
- Excessive discretion afforded to or exercised by management or the compensation committee to deviate from defined performance metrics and goals in making awards;
- Ex gratia or other non-contractual payments have been made and the reasons for making the payments have not been fully explained or the explanation is unconvincing;
- Guaranteed bonuses are established;
- There is no clawback policy; or
- Egregious or excessive bonuses, equity awards or severance payments.

#### LONG-TERM INCENTIVE PLANS

Glass Lewis recognizes the value of equity-based incentive programs. When used appropriately, they can provide a vehicle for linking an employee's pay to a company's performance, thereby aligning their interests with those of shareholders. Tying a portion of an employee's compensation to the performance of the Company provides an incentive to maximize share value. In addition, equity-based compensation is an effective way to attract, retain and motivate key employees.

In order to allow for meaningful shareholder review, we believe that incentive programs should generally include: (i) specific and appropriate performance goals; (ii) a maximum award pool; and (iii) a maximum award amount per employee. In addition, the payments made should be reasonable relative to the performance of the business and total compensation to those covered by the plan should be in line with compensation paid by the Company's peers.

## **PERFORMANCE-BASED EQUITY COMPENSATION**

Glass Lewis believes in performance-based equity compensation plans for senior executives. We feel that executives should be compensated with equity when their performance and that of the company warrants such rewards. While we do not believe that equity-based compensation plans for all employees need to be based on overall company performance, we do support such limitations for grants to senior executives (although even some equity-based compensation of senior executives without performance criteria is acceptable, such as in the case of moderate incentive grants made in an initial offer of employment).

We generally support the establishment of performance-based option requirements and do not believe such requirements limit the ability of companies to attract and retain executives.

There should be no retesting of performance conditions for all share- and option- based incentive schemes. We will generally recommend that shareholders vote against performance-based equity compensation plans that allow for re-testing.

## **DIRECTOR COMPENSATION**

Glass Lewis believes that non-employee directors should receive appropriate types and levels of compensation for the time and effort they spend serving on the board and its committees. Director fees should be reasonable in order to retain and attract qualified individuals. In particular, we support compensation plans that include non performance-based equity awards, which help to align the interests of outside directors with those of shareholders.

Glass Lewis compares the costs of these plans to the plans of peer companies with similar market capitalizations in the same country to help inform its judgment on this issue.

## **RETIREMENT BENEFITS FOR DIRECTORS**

We will typically recommend voting against proposals to grant retirement benefits to non-executive directors. Such extended payments can impair the objectivity and independence of these board members. Directors should receive adequate compensation for their board service through initial and annual fees.

## **LIMITS ON EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION**

As a general rule, Glass Lewis believes that shareholders should not be involved in setting executive compensation. Such matters should be left to the board's compensation committee. We view the election of directors, and specifically those who sit on the compensation committee, as the appropriate mechanism for shareholders to express their disapproval or support of board policy on this issue. Further, we believe that companies whose pay-for-performance is in line with their peers should be granted the flexibility to compensate their executives in a manner that drives growth and profit.

However, Glass Lewis favors performance-based compensation as an effective means of motivating executives to act in the best interests of shareholders. Performance-based compensation may be limited if a chief executive's pay is capped at a low level rather than flexibly tied to the performance of the company.

#### **IV. Governance Structure**

##### **AMENDMENTS TO THE ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION**

We will evaluate proposed amendments to a company's articles of association on a case-by-case basis. We are opposed to the practice of bundling several amendments under a single proposal because it prevents shareholders from evaluating each amendment on its own merits. In such cases, we will analyze each change individually and will recommend voting for the proposal only when we believe that the amendments on balance are in the best interests of shareholders.

##### **ANTI-TAKEOVER MEASURES**

###### **POISON PILLS (SHAREHOLDER RIGHTS PLANS)**

Glass Lewis believes that poison pill plans generally are not in the best interests of shareholders. Specifically, they can reduce management accountability by substantially limiting opportunities for corporate takeovers. Rights plans can thus prevent shareholders from receiving a buy-out premium for their stock.

We believe that boards should be given wide latitude in directing the activities of the company and charting the company's course. However, on an issue such as this where the link between the financial interests of shareholders and their right to consider and accept buyout offers is so substantial, we believe that shareholders should be allowed to vote on whether or not they support such a plan's implementation.

In certain limited circumstances, we will support a limited poison pill to accomplish a particular objective, such as the closing of an important merger, or a pill that contains what we believe to be a reasonable 'qualifying offer' clause.

###### **SUPERMAJORITY VOTE REQUIREMENTS**

Glass Lewis favors a simple majority voting structure. Supermajority vote requirements act as impediments to shareholder action on ballot items that are critical to our interests. One key example is in the takeover context where supermajority vote requirements can strongly limit shareholders' input in making decisions on such crucial matters as selling the business.

## **INCREASE IN AUTHORIZED SHARES**

Glass Lewis believes that having adequate capital stock available for issuance is important to the operation of a company. We will generally support proposals when a company could reasonably use the requested shares for financing, stock splits and stock dividends. While we think that having adequate shares to allow management to make quick decisions and effectively operate the business is critical, we prefer that, for significant transactions, management come to shareholders to justify their use of additional shares rather than providing a blank check in the form of large pools of unallocated shares available for any purpose.

In general, we will support proposals to increase authorized shares up to 100% of the number of shares currently authorized unless, after the increase the company would be left with less than 30% of its authorized shares outstanding.

## **ISSUANCE OF SHARES**

Issuing additional shares can dilute existing holders in some circumstances. Further, the availability of additional shares, where the board has discretion to implement a poison pill, can often serve as a deterrent to interested suitors. Accordingly, where we find that the company has not disclosed a detailed plan for use of the proposed shares, or where the number of shares requested are excessive, we typically recommend against the issuance. In the case of a private placement, we will also consider whether the company is offering a discount to its share price.

In general, we will support proposals to issue shares (with pre-emption rights) when the requested increase is less than issued ordinary share capital, unless a lower threshold is accepted best practice in a market. This authority should not exceed five years.

We will also generally support proposals to suspend pre-emption rights for a maximum of 5-20% of the issued ordinary share capital of the company, depending on the country in which the company is located. This authority should not exceed five years, or less for best practice in some countries.

Where a proposed share issue exceeds these thresholds, the company should provide a compelling justification for the additional amounts requested.

## **REPURCHASE OF SHARES**

We will recommend voting in favor of a proposal to repurchase shares when the plan includes the following provisions: (i) a maximum number of shares which may be purchased (typically not more than 20% of the issued share capital); and (ii) a maximum price which may be paid for each share (as a percentage of the market price).

## **V. Environmental and Social Risk**

We believe companies should actively evaluate risks to long-term shareholder value stemming from exposure to environmental and social risks and should incorporate this information into their overall business risk profile. In addition, we believe companies should consider their exposure to changes in environmental or social regulation with respect to their operations as well as related legal and reputational risks. Companies should disclose to shareholders both the nature and magnitude of such risks as well as steps they have taken or will take to mitigate those risks.

When we identify situations where shareholder value is at risk, we may recommend voting in favor of a reasonable and well-targeted proposal if we believe supporting the proposal will promote disclosure of and/ or mitigate significant risk exposure. In limited cases where a company has failed to adequately mitigate risks stemming from environmental or social practices, we will recommend shareholders vote against: (i) ratification of board and/or management acts; (ii) approving a company's accounts and reports and/or; (iii) directors (in egregious cases). Further, we may also recommend shareholders vote against directors for lapses in environmental and social risk management at companies.



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**PART C: OTHER INFORMATION**

**Item 28. Exhibits:**

- (a) Amended and Restated Declaration of Trust.<sup>55</sup>
- (b) Amended and Restated Bylaws of the Trust.<sup>55</sup>
- (c) Not applicable.
- (d)(1) Form of Investment Management Agreement between the Trust and Van Eck Associates Corporation (with respect to VanEck Vectors—Gold Miners ETF).
- (d)(2) Form of Investment Management Agreement between the Trust and Van Eck Associates Corporation (with respect to all non-unitary fee portfolios except for VanEck Vectors—Gold Miners ETF).
- (d)(3) Form of Investment Management Agreement between the Trust and Van Eck Associates Corporation (with respect to all unitary fee portfolios ).<sup>23</sup>
- (d)(4) Not applicable.
- (d)(5) Form of Amended and Restated Sub-Investment Advisory Agreement between China Asset Management (Hong Kong) Limited and Van Eck Associates Corporation.<sup>59</sup>
- (d)(6) Not applicable.
- (d)(7) Not applicable.
- (d)(8) Form of Investment Management Agreement between the Trust and Van Eck Absolute Return Advisers Corporation (with respect to VanEck Vectors Dynamic Put Write ETF and VanEck Vectors Long/Flat Commodity ETF).<sup>59</sup>
- (e)(1) Form of Distribution Agreement between the Trust and Van Eck Securities Corporation.<sup>2</sup>
- (e)(2) Form of Participant Agreement.<sup>1</sup>
- (f) Not applicable.
- (g) Form of Custodian Agreement between the Trust and The Bank of New York.<sup>1</sup>
- (h)(1) Form of Fund Accounting Agreement between the Trust and The Bank of New York.<sup>1</sup>
- (h)(2) Form of Transfer Agency Services Agreement between the Trust and The Bank of New York.<sup>1</sup>
- (h)(3) Form of Sub-License Agreement between the Trust and the Van Eck Associates Corp.<sup>1</sup>
- (i)(1) Opinion and Consent of Clifford Chance US LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors—Environmental Services ETF, VanEck Vectors—Gold Miners ETF and VanEck Vectors—Steel ETF).
- (i)(2) Opinion of Clifford Chance US LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors—Global Alternative Energy ETF and VanEck Vectors—Russia ETF).
- (i)(3) Opinion of Clifford Chance US LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors—Global Agribusiness ETF and VanEck Vectors—Uranium+Nuclear Energy ETF f/k/a Market Vectors Global Nuclear Energy ETF).
- (i)(4) Opinion of Clifford Chance US LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors—Lehman Brothers Intermediate Municipal ETF, VanEck Vectors—Lehman Brothers Long Municipal ETF, VanEck Vectors—Lehman Brothers 1-5 Year Municipal ETF, VanEck Vectors—Lehman Brothers Non-Investment Grade Municipal ETF, VanEck Vectors—Lehman Brothers California Municipal ETF and VanEck Vectors—Lehman Brothers New York Municipal ETF).<sup>6</sup>
- (i)(5) Opinion of Clifford Chance US LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors—Coal ETF and VanEck Vectors—Gaming ETF).<sup>7</sup>
- (i)(6) Opinion of Clifford Chance US LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors—Lehman Brothers AMT-Free Massachusetts Municipal Index ETF, VanEck Vectors—Lehman Brothers AMT-Free New Jersey Municipal Index ETF, VanEck Vectors—Lehman Brothers AMT-Free Ohio Municipal Index ETF and VanEck Vectors—Lehman Brothers AMT-Free Pennsylvania Municipal Index ETF).<sup>8</sup>

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- (i)(7) Opinion of Clifford Chance US LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors—Hard Assets ETF and VanEck Vectors—Solar Energy ETF).
- (i)(8) Opinion and Consent of Clifford Chance US LLP with respect to VanEck Vectors—Africa Index ETF, VanEck Vectors—Emerging Eurasia Index ETF, VanEck Vectors—Global Frontier Index ETF and VanEck Vectors—Gulf States Index ETF).<sup>10</sup>
- (i)(9) Consent of Clifford Chance US LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors—Lehman Brothers High-Yield Municipal Index ETF).<sup>11</sup>
- (i)(10) Opinion and Consent of Clifford Chance US LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Indonesia Index ETF).<sup>12</sup>
- (i)(11) Opinion and Consent of Clifford Chance US LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Vietnam ETF).<sup>13</sup>
- (i)(12) Opinion and Consent of Clifford Chance US LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Pre-Refunded Municipal Index ETF).<sup>14</sup>
- (i)(13) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Egypt Index ETF).<sup>19</sup>
- (i)(14) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Latin America Small-Cap Index ETF).<sup>20</sup>
- (i)(15) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors ChinaAMC CSI 300 ETF f/k/a Market Vectors China ETF and Market Vectors ChinaAMC A-Shares ETF).<sup>16</sup>
- (i)(16) Opinion and Consent of Clifford Chance US LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Brazil Small-Cap ETF).<sup>15</sup>
- (i)(17) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Junior Gold Miners ETF).<sup>17</sup>
- (i)(18) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Poland ETF).<sup>18</sup>
- (i)(19) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors India Small-Cap Index ETF).<sup>21</sup>
- (i)(20) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors J.P. Morgan EM Local Currency Bond ETF f/k/a VanEck Vectors Emerging Markets Local Currency Bond ETF).<sup>22</sup>
- (i)(21) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Investment Grade Floating Rate Bond ETF).<sup>22</sup>
- (i)(22) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors MLP ETF).<sup>61</sup>
- (i)(23) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Rare Earth/Strategic Metals ETF).<sup>24</sup>
- (i)(24) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Emerging Markets Aggregate Bond ETF f/k/a Market Vectors LatAm Aggregate Bond ETF).<sup>27</sup>
- (i)(25) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Colombia ETF).<sup>25</sup>
- (i)(26) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Russia Small-Cap ETF).<sup>26</sup>
- (i)(27) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Germany Small-Cap ETF).<sup>26</sup>
- (i)(28) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors CEF Municipal Income ETF).<sup>28</sup>
- (i)(29) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors European Currency High Yield Bond ETF).<sup>31</sup>
- (i)(30) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Mortgage REIT Income ETF).<sup>29</sup>

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- (i)(31) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors International High Yield Bond ETF).<sup>35</sup>
- (i)(32) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors BDC Income ETF).<sup>40</sup>
- (i)(33) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Renminbi Bond ETF).<sup>30</sup>  
Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Biotech ETF, VanEck Vectors Bank  
(i)(34) and Brokerage ETF, VanEck Vectors Oil Services ETF, VanEck Vectors Pharmaceutical ETF, VanEck Vectors  
Retail ETF and VanEck Vectors Semiconductor ETF).<sup>32</sup>
- (i)(35) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Indonesia Small-Cap ETF).<sup>34</sup>
- (i)(36) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Yuan Bond ETF).<sup>61</sup>
- (i)(37) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Unconventional Oil & Gas ETF).<sup>33</sup>
- (i)(38) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Wide Moat ETF).<sup>37</sup>
- (i)(39) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Emerging Markets High Yield Bond  
ETF).<sup>36</sup>
- (i)(40) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Global High Yield Bond ETF).<sup>61</sup>
- (i)(41) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Fallen Angel High Yield Bond ETF).<sup>36</sup>
- (i)(42) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Preferred Securities ex Financials  
ETF).<sup>38</sup>
- (i)(43) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Saudi Arabia ETF).<sup>49</sup>
- (i)(44) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Short High-Yield Municipal Index  
ETF).<sup>42</sup>
- (i)(45) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Defaulted & Distressed Bond ETF).<sup>61</sup>
- (i)(46) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Treasury-Hedged High Yield Bond  
ETF).<sup>39</sup>
- (i)(47) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Israel ETF).<sup>41</sup>
- (i)(48) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Puerto Rico Municipal Index ETF).<sup>61</sup>
- (i)(49) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Emerging Markets Short-Term  
Corporate Bond ETF).<sup>61</sup>
- (i)(50) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors China A Consumer Demand ETF).<sup>61</sup>
- (i)(51) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors MSCI International Quality ETF and  
VanEck Vectors MSCI International Quality Dividend ETF).<sup>43</sup>
- (i)(52) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors MSCI Emerging Markets Quality ETF  
and VanEck Vectors MSCI Emerging Markets Quality Dividend ETF).<sup>43</sup>
- (i)(53) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors MSCI All China ETF).<sup>44</sup>
- (i)(54) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors ChinaAMC SME-ChiNext ETF).<sup>46</sup>

- (i)(55) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors ChinaAMC China Bond ETF).<sup>47</sup>  
Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Asia ex Japan Equal Weight ETF, VanEck Vectors Australia Equal Weight ETF, VanEck Vectors Australia Hedged Equal Weight ETF, VanEck Vectors Brazil Equal Weight ETF, VanEck Vectors China Equal Weight ETF, VanEck Vectors Europe Equal Weight ETF, VanEck Vectors Europe Hedged Equal Weight ETF, VanEck Vectors Germany Equal Weight ETF, VanEck Vectors Hong Kong Equal Weight ETF, VanEck Vectors India Equal Weight ETF, VanEck Vectors Italy Equal Weight ETF, VanEck Vectors Japan Equal Weight ETF, VanEck Vectors Japan Hedged Equal Weight ETF, VanEck Vectors Mexico Equal Weight ETF, VanEck Vectors Russia Equal Weight ETF, VanEck Vectors South Africa Equal Weight ETF, VanEck Vectors South Korea Equal Weight ETF, VanEck Vectors Spain Equal Weight ETF, VanEck Vectors Taiwan Equal Weight ETF and VanEck Vectors United Kingdom Equal Weight ETF).<sup>61</sup>
- (i)(56) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Global Spin-Off ETF).<sup>48</sup>
- (i)(57) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Morningstar International Moat ETF).<sup>50</sup>
- (i)(58) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Oil Refiners ETF).<sup>51</sup>
- (i)(59) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors High Income MLP ETF and VanEck Vectors High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF).<sup>53</sup>
- (i)(60) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Dynamic Put Write ETF).<sup>61</sup>
- (i)(61) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Generic Drugs ETF).<sup>52</sup>
- (i)(62) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Private-Owned Enterprises ETF).<sup>61</sup>  
Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors AMT-Free 6-8 Year Municipal Index
- (i)(63) ETF, VanEck Vectors AMT-Free 8-12 Year Municipal Index ETF and VanEck Vectors AMT-Free 12-17 Year Municipal Index ETF).<sup>58</sup>
- (i)(64) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Long/Flat Commodity ETF).<sup>56</sup>
- (i)(65) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Long/Flat US Equity ETF).<sup>61</sup>
- (i)(66) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors EM Investment Grade + BB Rated USD Sovereign Bond ETF).<sup>57</sup>
- (i)(67) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors AMT-Free National Municipal Index ETF).<sup>61</sup>
- (i)(68) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors Green Bond ETF).<sup>60</sup>
- (i)(69) Opinion and Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors REIT Preferred Securities ETF).<sup>61</sup>
- (i)(70) Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors High Income MLP ETF and VanEck Vectors High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF).<sup>62</sup>
- (i)(71) Consent of Ernst & Young LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors High Income MLP ETF and VanEck Vectors High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF).<sup>62</sup>
- (j) Not applicable.
- (k) Not applicable.
- (l) Not applicable.
- (m) Not applicable.

- (n) Not applicable.
- (o) Not applicable.
- (p)(1) Code of Ethics of VanEck Vectors ETF Trust.<sup>54</sup>
- (p)(2) Code of Ethics of Van Eck Associates Corporation, Van Eck Absolute Return Advisers Corporation and Van Eck Securities Corporation.<sup>57</sup>
- (q) Powers of Attorney for Messrs. John J. Crimmins, David H. Chow, R. Alastair Short, Peter J. Sidebottom, Richard D. Stamberger and Jan F. van Eck.<sup>60</sup>

- 1 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on April 28, 2006.
- 2 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on May 11, 2006.
- 3 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on October 6, 2006.
- 4 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on April 9, 2007.
- 5 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on July 30, 2007.
- 6 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on November 2, 2007.
- 7 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on December 31, 2007.
- 8 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on February 15, 2008.
- 9 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on April 21, 2008.
- 10 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on July 8, 2008.
- 11 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on August 8, 2008.
- 12 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on November 25, 2008.
- 13 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on December 23, 2008.
- 14 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on January 28, 2009.
- 15 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on May 8, 2009.
- 16 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on September 4, 2009.
- 17 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on November 9, 2009.
- 18 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on November 20, 2009.
- 19 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on February 16, 2010.
- 20 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on March 29, 2010.
- 21 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on April 5, 2010.
- 22 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on June 28, 2010.
- 23 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on August 27, 2010.
- 24 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on October 22, 2010.
- 25 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on March 4, 2011.
- 26 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on April 1, 2011.
- 27 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on May 10, 2011.
- 28 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on July 7, 2011.
- 29 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on August 15, 2011.
- 30 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on October 11, 2011.
- 31 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on October 26, 2011.
- 32 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on October 31, 2011.
- 33 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on February 8, 2012.
- 34 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on March 14, 2012.
- 35 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on March 29, 2012.
- 36 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on April 3, 2012.
- 37 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on April 13, 2012.
- 38 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on July 5, 2012.
- 39 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on February 5, 2013.
- 40 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on February 7, 2013.



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41 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on June 24, 2013.

42 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on December 20, 2013.

43 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on January 17, 2014.

44 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on April 15, 2014.

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- 45 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on April 30, 2014.
- 46 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on May 16, 2014.
- 47 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on November 7, 2014.
- 48 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on June 5, 2015.
- 49 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on June 22, 2015.
- 50 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on July 9, 2015.
- 51 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on August 14, 2015.
- 52 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on November 23, 2015.
- 53 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on December 10, 2015.
- 54 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on January 25, 2016.
- 55 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on April 25, 2016.
  
- 56 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on May 31, 2016.
- 57 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on July 11, 2016.
- 58 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on August 5, 2016.
- 59 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on January 26, 2017.
- 60 Incorporated by reference to the Registrant's Registration Statement filed on February 28, 2017.
- 61 To be filed by Amendment.
- 62 Filed herewith.

**Item 29. Persons Controlled by or Under Common Control with Registrant**

None.

**Item 30. Indemnification**

Pursuant to Section 10.2 of the Amended and Restated Declaration of Trust, every person who is, or has been, a Trustee or officer of the Trust (including persons who serve at the Trust's request as directors, officers or trustees of another organization in which the Trust has any interest as a shareholder, creditor or otherwise) (collectively, the "Covered Persons") shall be indemnified by the Trust to the fullest extent permitted by law against liability and against all expenses reasonably incurred or paid by him in connection with any claim, action, suit, mediation, arbitration or proceeding, whether civil or criminal, in which he or she becomes involved as a party or otherwise by virtue of his being or having been a Trustee or officer and against amounts paid or incurred by him in the settlement thereof. No indemnification shall be provided to a Covered Person who shall have been adjudicated by a court or body before which the proceeding was brought to be liable to the Trust or its shareholders by reason of willful misfeasance, bad faith, gross negligence or reckless disregard of the duties involved in the conduct of his office or not to have acted in good faith in the reasonable belief that his action was in the best interest of the Trust; or in the event of a settlement, unless there has been a determination that such Trustee or officer did not engage in willful misfeasance, bad faith, gross negligence, or reckless disregard of the duties involved in the conduct of his office (i) by the court or other body approving the settlement; (ii) by at least a majority of those Trustees who are neither interested parties of the Trust nor are parties to the matter based upon a review of readily-available facts (as opposed to a full trial-type inquiry); or (iii) by written opinion of independent legal counsel based upon a review of readily available facts (as opposed to a full trial-type inquiry). For purposes of the determination or opinion referred to in (ii) and (iii) above, the majority of those Trustees who neither are interested persons of the Trust nor are parties to the matter or independent legal counsel, as the case may be, shall be entitled to rely on a rebuttable presumption that the Covered Person has not engaged in willful misfeasance, bad faith, gross negligence or reckless disregard of the duties involved in the conduct of such Covered Person's office.

The Trust has agreed to indemnify and hold harmless the Trustees against any and all expenses actually and reasonably incurred by the Trustee in any proceeding arising out of or in connection with the Trustee's service to the Trust, to the fullest extent permitted by the Amended and Restated Agreement and Declaration of Trust of the Fund and Title 12, Part V, Chapter 38 of the Delaware Code, and applicable law.

**Item 31. Business and Other Connections of Investment Manager**

See "Management" in the Statement of Additional Information. Information as to the directors and officers of the Adviser is included in its Form ADV filed with the SEC and is incorporated herein by reference thereto.

**Item 32. Principal Underwriters**

(a) Van Eck Securities Corporation is the Trust's principal underwriter. Van Eck Securities Corporation also acts as a principal underwriter, depositor, or

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investment manager for the following other investment companies: each series of VanEck Funds and VanEck VIP Trust.

(b) The following is a list of the officers, directors and partners of Van Eck Securities Corporation:

<b>Name and Principal Business Address</b>	<b>Positions and Offices with Underwriter</b>	<b>Positions and Offices with Trust</b>
Jan F. van Eck 666 Third Avenue New York, NY 10017	Director, President and Chief Executive Officer	President, Chief Executive Officer and Trustee
Bruce J. Smith 666 Third Avenue New York, NY 10017	Director, Senior Vice President, Chief Financial Officer, and Treasurer	Senior Vice President
Susan Marino 666 Third Avenue New York, NY 10017	Senior Vice President	N/A
John J. Crimmins 666 Third Avenue New York, NY 10017	Vice President	Vice President, Treasurer, Chief Financial Officer and Principal Accounting Officer
Susan C. Lashley 666 Third Avenue New York, NY 10017	Vice President	Vice President
Jonathan R. Simon 666 Third Avenue New York, NY 10017	Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary	Senior Vice President, Chief Legal Officer and Secretary
John Wolfe 666 Third Avenue New York, NY 10017	Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer	N/A
Laura I. Martinez 666 Third Avenue New York,	Vice President, Associate General Counsel and Assistant Secretary	Vice President and Assistant Secretary

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NY 10017

Matthew  
Babinsky

Assistant Vice President, Assistant General  
Counsel and Assistant Secretary  
666 Third Avenue  
New York, NY  
10017

Assistant Vice President and Assistant Secretary

Patrick Lulley  
666 Third Avenue  
New York,  
NY 10017

Vice President

N/A

<b>Name and Principal Business Address</b>	<b>Positions and Offices with Underwriter</b>	<b>Positions and Offices with Trust</b>
William A. Best III  666 Third Avenue New York, NY 10017	Senior Vice President	N/A
Janet Squitieri  666 Third Avenue New York, NY 10017	Vice President, Global Head of Compliance and Chief Compliance Officer	Chief Compliance Officer
Bryan S. Paisley 666 Third Avenue New York, NY 10017	Assistant Vice President	N/A
Lee Rappaport 666 Third Avenue New York, NY 10017	Vice President, Controller and Financial and Operations Principal	N/A
Catherine Cardaci 666 Third Avenue New York, NY 10017	Senior Vice President	N/A
Kristen Capuano 666 Third Avenue New York, NY 10017	Vice President	N/A

**Item 33. Location of Accounts and Records**

All accounts, books and other documents required to be maintained by Section 31(a) of the 1940 Act and the Rules thereunder will be maintained at the offices of The Bank of New York Mellon, 101 Barclay Street, New York, New York 10286.

**Item 34. Management Services**

Not applicable.

Item 35. **Undertakings**

Not applicable.



**SIGNATURES**

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933 and the Investment Company Act of 1940, the Registrant certifies that it meets all of the requirements for effectiveness of this registration statement under Rule 485(b) under the Securities Act of 1933 and has duly caused this Registration Statement to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized, in the City of New York and State of New York on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2017.

VANECK VECTORS ETF TRUST

By: /s/ Jonathan R. Simon  
 Name: Jonathan R. Simon  
 Title: Senior Vice President,  
 Secretary and Chief Legal Officer

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, this Registration Statement has been signed below by the following person in the capacities and on the date indicated.

/s/ David H. Chow*	Trustee	March 27, 2017
David H. Chow		
/s/ R. Alastair Short*	Trustee	March 27, 2017
R. Alastair Short		
/s/ Peter J. Sidebottom*	Trustee	March 27, 2017
Peter J. Sidebottom		
/s/ Richard D. Stamberger*	Trustee	March 27, 2017
Richard D. Stamberger		
/s/ Jan F. van Eck	President, Chief Executive Officer and Trustee	March 27, 2017
Jan F. van Eck		
/s/ John J. Crimmins*	Vice President, Treasurer, Chief Financial Officer and Principal Accounting Officer	March 27, 2017
John J. Crimmins		

\*By: /s/ Jonathan R. Simon

Jonathan R. Simon  
Attorney in Fact  
March 27, 2017

**EXHIBIT INDEX**

- (i)(71) Consent of Dechert LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors High Income MLP ETF and VanEck Vectors High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF).
- (j) Consent of Ernst & Young LLP (with respect to VanEck Vectors High Income MLP ETF and VanEck Vectors High Income Infrastructure MLP ETF).