

March 1, 2026

LEGG MASON PARTNERS INVESTMENT TRUST

Fund	Ticker Symbol					
	Class A	Class C	Class R	Class I	Class IS	Class 1
FRANKLIN GLOBAL EQUITY FUND (the "Fund")	CFIPX	SILLX	—	SMYIX	SMYSX	LMPEX

One Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10010
877-6LM-FUND/656-3863

STATEMENT OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This Statement of Additional Information ("SAI") is not a prospectus and is meant to be read in conjunction with the Prospectus of the Fund, dated March 1, 2026, as amended or supplemented from time to time, and is incorporated by reference in its entirety into the Prospectus.

Additional information about the Fund's investments is available in the Fund's annual and semi-annual reports to shareholders and in Form N-CSR. In the 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. In Form N-CSR, you will find the Fund's annual and semi-annual financial statements. The Fund's audited financial statements and the accompanying independent registered public accounting firm's report for the fiscal year ended October 31, 2025, as filed on Form N-CSR, are incorporated herein by reference (https://www.sec.gov/ix?doc=/Archives/edgar/data/880366/000113322825014009/fgef-efp20751_ncsr.htm). The Fund's Prospectus, copies of the annual and semi-annual reports and other information such as Fund financial statements may be obtained free of charge by contacting banks, brokers, dealers, insurance companies, investment advisers, financial consultants or advisers, mutual fund supermarkets and other financial intermediaries that have entered into an agreement with the Fund's distributor to sell shares of the Fund (each called a "Service Agent"), by writing the Fund at Legg Mason Funds, P.O. Box 33030, St. Petersburg, FL 33733-8030, by calling the telephone number set forth above, by sending an e-mail request to prospectus.us.franklintempleton@fisglobal.com or by visiting www.franklintempleton.com/prospectus. Franklin Distributors, LLC ("Franklin Distributors" or the "Distributor"), an indirect, wholly-owned broker/dealer subsidiary of Franklin Resources, Inc., serves as the Fund's sole and exclusive distributor.

THIS SAI IS NOT A PROSPECTUS AND IS AUTHORIZED FOR DISTRIBUTION TO PROSPECTIVE INVESTORS ONLY IF PRECEDED OR ACCOMPANIED BY AN EFFECTIVE PROSPECTUS.

No person has been authorized to give any information or to make any representations not contained in the Prospectus or this SAI in connection with the offering made by the Prospectus and, if given or made, such information or representations must not be relied upon as having been authorized by the Fund or the Distributor. The Prospectus and this SAI do not constitute an offering by the Fund or by the Distributor in any jurisdiction in which such offering may not lawfully be made.

**LEGG MASON GLOBAL ASSET MANAGEMENT TRUST
LEGG MASON PARTNERS INVESTMENT TRUST
SUPPLEMENT DATED APRIL 17, 2026,
TO THE SUMMARY PROSPECTUS, PROSPECTUS AND
STATEMENT OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (“SAI”)
OF EACH FUND LISTED IN SCHEDULE A**

All changes described below are effective June 1, 2026.

- I. The following replaces the reference to Sundaram Chettiappan in the section titled “Management – Portfolio managers” in the Summary Prospectus and Prospectus, respectively, of each fund listed in Schedule A:**

Portfolio manager	Title	Portfolio manager of the fund since
Adrian H. Chan, CFA	Portfolio Manager	June 2026

- II. The following replaces the reference to Sundaram Chettiappan in the section titled “More on fund management – Portfolio managers” in the Prospectus of each fund listed in Schedule A:**

Portfolio manager	Title and recent biography	Portfolio manager of the fund since
Adrian H. Chan, CFA	Portfolio Manager of Franklin Advisers. Mr. Chan joined Franklin Templeton in 2024. Prior to joining Franklin Templeton, Mr. Chan was a portfolio manager for Putnam Investment Management, LLC, which he joined in 2003.	June 2026

- III. The following replaces the reference to Sundaram Chettiappan in the table in the section titled “Portfolio Managers – Other Accounts Managed by the Portfolio Managers” in the SAI of each fund listed in Schedule A:**

Portfolio Managers	Type of Account	Number of Accounts Managed	Total Assets Managed (Billions) (\$)	Number of Accounts Managed for which Advisory Fee is Performance-Based	Assets Managed for which Advisory Fee is Performance - Based (Billions) (\$)
Adrian H. Chan*	Registered Investment Companies	31	14.27	None	None
	Other Pooled Investment Vehicles	33	16.88	None	None
	Other Accounts	4	1.50	None	None

* The information is as of February 28, 2026.

IV. The following replaces the reference to Sundaram Chettiappan in the table in the section titled “Portfolio Managers – Portfolio Managers Securities Ownership” in the SAI of each fund listed in Schedule A:

Portfolio Managers	Dollar Range of Ownership of Securities (\$)
Adrian H. Chan*	None

* The information is as of March 31, 2026.

SCHEDULE A

Fund	Date of Summary Prospectus, Prospectus and SAI
<u>LEGG MASON GLOBAL ASSET MANAGEMENT TRUST</u>	
Franklin International Equity Fund	February 1, 2026
Franklin U.S. Small Cap Equity Fund	May 1, 2025
<u>LEGG MASON PARTNERS INVESTMENT TRUST</u>	
Franklin Global Equity Fund	March 1, 2026
Franklin U.S. Large Cap Equity Fund	April 1, 2026

Please retain this supplement for future reference.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS	1
INVESTMENT POLICIES	3
Investment Objective and Strategies	3
Fundamental and Non-Fundamental Investment Policies—General	3
Fundamental Investment Policies	3
Diversification	6
Non-Fundamental Investment Policies	6
Commodity Exchange Act Regulation—Exclusion from Commodity Pool Operator Definition	6
INVESTMENT PRACTICES AND RISK FACTORS	6
MANAGEMENT	30
Trustees and Officers	30
Qualifications of Trustees, Board Leadership Structure and Oversight and Standing Committees	33
Trustee Ownership of Securities	35
Trustee Compensation	36
INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT AND SERVICE PROVIDER INFORMATION	36
Manager	36
Subadviser	38
Expenses	38
Portfolio Managers	40
Other Accounts Managed by the Portfolio Managers	40
Portfolio Managers Securities Ownership	41
Potential Conflicts of Interest	41
Portfolio Manager Compensation Structure	42
Custodian and Transfer Agent	42
Fund Counsel	43
Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm	43
PORTFOLIO TRANSACTIONS AND BROKERAGE	43
Portfolio Transactions	43
Brokerage and Research Services	44
Aggregate Brokerage Commissions Paid	45
Securities of Regular Broker Dealers	45
Portfolio Turnover	45
SHARE OWNERSHIP	46
Principal Shareholders	46
DISTRIBUTOR	48
Dealer Commissions and Concessions	52
Sales Charges	52
Initial Sales Charges	52
Contingent Deferred Sales Charges	52
Services and Distribution Plan	53
PURCHASE OF SHARES	54
REDEMPTION OF SHARES	62
EXCHANGE OF SHARES	64
VALUATION OF SHARES	65
UNCLAIMED SHARE ACCOUNTS	66
PROXY VOTING GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES	66
DISCLOSURE OF PORTFOLIO HOLDINGS	66
General Rules/Website Disclosure	67
Ongoing Arrangements	67
Release of Limited Portfolio Holdings Information	69
Exceptions to the Policy	70
Limitations of Policy	70
THE TRUST	70

TAXES73
CODES OF ETHICS.....83
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS84
APPENDIX A—PROXY VOTING POLICIESA-1
APPENDIX B—CREDIT RATINGSB-1

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Because the following is a combined glossary of terms, certain terms below may not apply to your fund. Any terms used but not defined herein have the meaning ascribed to them in the applicable Fund's prospectus.

"12b-1 Plans" means the Fund's distribution and shareholder services plan.

"1933 Act" means the Securities Act of 1933, as amended.

"1934 Act" means the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended.

"1940 Act" means the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended.

"1940 Act Vote" means the vote of the lesser of: (a) more than 50% of the outstanding shares of the Fund; or (b) 67% or more of the shares of the Fund present at a shareholders' meeting if more than 50% of the outstanding shares of that Fund are represented at the meeting in person or by proxy.

"Advisers Act" means the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, as amended.

"Board" means the Board of Trustees or Board of Directors, as applicable.

"CEA" means the Commodity Exchange Act, as amended.

"CFTC" means the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

"Code" means the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

"Corporation" (if applicable) means the corporation listed on the cover page of this SAI.

"Directors" means the directors of the Corporation.

"Distributor" means the party that is responsible for the distribution or sale of the Fund's shares. Franklin Distributors, LLC ("Franklin Distributors") is the Fund's distributor.

"FINRA" means the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc.

"Franklin Resources" means Franklin Resources, Inc.

"Fund" means the Fund or Funds listed on the cover of this SAI unless stated otherwise.

"Fundamental Investment Policy" means an investment policy of the Fund that may be changed only by a 1940 Act Vote. Only those policies expressly designated as such are fundamental investment policies. All other policies and restrictions may be changed by the Board without shareholder approval.

"Independent Director" or "Independent Trustee" (as applicable) means a Director of the Corporation or a Trustee of the Trust who is not an "interested person" (as defined in the 1940 Act) of the Corporation or Trust (as applicable).

"IRAs" means Individual Retirement Accounts.

"IRS" means Internal Revenue Service.

"Legg Mason" means Legg Mason, Inc.

"Manager" or "FTFA" means Franklin Templeton Fund Adviser, LLC.

"NAV" means net asset value.

"NRSROs" means nationally recognized (or non-U.S.) statistical rating organizations, including, but not limited to, Moody's Investors Service, Inc. ("Moody's"), Fitch Ratings and S&P Global Ratings, a subsidiary of S&P Global Inc. ("S&P").

"NYSE" means the New York Stock Exchange.

"Prospectus" means the prospectus of a Fund as referenced on the cover page of this SAI.

"SAI" means this Statement of Additional Information.

"SEC" means the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

"Service Agent" means each bank, broker, dealer, insurance company, investment adviser, financial consultant or adviser, mutual fund supermarket and any other financial intermediaries that have entered into an agreement with the Distributor to sell shares of the Fund.

"Subadviser" means Franklin Advisers, Inc. and Western Asset Management Company, LLC, as applicable, and as referred to in the Fund's Prospectus and this SAI.

"Trust" (if applicable) means the trust listed on the cover page of this SAI.

"Trustees" means the trustees of the Trust.

INVESTMENT POLICIES

Investment Objective and Strategies

The Fund is registered under the 1940 Act as an open-end management investment company. The Fund's Prospectus discusses the Fund's investment objective and strategies. The following is a summary of certain strategies and investment limitations of the Fund and supplements the description of the Fund's investment strategies in its Prospectus. Additional information regarding investment practices and risk factors with respect to the Fund may also be found below in the section entitled *Investment Practices and Risk Factors*.

Franklin Global Equity Fund

- *Investment objective.* The Fund seeks long-term capital growth. Dividend income, if any, is incidental to this objective.
- Under normal circumstances, the Fund invests at least 80% of its assets in equity and equity-related securities. The Fund's 80% investment policy may be changed by the Board without shareholder approval upon 60 days' prior notice to shareholders.
- Under normal circumstances the Fund invests in at least three countries, which may include the United States.
- The Fund may invest up to 25% of its net assets, determined at time of purchase, in emerging market issuers.
- The Fund may invest up to 20% of its net assets in fixed income obligations of foreign and U.S. issuers that are rated at least investment grade at the time of purchase (i.e., rated in the Baa or higher categories by Moody's, or BBB or higher by S&P) or, if unrated, of comparable quality in the opinion of the Subadviser.
- While the Fund does not currently intend to engage in short sales against the box, no more than 40% of the Fund's total assets would be involved in such sales.

Fundamental and Non-Fundamental Investment Policies

General

The Fund has adopted the fundamental and non-fundamental investment policies below for the protection of shareholders. Fundamental investment policies of the Fund may not be changed without a 1940 Act Vote. The Board may change non-fundamental investment policies at any time without shareholder approval and upon notice to shareholders.

If any percentage restriction described below (other than the limitation on borrowing) is complied with at the time of an investment, a later increase or decrease in the percentage resulting from a change in asset values or characteristics will not constitute a violation of such restriction, unless otherwise noted below.

The Fund's investment objective is non-fundamental.

Fundamental Investment Policies

The Fund's fundamental investment policies are as follows:

Borrowing. The Fund may not borrow money except as permitted by (i) the 1940 Act, or interpretations or modifications by the SEC, SEC staff or other authority with appropriate jurisdiction, or (ii) exemptive or other relief or permission from the SEC, SEC staff or other authority.

Underwriting. The Fund may not engage in the business of underwriting the securities of other issuers except as permitted by (i) the 1940 Act, or interpretations or modifications by the SEC, SEC staff or other authority with appropriate jurisdiction, or (ii) exemptive or other relief or permission from the SEC, SEC staff or other authority.

Lending. The Fund may lend money or other assets to the extent permitted by (i) the 1940 Act, or interpretations or modifications by the SEC, SEC staff or other authority with appropriate jurisdiction, or (ii) exemptive or other relief or permission from the SEC, SEC staff or other authority.

Senior Securities. The Fund may not issue senior securities except as permitted by (i) the 1940 Act, or interpretations or modifications by the SEC, SEC staff or other authority with appropriate jurisdiction, or (ii) exemptive or other relief or permission from the SEC, SEC staff or other authority.

Real Estate. The Fund may not purchase or sell real estate except as permitted by (i) the 1940 Act, or interpretations or modifications by the SEC, SEC staff or other authority with appropriate jurisdiction, or (ii) exemptive or other relief or permission from the SEC, SEC staff or other authority.

Commodities. The Fund may purchase or sell commodities or contracts related to commodities to the extent permitted by (i) the 1940 Act, or interpretations or modifications by the SEC, SEC staff or other authority with appropriate jurisdiction, or (ii) exemptive or other relief or permission from the SEC, SEC staff or other authority.

Concentration. Except as permitted by exemptive or other relief or permission from the SEC, SEC staff or other authority with appropriate jurisdiction, the Fund may not make any investment if, as a result, the Fund's investments will be concentrated in any one industry.

With respect to the fundamental policy relating to borrowing money set forth above, the 1940 Act permits a fund to borrow money in amounts of up to one-third of the fund's total assets from banks for any purpose, and to borrow up to 5% of the fund's total assets from banks or other lenders for temporary purposes. (A fund's total assets include the amounts being borrowed.) To limit the risks attendant to borrowing, the 1940 Act requires a fund to maintain an "asset coverage" of at least 300% of the amount of its borrowings, provided that in the event that the fund's asset coverage falls below 300%, the fund is required to reduce the amount of its borrowings so that it meets the 300% asset coverage threshold within three days (not including Sundays and holidays). Asset coverage means the ratio that the value of a fund's total assets (including amounts borrowed), minus liabilities other than borrowings, bears to the aggregate amount of all borrowings. Certain trading practices and investments, such as reverse repurchase agreements, may be considered to be borrowing, and thus subject to the 1940 Act restrictions. Borrowing money to increase portfolio holdings is known as "leveraging." Borrowing, especially when used for leverage, may cause the value of the Fund's shares to be more volatile than if the Fund did not borrow. This is because borrowing tends to magnify the effect of any increase or decrease in the value of the Fund's portfolio holdings. Borrowed money thus creates an opportunity for greater gains, but also greater losses. To repay borrowings, the Fund may have to sell securities at a time and at a price that is unfavorable to the Fund. There also are costs associated with borrowing money, and these costs would offset and could eliminate the Fund's net investment income in any given period. Currently, the Fund does not contemplate borrowing money for leverage, but if the Fund does so, it will not likely do so to a substantial degree. The policy above will be interpreted to permit the Fund to engage in trading practices and investments that may be considered to be borrowing to the extent permitted by the 1940 Act. Short-term credits necessary for the settlement of securities transactions and arrangements with respect to securities lending will not be considered to be borrowings under the policy. Practices and investments that may involve leverage but are not considered to be borrowings are not subject to the policy.

With respect to the fundamental policy relating to underwriting set forth above, the 1940 Act does not prohibit a fund from engaging in the underwriting business or from underwriting the securities of other issuers; in fact, the 1940 Act permits a fund to have underwriting commitments of up to 25% of its assets under certain circumstances. Those circumstances currently are that the amount of the fund's underwriting commitments, when added to the value of the fund's investments in issuers where the fund owns more than 10% of the outstanding voting securities of those issuers, cannot exceed the 25% cap. A fund engaging in transactions involving the acquisition or disposition of portfolio securities may be considered to be an underwriter under the 1933 Act. Under the 1933 Act, an underwriter may be liable for material omissions or misstatements in an issuer's registration statement or prospectus. Securities purchased from an issuer and not registered for sale under the 1933 Act are considered restricted securities. There may be a limited market for these securities. If these securities are registered under the 1933 Act, they may then be eligible for sale but participating in the sale may subject the seller to underwriter liability. These risks could apply to a fund investing in restricted securities. Although it is not believed that the application of the 1933 Act provisions described above would cause the Fund to be engaged in the business of underwriting, the policy above will be interpreted not to prevent the Fund from engaging in transactions involving the acquisition or disposition of portfolio securities, regardless of whether the Fund may be considered to be an underwriter under the 1933 Act.

With respect to the fundamental policy relating to lending set forth above, the 1940 Act does not prohibit a fund from making loans; however, SEC staff interpretations currently prohibit funds from lending more than one-third of their total assets, except through the purchase of debt obligations or the use of repurchase agreements. (A repurchase agreement is an agreement to purchase a security, coupled with an agreement to sell that security back to the original seller on an agreed-upon date at a price that reflects current interest rates. The SEC frequently treats repurchase agreements as loans.) While lending securities may be a source of income to the Fund, as with other extensions of credit, there are risks of delay in recovery or even loss of

rights in the underlying securities should the borrower fail financially. However, loans would be made only when the Fund's Manager or a Subadviser believes the income justifies the attendant risks. The Fund also will be permitted by this policy to make loans of money, including to other funds. The Fund would have to obtain exemptive relief from the SEC to make loans to other funds. The policy above will be interpreted not to prevent the Fund from purchasing or investing in debt obligations and loans. In addition, collateral arrangements with respect to options, forward currency and futures transactions and other derivative instruments, as well as delays in the settlement of securities transactions, will not be considered loans.

With respect to the fundamental policy relating to issuing senior securities set forth above, "senior securities" are defined as fund obligations that have a priority over the fund's shares with respect to the payment of dividends or the distribution of fund assets. The 1940 Act prohibits a fund from issuing senior securities, except that the fund may borrow money in amounts of up to one-third of the fund's total assets from banks for any purpose. A fund also may borrow up to 5% of the fund's total assets from banks or other lenders for temporary purposes, and these borrowings are not considered senior securities. The issuance of senior securities by a fund can increase the speculative character of the fund's outstanding shares through leveraging. Leveraging of the Fund's portfolio through the issuance of senior securities magnifies the potential for gain or loss on monies, because even though the Fund's net assets remain the same, the total risk to investors is increased to the extent of the Fund's gross assets. 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.

With respect to the fundamental policy relating to real estate set forth above, the 1940 Act does not prohibit a fund from owning real estate; however, a fund is limited in the amount of illiquid assets it may purchase. Investing in real estate may involve risks, including that real estate is generally considered illiquid and may be difficult to value and sell. Owners of real estate may be subject to various liabilities, including environmental liabilities. To the extent that investments in real estate are considered illiquid, an SEC rule limits a fund's purchases of illiquid securities to 15% of net assets. The policy above will be interpreted not to prevent the Fund from investing in real estate-related companies, companies whose businesses consist in whole or in part of investing in real estate, instruments (like mortgages) that are secured by real estate or interests therein, or real estate investment trust securities.

With respect to the fundamental policy relating to commodities set forth above, the 1940 Act does not prohibit a fund from owning commodities, whether physical commodities and contracts related to physical commodities (such as oil or grains and related futures contracts), or financial commodities and contracts related to financial commodities (such as currencies and, possibly, currency futures). However, a fund is limited in the amount of illiquid assets it may purchase. To the extent that investments in commodities are considered illiquid, an SEC rule limits a fund's purchases of illiquid securities to 15% of net assets. If the Fund were to invest in a physical commodity or a physical commodity-related instrument, the Fund would be subject to the additional risks of the particular physical commodity and its related market. The value of commodities and commodity-related instruments may be extremely volatile and may be affected either directly or indirectly by a variety of factors. There also may be storage charges and risks of loss associated with physical commodities. The policy above will be interpreted to permit investments in exchange traded funds that invest in physical and/or financial commodities.

With respect to the fundamental policy relating to concentration set forth above, the 1940 Act does not define what constitutes "concentration" in an industry. The SEC staff has taken the position that investment of 25% or more of a fund's total assets in one or more issuers conducting their principal activities in the same industry or group of industries constitutes concentration. It is possible that interpretations of concentration could change in the future. A fund that invests a significant percentage of its total assets in a single industry may be particularly susceptible to adverse events affecting that industry and may be more risky than a fund that does not concentrate in an industry. The policy above will be interpreted to refer to concentration as that term may be interpreted from time to time. The policy also will be interpreted to permit investment without limit in the following: securities of the U.S. government and its agencies or instrumentalities; securities of state, territory, possession or municipal governments and their authorities, agencies, instrumentalities or political subdivisions; securities of foreign governments; and repurchase agreements collateralized by any such obligations. Accordingly, issuers of the foregoing securities will not be considered to be members of any industry. There also will be no limit on investment in issuers domiciled in a single jurisdiction or country. The policy also will be interpreted to give broad authority to the Fund as to how to classify issuers within or among industries.

The Fund's fundamental policies will be interpreted broadly. For example, the policies will be interpreted to refer to the 1940 Act and the related rules as they are in effect from time to time, and to interpretations and modifications of or relating to

the 1940 Act by the SEC and others as they are given from time to time. When a policy provides that an investment practice may be conducted as permitted by the 1940 Act, the policy will be interpreted to mean either that the 1940 Act expressly permits the practice or that the 1940 Act does not prohibit the practice.

Diversification

The Fund is currently classified as a diversified fund under the 1940 Act. This means that the Fund may not purchase securities of an issuer (other than obligations issued or guaranteed by the U.S. government, its agencies or instrumentalities) if, with respect to 75% of its total assets, (a) more than 5% of the Fund's total assets would be invested in securities of that issuer or (b) the Fund would hold more than 10% of the outstanding voting securities of that issuer. With respect to the remaining 25% of its total assets, the Fund can invest more than 5% of its assets in one issuer. Under the 1940 Act, the Fund cannot change its classification from diversified to non-diversified without shareholder approval.

Non-Fundamental Investment Policies

The Fund's non-fundamental investment policies are as follows:

- The Fund may not invest in other registered open-end management investment companies and registered unit investment trusts in reliance upon the provisions of subparagraphs (G) or (F) of Section 12(d)(1) of the 1940 Act. The foregoing investment policy does not restrict the Fund from (i) acquiring securities of other registered investment companies in connection with a merger, consolidation, reorganization, or acquisition of assets, or (ii) purchasing the securities of registered investment companies, to the extent otherwise permissible under Section 12(d)(1) of the 1940 Act.
- The Fund may not purchase or otherwise acquire any security if, as a result, more than 15% of its net assets would be invested in securities that are illiquid. The Fund monitors the portion of the Fund's total assets that is invested in illiquid securities on an ongoing basis, not only at the time of investment in such securities.

Commodity Exchange Act Regulation — Exclusion from Commodity Pool Operator Definition

The Fund is operated by persons who have claimed an exclusion, granted to operators of registered investment companies like the Fund, from registration as a "commodity pool operator" with respect to the Fund under the CEA and, therefore are not subject to registration or regulation with respect to the Fund under the CEA. As a result, the Fund is limited in its ability to trade instruments subject to the CFTC's jurisdiction, including commodity futures (which include futures on broad-based securities indexes, interest rate futures and currency futures), options on commodity futures, and certain swaps or other investments, either directly or indirectly through investments in other investment vehicles (collectively, "Commodity Interests").

Under this exclusion, the Fund must satisfy one of the following two trading limitations whenever it establishes a new Commodity Interest position: (1) the aggregate initial margin and premiums required to establish the Fund's Commodity Interest positions does not exceed 5% of the liquidation value of the Fund's portfolio (after accounting for unrealized profits and unrealized losses on any such investments); or (2) the aggregate net notional value of the Fund's Commodity Interests, determined at the time the most recent position was established, does not exceed 100% of the liquidation value of the Fund's portfolio (after accounting for unrealized profits and unrealized losses on any such positions). The Fund is not required to consider its exposure to such instruments if they are held for "bona fide hedging" purposes, as such term is defined in the rules of the CFTC. In addition to meeting one of the foregoing trading limitations, the Fund may not be marketed as a commodity pool or otherwise as a vehicle for trading in the markets for Commodity Interests.

If the Fund's operators were to lose their ability to claim this exclusion with respect to the Fund, such persons would be required to comply with certain CFTC rules regarding commodity pools that could impose additional regulatory requirements and compliance obligations.

INVESTMENT PRACTICES AND RISK FACTORS

In addition to the investment strategies and the risks described in the Fund's Prospectus and in this SAI under Investment Objective and Strategies, the Fund may employ other investment practices and may be subject to other risks, which are described below. The Fund may engage in the practices described below to the extent consistent with its investment objectives, strategies, policies and restrictions. However, as with any investment or investment technique, even when the Fund's Prospectus or this discussion indicates that the Fund may engage in an activity, the Fund may not actually do so for a variety of

reasons. In addition, new types of instruments and other securities may be developed and marketed from time to time. Consistent with its investment limitations, the Fund expects to invest in those new types of securities and instruments that its portfolio manager believes may assist the Fund in achieving its investment objective.

This discussion is not intended to limit the Fund's investment flexibility, unless such a limitation is expressly stated, and therefore will be construed by the Fund as broadly as possible. Statements concerning what the Fund may do are not intended to limit any other activity.

Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence refers to computer systems that can perform tasks that would otherwise require human intelligence and encompasses various different forms of artificial intelligence, including machine learning models. Artificial intelligence is typically designed to analyze data, learn from patterns and experiences, make decisions, and solve problems. Artificial intelligence can be categorized into two types: narrow artificial intelligence, which is designed for specific tasks, and general artificial intelligence, which has the ability to perform any intellectual task that a human can do and includes generative artificial intelligence ("GAI"). GAI is a type of artificial intelligence technology that produces new text, images, audio, and other content based on training data that includes examples of the desired output.

Typically, users enter questions, queries, or other inputs that prompt the GAI model or tool to produce output. In addition, some software uses GAI to suggest changes, summarize information, or translate text. Artificial intelligence has various applications in many fields such as healthcare, finance, transportation, and law.

The use of artificial intelligence in general may adversely impact markets, the overall performance of the Fund's investments, or the services provided to the Fund by its service providers. The Manager or the Subadviser or a third party service provider may use and/or expand its use of artificial intelligence in connection with its business, operating and investment activities and the Fund's investments may also use such technologies. Actual usage of such artificial intelligence will vary, and while the Manager or the Subadviser expects it and the third party service provider to the Fund may, from time to time, adopt and adjust usage policies and procedures governing the use of artificial intelligence by its personnel, there is a risk of misuse of artificial intelligence technologies.

Artificial intelligence is highly reliant on the collection and analysis of large amounts of data and complex algorithms, but it is not possible nor practicable to incorporate all data that would be relevant for a task conducted by artificial intelligence. Therefore, it is possible that the information provided through use of artificial intelligence could be insufficient, incomplete, inaccurate or biased leading to adverse effects for the Fund, including, potentially, operational errors and investment losses.

Artificial intelligence and its current and potential future applications, including in the investment and financial sectors, as well as the regulatory frameworks within which they operate, continue to rapidly evolve, and it is impossible to predict the full extent of future applications or regulations. Ongoing and future regulatory actions with respect to artificial intelligence generally or artificial intelligence's use in any industry in particular may alter, perhaps to a materially adverse extent, the ability of the Manager or the Subadviser, a third-party service provider, the Fund or its investments to utilize artificial intelligence in the manner it has to-date, and may have an adverse impact on the ability of any of those entities to continue to operate as intended.

Benchmark Reference Rates Risk

Many debt securities, derivatives, and other financial instruments utilize benchmark or reference rates for variable interest rate calculations, including the Euro Interbank Offer Rate, Sterling Overnight Index Average Rate, and the Secured Overnight Financing Rate (each a "Reference Rate"). Instruments in which the Fund invests may pay interest at floating rates based on such Reference Rates or may be subject to interest caps or floors based on such Reference Rates. The Fund and issuers of instruments in which the Fund invests may also obtain financing at floating rates based on such Reference Rates. The elimination of a Reference Rate or any other changes to or reforms of the determination or supervision of Reference Rates could have an adverse impact on the market for, or value of, any instruments or payments linked to those Reference Rates.

For example, some Reference Rates, as well as other types of rates and indices, are described as "benchmarks" and have been the subject of ongoing national and international regulatory reform, including under the European Union regulation on indices used as benchmarks in financial instruments and financial contracts (known as the "Benchmarks Regulation"). The Benchmarks Regulation has been enacted into United Kingdom law by virtue of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 (as amended), subject to amendments made by the Benchmarks (Amendment and Transitional Provision) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019

(SI 2019/657) and other statutory instruments. Following the implementation of these reforms, the manner of administration of benchmarks has changed and may further change in the future, with the result that relevant benchmarks may perform differently than in the past, the use of benchmarks that are not compliant with the new standards by certain supervised entities may be restricted, and certain benchmarks may be eliminated entirely. Such changes could cause increased market volatility and disruptions in liquidity for instruments that rely on or are impacted by such benchmarks. Additionally, there could be other consequences which cannot be predicted.

Common Stock

Common stocks are shares of ownership in a corporation or other entity that entitle the holder to a pro rata share of the profits of the corporation, if any, distributed as dividends to holders of common stock, without preference over any other shareholder or class of shareholders, including holders of the entity's preferred stock and other senior equity securities. Common stock usually carries with it the right to vote and frequently an exclusive right to do so.

Convertible Securities

Convertible securities are fixed income securities (usually debt or preferred stock) that may be converted or exchanged for a prescribed amount of common stock or other equity securities of the same or a different issuer within a particular period of time at a specified price or formula. A convertible security entitles the holder to receive interest paid or accrued on debt or the dividend paid on preferred stock until the convertible security matures or is redeemed, converted or exchanged. Before conversion or exchange, convertible securities ordinarily provide a stream of income with generally higher yields than those of common stocks of the same or similar issuers, but lower than the yield of nonconvertible debt. However, there can be no assurance of current income because the issuers of the convertible securities may default on their obligations. Convertible securities are usually subordinated to comparable nonconvertible debt or preferred stock, but rank senior to common stock in a corporation's capital structure.

The value of a convertible security is generally related to (1) its yield in comparison with the yields of other securities of comparable maturity and quality that do not have a conversion privilege and/or (2) its worth, at market value, if converted or exchanged into the underlying common stock. A convertible security may be subject to redemption at the option of the issuer at a price established in the convertible security's governing instrument, which may be less than the ultimate conversion or exchange value.

Convertible securities are subject to stock market and other risks associated with equity securities, as well as credit, interest rate and other risks associated with fixed income securities. As the market price of the equity security underlying a convertible security falls, the convertible security tends to trade on the basis of its yield and other fixed income characteristics. As the market price of such equity security rises, the convertible security tends to trade on the basis of its equity conversion features. Investments in convertible securities generally entail less risk than investments in common stock of the same issuer.

Synthetic Convertible Securities

A synthetic convertible security is comprised of two distinct securities that together resemble convertible securities in certain respects. Synthetic convertible securities are created by combining non-convertible bonds or preferred shares with common stocks, warrants or stock call options. The options that will form elements of synthetic convertible securities will be listed on a securities exchange. The two components of a synthetic convertible security, which will be issued with respect to the same entity, generally are not offered as a unit, and may be purchased and sold by the Fund at different times. Synthetic convertible securities differ from convertible securities in certain respects, including that each component of a synthetic convertible security has a separate market value and responds differently to market fluctuations. Investing in synthetic convertible securities involves the risk normally involved in holding the securities comprising the synthetic convertible security.

Cybersecurity Risk

Like other funds and business enterprises, the Fund, the Manager and the Subadviser and their service providers are subject to the risk of cyber incidents occurring from time to time. With the increased use of technologies such as mobile devices and Web-based or "cloud" applications, and the dependence on the Internet and computer systems to conduct business, the Fund, the Manager, the Subadviser, and other service providers are susceptible to operational, information security and related risks. In general, cybersecurity incidents can result from deliberate attacks or unintentional events (arising from external or

internal sources) that may cause the Fund, the Manager and the Subadviser and/or their service providers to lose proprietary information, suffer data corruption, physical damage to a computer or network system or lose operational capacity. Cybersecurity attacks include, but are not limited to, infection by malicious software, such as malware or computer viruses or gaining unauthorized access to digital systems, networks or devices that are used to service the Fund's operations (e.g., through "hacking," "phishing" or malicious software coding) or other means for purposes of misappropriating assets or sensitive information, corrupting data, or causing operational disruption. Cybersecurity attacks may also be carried out in a manner that does not require gaining unauthorized access, such as causing denial-of-service attacks on the Fund's websites (i.e., efforts to make network services unavailable to intended users). Recently, geopolitical tensions may have increased the scale and sophistication of deliberate cybersecurity attacks, particularly those from nation-states or from entities with nation-state backing. In addition, authorized persons could inadvertently or intentionally release confidential or proprietary information stored on the Fund's systems.

Cybersecurity incidents affecting the Fund's Manager, the Subadviser, and other service providers to the Fund or its shareholders (including, but not limited to, Fund accountants, custodians, sub-custodians, transfer agents and financial intermediaries) have the ability to cause disruptions and impact business operations, potentially resulting in financial losses to both the Fund and its shareholders, interference with the Fund's ability to calculate its net asset value, impediments to trading, the inability of Fund shareholders to transact business and the Fund to process transactions (including fulfillment of Fund share purchases and redemptions), violations of applicable privacy and other laws (including the release of private shareholder information) and attendant breach notification and credit monitoring costs, regulatory fines, penalties, litigation costs, reputational damage, reimbursement or other compensation costs, forensic investigation and remediation costs, and/or additional compliance costs. Similar adverse consequences could result from cybersecurity incidents affecting issuers of securities in which the Fund invests, counterparties with which the Fund engages in transactions, governmental and other regulatory authorities, exchange and other financial market operators, banks, brokers, dealers, insurance companies and other financial institutions (including financial intermediaries and other service providers) and other parties. In addition, substantial costs may be incurred in order to safeguard against and reduce the risk of any cybersecurity incidents in the future. In addition to administrative, technological and procedural safeguards, the Fund's Manager and the Subadviser have established business continuity plans in the event of, and risk management systems to prevent or reduce the impact of, such cybersecurity incidents. However, there are inherent limitations in such plans and systems, including the possibility that certain risks have not been identified, as well as the rapid development of new threats. Furthermore, the Fund cannot control the cybersecurity plans and systems put in place by its service providers or any other third parties whose operations may affect the Fund and its shareholders. The Fund and its shareholders could be negatively impacted as a result.

New ways to carry out cyber attacks continue to develop. There is a chance that some risks have not been identified or prepared for, or that an attack may not be detected, which puts limitations on the Fund's, the Manager's and the Subadviser's and/or their service providers' ability to plan for or respond to a cyber attack.

Debt and Fixed Income Securities

The Fund may invest in a variety of debt and fixed income securities, which may be issued by governmental, corporate or other issuers. Debt securities may pay fixed, floating or variable rates of interest or interest at a rate contingent upon some other factor. Variable rate securities reset at specified intervals, while floating rate securities reset whenever there is a change in a specified index rate. In most cases, these reset provisions reduce the effect of market interest rates on the value of the security. However, some securities do not track the underlying index directly, but reset based on formulas that can produce an effect similar to leveraging; others may provide for interest payments that vary inversely with market rates. The market prices of these securities may fluctuate significantly when interest rates change.

These securities share principal risks. For example, the level of interest income generated by the Fund's fixed income investments may decline due to a decrease in market interest rates. Thus, when fixed income securities mature or are sold, they may be replaced by lower-yielding investments. Also, their values fluctuate with changes in interest rates. A decrease in interest rates will generally result in an increase in the value of the Fund's fixed income investments. Conversely, during periods of rising interest rates, the value of the Fund's fixed income investments will generally decline. However, a change in interest rates will not have the same impact on all fixed rate securities. For example, the magnitude of these fluctuations will generally be greater when the Fund's duration or average maturity is longer. In addition, certain fixed income securities are subject to credit risk, which is the risk that an issuer of securities will be unable to pay principal and interest when due, or that the value of the

security will suffer because investors believe the issuer is unable to pay. Recently, there have been inflationary price movements. As such, fixed income securities markets may experience heightened levels of interest rate volatility and liquidity risk.

Changing Interest Rates. In a low or negative interest rate environment, debt securities may trade at, or be issued with, negative yields, which means the purchaser of the security may receive at maturity less than the total amount invested. To the extent the Fund holds a negatively-yielding debt security or has a bank deposit with a negative interest rate, the Fund would generate a negative return on that investment. Cash positions may also subject the Fund to increased counterparty risk to the Fund's bank. Debt market conditions are highly unpredictable and some parts of the market are subject to dislocations. In a low or negative interest rate environment, some investors may seek to reallocate assets to other income-producing assets. This may cause the price of such higher yielding instruments to rise, could further reduce the value of instruments with a negative yield, and may limit the Fund's ability to locate fixed income instruments containing the desired risk/return profile. Changes in monetary or fiscal policy may exacerbate the risks associated with changing interest rates. In the past, the U.S. government and certain foreign central banks have taken steps to stabilize markets by, among other things, reducing interest rates. In recent years, the U.S. government implemented increases to the federal funds interest rate and there may be further rate increases or other actions which may increase market volatility to the extent inconsistent with general market expectations. As interest rates rise, there is risk that rates across the financial system also may rise. To the extent rates increase substantially and/or rapidly, the Fund may be subject to significant losses. Changing interest rates could have unpredictable effects on the markets and may expose fixed income markets to heightened volatility, increased redemptions, and potential illiquidity.

Fixed Income Securities Ratings. Securities rated in the fourth highest ratings category by a NRSRO, such as those rated BBB by S&P, or Baa by Moody's, and unrated securities of comparable quality, are generally regarded as having adequate capacity to pay interest and repay principal but may have some speculative characteristics. Securities rated below the fourth highest ratings category by a NRSRO, including those rated below Baa by Moody's or BBB by S&P, and unrated securities of comparable quality, are generally considered below "investment grade," and may have speculative characteristics, including a greater possibility of default or bankruptcy of the issuers of such securities, market price volatility based upon interest rate sensitivity, questionable creditworthiness and relative liquidity of the secondary trading market. Changes in economic conditions or other circumstances are more likely to lead to a weakened capacity for lower rated securities to make principal and interest payments, including a greater possibility of default or bankruptcy of the issuer, than is the case for high rated securities. Appendix B to this SAI contains further information concerning the rating categories of NRSROs and their significance.

Derivatives — Generally

A derivative is a financial instrument that has a value based on, or derived from, the value of one or more underlying reference instruments or measures of value or interest rates ("underlying instruments"), such as a security, a commodity, a currency, an index, an interest rate or a currency exchange rate. A derivative can also have a value based on the likelihood that an event will or will not occur. Derivatives include futures contracts, forward contracts, options and swaps.

The Fund may use derivatives for any purpose, including but not limited to, to attempt to enhance income, yield or return, as a substitute for investing directly in a security or asset, or as a hedging technique in an attempt to manage risk in the Fund's portfolio. The Fund may choose not to make use of derivatives for a variety of reasons, and no assurance can be given that any derivatives strategy employed will be successful. The Fund's use of derivative instruments may be limited from time to time by applicable law, availability or by policies adopted by the Board, Manager or Subadviser (as applicable).

The Fund may utilize multiple derivative instruments and combinations of derivative instruments to seek to adjust the risk and return characteristics of its overall position. Combined positions will typically contain elements of risk that are present in each of its component transactions. It is possible that the combined position will not achieve its intended goal and will instead increase losses or risk to the Fund. Because combined positions involve multiple trades, they result in higher transaction costs and may be more difficult to open and close out.

The Fund may enter into derivatives with standardized terms that have no or few special or unusual components, which are generally traded on an exchange, as well as derivatives with more complex features, singly or in combination. Non-standardized derivatives are generally traded over the counter ("OTC"). OTC derivatives may be standardized or have customized features and may have limited or no liquidity. The Fund's derivatives contracts may be centrally cleared or settled bilaterally directly with a counterparty. The Fund's derivatives contracts may be cash settled or physically settled.

In addition to the instruments and strategies discussed in this section, additional opportunities in connection with derivatives and other similar or related techniques may become available to the Fund as a result of the development of new techniques, the development of new derivative instruments or a regulatory authority broadening the range of permitted transactions. The Fund may utilize these opportunities and techniques to the extent that they are consistent with the Fund's investment objectives and permitted by its investment limitations and applicable regulatory authorities. These opportunities and techniques may involve risks different from or in addition to those summarized herein.

- *Risks of Derivatives Generally.* The use of derivatives involves special considerations and risks, certain of which are summarized below, and may result in losses to the Fund. In general, derivatives may increase the volatility of the Fund and may involve a small investment of cash relative to the magnitude of the risk or exposure assumed. Even a small investment in derivatives may magnify or otherwise increase investment losses to the Fund.
- *Market risk.* Derivatives can be complex, and their success depends in part upon the portfolio manager's ability to forecast correctly future market or other trends or occurrences or other financial or economic factors or the value of the underlying instrument. Even if the portfolio manager's forecasts are correct, other factors may cause distortions or dislocations in the markets that result in losses or otherwise unsuccessful transactions. Derivatives may behave in unexpected ways, especially in abnormal or volatile market conditions. The market value of the derivative itself or the market value of underlying instruments may change in a way that is adverse to the Fund's interest. There is no assurance that the use of derivatives will be advantageous to the Fund or that the portfolio manager will use derivatives to hedge at an appropriate time.
- *Illiquidity risk.* The Fund's ability to close out or unwind a derivative prior to expiration or maturity depends on the existence of a liquid market or, in the absence of such a market, the ability and willingness of the other party to the transaction (the "counterparty") to enter into a transaction closing out the position. If there is no market or the Fund is not successful in its negotiations, the Fund may not be able to sell or unwind the derivative position at an advantageous or anticipated time or price. This may also be the case if the counterparty becomes insolvent. The Fund may be required to make delivery of portfolio securities or other underlying instruments in order to settle a position or to sell portfolio securities or assets at a disadvantageous time or price in order to obtain cash to settle the position. While a position remains open, the Fund continues to be subject to investment risk on a derivative. The Fund may or may not be able to take other actions or enter into other transactions, including hedging transactions, to limit or reduce its exposure to the derivative. Illiquidity risk may be enhanced if a derivative transaction is particularly large. Certain derivatives, including certain OTC options and swaps, may be considered illiquid and therefore subject to the Fund's limitation on illiquid investments.
- *Leverage risk.* Certain derivative transactions may have a leveraging effect on the Fund, meaning that the Fund can obtain significant investment exposure in return for meeting a relatively small margin or other investment requirement. An adverse change in the value of an underlying instrument can result in losses substantially greater than the amount invested in the derivative itself. When the Fund engages in transactions that have a leveraging effect, the value of the Fund is likely to be more volatile and certain other risks also are likely to be compounded. This is because leverage generally magnifies the effect of any increase or decrease in the value of an investment. Certain derivatives have the potential for unlimited loss, regardless of the size of the initial investment.
- *Margin risk.* Certain derivatives require the Fund to make initial margin payments, a form of security deposit intended to protect against nonperformance of the derivative contract. The Fund may have to post additional margin (known as "variation margin") if the value of the derivative position changes in a manner adverse to the Fund. Derivatives may be difficult to value, which may result in increased payment requirements to counterparties or a loss of value to the Fund. If the Fund has insufficient cash to meet additional margin requirements, it might need to sell securities at a disadvantageous time.
- *Speculation risk.* Derivatives used for non-hedging purposes may result in losses which are not offset by increases in the value of portfolio holdings or declines in the cost of securities or other assets to be acquired. In the event that the Fund uses a derivative as an alternative to purchasing or selling other investments or in order to obtain desired exposure to an index or market, the Fund will be exposed to the same risks as are incurred in purchasing or selling the other investments directly, as well as the risks of the derivative transaction itself, such as counterparty risk.
- *Counterparty risk.* Derivatives involve the risk of loss resulting from the actual or potential insolvency or bankruptcy of the counterparty or the failure by the counterparty to make required payments or otherwise comply with the terms of the contract. In the event of default by a counterparty (or its affiliates), the Fund may have contractual remedies pursuant to the

agreements related to the transaction, which may be limited by applicable law in the case of the counterparty's (or its affiliates') bankruptcy. The Fund may not be able to recover amounts owed to it by an insolvent counterparty.

- *Operational risk.* There may be incomplete or erroneous documentation or inadequate collateral or margin, or transactions may fail to settle. The Fund may have only contractual remedies in the event of a counterparty default, and there may be delays, costs or disagreements as to the meaning of contractual terms and litigation in enforcing those remedies.
- *OTC risk.* Derivative transactions that are traded OTC, such as options, swaps, forward contracts, and options on foreign currencies, are entered into directly with counterparties or financial institutions acting as market makers, rather than being traded on exchanges or centrally cleared. Because OTC derivatives and other transactions are traded between counterparties based on contractual relationships, the Fund is subject to increased risk that its counterparty will not perform its obligations under the related contracts. Although the Fund intends to enter into transactions only with counterparties which the Fund believes to be creditworthy, there can be no assurance that a counterparty will not default and that the Fund will not sustain a loss on a transaction as a result. Information available on counterparty creditworthiness may be incomplete or outdated, thus reducing the ability to anticipate counterparty defaults. The Fund bears the risk of loss of the amount expected to be received under an OTC derivative in the event of the default or bankruptcy of the counterparty to the OTC derivative. When a counterparty's obligations are not fully secured by collateral, then the Fund is essentially an unsecured creditor of the counterparty. If the counterparty defaults, the Fund will have contractual remedies, but there is no assurance that a counterparty will be able to meet its obligations pursuant to such contracts or that, in the event of default, the Fund will succeed in enforcing contractual remedies. Credit/counterparty risk still exists even if a counterparty's obligations are secured by collateral because the Fund's interest in collateral may not be perfected or additional collateral may not be promptly posted as required. Credit/counterparty risk also may be more pronounced if a counterparty's obligations exceed the amount of collateral held by the Fund (if any), the Fund is unable to exercise its interest in collateral upon default by the counterparty, or the termination value of the instrument varies significantly from the marked-to-market value of the instrument.
- *Non-U.S. derivatives risk.* Derivative transactions may be conducted OTC outside of the United States or traded on foreign exchanges. Such transactions may not be regulated as effectively as similar transactions in the United States, may not involve a clearing mechanism and related guarantees and are subject to the risk of governmental actions affecting trading in, or the price of, foreign securities or currencies. The value of such positions also could be adversely affected by (1) other foreign political, legal and economic factors, (2) lesser availability than in the United States of data on which to make trading decisions, (3) delays in the Fund's ability to act upon economic events occurring in foreign markets during non-business hours in the United States, (4) the imposition of different exercise and settlement terms, procedures, margin requirements, fees, taxes or other charges than in the United States and (5) lesser trading volume. Counterparty risk and many of the risks of OTC derivatives transactions are also applicable to derivative transactions conducted outside the United States.
- *Currency derivatives risk.* Currency related transactions may be negatively affected by factors such as government exchange controls, blockages, and manipulations. Exchange rates may be influenced by factors extrinsic to a country's economy. Also, there is no systematic reporting of last sale information with respect to foreign currencies. As a result, the information on which trading in currency derivatives is based may not be as complete as, and may be delayed beyond, comparable data for other types of transactions.
- *Turnover risk.* Use of derivatives involves transaction costs, which may be significant. The Fund may be required to sell or purchase investments in connection with derivative transactions, potentially increasing the Fund's portfolio turnover rate and transaction costs. Use of derivatives also may increase the amount of taxable income to shareholders, if applicable.

Risks Associated with Hedging with Derivatives. If the portfolio manager uses a hedging strategy at the wrong time or judges market conditions incorrectly, hedging strategies may reduce the Fund's return. Successful use of derivatives to hedge positions depends on the correlation between the price of the derivative and the price of the hedged asset.

The Fund may attempt to protect against declines in the value of the Fund's portfolio assets by entering into a variety of derivatives transactions, including selling futures contracts, entering into swaps or purchasing puts on indices or futures contracts (short hedging). Short hedging involves the risk that the prices of the futures contracts or the value of the swap or the applicable index will correlate imperfectly with price movements in the Fund's assets. If the value of the assets held in the Fund's portfolio declines while the Fund has used derivative instruments in a short hedge, and the prices referenced in the short hedge do not also decline, the value of the Fund's assets would decline, and the short hedge would not hedge or mitigate the loss in the value of the assets. With respect to a derivative transaction based on an index, the risk of imperfect correlation increases as the

composition of the Fund's portfolio diverges from the assets included in the applicable index. To compensate for the imperfect correlation of movements in the price of the portfolio securities being hedged and movements in the price of the hedging instruments, the Fund may use derivative instruments in a greater dollar amount than the dollar amount of portfolio assets being hedged. It might do so if the historical volatility of the prices of the portfolio assets being hedged is more than the historical volatility of the applicable index.

If the Fund has used derivatives to hedge or otherwise reduce the Fund's risk exposure to a particular position and then disposes of that position at a time at which it cannot also settle, terminate or close out the corresponding hedge position, this may create short investment exposure. Certain "short" derivative positions involve investment leverage, and the amount of the Fund's potential loss is theoretically unlimited.

The Fund can use derivative instruments to establish a position in the market as a temporary substitute for the purchase of individual securities or other assets (long hedging) by buying futures contracts and/or calls on such futures contracts, indices or on securities or other assets, or entering into swaps. It is possible that when the Fund does so the market might decline. If the Fund then decides not to invest in the assets because of concerns that the market might decline further or for other reasons, the Fund will realize a loss on the hedge position that is not offset by a reduction in the price of the asset the Fund had intended to purchase.

Risk of Government Regulation of Derivatives. The regulation of derivatives transactions and funds that engage in such transactions is an evolving area of law and is subject to modification by government, self-regulatory organization and judicial action. Registered investment companies are subject to regulatory limitations on their use of derivative investments and certain financing transactions (e.g. reverse repurchase agreements). Among other things, a fund that invests in derivative instruments beyond a specified limited amount must apply a value-at-risk based limit to its use of certain derivative instruments and financing transactions and must adopt and implement a derivatives risk management program. A fund that uses derivative instruments in a limited amount, as specified by applicable rules, is not subject to the same restrictions. Regulatory restrictions may restrict the Fund's ability to engage in certain derivatives transactions and/or increase the costs of such derivatives transactions, which could adversely affect the value or performance of the Fund.

The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (the "Dodd-Frank Act") has caused broad changes to the OTC derivatives market and granted significant authority to the SEC and the CFTC to regulate OTC derivatives and market participants. Pursuant to such authority, rules have been enacted that currently require clearing of many OTC derivatives transactions and may require clearing of additional OTC derivatives transactions in the future and that impose minimum margin and capital requirements for uncleared OTC derivatives transactions. Similar regulations have been or are being adopted in other jurisdictions around the world. The implementation of the clearing requirement has increased the costs of derivatives transactions since investors have to pay fees to clearing members and are typically required to post more margin for cleared derivatives than had historically been the case. While the new rules and regulations and central clearing of some derivatives transactions are designed to reduce systemic risk (i.e., the risk that the interdependence of large derivatives dealers could cause them to suffer liquidity, solvency or other challenges simultaneously), there is no assurance that they will achieve that result, and mandatory clearing of derivatives may expose the Fund to new kinds of costs and risks.

Additionally, new regulations may result in increased uncertainty about credit/counterparty risk and may limit the flexibility of the Fund to protect its interests in the event of an insolvency of a derivatives counterparty. In the event of a counterparty's (or its affiliate's) insolvency, the Fund's ability to exercise remedies, such as the termination of transactions, netting of obligations and realization on collateral, could be stayed or eliminated under the rules of the applicable exchange or clearing corporation or under relatively new special resolution regimes adopted in the United States, the United Kingdom, the European Union and various other jurisdictions. Such regimes provide government authorities with broad authority to intervene when a financial institution is experiencing financial difficulty. In particular, with respect to counterparties who are subject to such proceedings in the United Kingdom and the European Union, the liabilities of such counterparties to the Fund could be reduced, eliminated, or converted to equity in such counterparties (sometimes referred to as a "bail in").

Foreign Currency Instruments and Hedging Strategies

The Fund may use options and futures contracts on foreign currencies and forward currency contracts and currency swap agreements (collectively, "Currency Instruments"), deliverable and non-deliverable, to attempt to hedge against movements in the values of the foreign currencies in which the Fund's securities are denominated or to attempt to enhance the Fund's return

or yield. The Fund may also use such investments to attempt to establish a short position or to gain exposure to a market that would be more costly or difficult to access with other types of investments, such as bonds or currency. The Fund may also engage in foreign currency transactions on a spot (cash) basis at the rate prevailing in the currency exchange market at the time of the transaction. The Fund may determine not to hedge, and the Fund may be completely unhedged at any point in time. In cases when a particular currency is difficult to hedge or difficult to hedge against the U.S. dollar, the Fund may seek to hedge against price movements in that currency by entering into transactions using Currency Instruments on another currency or a basket of currencies, the value of which the portfolio manager believes will have a high degree of positive correlation to the value of the currency being hedged. The risk that movements in the price of the Currency Instrument will not correlate perfectly with movements in the price of the currency subject to the hedging transaction is magnified when this strategy is used.

Currency Instruments Risks. In addition to the risks found under “Derivatives – Risks of Derivatives Generally,” Currency Instruments are subject to the following risks:

The value of Currency Instruments depends on the value of the underlying foreign currency relative to the U.S. dollar. Because foreign currency transactions occurring in the interbank market might involve substantially larger amounts than those involved in the Fund’s use of such Currency Instruments, the Fund could be disadvantaged by having to deal in the odd lot market (generally consisting of transactions of less than \$1 million) for the underlying foreign currencies at prices that are less favorable than for round lots. There is no systematic reporting of last sale information for foreign currencies or any regulatory requirement that quotations available through dealers or other market sources be firm or revised on a timely basis. Quotation information generally is representative of very large transactions in the interbank market and thus might not reflect odd-lot transactions where rates might be less favorable. The interbank market in foreign currencies is a global, round-the-clock market. To the extent the U.S. options or futures markets are closed while the markets for the underlying currencies remain open, significant price and rate movements might take place in the underlying markets that cannot be reflected in the U.S. markets for the Currency Instruments until they reopen.

Settlement of hedging transactions involving foreign currencies might be required to take place within the country issuing the underlying currency. Thus, the Fund might be required to accept or make delivery of the underlying foreign currency in accordance with any U.S. or foreign regulations regarding the maintenance of foreign banking arrangements by U.S. residents and might be required to pay any fees, taxes and charges associated with such delivery assessed in the issuing country.

Forward Currency Contracts

The Fund may enter into forward currency contracts to purchase or sell foreign currencies for a fixed amount of U.S. dollars or another currency at a future date and at a price set by the parties to the forward currency contract. Forward currency contracts are traded directly between currency traders (usually large commercial banks) and their customers (such as the Fund).

The Fund may purchase a forward currency contract to lock in the U.S. dollar price of a security denominated in a foreign currency that the Fund intends to acquire (a long hedge). The Fund may sell a forward currency contract to lock in the U.S. dollar equivalent of the proceeds from the anticipated sale of a security, dividend or interest payment denominated in a foreign currency (a short hedge). A “position hedge” is when the Fund owns a security denominated in, for example, euros and to protect against a possible decline in the euro’s value, the Fund enters into a forward currency contract to sell euros in return for U.S. dollars. A “position hedge” tends to offset both positive and negative currency fluctuations but would not offset changes in security values caused by other factors. A “proxy hedge” is when the Fund owns a security denominated in, for example, euros and to protect against a possible decline in the euro’s value, the Fund enters into a forward currency contract to sell a currency expected to perform similarly to the euro in return for U.S. dollars. A “proxy hedge” could offer advantages in terms of cost, yield or efficiency, but generally would not hedge currency exposure as effectively as a position hedge to the extent the proxy currency does not perform similarly to the targeted currency. The Fund could, in fact, lose money on both legs of the hedge, *i.e.*, between the euro and proxy currency, and between the proxy currency and the dollar. The Fund also may use forward currency contracts to attempt to enhance return or yield. The Fund could use forward currency contracts to increase its exposure to foreign currencies that the portfolio manager believes might rise in value relative to the U.S. dollar, or shift its exposure to foreign currency fluctuations from one currency to another. For example, if the Fund’s portfolio manager believes that the U.S. dollar will increase in value relative to the euro, the Fund could write a forward contract to buy U.S. dollars in three months at the current price in order to sell those U.S. dollars for a profit if the U.S. dollar does in fact appreciate in value relative to the euro. The cost to the Fund of engaging in forward currency contracts varies with factors such as the currency involved, the length of the contract period and the market conditions then prevailing. Because forward currency contracts are usually entered into on a principal

basis, no fees or commissions are involved. When the Fund enters into a forward currency contract, it relies on the counterparty to make or take delivery of the underlying currency at the maturity of the contract or to otherwise fulfill its obligations in connection with settlement. Failure by the counterparty to do so would result in the loss of any expected benefit of the transaction.

The precise matching of forward currency contract amounts, and the value of the securities involved generally will not be possible because the value of such securities, measured in the foreign currency, will change after the forward currency contract has been established. Thus, the Fund may need to purchase or sell foreign currencies in the spot (*i.e.*, cash) market to the extent such foreign currencies are not covered by forward currency contracts. The projection of short-term currency market movements is extremely difficult, and the successful execution of a short-term hedging strategy is highly uncertain.

Successful use of forward currency contracts depends on the portfolio manager's skill in analyzing and predicting currency values. Forward currency contracts may substantially change the Fund's exposure to changes in currency exchange rates and could result in losses to the Fund if currencies do not perform as the portfolio manager anticipates. There is no assurance that the portfolio manager's use of forward currency contracts will be advantageous to the Fund or that the portfolio manager will hedge at an appropriate time.

Non-deliverable Forwards. The consummation of a deliverable foreign exchange forward requires the actual exchange of the principal amounts of the two currencies in the contract (*i.e.*, settlement on a physical basis). Forward currency contracts in which the Fund may engage also include non-deliverable forwards ("NDFs"). NDFs are cash-settled, forward contracts on foreign currencies (each a "Reference Currency") that are non-convertible and that may be thinly traded or illiquid. NDFs involve an obligation to pay an amount equal to the difference between the prevailing market exchange rate for the Reference Currency and the agreed upon exchange rate, with respect to an agreed notional amount. NDFs are subject to many of the risks associated with derivatives in general and forward currency transactions, including risks associated with fluctuations in foreign currency and the risk that the counterparty will fail to fulfill its obligations.

Under the Dodd-Frank Act, NDFs are classified as "swaps" and are therefore subject to the full panoply of CFTC swap regulations under the Dodd-Frank Act. Although NDFs have historically been traded OTC, in the future, pursuant to the Dodd-Frank Act, they may be subject to mandatory clearing. Non-centrally-cleared NDFs are subject to mandatory minimum margin requirements for uncleared swaps. Deliverable foreign exchange forwards that solely involve the exchange of two different currencies on a specific future date at a fixed rate agreed upon by the parties are not considered "swaps" and accordingly are not subject to many of the regulations that apply to NDFs. However, as mandated by the Dodd-Frank Act and set forth in CFTC regulations adopted thereunder, foreign exchange forwards must be reported to a swap data repository, and swap dealers and major swap participants who are party to such transactions remain subject to the business conduct standards pertaining to swaps in connection with such deliverable foreign exchange forwards.

Equity Securities

Equity securities include exchange-traded and over-the-counter common and preferred stocks, warrants and rights, and securities convertible into common stocks. Equity securities fluctuate in price based on changes in a company's financial condition and overall market and economic conditions. The value of a particular security may decline due to factors that affect a particular industry or industries, such as an increase in production costs, competitive conditions or labor shortages; or due to general market conditions, such as real or perceived adverse economic conditions, changes in the general outlook for corporate earnings, changes in interest or currency rates or generally adverse investor sentiment. The value of an equity security can be more volatile than the market as a whole and can perform differently from the value of the market as a whole. The value of a company's equity securities may deteriorate because of a variety of factors, including disappointing earnings reports by the issuer, unsuccessful products or services, loss of major customers, major litigation against the issuer or changes in government regulations affecting the issuer or the competitive environment.

Exchange Traded Funds ("ETFs")

ETFs are ownership interests in investment companies, unit investment trusts, depositary receipts and other pooled investment vehicles that are traded on an exchange and that hold a portfolio of securities or other financial instruments (the "Underlying Assets"). The Underlying Assets are typically selected to correspond to the securities that comprise a particular broad based sector or international index, or to provide exposure to a particular industry sector or asset class, including precious metals or other commodities. "Short ETFs" seek a return similar to the inverse, or a multiple of the inverse, of a reference index.

Short ETFs carry additional risks because their Underlying Assets may include a variety of financial instruments, including futures and options on futures, options on securities and securities indexes, swap agreements and forward contracts, and a short ETF may engage in short sales. An ETF's losses on short sales are potentially unlimited; however, the Fund's risk would be limited to the amount it invested in the ETF. Certain ETFs are actively managed by a portfolio manager or management team that makes investment decisions on Underlying Assets without seeking to replicate the performance of a reference index or industry sector or asset class.

Unlike shares of typical open-end management investment companies or unit investment trusts, shares of ETFs are designed to be traded throughout the trading day and bought and sold based on market price rather than net asset value. Shares can trade at either a premium or discount to net asset value. The portfolios held by ETFs are typically publicly disclosed on each trading day and an approximation of actual net asset value is disseminated throughout the trading day. An ETF will generally gain or lose value depending on the performance of the Underlying Assets. In the future, as new products become available, the Fund may invest in ETFs that do not have this same level of transparency and, therefore, may be more likely to trade at a larger discount or premium to actual net asset values.

Gains or losses on the Fund's investment in ETFs will ultimately depend on the purchase and sale price of the ETF. An active trading market for an ETF's shares may not develop or be maintained and trading of an ETF's shares may be halted if the listing exchange's officials deem such action appropriate, the shares are delisted from the exchange or the activation of market-wide "circuit breakers" (which are tied to large decreases in stock prices) halts stock trading generally. The performance of an ETF will be reduced by transaction and other expenses, including fees paid by the ETF to service providers. Investors in ETFs are eligible to receive their portion of income, if any, accumulated on the securities held in the portfolio, less fees and expenses of the ETF.

An investment in an ETF involves risks similar to investing directly in the Underlying Assets, including the risk that the value of the Underlying Assets may fluctuate in accordance with changes in the financial condition of their issuers, the value of securities and other financial instruments generally, and other market factors.

If an ETF is a registered investment company (as defined in the 1940 Act), the limitations applicable to the Fund's ability to purchase securities issued by other investment companies apply absent certain exemptive rules or other available exemptive relief. However, under Rule 12d1-4, the Fund may invest in other investment companies, including ETFs, in excess of these limits, subject to certain conditions. These restrictions may limit the Fund's ability to invest in ETFs to the extent desired. Some ETFs are not structured as investment companies and thus are not regulated under the 1940 Act.

Foreign Securities

The risks of investing in securities of non-U.S. issuers or issuers with significant exposure to non-U.S. markets may be related, among other things, to (i) differences in size, liquidity and volatility of, and the degree and manner of regulation of, the securities markets of certain non-U.S. markets compared to the securities markets in the U.S.; (ii) economic, political and social factors; and (iii) foreign exchange matters, such as restrictions on the repatriation of capital, fluctuations in exchange rates between the U.S. dollar and the currencies in which the Fund's portfolio securities are quoted or denominated, exchange control regulations and costs associated with currency exchange. The political and economic structures in certain foreign countries, particularly emerging markets, are expected to undergo significant evolution and rapid development, and such countries may lack the social, political and economic stability characteristic of more developed countries.

Unanticipated political or social developments may affect the values of the Fund's investments in such countries. The economies and securities and currency markets of many emerging markets have experienced significant disruption and declines. There can be no assurances that these economic and market disruptions will not continue.

Legal remedies available to investors in certain foreign countries may be less extensive than those available to investors in the U.S. or other foreign countries. Accounting standards in other countries are also not necessarily the same as in the United States. If the accounting standards in another country do not require as much detail as U.S. accounting standards, it may be harder for the portfolio manager to completely and accurately determine a company's financial condition. In addition, the U.S. Government has from time to time in the past imposed restrictions, through penalties and otherwise, on foreign investments by U.S. investors such as the Fund. Also, brokerage commissions and other costs of buying or selling securities often are higher in foreign countries than they are in the U.S. This reduces the amount the Fund can earn on its investments.

The Fund generally holds its foreign securities and cash in foreign banks and securities depositories. Some foreign banks and securities depositories may be recently organized or new to the foreign custody business. In addition, there may be limited or no regulatory oversight over their operations. Also, the laws of certain countries may put limits on the Fund's ability to recover its assets if a foreign bank or depository or issuer of a security or any of their agents goes bankrupt. In addition, it is often more expensive for the Fund to buy, sell and hold securities in certain foreign markets than in the U.S. The increased expense of investing in foreign markets reduces the amount the Fund can earn on its investments and typically results in a higher operating expense ratio for the Fund as compared to investment companies that invest only in the United States.

Securities of some foreign companies have lower liquidity, and their prices are more volatile, than securities of comparable domestic companies. Certain foreign countries are known to experience long delays between the trade and settlement dates of securities purchased or sold resulting in increased exposure of the Fund to market and foreign exchange fluctuations brought about by such delays, and to the corresponding negative impact on Fund liquidity.

Foreign Currency Risks

The U.S. dollar value of securities denominated in a foreign currency will vary with changes in currency exchange rates, which can be volatile. Accordingly, changes in the value of the currency in which the Fund's investments are denominated relative to the U.S. dollar will affect the Fund's net asset value. Exchange rates are generally affected by the forces of supply and demand in the international currency markets, the relative merits of investing in different countries and the intervention or failure to intervene of U.S. or foreign governments and central banks. However, currency exchange rates may fluctuate based on factors intrinsic to a country's economy. Some emerging market countries also may have managed currencies, which are not free floating against the U.S. dollar. In addition, emerging markets are subject to the risk of restrictions upon the free conversion of their currencies into other currencies. Any devaluations relative to the U.S. dollar in the currencies in which the Fund's securities are quoted would reduce the Fund's net asset value per share.

Investment in Emerging Markets

Investors are strongly advised to consider carefully the special risks involved in emerging markets, which are in addition to the usual risks of investing in developed foreign markets around the world.

The risks of investing in securities in emerging countries include: (i) less social, political and economic stability; (ii) the smaller size of the markets for such securities and lower volume of trading, which result in a lack of liquidity and in greater price volatility; (iii) certain national policies that may restrict the Fund's investment opportunities, including restrictions on investment in issuers or industries deemed sensitive to national interests; (iv) foreign taxation; (v) the absence of developed structures governing private or foreign investment or allowing for judicial redress for injury to private property; and (vi) military unrest, war and terrorism.

Investors should note that upon the accession to power of authoritarian regimes, the governments of a number of emerging market countries previously expropriated large quantities of real and personal property similar to the property which may be represented by the securities purchased by the Fund. The claims of property owners against those governments were never finally settled. There can be no assurance that any property represented by securities purchased by the Fund will not also be expropriated, nationalized, or otherwise confiscated at some time in the future. If such confiscation were to occur, the Fund could lose a substantial portion or all of its investments in such countries. The Fund's investments would similarly be adversely affected by exchange control regulation in any of those countries.

Certain countries in which the Fund may invest may have vocal groups that advocate radical religious or revolutionary philosophies or support ethnic independence. Any disturbance on the part of such individuals could carry the potential for widespread destruction or confiscation of property owned by individuals and entities foreign to such country and could cause the loss of the Fund's investment in those countries.

Settlement mechanisms in emerging market securities may be less efficient and reliable than in more developed markets. In such emerging securities markets there may be delays and failures in share registration and delivery. In certain markets there have been times when settlements have been unable to keep pace with the volume of securities transactions, making it difficult to conduct such transactions. The inability of the Fund to make intended securities purchases due to settlement problems could cause the Fund to miss attractive investment opportunities. Inability to dispose of a portfolio security caused by settlement problems could result either in losses to the Fund due to subsequent declines in the value of the portfolio security or,

if the Fund has entered into a contract to sell the security, in possible liability to the purchaser. There may also be a danger that, because of uncertainties in the operation of settlement systems in individual markets, competing claims may arise in respect of securities held by or to be transferred to the Fund. Furthermore, compensation schemes may be non-existent, limited or inadequate to meet the Fund's claims in any of these events.

Inflation and rapid fluctuations in inflation rates have had, and may continue to have, very negative effects on the economies and securities markets of certain emerging markets. While some emerging market countries have sought to develop a number of corrective mechanisms to reduce inflation or mitigate its effects, inflation may continue to have significant effects both on emerging market economies and their securities markets. In addition, many of the currencies of emerging market countries have experienced steady devaluations relative to the U.S. dollar and major devaluations have occurred in certain countries. Economies in emerging markets generally are heavily dependent upon international trade and, accordingly, have been and may continue to be affected adversely by economic conditions, trade barriers, exchange controls, managed adjustments in relative currency values and other protectionist measures imposed or negotiated by the countries with which they trade.

Because of the high levels of foreign-denominated debt owed by many emerging market countries, fluctuating exchange rates can significantly affect the debt service obligations of those countries. This could, in turn, affect local interest rates, profit margins and exports, which are a major source of foreign exchange earnings.

To the extent an emerging market country faces a liquidity crisis with respect to its foreign exchange reserves, it may increase restrictions on the outflow of any foreign exchange. Repatriation is ultimately dependent on the ability of the Fund to liquidate its investments and convert the local currency proceeds obtained from such liquidation into U.S. dollars. Where this conversion must be done through official channels (usually the central bank or certain authorized commercial banks), the ability to obtain U.S. dollars is dependent on the availability of such U.S. dollars through those channels and, if available, upon the willingness of those channels to allocate those U.S. dollars to the Fund. The Fund's ability to obtain U.S. dollars may be adversely affected by any increased restrictions imposed on the outflow of foreign exchange. If the Fund is unable to repatriate any amounts due to exchange controls, it may be required to accept an obligation payable at some future date by the central bank or other governmental entity of the jurisdiction involved. If such conversion can legally be done outside official channels, either directly or indirectly, the Fund's ability to obtain U.S. dollars may not be affected as much by any increased restrictions except to the extent of the price which may be required to be paid in U.S. dollars. Furthermore, repatriation of investment income, capital and the proceeds of sales by foreign investors may require governmental registration and/or approval in some countries.

Many emerging market countries have little experience with the corporate form of business organization and may not have well-developed corporation and business laws or concepts of fiduciary duty in the business context. The Fund may encounter substantial difficulties in obtaining and enforcing judgments against individuals and companies located in certain emerging market countries. It may be difficult or impossible to obtain or enforce legislation or remedies against governments, their agencies and sponsored entities.

Disclosure and regulatory standards in emerging markets in many respects are less stringent than in the United States and other major markets. There also may be a lower level of monitoring and regulation of emerging markets and the activities of investors in such markets; enforcement of existing regulations has been extremely limited. Additionally, accounting, auditing and financial reporting and recordkeeping standards in emerging markets may not provide the same degree of investor protection or information to investors as would generally apply in more developed markets. The Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, which regulates auditors of U.S. public companies, may, from time to time, be unable to inspect audit work papers in certain foreign or emerging market countries.

Trading in the securities of emerging markets presents additional credit and financial risks. The Fund may have limited access to, or there may be a limited number of, potential counterparties that trade in the securities of emerging market issuers. Governmental regulations may restrict potential counterparties to certain financial institutions located or operating in the particular emerging market. Potential counterparties may not possess, adopt or implement creditworthiness standards, financial reporting standards or legal and contractual protections similar to those in developed markets. Currency hedging techniques may not be available or may be limited. The Fund may not be able to reduce or mitigate risks related to trading with emerging market counterparties.

The risk also exists that an emergency situation may arise in one or more emerging markets as a result of which trading of securities may cease or may be substantially curtailed and prices for the Fund's portfolio securities in such markets

may not be readily available. Section 22(e) of the 1940 Act permits a registered investment company to suspend redemption of its shares for any period during which an emergency exists, as determined by the SEC. Accordingly, if the Fund believes that appropriate circumstances warrant, it may apply to the SEC for a determination that an emergency exists within the meaning of Section 22(e) of the 1940 Act. During the period commencing from the Fund's identification of such conditions until the date of SEC action, the portfolio securities in the affected markets will be valued at fair value as determined by the Manager in accordance with the Fund's valuation policy.

Although it might be theoretically possible to hedge for anticipated income and gains, the ongoing and indeterminate nature of the risks associated with emerging market investing (and the costs associated with hedging transactions) makes it very difficult to hedge effectively against such risks.

Europe — Recent Events

A number of countries in Europe have experienced severe economic and financial difficulties. Many non-governmental issuers, and even certain governments, have defaulted on, or been forced to restructure, their debts; many other issuers have faced difficulties obtaining credit or refinancing existing obligations; financial institutions have in many cases required government or central bank support, have needed to raise capital, and/or have been impaired in their ability to extend credit; and financial markets in Europe and elsewhere have experienced extreme volatility and declines in asset values and liquidity. These difficulties may continue, worsen or spread within and outside of Europe. Responses to the financial problems by European governments, central banks and others, including austerity measures and reforms, may not work, may result in social unrest and may limit future growth and economic recovery or have other unintended consequences. Further defaults or restructurings by governments and others of their debt could have additional adverse effects on economies, financial markets and asset valuations around the world.

In addition, the United Kingdom left the European Union on January 31, 2020, commonly referred to as "Brexit." Following a transition period, the United Kingdom's post-Brexit trade agreement with the European Union passed into law in December 2020, was provisionally applied effective January 1, 2021, and formally entered into force on May 1, 2021. There is significant market uncertainty regarding Brexit's ramifications. The range and potential implications of possible political, regulatory, economic, and market outcomes cannot be fully known but could be significant, potentially resulting in increased volatility and illiquidity and lower economic growth for companies that rely significantly on Europe for their business activities and revenues. The United Kingdom has one of the largest economies in Europe and is a major trading partner with the European Union countries and the United States. Brexit may create additional and substantial economic stresses for the United Kingdom, including a contraction of the United Kingdom's economy, decreased trade, capital outflows, devaluation of the British pound, as well as a decrease in business and consumer spending and investment. The negative impact on not only the United Kingdom and other European economies but also the broader global economy could be significant. Moreover, other countries may seek to withdraw from the European Union and/or abandon the euro, the common currency of the European Union. A number of countries in Europe have suffered terror attacks, and additional attacks may occur in the future. Europe has also been struggling with mass migration from the Middle East and Africa.

The ultimate effects of these events and other socio-political or geopolitical issues are not known but could profoundly affect global economies and markets. Whether or not the Fund invests in securities of issuers located in Europe or with significant exposure to European issuers or countries, these events could negatively affect the value and liquidity of the Fund's investments.

Risks Related to Russia's Invasion of Ukraine

Russia's military invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 resulted in the United States, other countries and certain international organizations levying broad economic sanctions against Russia. These sanctions froze certain Russian assets and prohibited, among other things, trading in certain Russian securities and doing business with specific Russian corporate entities, large financial institutions, officials and oligarchs. The sanctions also included the removal of some Russian banks from the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications (SWIFT), the electronic network that connects banks globally, and imposed restrictive measures to prevent the Russian Central Bank from undermining the impact of the sanctions. The United States and other countries have also imposed economic sanctions on Belarus and may impose sanctions on other countries that support Russia's military invasion. A number of large corporations and U.S. states have also announced plans to divest interests or otherwise curtail business dealings with certain Russian businesses. These sanctions and any additional sanctions or other intergovernmental actions that may be undertaken against Russia or other countries that support Russia's military invasion in the

future may result in the devaluation of Russian or other affected currencies, a downgrade in the sanctioned country's credit rating, and a decline in the value and liquidity of Russian securities and securities of issuers in other countries that support the invasion. The potential for wider conflict may further decrease the value and liquidity of certain Russian securities and securities of issuers in other countries affected by the invasion. In addition, the ability to price, buy, sell, receive, or deliver such securities is also affected due to these measures. For example, the Fund may be prohibited from investing in securities issued by companies subject to such sanctions. In addition, the sanctions may require the Fund to freeze its existing investments in companies operating in or having dealings with Russia or other sanctioned countries, which would prevent the Fund from selling these investments. Any exposure that the Fund may have to Russian counterparties or counterparties in other sanctioned countries also could negatively impact the Fund's portfolio.

Additionally, Russia has taken retaliatory actions, including preventing repatriation of capital by U.S. and other investors. The ongoing conflict has resulted in significant market disruptions, including in certain markets, industries and sectors, such as the oil and natural gas markets, and has negatively affected global supply chains, food supplies, inflation and global growth. The extent and duration of Russia's military actions and the repercussions of such actions (including any sanctions, retaliatory actions and countermeasures, including cyber attacks) are impossible to predict. These and any related events could significantly impact the Fund's performance and the value of an investment in the Fund, even if the Fund does not have direct exposure to Russian issuers or issuers in other countries affected by the invasion.

Depository Receipts

Depository receipts demonstrate ownership of shares of a foreign issuer and are alternatives to directly purchasing the underlying foreign security. Depository receipts may be sponsored or unsponsored and include American Depository Receipts ("ADRs"), Global Depository Receipts ("GDRs"), European Depository Receipts ("EDRs") and non-voting depository receipts ("NVDRs"). ADRs in registered form are typically issued by a U.S. bank or trust company, traded in U.S. dollars, and are designed for use in the domestic market. GDRs, EDRs, NVDRs and other similar instruments may be issued by a U.S. or non-U.S. entity and may be traded in other currencies. GDRs are tradable both in the United States and Europe and are designed for use throughout the world. EDRs are issued in bearer form and are designed for use in European securities markets.

Depository receipts in general are subject to many of the risks associated with foreign investing (e.g., increased market, illiquidity, currency, political, information and other risks), and even where traded in U.S. dollars are subject to currency risk if the underlying security is traded in a foreign currency. Unsponsored depository receipts are issued without the participation of the issuer of the underlying foreign security and there may be less information available about such issuers than there is with respect to domestic companies and issuers of securities underlying sponsored depository receipts. Even if there is information available, there may not be a correlation between such information and the market value of the depository receipts.

High Yield ("Junk") Bonds

High yield securities are medium or lower rated securities and unrated securities of comparable quality, sometimes referred to as "high yield" or "junk" bonds. Generally, such securities offer a higher current yield than is offered by higher rated securities, but also are predominantly speculative with respect to the issuer's capacity to pay interest and repay principal in accordance with the terms of the securities. The market values of certain of these securities also tend to be more sensitive to individual corporate developments and changes in economic conditions than higher quality bonds. In addition, medium and lower rated securities and comparable unrated securities generally present a higher degree of credit risk. The risk of loss because of default by issuers of these securities is significantly greater because medium and lower rated securities generally are unsecured and frequently subordinated to senior indebtedness. In addition, the market value of securities in lower rated categories is generally more volatile than that of higher quality securities, and the markets in which medium and lower rated securities are traded are more limited than those in which higher rated securities are traded. The existence of limited markets may make it more difficult for the Fund to obtain accurate market quotations for purposes of valuing its securities and calculating its net asset value. Moreover, the lack of a liquid trading market may restrict the availability of securities for the Fund to purchase and may also limit the ability of the Fund to sell securities at their fair value either to meet redemption requests or to respond to changes in the economy or the financial markets.

Lower rated debt obligations often have redemption features that permit an issuer to repurchase the security from the Fund before it matures. If an issuer exercises that right, the Fund may have to replace the security with a lower yielding security, resulting in a decreased return for investors. If the Fund experiences unexpected net redemptions, it may be forced to sell its

higher rated bonds, resulting in a decline in the overall credit quality of the securities held by the Fund and increasing the exposure of the Fund to the risks of lower rated securities. Investments in lower rated zero coupon bonds may be more speculative and subject to greater fluctuations in value because of changes in interest rates than lower rated bonds that pay interest currently.

Subsequent to its purchase by the Fund, an issue of securities may cease to be rated or its rating may be reduced below the minimum required for purchase by the Fund (if applicable). Neither event will require sale of these securities by the Fund, but the portfolio manager will consider the event in determining whether the Fund should continue to hold the security.

Illiquid Investments and Restricted Securities

The Fund may invest up to 15% of its net assets in illiquid investments. An illiquid security is any security which the Fund reasonably expects cannot be sold or disposed of in current market conditions in seven calendar days or less without the sale or disposition significantly changing the market value of the security. To the extent required by applicable law and SEC guidance, the Fund will not acquire an illiquid security if such acquisition would cause the aggregate value of illiquid securities to exceed 15% of the Fund's net assets. If at any time the portfolio manager determines that the value of illiquid securities held by the Fund exceeds 15% of the Fund's net assets, the portfolio manager will take such steps as it considers appropriate to reduce the percentage within a reasonable period of time consistent with applicable regulatory requirements. Because illiquid investments may not be readily marketable, the Fund may not be able to dispose of them in a timely manner. As a result, the Fund may be forced to hold illiquid investments while their price depreciates. Depreciation in the price of illiquid investments may cause the net asset value of the Fund to decline.

Restricted securities are securities subject to legal or contractual restrictions on their resale, such as private placements. Such restrictions might prevent the sale of restricted securities at a time when the sale would otherwise be desirable. Under SEC regulations, certain restricted securities acquired through private placements can be traded freely among qualified purchasers. While restricted securities are generally presumed to be illiquid, it may be determined that a particular restricted security is liquid. Investing in these restricted securities could have the effect of increasing the Fund's illiquidity if qualified purchasers become, for a time, uninterested in buying these securities.

Restricted securities may be sold only (1) pursuant to SEC Rule 144A or another exemption, (2) in privately negotiated transactions or (3) in public offerings with respect to which a registration statement is in effect under the 1933 Act. Rule 144A securities, although not registered in the U.S., may be sold to qualified institutional buyers in accordance with Rule 144A under the 1933 Act. As noted above, the Fund may determine that some Rule 144A securities are liquid. Where registration is required, the Fund may be obligated to pay all or part of the registration expenses and a considerable period may elapse between the time of the decision to sell and the time the Fund may be permitted to sell a restricted security under an effective registration statement. If, during such a period, adverse market conditions were to develop, the Fund might obtain a less favorable price than prevailed when it decided to sell.

Illiquid securities may be difficult to value, and the Fund may have difficulty disposing of such securities promptly. The Fund does not consider non-U.S. securities to be restricted if they can be freely sold in the principal markets in which they are traded, even if they are not registered for sale in the U.S.

Liquidity Risk Management. Rule 22e-4 under the 1940 Act requires, among other things, that the Fund and other Franklin Templeton ETFs and open-end funds establish a liquidity risk management program ("LRMP") that is reasonably designed to assess and manage liquidity risk. Rule 22e-4 defines "liquidity risk" as the risk that a fund could not meet requests to redeem shares issued by the fund without significant dilution of the remaining investors' interests in the fund. The Fund has implemented a LRMP designed to meet the relevant requirements. Additionally, the Board, including a majority of the Independent Trustees, approved the designation of the Fund's LRMP administrator to administer such program and review no less frequently than annually a written report prepared by the LRMP administrator that addresses the operation of the LRMP and assesses its adequacy and effectiveness of implementation. There is no guarantee the LRMP will be effective in its operations, and complying with Rule 22e-4 or any amendment thereto, including bearing related costs, could impact the Fund's performance and its ability to achieve its investment objective.

Investments by Other Funds and by Other Significant Investors

Certain investment companies, including those that are affiliated with the Fund because they are managed by the Manager or an affiliate of the Manager, may invest in the Fund and may at times have substantial investments in one or more funds. Other investors also may at times have substantial investments in one or more funds.

From time to time, the Fund may experience relatively large redemptions or investments due to transactions in Fund shares by a fund or other significant investor. In addition, a large number of shareholders collectively may purchase or redeem Fund shares in large amounts rapidly or unexpectedly (collectively, such transactions are referred to as "large shareholder transactions"). The effects of these transactions could adversely affect the Fund's performance. In the event of such redemptions or investments, the Fund could be required to sell securities or to invest cash at a time when it is not advantageous to do so. Such transactions may increase brokerage and/or other transaction costs of the Fund. A large redemption could cause the Fund's expenses to increase and could result in the Fund becoming too small to be economically viable. Large redemptions of Fund shares may indirectly result in required distributions to non-redeeming shareholders, and those distributions would generally be taxable to shareholders who do not hold their Fund shares in an IRA, 401(k) plan or other tax-advantaged plan. Redemptions may result in the recognition of short-term capital gains by the Fund, and distributions of short-term capital gains will generally be taxed at ordinary income tax rates for shareholders who hold Fund shares in a taxable account. Redemptions may directly or indirectly result from actions taken (or not taken) by the Trust, the Manager, the Subadviser, a fund, or an affiliate. A number of circumstances may cause the Fund to experience large redemptions, such as changes in the eligibility criteria for the Fund or share class of the Fund; liquidations, reorganizations, repositionings, or other announced Fund events; or changes in investment objectives, strategies, policies, risks, or investment personnel.

The Manager and the Subadviser are subject to potential conflicts of interest in connection with investments in the Fund by an affiliated fund due to their affiliation. For example, the Manager or the Subadviser could have the incentive to permit an affiliated fund to become a more significant shareholder (with the potential to cause greater disruption) than would be permitted for an unaffiliated investor. Investments by an affiliated fund may also give rise to conflicts in connection with the voting of fund shares. The Manager, the Subadviser and/or its advisory affiliates intend to seek to address these potential conflicts of interest in the best interests of the Fund's shareholders, although there can be no assurance that such efforts will be successful. The Manager and the Subadviser will consider how to minimize potential adverse impacts of affiliated fund investments, and, may take such actions as each deems appropriate to address potential adverse impacts, including redemption of shares in-kind, rather than in cash.

Investments in Other Investment Companies

Subject to applicable statutory and regulatory limitations described below, the Fund may invest in shares of other investment companies, including shares of open-end and closed-end investment companies affiliated or unaffiliated with the Fund, business development companies, exchange-traded funds and unregistered investment companies.

An investment in an investment company is subject to the risks associated with that investment company's portfolio securities. Investments in closed-end funds may entail the additional risk that the market value of such investments may be substantially less than their net asset value. To the extent the Fund invests in shares of another investment company, the Fund will indirectly bear a proportionate share of that investment company's advisory fees and other operating expenses. These fees are in addition to the advisory fees and other operational expenses incurred directly by the Fund. In addition, the Fund could incur a sales charge in connection with purchasing an investment company security or a redemption fee upon the redemption of such security.

Section 12(d)(1)(A) of the 1940 Act provides that a fund may not purchase or otherwise acquire the securities of other investment companies if, as a result of such purchase or acquisition, it would own: (i) more than 3% of the total outstanding voting stock of the acquired investment company; (ii) securities issued by any one investment company having a value in excess of 5% of the fund's total assets; or (iii) securities issued by all investment companies having an aggregate value in excess of 10% of the fund's total assets. These limitations are subject to certain statutory and regulatory exemptions including Rule 12d1-4, which permits the Fund to invest in other investment companies beyond the statutory limits, subject to certain conditions. Among other conditions, the Rule prohibits a fund from acquiring control of another investment company (other than an investment company in the same group of investment companies), including by acquiring more than 25% of its voting securities. In addition, the Rule imposes certain voting requirements when a fund's ownership of another investment company exceeds particular thresholds. If shares of a fund are acquired by another investment company, the "acquired" fund may not purchase or

otherwise acquire the securities of an investment company or private fund if immediately after such purchase or acquisition, the securities of investment companies and private funds owned by that acquired fund have an aggregate value in excess of 10% of the value of the total assets of the acquired fund, subject to certain exceptions. These restrictions may limit the Fund's ability to invest in other investment companies to the extent desired. In addition, other unaffiliated investment companies may impose other investment limitations or redemption restrictions which may also limit the Fund's flexibility with respect to making investments in those unaffiliated investment companies.

Model Risk

Proprietary models that may be used to evaluate securities or securities markets are based on certain assumptions concerning the interplay of market factors and may not adequately take into account certain factors and may result in the Fund having a lower return than if the Fund were managed using another model or investment strategy. The markets or prices of individual securities may be affected by factors not foreseen in developing the models.

Money Market Instruments Generally

Money market instruments are short-term IOUs issued by banks or other non-governmental issuers, the U.S. or non-U.S. governments, or state or local governments. Money market instruments generally have maturity dates of 13 months or less, and may pay interest at fixed, floating or adjustable rates, or may be issued at a discount. Money market instruments may include certificates of deposit, bankers' acceptances, variable rate demand securities (where the interest rate is reset periodically and the holder may demand payment from the issuer or another obligor at any time), preferred shares, fixed-term obligations, commercial paper (short-term unsecured debt), asset-backed commercial paper, other mortgage-backed and asset-backed securities and repurchase agreements. Asset-backed commercial paper refers to a debt security with an original term to maturity of up to 270 days that may be backed by residential and commercial mortgage loans or mortgage-backed securities or other types of receivables. Payments due on asset-backed commercial paper are supported by cash flows from underlying assets, or one or more liquidity or credit support providers, or both.

Preferred Securities

There are two basic types of preferred securities: traditional and hybrid-preferred securities. Traditional preferred securities consist of preferred stock issued by an entity taxable as a corporation. Preferred stocks, which may offer fixed or floating rate dividends, are perpetual instruments and considered equity securities. Preferred stocks are subordinated to debt instruments in a company's capital structure, in terms of priority to corporate income and claim to corporate assets, and therefore will be subject to greater credit risk than debt instruments. Alternatively, hybrid-preferred securities may be issued by corporations, generally in the form of interest-bearing notes with preferred securities characteristics, or by an affiliated trust or partnership of the corporation, generally in the form of preferred interests in subordinated debentures or similarly structured securities. The hybrid-preferred securities market consists of both fixed and adjustable coupon rate securities that are either perpetual in nature or have stated maturity dates.

Traditional Preferred Securities. Traditional preferred securities pay fixed or floating dividends to investors and have "preference" over common stock in the payment of dividends and the liquidation of a company's assets. This means that a company must pay dividends on preferred stock before paying any dividends on its common stock. In order to be payable, distributions on such preferred securities must be declared by the issuer's board of directors. Income payments on preferred securities may be cumulative, causing dividends and distributions to accumulate even if not declared by the board of directors or otherwise made payable. In such a case, all accumulated dividends must be paid before any dividend on the common stock can be paid. However, many traditional preferred stocks are non-cumulative, in which case dividends do not accumulate and need not ever be paid. There is no assurance that dividends or distributions on the traditional preferred securities in which the Fund invests will be declared or otherwise made payable. Preferred securities may also contain provisions under which payments must be stopped (i.e., stoppage is compulsory, not discretionary). The conditions under which this occurs may relate to, for instance, capitalization levels. Hence, if a company incurs significant losses that deplete retained earnings automatic payment stoppage could occur. In some cases the terms of the preferred securities provide that the issuer would be obligated to attempt to issue common shares to raise funds for the purpose of making the preferred payments. However, there is no guarantee that the issuer would be successful in placing common shares.

Preferred stockholders usually have no right to vote for corporate directors or on other matters. Shares of traditional preferred securities have a liquidation preference that generally equals the original purchase price at the date of issuance. The market value of preferred securities may be affected by, among other factors, favorable and unfavorable changes impacting the issuer or industries in which they operate, movements in interest rates and inflation, and the broader economic and credit environments, and by actual and anticipated changes in tax laws, such as changes in corporate and individual income tax rates. Because the claim on an issuer's earnings represented by traditional preferred securities may become onerous when interest rates fall below the rate payable on such securities, the issuer may redeem the securities. Thus, in declining interest rate environments in particular, the Fund's holdings of higher rate-paying fixed rate preferred securities may be reduced, and the Fund may be unable to acquire securities of comparable credit quality paying comparable rates with the redemption proceeds.

Hybrid-Preferred Securities. Hybrid-preferred securities are typically junior and fully subordinated liabilities of an issuer or the beneficiary of a guarantee that is junior and fully subordinated to the other liabilities of the guarantor. In addition, hybrid-preferred securities typically permit an issuer to defer the payment of income for eighteen months or more without triggering an event of default. Generally, the maximum deferral period is five years. Because of their subordinated position in the capital structure of an issuer, the ability to defer payments for extended periods of time without default consequences to the issuer, and certain other features (such as restrictions on common dividend payments by the issuer or ultimate guarantor when full cumulative payments on the hybrid preferred securities have not been made), these hybrid-preferred securities are often treated as close substitutes for traditional preferred securities, both by issuers and investors. Hybrid-preferred securities have many of the key characteristics of equity due to their subordinated position in an issuer's capital structure and because their quality and value are heavily dependent on the profitability of the issuer rather than on any legal claims to specific assets or cash flows. Hybrid-preferred securities include, but are not limited to, trust preferred securities (TRUPS[®]); enhanced trust preferred securities (Enhanced TRUPS[®]); trust-originated preferred securities (TOPrS[®]); monthly-income preferred securities (MIPS[®]); quarterly-income bond securities (QUIBS[®]); quarterly-income debt securities (QUIDS[®]); quarterly-income preferred securities (QUIPSSM); corporate trust securities (CorTS[®]); public income notes (PINES[®]); and other hybrid-preferred securities. Hybrid-preferred securities are typically issued with a final maturity date. In certain instances, a final maturity date may be extended and/or the final payment of principal may be deferred at the issuer's option for a specified time without default. No redemption can typically take place unless all cumulative payment obligations have been met, although issuers may be able to engage in open-market repurchases without regard to whether all payments have been paid.

Many hybrid-preferred securities are issued by trusts or other special purpose entities established by operating companies and are not a direct obligation of an operating company. At the time the trust or special purpose entity sells such preferred securities to investors, it purchases debt of the operating company (with terms comparable to those of the trust or special purpose entity securities), and the operating company deducts for tax purposes the interest paid on the debt held by the trust or special purpose entity. The trust or special purpose entity is generally required to be treated as transparent for U.S. federal income tax purposes such that the holders of the trust preferred securities are treated as owning beneficial interests in the underlying debt of the operating company. Accordingly, payments on the hybrid-preferred securities are generally treated as interest rather than dividends for U.S. federal income tax purposes and, as such, are not eligible for the dividends-received deduction for corporate taxpayers or the reduced rates of tax that apply to qualified dividend income for non-corporate taxpayers. The trust or special purpose entity in turn is a holder of the operating company's debt and has priority with respect to the operating company's earnings and profits over the operating company's common stockholders, but is typically subordinated to other classes of the operating company's debt. Typically a preferred security has a credit rating that is lower than that of its corresponding operating company's senior debt securities.

Within the category of hybrid-preferred securities are senior debt instruments that trade in the broader preferred securities market. These debt instruments, which are sources of long-term capital for the issuers, have structural features similar to other preferred securities such as maturities ranging from 30 years to perpetuity, call features, quarterly payments, exchange listings and the inclusion of accrued interest in the trading price. Preferred securities may be subject to changes in regulations and there can be no assurance that the current regulatory treatment of preferred securities will continue.

Real Estate Investment Trusts ("REITs")

REITs are pooled investment vehicles which invest primarily in income producing real estate or real estate-related loans or interests. REITs are generally classified as equity REITs, mortgage REITs or a combination of equity and mortgage REITs. Equity REITs invest the majority of their assets directly in real property and derive income primarily from the collection of rents.

Equity REITs can also realize capital gains by selling properties that have appreciated in value. Mortgage REITs invest the majority of their assets in real estate mortgages and derive income from the collection of interest payments. REITs are not taxed on income distributed to shareholders provided they comply with the applicable requirements of the Code. Debt securities issued by REITs, for the most part, are general and unsecured obligations and are subject to risks associated with REITs. Like mutual funds, REITs have expenses, including advisory and administration fees paid by certain REITs and, as a result, the Fund is indirectly subject to those fees if the Fund invests in REITs.

Investing in REITs, or in real estate linked derivative instruments linked to the value of REITs, involves certain risks, including declines in the value of the underlying real estate, risks related to general and local economic conditions, possible lack of availability of mortgage funds, overbuilding, extended vacancies of properties, increased competition, increases in property taxes and operating expenses, changes in zoning laws, losses due to costs resulting from the clean-up of environmental problems, liability to third parties for damages resulting from environmental problems, casualty or condemnation losses, limitations on rents, changes in neighborhood values and in the appeal of properties to tenants. Equity REITs may also be subject to property and casualty risks as their insurance policies may not completely recover repair or replacement of assets damaged by fires, floods, earthquakes or other natural disasters. In addition, global climate change may have an adverse effect on property and security values. A rise in sea levels or an increase in flooding could cause certain properties to lose value or become unmarketable altogether. Losses related to climate change could adversely affect the value of REITs. REITs whose underlying assets are concentrated in properties used by a particular industry, such as healthcare, are also subject to industry-related risks. Certain "special purpose" REITs may invest their assets in specific real estate sectors, such as hotels, nursing homes or warehouses, and are therefore subject to the risks associated with adverse developments in any such sectors.

REITs (especially mortgage REITs) are subject to interest rate risks. When interest rates decline, the value of a REIT's investment in fixed income obligations can be expected to rise. Conversely, when interest rates rise, the value of a REIT's investment in fixed-rate obligations can be expected to decline. If the REIT invests in adjustable rate debt instruments the interest rates on which are reset periodically, yields on a REIT's investments in such loans will gradually align themselves to reflect changes in market interest rates. This causes the value of such investments to fluctuate less dramatically in response to interest rate fluctuations than would investments in fixed-rate obligations. However, REIT shares can be more volatile than, and perform differently from, larger company securities since REITs tend to be small- to medium-sized companies in relation to the equity markets as a whole. REITs may have limited financial resources, may trade less frequently and in a limited volume and may be subject to more abrupt or erratic price movements than larger company securities.

REITs are dependent upon the skills of their managers and are generally not diversified. REITs may be highly leveraged, and financial covenants may affect the ability of REITs to operate effectively. REITs are generally dependent upon maintaining cash flows to repay borrowings, to cover operating costs, and to make distributions to shareholders and are subject to the risk of default by lessees and borrowers. In the event of a default by a borrower or lessee, the REIT may experience delays in enforcing its rights as a mortgagee or lessor and may incur substantial costs associated with protecting its investments. If REITs are net sellers of assets or do not reinvest principal, they are also subject to self-liquidation. In addition, REITs could possibly fail to qualify for favorable tax treatment of net income and gains under the Code or to maintain their exemptions from registration as an investment company under the 1940 Act. In the event of any such failure to qualify as a REIT under the Code, the company would be subject to corporate level taxation, significantly reducing the return to the Fund on its investment in such company.

Redemption Risk

The Fund may experience periods of heavy redemptions that could cause the Fund to liquidate its assets at inopportune times or at a loss or depressed value, particularly during periods of declining or illiquid markets. Redemption risk is greater to the extent that the Fund has investors with large shareholdings, short investment horizons, or unpredictable cash flow needs. In addition, redemption risk is heightened during periods of overall market turmoil. The redemption by one or more large shareholders of their holdings in the Fund could hurt performance and/or cause the remaining shareholders in the Fund to lose money. The Fund's redemption risk is increased if one decision maker has control of fund shares owned by separate fund shareholders, including clients or affiliates of the Fund's Manager. If the Fund is forced to liquidate its assets under unfavorable conditions or at inopportune times, the value of your investment could decline.

Repurchase Agreements

Under the terms of a typical repurchase agreement, the Fund would acquire one or more underlying debt securities from a counterparty (typically a bank or a broker-dealer), subject to the counterparty's obligation to repurchase, and the Fund to resell, the securities at an agreed-upon time and price. The Fund may enter into repurchase agreements where the underlying collateral consists entirely of cash items and/or securities of the U.S. Government, its agencies, its instrumentalities, or U.S. Government sponsored enterprises. The Fund may also enter into repurchase agreements where the underlying collateral consists of other types of securities, including securities the Fund could not purchase directly. For such repurchase agreements, the underlying securities which serve as collateral may include, but are not limited to, U.S. government securities, municipal securities, corporate debt obligations, asset-backed securities (including collateralized mortgage obligations ("CMOs")), convertible securities and common and preferred stock and may be of below investment grade quality. The repurchase price is typically greater than the purchase price paid by the Fund, thereby determining the Fund's yield. A repurchase agreement is similar to, and may be treated as, a secured loan, where the Fund loans cash to the counterparty and the loan is secured by the underlying securities as collateral. All repurchase agreements entered into by the Fund are required to be collateralized so that at all times during the term of a repurchase agreement, the value of the underlying securities is at least equal to the amount of the repurchase price. Also, the Fund or its custodian is required to have control of the collateral, which the portfolio manager believes will give the Fund a valid, perfected security interest in the collateral.

Repurchase agreements could involve certain risks in the event of default or insolvency of the counterparty, including possible delays or restrictions upon the Fund's ability to dispose of the underlying securities, the risk of a possible decline in the value of the underlying securities during the period in which the Fund seeks to assert its right to them, the risk that there may be a limited market or no market for disposition of such underlying securities, the risk of incurring expenses associated with asserting those rights and the risk of losing all or part of the income from the agreement. The Fund will seek to mitigate these risks but there is no guarantee that such efforts will be successful. If the Fund enters into a repurchase agreement involving securities the Fund could not purchase directly, and the counterparty defaults, the Fund may become the holder of such securities. Repurchase agreements collateralized by securities other than U.S. government securities may be subject to greater risks and are more likely to have a term to maturity of longer than seven days. Repurchase agreements with a maturity of more than seven days are considered to be illiquid.

Repurchase agreements may be entered into or novated with a financial clearinghouse, which would become the Fund's counterparty. The Fund would then become subject to the rules of the clearinghouse, which may limit the Fund's rights and remedies (including recourse to collateral) or delay or restrict the rights and remedies, and expose the Fund to the risks of the clearinghouses' insolvency.

Pursuant to an exemptive order issued by the SEC, the Fund, along with other affiliated entities managed by the Manager, may transfer uninvested cash balances into one or more joint accounts for the purpose of entering into repurchase agreements secured by cash and U.S. government securities, subject to certain conditions.

Reverse Repurchase Agreements

The Fund may enter into reverse repurchase agreements. A reverse repurchase agreement has the characteristics of a secured borrowing by the Fund and creates leverage in the Fund's portfolio. In a reverse repurchase transaction, the Fund sells a portfolio instrument to another person, such as a financial institution or broker-dealer, in return for cash. At the same time, the Fund agrees to repurchase the instrument at an agreed-upon time and at a price that is greater than the amount of cash that the Fund received when it sold the instrument, representing the equivalent of an interest payment by the Fund for the use of the cash. During the term of the transaction, the Fund will continue to receive any principal and interest payments (or the equivalent thereof) on the underlying instruments.

The Fund may engage in reverse repurchase agreements as a means of raising cash to satisfy redemption requests or for other temporary or emergency purposes. Unless otherwise limited in the Fund's Prospectus or this SAI, the Fund may also engage in reverse repurchase agreements to the extent permitted by its fundamental investment policies in order to raise additional cash to be invested by the Fund's portfolio manager in other securities or instruments in an effort to increase the Fund's investment returns.

During the term of the transaction, the Fund will remain at risk for any fluctuations in the market value of the instruments subject to the reverse repurchase agreement as if it had not entered into the transaction. When the Fund reinvests

the proceeds of a reverse repurchase agreement in other securities, the Fund will also be at risk for any fluctuations in the market value of the securities in which the proceeds are invested. Like other forms of leverage, this makes the value of an investment in the Fund more volatile and increases the Fund's overall investment exposure. In addition, if the Fund's return on its investment of the proceeds of the reverse repurchase agreement does not equal or exceed the implied interest that it is obligated to pay under the reverse repurchase agreement, engaging in the transaction will lower the Fund's return.

When the Fund enters into a reverse repurchase agreement, it is subject to the risk that the buyer under the agreement may file for bankruptcy, become insolvent or otherwise default on its obligations to the Fund. In the event of a default by the counterparty, there may be delays, costs and risks of loss involved in the Fund's exercising its rights under the agreement, or those rights may be limited by other contractual agreements or obligations or by applicable law.

In addition, the Fund may be unable to sell the instruments subject to the reverse repurchase agreement at a time when it would be advantageous to do so, or may be required to liquidate portfolio securities at a time when it would be disadvantageous to do so in order to make payments with respect to its obligations under a reverse repurchase agreement. This could adversely affect the Fund's strategy and result in lower fund returns.

The Fund will treat reverse repurchase agreements and similar financing transactions either (i) consistently with Section 18 of the 1940 Act by maintaining asset coverage of at least 300% of the value of such transactions or (ii) as derivatives transactions for purposes of Rule 18f-4, including, as applicable, the value-at-risk based limit on leverage risk.

Securities Lending

The Fund may lend its portfolio securities, provided that cash or equivalent collateral, equal to at least 100% of the market value of such securities, is continuously maintained by the other party with the Fund. During the pendency of the transaction, the other party will pay the Fund an amount equivalent to any dividends or interest paid on such securities, and the Fund may invest the cash collateral and earn additional income, or it may receive an agreed upon amount of interest income from the other party who has delivered equivalent collateral. These transactions are subject to termination at the option of the Fund or the other party. The Fund may pay administrative and custodial fees in connection with these transactions and may pay a negotiated portion of the interest earned on the cash or equivalent collateral to the other party or placing agent or broker. Although voting rights or rights to consent with respect to the relevant securities generally pass to the other party, the Fund will make arrangements to vote or consent with respect to a material event affecting such securities. The risks in lending portfolio securities include possible delays in recovering or the failure to recover the securities and possible loss of rights in the collateral should the borrower fail financially. The Fund runs the risk that the counterparty to a loan transaction will default on its obligation and that the value of the collateral received may decline before the Fund can dispose of it. If the Fund receives cash as collateral and invests that cash, the Fund is subject to the risk that the collateral will decline in value before the Fund must return it to the counterparty. Subject to the foregoing, loans of fund securities are effectively borrowings by the Fund and have economic characteristics similar to reverse repurchase agreements. The Fund does not currently intend to engage in securities lending, although it may engage in transactions (such as reverse repurchase agreements) which have similar characteristics.

Short Sales

Short sales are transactions in which the Fund sells a security it does not own in anticipation of a decline in the market value of the security, also known as "naked" short sales. To make delivery to the buyer, the Fund must borrow the security. The Fund is then obligated to replace the borrowed security by purchasing the same security at market price at the time of replacement. The price at such time may be more or less than the price at which the security was sold by the Fund. The lender of the security is entitled to retain the proceeds from the short sale and/or other collateral until the Fund replaces the borrowed security. Until the security is replaced, the Fund is required to pay to the lender the amount of any dividends or interest paid on shares sold short. To borrow the security, the Fund also may be required to pay a premium, which would increase the cost of the security sold.

The Fund will realize a gain if the price of a security declines between the date of the short sale and the date on which the Fund purchases a security to replace the borrowed security. On the other hand, the Fund will incur a loss if the price of the security increases between those dates. The amount of any gain will be decreased and the amount of any loss increased by any premium or interest that the Fund may be required to pay the lender. There is also a risk that a borrowed security will need to be returned to the lender on short notice. If the request for the return of a security occurs at a time when other short sellers of the security are receiving similar requests, a "short squeeze" can occur, meaning that the Fund might be compelled, at the most

disadvantageous time, to replace the borrowed security with a security purchased on the open market, possibly at prices significantly in excess of the proceeds received earlier.

Short selling is a technique that may be considered speculative and involves risks beyond the initial capital necessary to secure each transaction. It should be noted that possible losses from short sales differ from those losses that could arise from a cash investment in a security because losses from a short sale may be limitless, while the losses from a cash investment in a security cannot exceed the total amount of the investment in the security.

Short Sales Against the Box. The Fund may also make short sales "against the box," meaning that at all times when a short position is open, the Fund owns an equal amount of such securities or owns securities convertible into or exchangeable, without payment of further consideration, for securities of the same issues as, and in an amount equal to, the securities sold short. Short sales "against the box" result in a "constructive sale" and may require the Fund to recognize any gain unless an exception to the constructive sale rule applies.

Small and Mid Cap Companies

Investments in securities of companies with small and medium market capitalizations may offer greater opportunity for appreciation than larger companies, but involve special risks. The securities of those companies may be subject to more abrupt fluctuations in market price and may be more sensitive to economic conditions than larger, more established companies. Small and mid cap company stock prices may, to a degree, fluctuate independently of larger company stock prices, i.e., small and mid cap company stocks may decline in price as the prices of large company stocks rise or vice versa.

Small and mid cap companies may have newer or limited product lines, limited markets or financial resources, or they may be dependent upon a limited or inexperienced management group. In addition, securities of these companies are subject to the risk that, during certain periods, the liquidity of particular issuers or industries will shrink or disappear with little forewarning as a result of adverse economic or market conditions, or adverse investor perceptions, whether or not accurate. Securities of small and mid cap companies may not be widely traded and it may be difficult for the Fund to dispose of such securities, or receive an advantageous price.

Small and mid cap companies may require substantial additional capital to support their operations, to finance expansion or to maintain their competitive position; and may have substantial borrowings or may otherwise have a weak financial condition, and may be susceptible to bankruptcy. Transaction costs for these investments are often higher than those of larger capitalization companies. There is typically less publicly available information about small cap companies.

Some small and mid cap companies also may be relatively new issuers, which carries risks in addition to the risks of other small and mid cap companies. New issuers may be more speculative because such companies are relatively unseasoned. These companies will often be involved in the development or marketing of a new product with no established market, which could lead to significant losses.

Temporary Defensive Investing

The Fund may depart from its principal investment strategies in response to adverse market, economic or political conditions by taking temporary defensive positions, including by investing in any type of investment grade, government, corporate and money market instruments and short-term debt securities or holding cash without regard to any percentage limitations. If a significant amount of the Fund's assets is used for defensive investing purposes, the Fund will be less likely to achieve its investment objective. Although the portfolio manager has the ability to take defensive positions, they may choose not to do so for a variety of reasons, even during volatile market conditions.

Trade Policy

The U.S. government has indicated its intent to alter its approach to international trade policy and, in some cases, to renegotiate or potentially terminate certain existing bilateral or multilateral trade agreements and treaties with foreign countries and has made proposals and taken actions related thereto. In addition, the U.S. government has recently imposed tariffs on certain foreign goods and has indicated a willingness to impose tariffs on imports of other products. Some foreign governments have instituted retaliatory tariffs on certain U.S. goods and have indicated a willingness to impose additional tariffs on U.S. products. Other countries have threatened retaliatory tariffs on certain U.S. products.

Global trade disruption, significant introductions of trade barriers, and bilateral trade frictions, together with any future downturns in the global economy resulting therefrom, could adversely affect the financial performance of the Fund and its investments. Trade policy may be an ongoing source of instability, potentially resulting in significant currency fluctuations and/or having other adverse effects on international markets, international trade agreements, and/or other existing cross-border cooperation arrangements (whether economic, tax, fiscal, legal, regulatory, or otherwise). To the extent trade disputes escalate globally, there could be additional significant impacts on the sectors or industries in which the Fund invests and other adverse impacts on the Fund's overall performance.

Warrants and Rights

Warrants are instruments that give the holder the right to purchase equity securities at a specific price valid for a specified time period. Warrants are typically issued with preferred stock or bonds but can often be traded separately from the securities with which they were initially sold. Warrants may be purchased with values that vary depending on the change in value of one or more specified indexes ("index warrants"). Index warrants are generally issued by banks or other financial institutions and give the holder the right, at any time during the term of the warrant, to receive upon exercise of the warrant a cash payment from the issuer based on the value of the underlying index. Rights are similar to warrants but typically have a shorter duration than warrants and are issued directly by an issuer to existing stockholders and provide those holders the right to purchase additional shares of stock at a later date.

Warrants and rights may be considered speculative in that they have no voting rights, pay no dividends, and have no rights with respect to the assets of the issuer. The prices of warrants and rights do not necessarily move with the prices of the underlying securities. If the market price of the underlying security does not exceed the exercise price of the warrant or right plus the cost thereof before the expiration date, the Fund could sustain losses despite advantageous changes in the market price of the underlying security. Warrants and rights not exercised before their expiration date cease to have value.

Low Exercise Price Call Warrants. Low exercise price call warrants, sometimes also referred to as equity-linked participation certificates, are used to gain exposure to stocks in difficult to access local markets. These warrants typically have a strike price set where the value of the warrants will be identical to the price of the underlying stock. The value of these warrants fluctuates in line with the value of the underlying stock price and therefore, the risk and return profile of the warrants is very similar to owning the underlying securities, but the Fund may also be exposed to the risk of the counterparty that issued the warrant. These warrants have no voting rights. Dividends issued to the warrant issuer by the underlying issuer will be distributed to the warrant holders, net of any taxes or commissions imposed by the local jurisdiction in respect of the receipt of such amount. In addition, these warrants are not exchangeable into the ordinary shares of the underlying stock. These warrants are typically sold in private placement transactions and may be classified as derivative instruments.

When-Issued Securities and Forward Commitments

Securities may be purchased on a "when-issued" or "to be announced" or "forward delivery" basis. The payment obligation and the interest rate that will be received on the "when-issued" securities are fixed at the time the buyer enters into the commitment although settlement, i.e., delivery of and payment for the securities, takes place at a later date. In a "to be announced" transaction, the Fund commits to purchase securities for which all specific information is not known at the time of the trade.

Securities purchased on a "when-issued" or "forward delivery" basis are subject to changes in value based upon the market's perception of the creditworthiness of the issuer and changes, real or anticipated, in the level of interest rates. The value of these securities experiences appreciation when interest rates decline and depreciation when interest rates rise. Purchasing securities on a "when-issued" or "forward delivery" basis can involve a risk that the yields available in the market on the settlement date may actually be higher or lower than those obtained in the transaction itself.

An increase in the percentage of the Fund's assets committed to the purchase of securities on a "when-issued" basis may increase the volatility of its net asset value.

MANAGEMENT

Trustees and Officers

The business and affairs of the Fund are conducted by management under the supervision and subject to the direction of its Board. The business address of each Trustee (including each Independent Trustee) is c/o Jane Trust, Franklin Templeton, 100 International Drive, 11th Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. The tables below provide information about each of the Trustees and officers of the Trust.

Independent Trustees[#]:

Name and Year of Birth	Position(s) with Trust	Term of Office* and Year Service Began**	Principal Occupation(s) During the Past Five Years	Number of Funds in the Franklin Templeton Fund Complex Overseen by Trustee***	Other Board Memberships Held by Trustee During the Past Five Years
Andrew L. Breech Born 1952	Trustee	Since 1991	President, Dealer Operating Control Service, Inc. (automotive retail management) (since 1985)	48	None
Stephen R. Gross Born 1947	Trustee	Since 1986	Chairman Emeritus (since 2011) and formerly, Chairman, HLB Gross Collins, P.C. (accounting and consulting firm) (1979 to 2011); Principal, Gross Consulting Group, LLC (since 2011); CEO, Gross Capital Partners, LLC (since 2014); Chief Financial Officer, Hegemon Holdings LLC (insurance) (since 2019); formerly, CEO, Trusted CFO Solutions, LLC (2011 to 2024)	48	None
Susan M. Heilbron Born 1945	Trustee	Since 1991	Retired; formerly, President, Lacey & Heilbron (communications consulting) (1990 to 2002); General Counsel and Executive Vice President, The Trump Organization (1986 to 1990); Senior Vice President, New York State Urban Development Corporation (1984 to 1986); Associate, Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP (1980 to 1984 and 1977 to 1979)	48	None
Arnold L. Lehman Born 1944	Trustee	Since 1982	Consultant; formerly, Senior Advisor, Phillips (auction house) (2015 to 2023); Fellow Ford Foundation (2015 to 2016); Director of the Brooklyn Museum (1997 to 2015)	48	Trustee of American Federation of Arts (since 2002)
Robin J.W. Masters Born 1955	Trustee	Since 2002	Retired; formerly, Chief Investment Officer of ACE Limited (insurance) (1986 to 2000)	48	Director of HSBC Corporate Money Funds Limited, HSBC Managed Portfolios Limited and HSBC Specialist Funds Limited (since 2020); formerly, Director of Cheyne Capital International Limited (investment advisory firm) (2005 to 2020)

G. Peter O'Brien Born 1945	Trustee and Chair of the Board	Since 1999 (Chair of the Board since 2024)	Retired; Trustee Emeritus of Colgate University (since 2005); Board Member, Hill House, Inc. (residential home care) (since 1999); formerly, Board Member, Bridges School (pre-school) (2006 to 2017); Managing Director, Equity Capital Markets Group of Merrill Lynch & Co. (1971 to 1999)	48	Formerly, Director and Trustee of the Royce Family of Funds (15 funds) (2001 to 2025); Director of TICC Capital Corp. (2003 to 2017)
Thomas F. Schlafly Born 1948	Trustee	Since 1983	Chairman, The Saint Louis Brewery, LLC (brewery) (since 2012); formerly, President, The Saint Louis Brewery, Inc. (1989 to 2012); Senior Counsel (since 2017) and formerly, Partner (2009 to 2016), Thompson Coburn LLP (law firm)	48	Director, CNB St. Louis Bank (since 2020); formerly, Director, Citizens National Bank of Greater St. Louis (2006 to 2020)

Interested Trustee and Officer:

Name and Year of Birth	Position(s) with Trust	Term of Office* and Year Service Began**	Principal Occupation(s) During the Past Five Years	Number of Funds in the Franklin Templeton Fund Complex Overseen by Trustee***	Other Board Memberships Held by Trustee During the Past Five Years
Jane Trust, CFA† Born 1962	Trustee, President and Chief Executive Officer	Since 2015	Senior Vice President, Fund Board Management, Franklin Templeton (since 2020); Officer and/or Trustee/Director of 118 funds associated with FTFA or its affiliates (since 2015); President and Chief Executive Officer of FTFA (since 2015); formerly, Senior Managing Director (2018 to 2020) and Managing Director (2016 to 2018) of Legg Mason & Co., LLC ("Legg Mason & Co."); Senior Vice President of FTFA (2015)	Trustee/Director of Franklin Templeton funds consisting of 118 portfolios; Trustee of Putnam Family of Funds consisting of 99 portfolios	None

Trustees who are not "interested persons" of the Trust within the meaning of Section 2(a)(19) of the 1940 Act.

* Each Trustee serves until his or her respective successor has been duly elected and qualified or until his or her earlier death, resignation, retirement or removal.

** Indicates the earliest year in which the Trustee became a board member for a fund in the Franklin Templeton fund complex.

*** Information is for the calendar year ended December 31, 2025, except as otherwise noted.

† Ms. Trust is an "interested person" of the Trust, as defined in the 1940 Act, because of her position with FTFA and/or certain of its affiliates.

Additional Officers:

Name, Year of Birth and Address	Position(s) with Trust	Term of Office* and Year Service Began**	Principal Occupation(s) During the Past Five Years
Ted P. Becker Born 1951 Franklin Templeton One Madison Avenue New York, NY 10010	Chief Compliance Officer	Since 2007	Vice President, Global Compliance of Franklin Templeton (since 2020); Chief Compliance Officer of FTFA (since 2006); Chief Compliance Officer of certain funds associated with Legg Mason & Co. or its affiliates (since 2006); formerly, Director of Global Compliance at Legg Mason (2006 to 2020); Managing Director of Compliance of Legg Mason & Co. (2005 to 2020)
Christopher Berarducci Born 1974 Franklin Templeton One Madison Avenue New York, NY 10010	Treasurer and Principal Financial Officer	Since 2014 and 2019	Vice President, Fund Administration and Reporting, Franklin Templeton (since 2020), Treasurer (since 2010) and Principal Financial Officer (since 2019) of certain funds associated with Legg Mason & Co. or its affiliates; formerly, Managing Director (2020), Director (2015 to 2020), and Vice President (2011 to 2015) of Legg Mason & Co.
Marc A. De Oliveira Born 1971 Franklin Templeton 100 First Stamford Place 6th Floor Stamford, CT 06902	Secretary and Chief Legal Officer	Since 2020	Associate General Counsel of Franklin Templeton (since 2020); Secretary and Chief Legal Officer (since 2020) and Assistant Secretary of certain funds in the Franklin Templeton fund complex (since 2006); formerly, Managing Director (2016 to 2020) and Associate General Counsel of Legg Mason & Co. (2005 to 2020)
Jeanne Kelly Born 1951 Franklin Templeton One Madison Avenue New York, NY 10010	Senior Vice President	Since 2007	U.S. Fund Board Team Manager, Franklin Templeton (since 2020); Senior Vice President of certain funds associated with Legg Mason & Co. or its affiliates (since 2007); Senior Vice President of FTFA (since 2006); President and Chief Executive Officer of LM Asset Services, LLC ("LMAS") and Legg Mason Fund Asset Management, Inc. ("LMFAM") (formerly registered investment advisers) (since 2015); formerly, Managing Director of Legg Mason & Co. (2005 to 2020), and Senior Vice President of LMFAM (2013 to 2015)
Susan Kerr Born 1949 Franklin Templeton One Madison Avenue New York, NY 10010	Chief Anti-Money Laundering Compliance Officer	Since 2013	Senior Compliance Analyst, Franklin Templeton (since 2020); Chief Anti-Money Laundering Compliance Officer of certain funds associated with Legg Mason & Co. or its affiliates (since 2013) and Anti-Money Laundering Compliance Officer (since 2012), Senior Compliance Officer (since 2011) and Assistant Vice President (since 2010) of the Distributor; formerly, Assistant Vice President of Legg Mason & Co. (2010 to 2020)
Thomas C. Mandia Born 1962 Franklin Templeton 100 First Stamford Place 6th Floor Stamford, CT 06902	Senior Vice President	Since 2020	Senior Associate General Counsel to Franklin Templeton (since 2020); Senior Vice President (since 2020) and Assistant Secretary of certain funds in the Franklin Templeton fund complex (since 2006); Secretary of FTFA (since 2006); Secretary of LMAS (since 2002) and LMFAM (formerly registered investment advisers) (since 2013); formerly, Managing Director and Deputy General Counsel of Legg Mason & Co. (2005 to 2020)

* Each officer serves until his or her respective successor has been duly elected and qualified or until his or her earlier death, resignation, retirement or removal.

** Indicates the earliest year in which the officer took such office.

Qualifications of Trustees, Board Leadership Structure and Oversight and Standing Committees

The Independent Trustees were selected to join the Board based upon the following as to each Trustee: character and integrity; service as a board member of predecessor funds and/or other Franklin Templeton (previously, Legg Mason) funds; willingness to serve and willingness and ability to commit the time necessary to perform the duties of a Trustee; such person's skills, experience, judgment, analytical ability, intelligence, and common sense; their current or previous profit and non-profit board membership; such person's considerable familiarity with the special regulatory requirements governing regulated investment companies and the special responsibilities of investment company trustees; and the Trustee's status as not being an "interested person" of the Fund, as defined in the 1940 Act. Ms. Trust was selected to join the Board based upon her investment management and risk oversight experience as an executive and portfolio manager and leadership roles with Franklin Templeton and affiliated entities. The Board also considered her character and integrity, her willingness to serve and willingness and ability to commit the time necessary to perform the duties of a Trustee, her skills, experience, judgment, analytical ability, intelligence, and common sense, her considerable familiarity with the special regulatory requirements governing regulated investment companies and the special responsibilities of investment company trustees, and her status as a representative of Franklin Templeton. Ms. Trust is an interested person of the Fund. Mr. O'Brien serves as Chair of the Board and is an Independent Trustee. Independent Trustees constitute more than 75% of the Board.

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 attributes and skills. The Board believes that the Trustees' ability to review critically, evaluate, question and discuss information provided to them, to interact effectively with the Manager, the Subadviser(s), other service providers, counsel and the independent registered public accounting firm, and to exercise effective business judgment in the performance of their duties support this conclusion. In addition, the following specific experience, qualifications, attributes and/or skills apply to each Trustee.

Each Trustee has served as a board member of the Fund and/or other Franklin Templeton funds for at least ten years. Mr. Breech has substantial experience as the chief executive of a private corporation. Mr. Gross has a substantial accounting background and experience as an officer, trustee and board member of various organizations. Ms. Heilbron has substantial legal background and experience, business and consulting experience, and experience as a board member of public companies. Dr. Lehman has experience as chief executive officer of major museums and other entities involved in the arts, has previously served as a lead independent trustee and board chair for certain Franklin Templeton funds and has experience as a founding director of certain Franklin Templeton funds. Ms. Masters has investment management experience as chief investment officer, as a director of an investment advisory firm and from her service on the boards of other investment companies. Mr. O'Brien has experience at senior levels of a large financial services company and has experience from his service on the boards of academic institutions and a residential home care company. Mr. Schlafly has substantial experience practicing law and also serves as the non-executive Chairman of a private corporation and as director of a bank. Ms. Trust has been the Chief Executive Officer of the Trust and other funds in the fund complex since 2015 and has investment management and risk oversight experience as an executive and portfolio manager and in leadership roles with Franklin Templeton (and before that, Legg Mason) and affiliated entities. References to the experience, qualifications, attributes and skills of Trustees are pursuant to requirements of the Securities and Exchange Commission, do not constitute holding out of the Board or any Trustee as having any special expertise, and shall not impose any greater responsibility or liability on any such person or on the Board.

The Board has five standing committees: the Audit Committee, the Contract Committee, the Performance Committee, the Governance Committee, and the Compensation and Nominating Committee (which is a sub-committee of the Governance Committee). Each Committee is chaired by an Independent Trustee. The Audit Committee and the Governance Committee are each composed of all of the Independent Trustees. The Contract Committee and the Performance Committee are each composed of four Independent Trustees. The Compensation and Nominating Committee is composed of three Independent Trustees. Where deemed appropriate, the Board may constitute ad hoc committees.

The Chair of the Board and the chairs of the Audit and Performance Committees work with the Chief Executive Officer of the Trust to set the agendas for Board and committee meetings. The Chair of the Board also serves as a key point person for interaction between management and the other Independent Trustees. Through the committees the Independent Trustees consider and address important matters involving the Fund, including those presenting conflicts or potential conflicts of interest for management. 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 Fund has effective and independent governance and oversight. The Board also has determined that its leadership structure, in which the Chair of the

Board is not affiliated with Franklin Templeton, is appropriate. The Board also believes that its leadership structure facilitates the orderly and efficient flow of information between the Independent Trustees and management, including the Fund's Subadviser.

The Audit Committee oversees the scope of the Fund's audit, the Fund's accounting and financial reporting policies and practices and its internal controls. The Audit Committee assists the Board in fulfilling its responsibility for oversight of the integrity of the Fund's accounting, auditing and financial reporting practices, the qualifications and independence of the Fund's independent registered public accounting firm and the Fund's compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. The Audit Committee approves, and recommends to the Board for ratification, the selection, appointment, retention or termination of the Fund's independent registered public accounting firm and approves the compensation of the independent registered public accounting firm. The Audit Committee also approves all audit and permissible non-audit services provided to the Fund by the independent registered public accounting firm and all permissible non-audit services provided by the Fund's independent registered public accounting firm to the Manager and any affiliated service providers if the engagement relates directly to the Fund's operations and financial reporting.

The Contract Committee is charged with assisting the Board in requesting and evaluating such information from the Manager and the Subadviser as may reasonably be necessary to evaluate the terms of the Fund's investment management agreement, subadvisory arrangements and distribution arrangements.

The Performance Committee is charged with assisting the Board in carrying out its oversight responsibilities over the Fund and fund management with respect to investment management, objectives, strategies, policies and procedures, performance and performance benchmarks, and the applicable risk management process.

The Governance Committee is charged with overseeing Board governance and related Trustee practices, including selecting and nominating persons for election or appointment by the Board as Trustees of the Trust. The Governance Committee has formed the Compensation and Nominating Committee, the function of which is to recommend to the Board the appropriate compensation for serving as a Trustee on the Board. In addition, the Compensation and Nominating Committee is responsible for, among other things, selecting and recommending candidates to fill vacancies on the Board. The Committee may consider nominees recommended by a shareholder. In evaluating potential nominees, including any nominees recommended by shareholders, the Committee takes into consideration various factors, including, among any others it may deem relevant, character and integrity, business and professional experience, and whether the committee believes the person has the ability to apply sound and independent business judgment and would act in the interest of the Fund and its shareholders. Shareholders who wish to recommend a nominee should send recommendations to the Trust's Secretary that include all information relating to such person that is required to be disclosed in solicitations of proxies for the election of Trustees. A recommendation must be accompanied by a written consent of the individual to stand for election if nominated by the Board and to serve if elected by the shareholders.

Service providers to the Fund, primarily the Fund's Manager, the Subadviser and, as appropriate, their affiliates, have responsibility for the day-to-day management of the Fund, which includes responsibility for risk management. As an integral part of its responsibility for oversight of the Fund, the Board oversees risk management of the Fund's investment program and business affairs. Oversight of the risk management process is part of the Board's general oversight of the Fund and its service providers. The Board has emphasized to the Fund's Manager and the Subadviser the importance of maintaining vigorous risk management. The Board exercises oversight of the risk management process primarily through the Audit Committee and the Performance Committee, and through oversight by the Board itself.

The Fund is subject to a number of risks, including investment risk, counterparty risk, valuation risk, reputational risk, cybersecurity risk, risk of operational failure or lack of business continuity, and legal, compliance and regulatory risk. Risk management seeks to identify and address risks, i.e., events or circumstances that could have material adverse effects on the business, operations, shareholder services, investment performance or reputation of the Fund. The Fund's Manager and the Subadviser, the affiliates of the Manager and the Subadviser, or various service providers to the Fund employ a variety of processes, procedures and controls to identify various of those 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 Fund's and the Manager's Chief Compliance Officer and the Manager's chief risk officer, as well as personnel of the Subadviser and other service providers, such as the Fund's independent registered public accounting firm, make periodic reports to the Audit Committee, the Performance Committee 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 Board recognizes that not all risks that may affect the Fund 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 Fund's goals, and that the processes, procedures and controls employed to address certain risks may be limited in their effectiveness. Moreover, reports received by the Trustees as to risk management matters are typically summaries of the relevant information. As a result of the foregoing and other factors, the Board's risk management oversight is subject to inherent limitations.

During the fiscal year ended October 31, 2025, the Board met 5 times, the Audit Committee met 4 times, the Governance Committee met 4 times, the Performance Committee met 4 times, the Compensation and Nominating Committee met 1 time, and the Contract Committee met 3 times.

Trustee Ownership of Securities

The following tables show the dollar range of equity securities owned by the Trustees in the Fund and other investment companies in the Franklin Templeton fund complex overseen by the Trustees as of December 31, 2025.

Name of Trustee	Dollar Range of Equity Securities in the Fund (\$)	Aggregate Dollar Range of Equity Securities in All Registered Investment Companies in Franklin Templeton Fund Complex Overseen by Trustee (\$)
Independent Trustees:		
Andrew L. Breech	None	Over 100,000
Stephen R. Gross	None	Over 100,000
Susan M. Heilbron	None	Over 100,000
Arnold L. Lehman	None	Over 100,000
Robin J.W. Masters	None	Over 100,000
G. Peter O'Brien	None	Over 100,000
Thomas F. Schlafly	None	Over 100,000
Interested Trustee:		
Jane Trust	None	Over 100,000

As of December 31, 2025, none of the Independent Trustees or their immediate family members owned beneficially or of record any securities of the Manager, the Subadviser, or the Distributor of the Fund, or of a person (other than a registered investment company) directly or indirectly controlling, controlled by or under common control with the Manager, the Subadviser, or the Distributor of the Fund.

For serving as a Trustee of the Trust, each Independent Trustee receives an annual retainer plus fees for attending each regularly scheduled meeting and special Board meeting they attend in person or by telephone. Each Independent Trustee is also reimbursed for all out-of-pocket expenses relating to attendance at such meetings. Those Independent Trustees who serve in leadership positions of the Board or Board committees, and members of the Contract Committee, the Performance Committee, and the Compensation and Nominating Committee, receive additional compensation. The Board reviews the level of Trustee compensation periodically and Trustee compensation may change from time to time. Ms. Trust, an "interested person" of the Trust, as defined in the 1940 Act, does not receive compensation from the Fund for her service as Trustee. The Fund pays its pro rata share of the fees and expenses of the Trustees based upon asset size.

Officers of the Trust receive no compensation from the Fund, although they may be reimbursed for reasonable out-of-pocket travel expenses for attending Board meetings.

Trustee Compensation

Information regarding compensation paid to the Trustees is shown below.

Name of Trustee	Aggregate Compensation from the Fund*(\$)	Total Pension or Retirement Benefits Paid as Part of Fund Expenses* (\$)	Total Compensation from Franklin Templeton Fund Complex Paid to Trustee** (\$)
Independent Trustees:			
Andrew L. Breech	2,839	None	504,000
Stephen R. Gross	2,899	None	514,500
Susan M. Heilbron	2,771	None	492,000
Arnold L. Lehman	2,742	None	487,000
Robin J.W. Masters	2,771	None	492,000
Ken Miller***	2,771	None	492,000
G. Peter O'Brien	3,140	None	780,500
Thomas F. Schlafly	2,742	None	487,000
Interested Trustee:			
Jane Trust†	None	None	None

* Information is for the fiscal year ended October 31, 2025.

** Information is for the calendar year ended December 31, 2025.

*** Mr. Miller retired from the Board effective December 31, 2025.

† Ms. Trust is not compensated by the Trust for her services as a Trustee because of her affiliations with the Manager.

INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT AND SERVICE PROVIDER INFORMATION

Manager

The Manager, a limited liability company organized under the laws of the State of Delaware, serves as investment manager to the Fund and provides administrative and certain oversight services to the Fund, pursuant to an investment management agreement (the "Management Agreement"). The Manager has offices at One Madison Avenue, New York, New York, 10010 and also serves as the investment manager of other Franklin Templeton funds. The Manager is an indirect, wholly-owned subsidiary of Franklin Resources, a Delaware corporation. Franklin Resources, whose principal executive offices are at One Franklin Parkway, San Mateo, California 94403, is a global investment management organization operating, together with its subsidiaries, as Franklin Templeton.

The Manager has agreed, under the Management Agreement, subject to the supervision of the Board, to provide the Fund with investment research, advice, management and supervision, furnish a continuous investment program for the Fund's portfolio of securities and other investments consistent with the Fund's investment objectives, policies and restrictions, and place orders pursuant to its investment determinations. The Manager is permitted to enter into contracts with subadvisers or subadministrators, subject to the Board's approval. The Manager has entered into subadvisory agreements, as described below.

As compensation for services performed, facilities furnished and expenses assumed by the Manager, the Fund pays the Manager a fee computed daily at an annual rate of the Fund's average daily net assets as described below. The Manager also performs administrative and management services as reasonably requested by the Fund necessary for the operation of the Fund, such as (i) supervising the overall administration of the Fund, including negotiation of contracts and fees with, and monitoring of performance and billings of, the Fund's transfer agent, shareholder servicing agents, custodian and other independent

contractors or agents; (ii) providing certain compliance, fund accounting, regulatory reporting and tax reporting services; (iii) preparing or participating in the preparation of Board materials, registration statements, proxy statements and reports and other communications to shareholders; (iv) maintaining the Fund's existence; and (v) maintaining the registration or qualification of the Fund's shares under federal and state laws.

The Management Agreement will continue in effect for its initial term and thereafter from year to year, provided continuance is specifically approved at least annually (a) by the Board or by a 1940 Act Vote, and (b) in either event, by a majority of the Independent Trustees casting votes in accordance with applicable law.

The Management Agreement provides that the Manager may render services to others. The Management Agreement is terminable without penalty by the Board or by vote of a majority of the outstanding voting securities of the Fund on not more than 60 days' nor less than 30 days' written notice to the Manager, or by the Manager on not less than 90 days' written notice to the Fund as applicable, and will automatically terminate in the event of its assignment (as defined in the 1940 Act) by the Manager. No Management Agreement is assignable by the Trust except with the consent of the Manager.

The Management Agreement provides that the Manager, its affiliates performing services contemplated by the Management Agreement, and the partners, shareholders, directors, officers and employees of the Manager and such affiliates, will not be liable for any error of judgment or mistake of law, for any loss arising out of any investment, or for any act or omission in the execution of securities transactions for the Fund, but the Manager is not protected against any liability to the Fund to which the Manager would be subject by reason of willful misfeasance, bad faith or gross negligence in the performance of its duties or by reason of its reckless disregard of its obligations and duties under the Management Agreement.

For its services under the Fund's Management Agreement, the Manager receives an investment management fee that is calculated daily and payable monthly at an annual rate according to the following schedule:

<u>Average Daily Net Assets</u>	<u>Investment Management Fee Rate (% of Average Daily Net Assets)</u>
First \$1 billion	0.750
Next \$1 billion	0.700
Next \$3 billion	0.650
Next \$5 billion	0.600
Over \$10 billion	0.550

The table below sets forth the management fees paid by the Fund to the Manager (waived/reimbursed amounts are in parentheses), with respect to the fiscal periods indicated:

<u>For the Fiscal Period Ended October 31,</u>	<u>Gross Management Fees (\$)</u>	<u>Management Fees Waived/Expenses Reimbursed (\$)</u>	<u>Net Management Fees (After Waivers/Expense Reimbursements) (\$)</u>
2025	3,390,980	(13,948)	3,377,032
2024	2,254,310	(26,825)	2,227,485
2023	1,588,298	(113,094)	1,475,204

Any expense limitation arrangements in place during the Fund's past three fiscal periods can be found in the Fund's Prospectus in effect (as amended or supplemented from time to time) for such year.

Subadviser

Franklin Advisers, Inc. serves as the subadviser to the Fund (the "Subadviser") pursuant to a subadvisory agreement between the Manager and the Subadviser (the "Subadvisory Agreement"). The Subadviser, with offices at One Franklin Parkway, San Mateo, CA 94403-1906, is a corporation formed under the laws of the State of California. The Subadviser provides asset management services to numerous other investment companies and accounts. The Subadviser is a direct, wholly-owned subsidiary of Franklin Resources.

As compensation for its services, the Manager pays to the Subadviser a fee equal to 70% of the management fee paid to the Manager by the Fund, net of any waivers and expense reimbursements.

Western Asset Management Company, LLC, organized under the laws of the State of California ("Western Asset" and together with the Subadviser, the "Subadviser"), manages the portion of the Fund's cash and short-term instruments allocated to it pursuant to a separate subadvisory agreement between the Manager and Western Asset (the "Western Asset Agreement" and together with the Subadvisory Agreement, the "Subadvisory Agreement"). Western Asset, established in 1971, has offices at 385 East Colorado Boulevard, Pasadena, California 91101 and One Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10010. Western Asset acts as investment adviser to institutional accounts, such as corporate pension plans, mutual funds and endowment funds. Western Asset is an indirect, wholly-owned subsidiary of Franklin Resources. Under the Western Asset Agreement, Western Asset is responsible, subject to the general supervision of the Manager and the Board, for the management of the portion of the Fund's cash and short term instruments allocated to it. For Western Asset's services to the Fund, the Manager, not the Fund, pays Western Asset 0.02% of the portion of the Fund's average daily net assets that are allocated to Western Asset by the Manager, net of expense waivers and reimbursements.

Under the Subadvisory Agreement, subject to the supervision of the Board and the Manager, the Subadviser regularly provides with respect to the portion of the Fund's assets allocated to it by the Manager, investment research, advice, management and supervision; furnishes a continuous investment program for the allocated assets consistent with the Fund's investment objectives, policies and restrictions; and places orders pursuant to its investment determinations. The Subadviser may delegate to companies that the Subadviser controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with, certain of the Subadviser's duties under a Subadvisory Agreement, subject to the Subadviser's supervision, provided the Subadviser will not be relieved of its duties or obligations under the Subadvisory Agreement as a result of any delegation.

The Subadvisory Agreement will continue in effect for its initial term and thereafter from year to year provided such continuance is specifically approved at least annually (a) by the Board or by a majority of the outstanding voting securities of the Fund (as defined in the 1940 Act), and (b) in either event, by a majority of the Independent Trustees casting votes in accordance with applicable law. The Board or a majority of the outstanding voting securities of the Fund (as defined in the 1940 Act) may terminate the Subadvisory Agreement without penalty, in each case on not more than 60 days' nor less than 30 days' written notice to the Subadviser. The Subadviser may terminate the respective Subadvisory Agreement, on 90 days' written notice to the Fund and the Manager. The Subadvisory Agreement may be terminated upon the mutual written consent of the Manager and the Subadviser. The Subadvisory Agreement will terminate automatically in the event of assignment (as defined in the 1940 Act) by the applicable Subadviser, and shall not be assignable by the Manager without the consent of the Subadviser.

The Subadvisory Agreement provides that the Subadviser, its affiliates performing services contemplated by the Subadvisory Agreement, and the partners, shareholders, directors, officers and employees of the Subadviser and such affiliates will not be liable for any error of judgment or mistake of law, for any loss arising out of any investment, or for any act or omission in the execution of securities transactions for the Fund, but the Subadviser is not protected against any liability to the Fund or the Manager to which the Subadviser would be subject by reason of willful misfeasance, bad faith or gross negligence in the performance of its duties or by reason of its reckless disregard of its obligations and duties under the Subadvisory Agreement.

Expenses

In addition to amounts payable under the Management Agreement and the 12b-1 Plan (as discussed in this SAI), the Fund is responsible for its own expenses, including, among other things: interest; taxes; governmental fees; voluntary assessments and other expenses incurred in connection with membership in investment company organizations; organizational costs of the Fund; costs (including interest, brokerage commissions, transaction fees or charges or acquired fund fees and expenses, if any) in connection with the purchase or sale of the Fund's securities and other investments and any losses in connection therewith; fees and expenses of custodians, transfer agents, registrars, independent pricing vendors or other agents;

legal expenses; loan commitment fees; expenses relating to the issuance and redemption or repurchase of the Fund's shares and servicing shareholder accounts; expenses of registering and qualifying the Fund's shares for sale under applicable federal and state law; expenses of preparing, setting in print, printing and distributing prospectuses and statements of additional information and any supplements thereto, reports, proxy statements, notices and dividends to the Fund's shareholders; costs of stationery; website costs; costs of meetings of the Board or any committee thereof, meetings of shareholders and other meetings of the Fund; Board fees; audit fees; travel expenses of officers, Trustees and employees of the Fund, if any; the Fund's pro rata portion of premiums on any fidelity bond and other insurance covering the Fund and its officers, Trustees and employees; and litigation expenses and any non-recurring or extraordinary expenses as may arise, including, without limitation, those relating to actions, suits or proceedings to which the Fund is a party and any legal obligation which the Fund may have to indemnify the Fund's Trustees and officers with respect thereto.

Management may agree to implement an expense cap, waive fees and/or reimburse operating expenses for one or more classes of shares. Any such expense caps, waived fees and/or reimbursed expenses are described in the Fund's Prospectus. The expense caps, waived fees and/or reimbursed expenses do not cover extraordinary expenses, such as (a) any expenses or charges related to litigation, derivative actions, demands related to litigation, regulatory or other government investigations and proceedings, "for cause" regulatory inspections and indemnification or advancement of related expenses or costs, to the extent any such expenses are considered extraordinary expenses for the purposes of fee disclosure in Form N-1A as the same may be amended from time to time; (b) transaction costs (such as brokerage commissions and dealer and underwriter spreads) and taxes; (c) other extraordinary expenses as determined for the purposes of fee disclosure in Form N-1A, as the same may be amended from time to time; and (d) any other exclusions enumerated in the Fund's particular expense cap. Without limiting the foregoing, extraordinary expenses are generally those that are unusual or expected to recur only infrequently, and may include such expenses, by way of illustration, as (i) expenses of the reorganization, restructuring, redomiciling or merger of the Fund or class or the acquisition of all or substantially all of the assets of another fund or class; (ii) expenses of holding, and soliciting proxies for, a meeting of shareholders of the Fund or class (except to the extent relating to routine items such as the election of Trustees or the approval of the independent registered public accounting firm); and (iii) expenses of converting to a new custodian, transfer agent or other service provider, in each case to the extent any such expenses are considered extraordinary expenses for the purposes of fee disclosure in Form N-1A as the same may be amended from time to time. In order to implement an expense limitation, the Manager will, as necessary, waive management fees or reimburse operating expenses. However, the Manager is permitted to recapture amounts waived or reimbursed to a class during the same fiscal year if the class' total annual fund operating expenses have fallen to a level below the class' expense limitation shown in the Fund's Prospectus. In no case will the Manager recapture any amount that would result, on any particular business day of the Fund, in the class' total annual fund operating expenses exceeding such expense limitation or any other lower limit then in effect. These arrangements may be reduced or terminated under certain circumstances.

Portfolio Managers

Other Accounts Managed by the Portfolio Managers

The table below identifies the portfolio managers, the number of accounts (other than the Fund) for which the portfolio managers have day-to-day management responsibilities and the total assets in such accounts, within each of the following categories: registered investment companies, other pooled investment vehicles, and other accounts. For each category, the number of accounts and total assets in the accounts where fees are based on performance are also indicated, as applicable. Unless noted otherwise, all information is provided as of October 31, 2025.

Portfolio Managers	Type of Account	Number of Accounts Managed	Total Assets Managed (Billions) (\$)	Number of Accounts Managed for which Advisory Fee is Performance-Based	Assets Managed for which Advisory Fee is Performance-Based (Billions) (\$)
Sundaram Chettiappan	Registered Investment Companies	12	7.07	None	None
	Other Pooled Investment Vehicles	13	4.00	None	None
	Other Accounts	6	2.30	1	0.56
Christopher Floyd	Registered Investment Companies	17	12.7	None	None
	Other Pooled Investment Vehicles	18	4.21	None	None
	Other Accounts	9	2.40	1	0.56
Brett E. Risser	Registered Investment Companies	7	4.62	None	None
	Other Pooled Investment Vehicles	6	1.70	None	None
	Other Accounts	4	1.40	None	None

Portfolio Managers Securities Ownership

The table below identifies ownership of equity securities of the Fund by the portfolio managers responsible for the day-to-day management of the Fund as of October 31, 2025.

Portfolio Managers	Dollar Range of Ownership of Securities (\$)
Sundaram Chettiappan	None
Christopher Floyd	None
Brett E. Risser	None

Potential Conflicts of Interest

In this subsection and the next subsection titled "Portfolio Manager Compensation Structure," "Subadviser" refers to Franklin Advisers, Inc.

Portfolio managers that provide investment services to the Fund may also provide services to a variety of other investment products, including other funds, institutional accounts and private accounts. The advisory fees for some of such other products and accounts may be different than that charged to the Fund and may include performance based compensation. This may result in fees that are higher (or lower) than the advisory fees paid by the Fund. As a matter of policy, each fund or account is managed solely for the benefit of the beneficial owners thereof. As discussed below, the separation of the trading execution function from the portfolio management function and the application of objectively based trade allocation procedures help to mitigate potential conflicts of interest that may arise as a result of the portfolio managers managing accounts with different advisory fees.

Conflicts. The management of multiple funds, including the Fund, and accounts may also give rise to potential conflicts of interest if the funds and other accounts have different objectives, benchmarks, time horizons, and fees as the portfolio manager must allocate his or her time and investment ideas across multiple funds and accounts. The Subadviser seeks to manage such competing interests for the time and attention of portfolio managers by having portfolio managers focus on a particular investment discipline. Most other accounts managed by a portfolio manager are managed using the same investment strategies that are used in connection with the management of the Fund. Accordingly, portfolio holdings, position sizes, and industry and sector exposures tend to be similar across similar portfolios, which may minimize the potential for conflicts of interest. As noted above, the separate management of the trade execution and valuation functions from the portfolio management process also helps to reduce potential conflicts of interest. However, securities selected for funds or accounts other than the Fund may outperform the securities selected for the Fund. Moreover, if a portfolio manager identifies a limited investment opportunity that may be suitable for more than one fund or other account, the Fund may not be able to take full advantage of that opportunity due to an allocation of that opportunity across all eligible funds and other accounts. The Subadviser seeks to manage such potential conflicts by using procedures intended to provide a fair allocation of buy and sell opportunities among funds and other accounts.

The structure of a portfolio manager's compensation may give rise to potential conflicts of interest. A portfolio manager's base pay and bonus tend to increase with additional and more complex responsibilities that include increased assets under management. As such, there may be an indirect relationship between a portfolio manager's marketing or sales efforts and his or her bonus.

Finally, the management of personal accounts by a portfolio manager may give rise to potential conflicts of interest. While the Fund and the Subadviser have adopted a code of ethics which they believe contains provisions designed to prevent a wide range of prohibited activities by portfolio managers and others with respect to their personal trading activities, there can be no assurance that the code of ethics addresses all individual conduct that could result in conflicts of interest.

The Subadviser and the Fund have adopted certain compliance procedures that are designed to address these, and other, types of conflicts. However, there is no guarantee that such procedures will detect each and every situation where a conflict arises.

Portfolio Manager Compensation Structure

The Subadviser seeks to maintain a compensation program that is competitively positioned to attract, retain and motivate top-quality investment professionals. Portfolio managers receive a base salary, a cash incentive bonus opportunity, an equity compensation opportunity, and a benefits package. Portfolio manager compensation is reviewed annually, and the level of compensation is based on individual performance, the salary range for a portfolio manager's level of responsibility and Franklin Templeton guidelines. Portfolio managers are provided no financial incentive to favor one fund or account over another. Each portfolio manager's compensation consists of the following three elements:

Base salary. Each portfolio manager is paid a base salary.

Annual bonus. Annual bonuses are structured to align the interests of the portfolio manager with those of the Fund's shareholders. Each portfolio manager is eligible to receive an annual bonus. Bonuses generally are split between cash (50% to 65%) and restricted shares of Franklin Resources stock (17.5% to 25%) and mutual fund shares (17.5% to 25%). The deferred equity-based compensation is intended to build a vested interest of the portfolio manager in the financial performance of both Franklin Resources and mutual funds advised by the Subadviser. The bonus plan is intended to provide a competitive level of annual bonus compensation that is tied to the portfolio manager achieving consistently strong investment performance, which aligns the financial incentives of the portfolio manager and Fund shareholders. The Chief Investment Officer of the Subadviser and/or other officers of the Subadviser, with responsibility for the Fund, have discretion in the granting of annual bonuses to portfolio managers in accordance with Franklin Templeton guidelines. The following factors are generally used in determining bonuses under the plan:

- *Investment performance.* Primary consideration is given to the historic investment performance over the 1, 3 and 5 preceding years of all accounts managed by the portfolio manager. The pre-tax performance of each fund managed is measured relative to a relevant peer group and/or applicable benchmark as appropriate.
- *Non-investment performance.* The more qualitative contributions of the portfolio manager to the Subadviser's business and the Subadviser's team, including professional knowledge, productivity, responsiveness to client needs and communication, are evaluated in determining the amount of any bonus award.
- *Responsibilities.* The characteristics and complexity of funds managed by the portfolio manager are factored in the Subadviser's appraisal.

Additional long-term equity-based compensation. Portfolio managers may also be awarded restricted shares or units of Franklin Resources stock or restricted shares or units of one or more mutual funds. Awards of such deferred equity-based compensation typically vest over time, so as to create incentives to retain key talent.

Benefits. Portfolio managers also participate in benefit plans and programs available generally to all employees of the Subadviser.

Custodian and Transfer Agent

The Fund has entered into an agreement with The Bank of New York Mellon ("BNY Mellon"), 240 Greenwich Street, New York, New York 10286, to serve as custodian of the Fund. BNY Mellon, among other things, maintains a custody account or accounts in the name of the Fund, receives and delivers all assets for the Fund upon purchase and upon sale or maturity, collects and receives all income and other payments and distributions on account of the assets of the Fund and makes disbursements on behalf of the Fund. BNY Mellon neither determines the Fund's investment policies nor decides which securities the Fund will buy or sell. For its services, BNY Mellon receives a monthly fee based upon the daily average market value of securities held in custody and also receives securities transaction charges, including out-of-pocket expenses. The Fund may also periodically enter into arrangements with other qualified custodians with respect to certain types of securities or other transactions such as repurchase agreements or derivatives transactions. BNY Mellon may also act as the Fund's securities lending agent and in that case would receive a share of the income generated by such activities.

Franklin Templeton Investor Services, LLC ("Investor Services") is the Fund's shareholder servicing agent and acts as the Fund's transfer agent and dividend-paying agent. Investor Services is located at 3344 Quality Drive, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-7313. Please send all correspondences relating to the Fund to Investor Services at P.O. Box 33030, St. Petersburg, FL 33733-8030.

Investor Services receives a fee for servicing Fund shareholder accounts. The Fund also will reimburse Investor Services for certain out-of-pocket expenses necessarily incurred in servicing the shareholder accounts in accordance with the terms of its servicing contract with the Fund.

In addition, Investor Services may make payments (or cause payments to be made) to financial intermediaries that provide administrative services to defined benefit plans. Investor Services does not seek reimbursement by the Fund for such payments.

For all classes of shares of the Fund, except for Class IS shares, Investor Services may also pay servicing fees, that will be reimbursed by the Fund, in varying amounts to certain financial institutions (to help offset their costs associated with client account maintenance support, statement preparation and transaction processing) that (i) maintain omnibus accounts with the Fund in the institution's name on behalf of numerous beneficial owners of Fund shares who are either direct clients of the institution or are participants in an IRS-recognized tax-advantaged savings plan (including Employer Sponsored Retirement Plans and Section 529 Plans) for which the institution, or its affiliate, provides participant level recordkeeping services (called "Beneficial Owners"); or (ii) provide support for Fund shareholder accounts by sharing account data with Investor Services through the National Securities Clearing Corporation (NSCC) networking system. In addition to servicing fees received from the Fund, these financial institutions also may charge a fee for their services directly to their clients. Investor Services will also receive a fee from the Fund (other than for Class IS shares) for services provided in support of Beneficial Owners and NSCC networking system accounts.

Fund Counsel

Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP, located at One Federal Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02110, serves as legal counsel to the Trust and the Fund.

Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, 100 East Pratt Street, Suite 2600, Baltimore, Maryland 21202, serves as the Fund's independent registered public accounting firm.

PORTFOLIO TRANSACTIONS AND BROKERAGE

Portfolio Transactions

Pursuant to the Subadvisory Agreement and subject to the general supervision of the Board and in accordance with the Fund's investment objectives and strategies, the Subadviser is responsible for the execution of the Fund's portfolio transactions with respect to assets allocated to the Subadviser. The Subadviser is authorized to place orders pursuant to its investment determinations for the Fund either directly with the issuer or with any broker or dealer, foreign currency dealer, futures commission merchant or others selected by it.

In certain instances, there may be securities that are suitable as an investment for the Fund as well as for one or more of the other clients of the Subadviser. Investment decisions for the Fund and for the Subadviser's other clients are made with a view to achieving their respective investment objectives. It may develop that a particular security is bought or sold for only one client even though it might be held by, or bought or sold for, other clients. Likewise, a particular security may be bought for one or more clients when one or more clients are selling the same security. Some simultaneous transactions are inevitable when several clients receive investment advice from the same investment adviser, particularly when the same security is suitable for the investment objectives of more than one client. When two or more clients are simultaneously engaged in the purchase or sale of the same security, the securities are allocated among clients in a manner believed to be equitable to each. It is recognized that in some cases this system could adversely affect the price of or the size of the position obtainable in a security for the Fund. When purchases or sales of the same security for the Fund and for other portfolios managed by the Subadviser occur contemporaneously, the purchase or sale orders may be aggregated in order to obtain any price advantages available to large volume purchases or sales.

Transactions on stock exchanges and other agency transactions involve the payment of negotiated brokerage commissions by the Fund. Transactions in foreign securities often involve the payment of brokerage commissions that may be higher than those in the United States. Fixed income securities are generally traded on a net basis (i.e., without a commission)

through dealers acting as principal for their own account and not as brokers. This means that a dealer makes a market for securities by offering to buy at one price and selling the security at a slightly higher price. The difference between the prices is known as a "spread." Other portfolio transactions may be executed through brokers acting as agents and the Fund will pay a spread or commission in connection with such transactions. The cost of securities purchased from underwriters includes an underwriting commission, concession or a net price. The Fund may also purchase securities directly from the issuer. The aggregate brokerage commissions paid by the Fund for the three most recent fiscal years or periods, as applicable, are set forth below under "Aggregate Brokerage Commissions Paid."

Brokerage and Research Services

The general policy of the Subadviser in selecting brokers and dealers is to obtain the best results achievable in the context of a number of factors which are considered both in relation to individual trades and broader trading patterns. The Fund may not always pay the lowest commission or spread available. Rather, in placing orders on behalf of the Fund, the Subadviser also takes into account other factors bearing on the overall quality of execution, such as size of the order, difficulty of execution, the reliability of the broker/dealer, the competitiveness of the price and the commission, the research services received and whether the broker/dealer commits its own capital.

In connection with the selection of such brokers or dealers and the placing of such orders, subject to applicable law, brokers or dealers may be selected who also provide brokerage and research services (as those terms are defined in Section 28(e) of the 1934 Act) to the Fund and/or the other accounts over which the Subadviser or its affiliates exercise investment discretion. The Subadviser is authorized to pay a broker or dealer that provides such brokerage and research services a commission for executing a portfolio transaction for the Fund which is in excess of the amount of commission another broker or dealer would have charged for effecting that transaction if the Subadviser determines in good faith that such amount of commission is reasonable in relation to the value of the brokerage and research services provided by such broker or dealer. Investment research services include information and analysis on particular companies and industries as well as market or economic trends and portfolio strategy, market quotations for portfolio evaluations, analytical software and similar products and services. If a research service also assists the Subadviser in a non-research capacity (such as bookkeeping or other administrative functions), then only the percentage or component that provides assistance to the Subadviser in the investment decision making process may be paid in commission dollars. This determination may be viewed in terms of either that particular transaction or the overall responsibilities that the Subadviser and its affiliates have with respect to accounts over which they exercise investment discretion. The Subadviser may also have arrangements with brokers pursuant to which such brokers provide research services to the Subadviser in exchange for a certain volume of brokerage transactions to be executed by such brokers. While the payment of higher commissions increases the Fund's costs, the Subadviser does not believe that the receipt of such brokerage and research services significantly reduces its expenses as Subadviser. Arrangements for the receipt of research services from brokers (so-called "soft dollar" arrangements) may create conflicts of interest. Although the Subadviser is authorized to use soft dollar arrangements in order to obtain research services, it is not required to do so, and the Subadviser may not be able or may choose not to use soft dollar arrangements because of regulatory restrictions, operational considerations or for other reasons.

Research services furnished to the Subadviser by brokers that effect securities transactions for the Fund may be used by the Subadviser in servicing other investment companies and accounts which the Subadviser manages. Similarly, research services furnished to the Subadviser by brokers that effect securities transactions for other investment companies and accounts which the Subadviser manages may be used by the Subadviser in servicing the Fund. Not all of these research services are used by the Subadviser in managing any particular account, including the Fund.

Firms that provide research and brokerage services to the Subadviser may also promote the sale of the Fund or other pooled investment vehicles advised by the Subadviser, and the Subadviser and/or its affiliates may separately compensate them for doing so. Such brokerage business is placed on the basis of brokerage and research services provided by the firm and is not based on any sales of the Fund or other pooled investment vehicles advised by the Subadviser.

The Fund contemplates that, consistent with the policy of obtaining the best net results, brokerage transactions may be conducted through "affiliated broker/dealers," as defined in the 1940 Act. The Fund's Board has adopted procedures in accordance with Rule 17e-1 under the 1940 Act to ensure that all brokerage commissions paid to such affiliates are reasonable and fair in the context of the market in which such affiliates operate. For the three most recent fiscal periods (as applicable), the Fund did not pay any brokerage commission to its affiliates.

Aggregate Brokerage Commissions Paid

The table below shows the aggregate brokerage commissions paid by the Fund during the periods indicated.

<u>For the Fiscal Period Ended October 31,</u>	<u>Aggregate Brokerage Commissions Paid (\$)</u>
2025	97,900
2024*	78,192
2023	22,995

* The increase in aggregate brokerage commissions paid between the fiscal periods ended October 31, 2023 and October 31, 2024 was due to an increase in assets under management and a change to the Fund's brokerage commission fees.

The table below shows the amount of transactions (if any) for the most recent fiscal period that were directed to firms that provided research services and the commissions paid on such transactions.

<u>Total Amount of Brokerage Transactions Related to Research Services (\$)</u>	<u>Total Commissions Paid on Transactions Related to Research Services (\$)</u>
301,138,707	58,622

Securities of Regular Broker/Dealers

As of October 31, 2025, the value of the Fund's holdings of the securities of its regular broker/dealers (as defined in Rule 10b-1 under the 1940 Act) were as follows:

<u>Broker/Dealer</u>	<u>Type of Security Owned D=Debt E=Equity</u>	<u>Market Value (000's) (\$)</u>
JP Morgan Securities LLC	E	4,330
Citigroup Global Markets Inc.	E	2,027
BNP Paribas Securities Corp.	E	1,366

Portfolio Turnover

For reporting purposes, the Fund's portfolio turnover rate is calculated by dividing the lesser of purchases or sales of portfolio securities for the fiscal year by the monthly average of the value of the portfolio securities owned by the Fund during the fiscal year. In determining such portfolio turnover, all securities whose maturities at the time of acquisition were one year or less are excluded. A 100% portfolio turnover rate would occur, for example, if all of the securities in the Fund's investment portfolio (other than short-term money market securities) were replaced once during the fiscal year.

In the event that portfolio turnover increases, this increase necessarily results in correspondingly greater transaction costs which must be paid by the Fund. To the extent the portfolio trading results in recognition of net short-term capital gains, shareholders that hold their shares in a taxable account will generally be taxed on distributions of such gains at ordinary tax rates.

Portfolio turnover will not be a limiting factor should the Subadviser deem it advisable to purchase or sell securities.

<u>For the Fiscal Period Ended 2025 (%)</u>	<u>For the Fiscal Period Ended 2024 (%)</u>
31	29

SHARE OWNERSHIP

Principal Shareholders

As of January 31, 2026, to the knowledge of the Trust, the following shareholders owned of record or beneficially 5% or more of the outstanding shares of the classes of the Fund as set forth below:

Class	Name and Address	Percent of Class (%)
1	BNY MELLON INVESTMENT SERVICING (US) INC FBO PRIMERICA FINANCIAL SERVICES 760 MOORE RD KING OF PRUSSIA PA 19406-1212	100.00
A	BNY MELLON INVESTMENT SERVICING (US) INC FBO PRIMERICA FINANCIAL SERVICES 760 MOORE RD KING OF PRUSSIA PA 19406-1212	45.27
A	PERSHING LLC 1 PERSHING PLZ JERSEY CITY NJ 07399-0001	6.42
A	NATIONAL FINANCIAL SERVICES LLC FOR THE EXCLUSIVE BENEFIT OF OUR CUSTOMERS ATTN MUTUAL FUNDS DEPARTMENT 4TH FL 499 WASHINGTON BLVD JERSEY CITY NJ 07310	5.22
A	VOYA INSTITUTIONAL TRUST COMPANY 1 ORANGE WAY WINDSOR CT 06095-4773	5.09
C	AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INVESTMENT SVC 707 2ND AVE S MINNEAPOLIS MN 55402-2405	21.93
C	RAYMOND JAMES OMNIBUS FOR MUTUAL FUNDS 880 CARILLON PKWY ST PETERSBURG FL 33716-1100	16.60
C	LPL FINANCIAL OMNIBUS CUSTOMER ACCOUNT 4707 EXECUTIVE DRIVE SAN DIEGO CA 92121	11.13

Class	Name and Address	Percent of Class (%)
C	PERSHING LLC 1 PERSHING PLZ JERSEY CITY NJ 07399-0001	10.82
C	NATIONAL FINANCIAL SERVICES LLC FOR THE EXCLUSIVE BENEFIT OF OUR CUSTOMERS ATTN MUTUAL FUNDS DEPARTMENT 4TH FL 499 WASHINGTON BLVD JERSEY CITY NJ 07310	5.53
I	LPL FINANCIAL OMNIBUS CUSTOMER ACCOUNT 4707 EXECUTIVE DRIVE SAN DIEGO CA 92121	25.89
I	CHARLES SCHWAB & CO INC SPECIAL CUSTODY ACCT FBO CUSTOMERS ATTN MUTUAL FUNDS 211 MAIN STREET SAN FRANCISCO CA 94105-1905	17.84
I	NATIONAL FINANCIAL SERVICES CORP FBO EXCLUSIVE BENEFIT OF OUR CUST ATTN MUTUAL FUNDS DEPT 4TH FLOOR 499 WASHINGTON BLVD JERSEY CITY NJ 07310-2010	11.52
I	AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INVESTMENT SVC 707 2ND AVE S MINNEAPOLIS MN 55402-2405	10.86
I	CHARLES SCHWAB & CO INC SPECIAL CUSTODY ACCT FBO CUSTOMERS ATTN MUTUAL FUNDS 211 MAIN STREET SAN FRANCISCO CA 94105-1905	8.51
I	RBC CAPITAL MARKETS, LLC MUTUAL FUND OMNIBUS PROCESSING OMNIBUS ATT MUTL FD OPS MANAGER 250 NICOLLET MALL STE 1400 MINNEAPOLIS MN 55401-1931	7.67
I	UBS WM USA FBO SPEC CDY A/C EXL BEN CUSTOMERS OF UBSFSI 1000 HARBOR BLVD WEEHAWKEN, NJ 07086	6.72

<u>Class</u>	<u>Name and Address</u>	<u>Percent of Class (%)</u>
IS	PERSHING LLC PO BOX 2052 JERSEY CITY NJ 07303-2052	41.31
IS	EMPOWER TRUST FBO EMPLOYEE BENEFITS CLIENTS 401K 8515 E ORCHARD RD 2T2 GREENWOOD VILLAGE CO 80111	19.58
IS	EMPOWER TRUST FBO EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PLANS 8515 E ORCHARD RD 2T2 GREENWOOD VILLAGE CO 80111	9.55
IS	EMPOWER TRUST FBO EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PLANS 8515 E ORCHARD RD 2T2 GREENWOOD VILLAGE CO 80111	5.39

As of January 31, 2026, to the knowledge of the Trust, the following shareholders owned of record or beneficially 25% or more of the outstanding shares of the Fund as set forth below. Shareholders who beneficially own 25% or more of the outstanding shares of the Fund or who are otherwise deemed to “control” the Fund may be able to determine or significantly influence the outcome of matters submitted to a vote of the Fund’s shareholders.

<u>Name and Address</u>	<u>Percent of Fund (%)</u>
BNY MELLON INVESTMENT SERVICING US INC FBO PRIMERICA FINANCIAL SERVICES 760 MOORE RD KING OF PRUSSIA PA 194061212	29.86

As of January 31, 2026, the Trustees and officers of the Trust, as a group, owned less than 1% of the outstanding shares of each class of the Fund.

DISTRIBUTOR

Franklin Distributors, LLC, an indirect, wholly-owned broker/dealer subsidiary of Franklin Resources, located at One Franklin Parkway, San Mateo, CA 94403-1906, serves as the sole and exclusive distributor of the Fund pursuant to a written agreement (as amended, the “Distribution Agreement”).

Under the Distribution Agreement, the Distributor is appointed as principal underwriter and distributor in connection with the offering and sale of shares of the Fund. The Distributor offers the shares on an agency or “best efforts” basis under which the Fund issues only the number of shares actually sold. Shares of the Fund are continuously offered by the Distributor.

The Distribution Agreement is renewable from year to year with respect to the Fund if approved (a) by the Board or by a vote of a majority of the Fund’s outstanding voting securities, and (b) by the affirmative vote of a majority of Trustees who are not parties to such agreement or interested persons of any party by votes cast in person at a meeting called for such purpose.

The Distribution Agreement is terminable with respect to the Fund without penalty by the Board or by vote of a majority of the outstanding voting securities of the Fund, or by the Distributor, on not less than 60 days' written notice to the other party (unless the notice period is waived by mutual consent). The Distribution Agreement will automatically and immediately terminate in the event of its assignment.

The Distributor may be deemed to be an underwriter for purposes of the 1933 Act. Dealer reallowances, if any, are described in the Fund's Prospectus.

The Distributor, the Manager, their affiliates and their personnel have interests in promoting sales of Franklin Templeton funds, including remuneration, fees and profitability relating to services to and sales of the funds. Associated persons of the Manager, the Distributor or their affiliates (including wholesalers registered with the Distributor) may receive additional compensation related to the sale of individual Franklin Templeton funds or categories of Franklin Templeton funds. The Manager, the Subadviser, and their advisory or other personnel may also benefit from increased amounts of assets under management.

Service Agents also may benefit from the sales of shares of funds sold by the Distributor. For example, in connection with such sales, Service Agents may receive compensation from the Fund (with respect to the Fund as a whole or a particular class of shares) and/or from the Manager, the Distributor, and/or their affiliates, as further described below. The structure of these compensation arrangements, as well as the amounts paid under such arrangements, vary and may change from time to time. In addition, new compensation arrangements may be negotiated at any time. The compensation arrangements described in this section are not mutually exclusive, and a single Service Agent may receive multiple types of compensation.

The Distributor has agreements in place with Service Agents defining how much each firm will be paid for the sale of the Fund from sales charges, if any, paid by Fund shareholders and from 12b-1 Plan fees, if any, paid to the Distributor by the Fund. These Service Agents then pay their employees or associated persons who sell such fund shares from the sales charges and/or fees they receive. The Service Agent, and/or its employees or associated persons may receive a payment when a sale is made and will, in most cases, continue to receive ongoing payments while you are invested in the Fund. In other cases, the Distributor may retain all or a portion of such fees and sales charges.

In addition, the Distributor, the Manager and/or certain of their affiliates may make additional payments (which are often referred to as "revenue sharing" payments) to the Service Agents from their past profits and other available sources, including profits from their relationships with the Fund. Revenue sharing payments are a form of compensation paid to a Service Agent in addition to the sales charges paid by Fund shareholders or 12b-1 Plan fees paid by the Fund. The Manager, the Distributor and/or certain of its affiliates may revise the terms of any existing revenue sharing arrangement and may enter into additional revenue sharing arrangements with other Service Agents.

Revenue sharing arrangements are intended, among other things, to foster the sale of Fund shares and/or to compensate financial services firms for assisting in marketing or promotional activities in connection with the sale of Fund shares. In exchange for revenue sharing payments, the Manager and the Distributor generally expect to receive the opportunity for the Fund to be sold through the Service Agents' sales forces or to have access to third-party platforms or other marketing programs, including but not limited to mutual fund "supermarket" platforms or other sales programs. To the extent that Service Agents receiving revenue sharing payments sell more shares of the Fund, the Manager and the Distributor and/or their affiliates benefit from the increase in Fund assets as a result of the fees they receive from the Fund. The Distributor, FTFA or their affiliates consider revenue sharing arrangements based on a variety of factors and services to be provided.

Revenue sharing payments are usually calculated based on a percentage of Fund sales and/or Fund assets attributable to a particular Service Agent. Payments are at times based on other criteria or factors such as, for example, a fee per each transaction. Specific payment formulas are negotiated based on a number of factors, including, but not limited to, reputation in the industry, ability to attract and retain assets, target markets, customer relationships and scope and quality of services provided. In addition, the Distributor, the Manager and/or certain of their affiliates may pay flat fees on a one-time or irregular basis for the initial set-up of the Fund on a Service Agent's systems, participation or attendance at a Service Agent's meetings, or for other reasons. Furthermore, the Distributor, the Manager and/or certain of their affiliates at times pay certain education and training costs of Service Agents (including, in some cases, travel expenses) to train and educate the personnel of the Service Agents. In addition, the Distributor, the Manager and/or certain of their affiliates at times may provide access to technology and other tools and support services that facilitate the marketing and promotion of investment management portfolios sponsored by Franklin Templeton and/or its affiliates. It is likely that Service Agents that execute portfolio transactions for the Fund will

include those firms with which the Manager, the Distributor and/or certain of their affiliates have entered into revenue sharing arrangements.

The Fund generally pays the transfer agent for certain recordkeeping and administrative services. In addition, the Fund may pay Service Agents for certain recordkeeping, administrative, sub-accounting and networking services. These services include maintenance of shareholder accounts by the firms, such as recordkeeping and other activities that otherwise would be performed by the Fund's transfer agent. Administrative fees may be paid to a firm that undertakes, for example, shareholder communications on behalf of the Fund. Networking services are services undertaken to support the electronic transmission of shareholder purchase and redemption orders through the National Securities Clearing Corporation ("NSCC"). These payments are generally based on either (1) a percentage of the average daily net assets of Fund shareholders serviced by a Service Agent or (2) a fixed dollar amount for each account serviced by a Service Agent. The Distributor, the Manager and/or their affiliates may make all or a portion of these payments.

In addition, the Fund reimburses the Distributor for NSCC fees that are invoiced to the Distributor as the party to the agreement with NSCC for the administrative services provided by NSCC to the Fund and its shareholders. These services include transaction processing and settlement through Fund/SERV, electronic networking services to support the transmission of shareholder purchase and redemption orders to and from Service Agents, and related recordkeeping provided by NSCC to the Fund and its shareholders.

If your Fund shares are purchased through a retirement plan, the Distributor, the Manager or certain of their affiliates at times also make similar payments to those described in this section to the plan's recordkeeper or an affiliate.

Revenue sharing payments, as well as the other types of compensation arrangements described in this section, create an incentive for Service Agents and their employees or associated persons to recommend the Fund over other investments or sell shares of the Fund to customers and in doing so may create conflicts of interest between the firms' financial interests and the interests of their customers. The total amount of these payments is substantial, may be substantial to any given recipient and may exceed the costs and expenses incurred by the recipient for any Fund-related marketing or shareholder servicing activities.

As of December 31, 2025, the Distributor, the Manager or their affiliates made revenue sharing payments to the Service Agents listed below (or their affiliates or successors). It is possible that each Service Agent listed is not receiving payments with respect to each fund sold by the Distributor. This list of intermediaries will change over time, and any additions, modifications or deletions thereto that have occurred since December 31, 2025 are not reflected.

ADP Retirement Services	Allianz Life Insurance Company
Allstate Life Insurance Company	American Enterprise Investment Services Inc.
American General Life Insurance Co of DE	American General Life Insurance Co.
American United Life Insurance Company	Ameriprise Financial, Inc
Ameritas Life Insurance Corporation	Annuity Investors Life Insurance Company
Ascensus, Inc.	Atria Wealth Solutions
AuguStar Life Insurance Company	Avantax Investment Services, Inc.
Axelus Financial	Benjamin F. Edwards & Company, Inc.
BlackRock Inc	Bighthouse Financial
Bighthouse Life Insurance Company	Bighthouse Life Insurance Company of NY
CAIS LLC	Cambridge Investment Research, Inc
Cetera Financial Group	Charles Schwab & Co.
Citigroup Global Markets Inc.	Citizens Securities, Inc.
CMFG Life Insurance Company	Columbia ThreadNeedle
Commonwealth Annuity & Life Insurance Company	Commonwealth Financial Network
Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Company	Corebridge Insurance Company of Bermuda, Ltd
Delaware Life Insurance Co	Delaware Life Insurance Co of NY
Deutsche Bank	DWC-The 401(K) Experts
Edward D. Jones & Co., L.P.	Empire Fidelity Investments Life
Empower Annuity Insurance Company of America	Empower Financial Services
Empower Life & Annuity Insurance Company of New York	Envestnet
Equitable Advisors, LLC	Equitable Financial Life Insurance

Equitable Life Insurance Company
Fidelity Investments
First Allmerica Financial Life Insurance Company
First Security Benefit Life Insurance and Annuity Company of NY
Forethought Life Insurance Company
Genworth Life & Annuity Insurance Company
Genworth Life Insurance Company of NY
Guardian Insurance & Annuity Company
Integrity Life Insurance Company
Janney Montgomery Scott LLC
Kestra Investment Services, LLC
Lincoln Investment Planning, Inc.
Lincoln National Life Insurance Company
LPL Financial LLC
Members Life Insurance Company
MetLife Insurance Company USA
Midland National
Minnesota Life Insurance Company
MONY Life Insurance Company of America (Equitable)
Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC
Nassau Life Insurance Company
National Integrity Life Insurance Company
National Security Life & Annuity Company
Nationwide Life Insurance Company
Northwestern Mutual Investment Svcs LLC
Osaic Wealth, Inc.
Pacific Life Insurance Company
PCS Retirement
PHL Variable Insurance Company
Phoenix Life Insurance Company
Primerica
Principal Life Insurance Company
Protective Life and Annuity Insurance Company
Pruco Life Insurance
Pruco Life Insurance Company of NJ
Raymond James & Associates, Inc.
RBC Capital Markets LLC
ReliaStar Life Insurance Company of NY
Riversource Life Insurance Company of New York
Rockefeller Capital
Sanctuary Wealth
Security Benefit Life Insurance Company
Stifel Financial Corporation
Symetra Life Insurance Company
Talcott Resolution Life Insurance Company
The Guardian Insurance & Annuity Company, Inc.
Thrivent Financial for Lutherans
TIAA-CREF Life Insurance Company
Transamerica Financial Life Insurance Company
Transamerica Premier Life Insurance Company
UBS Financial Services, Inc.
USI Consulting Group

Everlake Services Company
Fidelity Investments Life Insurance Co
First Command
Forethought Distributors, LLC
FTMF Consulting
Genworth Life Insurance
Goldman Sachs
Hantz Financial Services
J.P. Morgan Securities LLC
John Hancock
Lincoln Benefit Life Company
Lincoln Life & Annuity Company of NY
Lincoln Retirement Services Co
Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company
Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith, Inc.
Metropolitan Life Insurance Company
Midland National Life Insurance Company
MML Investors Services, LLC
MONY Life Insurance Company of America (Protective Life)
MSCS
National Financial Services LLC
National Life Insurance Company
Nationwide Financial Services, Inc.
New York Life Insurance and Annuity Corporation
Osaic Services, Inc
Pacific Life and Annuity Company
Paychex Securities Corp
Pershing
Phoenix Life & Annuity Company
PNC Investments LLC
Principal Financial Services
Principal National Life Insurance Company
Protective Life Insurance Company
Pruco Life Insurance Company of AZ
Prudential Insurance Company of America
Raymond James Financial Services, Inc.
ReliaStar Life Insurance Company
Riversource Life Insurance Company
Robert W. Baird & Co., Inc.
Sammons Financial Network
Securian Financial Group, Inc
Standard Insurance Company
SunAmerica Annuity and Life Assurance Company
Talcott Resolution Life and Annuity Insurance Company
TFS Securities, Inc.
The Variable Annuity Life Insurance Company (VALIC)
TIAA-CREF Individual & Institutional Services, LLC
TIFIN Wealth
Transamerica Life Insurance Company
U.S. Bancorp Investments
United States Life Insurance Co in the City of NY
(fka First SunAmerica)

Vanguard Marketing Corporation
 Voya Financial Advisors, LLC
 Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC
 Western National Life Insurance Company

Valor Financial Securities, LLC
 Venerable Insurance and Annuity Company
 Voya Retirement Insurance and Annuity Company
 Wells Fargo Clearing Services, LLC
 Wilton Reassurance Life Company of New York

The Distributor, the Manager or their affiliates may also pay fees, from their own assets, to Service Agents for providing other distribution-related services as well as recordkeeping, administrative, subaccounting, and networking services (or portions thereof), and other shareholder or administrative services in connection with investments in the Fund. These payments may be considered revenue sharing payments. The Service Agents receiving such payments may not be listed above.

You should assume that your Service Agent receives revenue sharing payments and/or other compensation described in this SAI. Please contact your Service Agent for details about any payments it (and its employees) may receive from the Fund and/or from the Distributor, the Manager and/or their affiliates. You should review your Service Agent’s disclosure and/or talk to your Service Agent to obtain more information on how this compensation may have influenced your Service Agent’s recommendation of the Fund.

Dealer Commissions and Concessions

From time to time, the Distributor or the Manager, at its expense, may provide compensation or promotional incentives (“concessions”) to dealers that sell or arrange for the sale of shares of the Fund or a managed account strategy of which the Fund is part. Such concessions provided by the Distributor or the Manager may include financial assistance to dealers in connection with preapproved conferences or seminars, sales or training programs for invited registered representatives and other employees, payment for travel expenses, including lodging, incurred by registered representatives and other employees for such seminars or training programs, seminars for the public, advertising and sales campaigns regarding one or more funds, and/or other dealer-sponsored events. From time to time, the Distributor or the Manager may make expense reimbursements for special training of a dealer’s registered representatives and other employees in group meetings or to help pay the expenses of sales contests. Other concessions may be offered to the extent not prohibited by applicable laws or any self-regulatory agency, such as the FINRA.

Sales Charges

The following expenses were incurred during the fiscal periods indicated:

Initial Sales Charges

The aggregate dollar amounts of initial sales charges received on Class A shares and the amounts retained by the Distributor were as follows:

Class A Shares

For the Fiscal Period Ended October 31,	Total Commissions (\$)	Amounts Retained by Distributor (\$)
2025	506,104	52,109
2024	386,777	39,550
2023	223,309	22,682

Contingent Deferred Sales Charges

The aggregate dollar amounts of contingent deferred sales charges on Class A and Class C shares received and retained by the Distributor were as follows:

Class A Shares

For the Fiscal Period Ended October 31,	Amounts Retained by Distributor (\$)
2025	1,201
2024	63
2023	405

Class C Shares

For the Fiscal Period Ended October 31,	Amounts Retained by Distributor (\$)
2025	896
2024	259
2023	0

Services and Distribution Plan

The Trust, on behalf of the Fund, has adopted a 12b-1 Plan in accordance with Rule 12b-1 under the 1940 Act. Under the 12b-1 Plan, the Fund may pay monthly fees to the Distributor at up to the annual rates set forth below (as a percentage of the average daily net assets of the Fund attributable to the applicable share class).

Class	Rate (%)
Class A	0.25
Class C	1.00
Class R	0.50

The Fund will provide the Board with periodic reports of amounts expended under the 12b-1 Plan and the purposes for which such expenditures were made. Fees under the 12b-1 Plan may be used to make payments to the Distributor, Service Agents and other parties with respect to the sale of Fund shares for advertising, marketing or other promotional activity, and payments for preparation, printing, and distribution of prospectuses, statements of additional information and reports for recipients other than existing shareholders. The Fund also may make payments to the Distributor, Service Agents and others for providing personal service or the maintenance of shareholder accounts. The amounts paid to each recipient may vary based upon certain factors, including, among other things, the levels of sales of shares and/or shareholder services; provided, however, that the fees paid to a recipient with respect to a particular class that may be used to cover expenses primarily intended to result in the sale of shares of that class, or that may be used to cover expenses primarily intended for personal service and/or maintenance of shareholder accounts, may not exceed the maximum amounts, if any, as may from time to time be permitted for such services under FINRA Conduct Rule 2341 or any successor rule, in each case as amended or interpreted by FINRA.

Since fees paid under the 12b-1 Plan are not tied directly to expenses incurred by the Distributor (or others), the amount of the fees paid by a class of the Fund during any year may be more or less than actual expenses incurred by the Distributor (or others). This type of distribution fee arrangement is characterized by the staff of the SEC as being of the "compensation variety" (in contrast to "reimbursement" arrangements by which a distributor's payments are directly linked to its expenses). Thus, even if the Distributor's expenses exceed the fees provided for by the 12b-1 Plan, the Fund will not be obligated to pay more than those fees and, if expenses incurred by the Distributor (or others) are less than the fees paid to the Distributor and others, they will realize a profit.

The 12b-1 Plan recognizes that various service providers to the Fund, such as the Manager, may make payments for distribution, marketing or sales-related expenses out of their own resources of any kind, including profits or payments received from the Fund for other purposes, such as management fees. The 12b-1 Plan provides that, to the extent that such payments

might be deemed to be indirect financing of any activity primarily intended to result in the sale of shares of the Fund, the payments are deemed to be authorized by the 12b-1 Plan.

Under its terms, the 12b-1 Plan continues in effect for successive annual periods, provided continuance is specifically approved at least annually by vote of the Board, including a majority of the Independent Trustees who have no direct or indirect financial interest in the operation of the 12b-1 Plan or in any agreements related to it ("Qualified Trustees"). The 12b-1 Plan may not be amended to increase the amount of the service and distribution fees without shareholder approval, and all amendments of the 12b-1 Plan also must be approved by the Trustees, including the Qualified Trustees, in the manner described above. The 12b-1 Plan may be terminated with respect to a class of the Fund at any time, without penalty, by vote of a majority of the Qualified Trustees or by vote of a majority of the outstanding voting securities of that class (as defined in the 1940 Act).

The following service and distribution fees were incurred by the Fund pursuant to the 12b-1 Plan in effect during the fiscal period ended October 31, 2025:

Class	Service and Distribution Fees Incurred (\$)	Service and Distribution Fees Waived/Reimbursed (\$)
Class A	725,011	0
Class C	56,351	0

No information is presented for Class R shares of the Fund, because no shares of that class were outstanding as of October 31, 2025.

For the fiscal period ended October 31, 2025, the Distributor incurred distribution expenses for advertising, printing and mailing prospectuses, support service and overhead expenses and compensation to Service Agents and third parties as expressed in the following table. The Distributor may have made revenue sharing payments in addition to the expenses shown here.

Class	Third Party Fees (\$)	Financial Consultant Compensation (Amortized) (\$)	Marketing (\$)	Printing (\$)	Total Expenses (\$)
Class A	725,010	57,124	125,075	0	907,209
Class C	56,351	17,795	5,469	0	79,615

No information is presented for Class R shares of the Fund, because no shares of that class were outstanding during the fiscal year ended October 31, 2025.

PURCHASE OF SHARES

Purchases of Fund shares are discussed under the "Buying shares" and "Exchanging shares" sections of the Fund's Prospectus; this information is incorporated herein by reference. See the Fund's Prospectus for a discussion of which share classes of the Fund are available for purchase, who is eligible to purchase shares of each class, and applicable investment minimums.

Investors may purchase shares from a Service Agent. However, Service Agents may not offer all classes of shares. In addition, certain investors, including retirement plans purchasing through certain Service Agents, may purchase shares directly from the Fund. When purchasing shares of the Fund, investors must specify the class of shares being purchased. Payment must be made with the purchase order. Service Agents may charge their customers an annual account maintenance fee in connection with a brokerage or other financial account through which an investor purchases or holds shares. Accounts held directly at the transfer agent are not subject to a maintenance fee.

Purchase orders received by the Fund prior to the scheduled close of regular trading on the NYSE on any day the Fund calculates its NAV are priced according to the NAV determined on that day (the "trade date"). Orders received by a Service Agent

prior to the scheduled close of regular trading on the NYSE on any day the Fund calculates its NAV are priced according to the NAV determined on that day, provided the order is transmitted by the Service Agent to the Fund's transfer agent in accordance with their agreed-upon procedures. See "Valuation of Shares" below for additional information about the NYSE's holiday schedule. NAV is calculated separately for each share class.

Class A Shares. Class A shares are sold to investors at the public offering price, which is the NAV plus an initial sales charge, as described in the Fund's Prospectus. The sales charge is waived for shareholders purchasing Class A shares through accounts where the Distributor is the broker-dealer of record ("Distributor Accounts"). Shareholders purchasing Class A shares through certain Service Agents or in certain types of accounts may be eligible for a waiver of the initial sales charge. For more information, see the appendix to the Prospectus titled "Appendix: Waivers and Discounts Available from Certain Service Agents."

The Distributor and Service Agents may receive a portion of the sales charge as described in the Fund's Prospectus and may be deemed to be underwriters of the Fund as defined in the 1933 Act. Sales charges are calculated based on the aggregate of purchases of Class A shares of the Fund made at one time by any "person," which includes an individual and his or her spouse and children, or a trustee or other fiduciary of a single trust estate or single fiduciary account. For additional information regarding sales charge reductions, see "Sales Charge Waivers and Reductions for Class A Shares" below.

Class A Shares. Purchases of Class A shares of \$1 million or more will be made at NAV without any initial sales charge on purchases but are subject to a contingent deferred sales charge on redemptions made within 18 months of purchase (except for purchases made through Distributor Accounts). The contingent deferred sales charge is waived in the same circumstances in which the contingent deferred sales charge applicable to Class C shares is waived. See "Contingent Deferred Sales Charge Provisions" and "Waivers of Contingent Deferred Sales Charge" below.

Class C Shares. Class C shares are not available for purchase through Distributor Accounts. Class C shares are sold at NAV without an initial sales charge on purchases but are subject to a contingent deferred sales charge payable upon certain redemptions. See "Contingent Deferred Sales Charge Provisions."

Class C1 Shares. Class C1 shares are not available for purchase by new or existing investors (except for certain retirement plan programs authorized by the Distributor prior to August 1, 2012). Class C1 shares will continue to be available for dividend reinvestment and incoming exchanges. Class C1 shares are sold at NAV without an initial sales charge on purchases but are subject to a contingent deferred sales charge payable upon certain redemptions. See "Contingent Deferred Sales Charge Provisions."

Class D Shares. Class D shares are offered to a limited group of investors who invest in the Fund through certain financial intermediary and retirement plan programs. Service Agents selling Class D shares may in the future discontinue offering Class D shares to clients of financial intermediaries. A Service Agent or financial intermediary may impose investment minimums. For more information about these programs, contact a Service Agent.

Class FI, Class R, Class I and Class IS Shares. Class FI shares are not available for purchase through Distributor Accounts. Class FI, Class R, Class I and Class IS shares are sold at NAV with no initial sales charge on purchases and no contingent deferred sales charge upon redemption.

Class I shares may be purchased directly from the Fund by the following persons: (i) current employees of the Manager and its affiliates; (ii) former employees of the Manager and its affiliates with existing accounts; (iii) current and former board members of investment companies managed by affiliates of Franklin Resources; (iv) current and former board members of Franklin Resources; and (v) the "immediate families" of such persons. "Immediate families" are such person's spouse (including the surviving spouse of a deceased board member), parents, grandparents, and children and grandchildren (including step-relationships). For such investors, the minimum initial investment is \$1,000 and the minimum for each purchase of additional shares is \$50. Current employees may purchase additional Class I shares through a systematic investment plan.

Class IS shares may be purchased only by retirement plans with omnibus accounts held on the books of the Fund, certain rollover IRAs and Institutional Investors, Clients of Eligible Financial Intermediaries and other investors authorized by the Distributor. In order to purchase Class IS shares, an investor must hold its shares in an account that is not subject to payment of fees for recordkeeping services, account servicing, networking, or similar services to Service Agents.

Class 1 Shares. Class 1 shares are closed to all purchases and incoming exchanges. Investors owning Class 1 shares may continue to maintain their then-current Class 1 shares but are no longer permitted to add to their Class 1 share positions, except through reinvestments of dividends.

* * * * *

Under certain circumstances, an investor who purchases Fund shares pursuant to a fee-based advisory account program of an Eligible Financial Intermediary as authorized by the Distributor may be afforded an opportunity to make a conversion between one or more share classes owned by the investor in the same Fund to Class I shares of that Fund. Such a conversion in these particular circumstances does not cause the investor to realize taxable gain or loss.

For additional information regarding applicable investment minimums and eligibility requirements for purchases of Fund shares, please see the Fund's Prospectus.

Systematic Investment Plan

Shareholders may make additions to their accounts at any time by purchasing shares through a service known as the Systematic Investment Plan. Under the Systematic Investment Plan, shareholders may arrange for automatic periodic investments of \$25 or more in certain share classes by authorizing the Distributor or the transfer agent to charge the shareholder's account held with a bank or other financial institution, as indicated by the shareholder, to provide for systematic additions to the shareholder's Fund account. Shareholders have the option of selecting the frequency of the investment as long as the investment equals a minimum of \$25 per month. Shareholders may terminate participation in the Systematic Investment Plan at any time without charge or penalty. Additional information is available from the Fund or your Service Agent.

Sales Charge Waivers and Reductions for Class A Shares

Initial Sales Charge Waivers. Purchases of Class A shares may be made at NAV without an initial sales charge in the following circumstances:

- i. sales to (a) current and retired board members, (b) current employees of Franklin Resources and its subsidiaries, (c) the "immediate families" of such persons, as defined above, and (d) a pension, profit-sharing or other benefit plan for the benefit of such persons;
- ii. sales to employees of certain Service Agents having dealer, service or other selling agreements with the Distributor or otherwise having an arrangement with any such Service Agent with respect to sales of Fund shares, and by the immediate families of such persons or by a pension, profit-sharing or other benefit plan for the benefit of such persons (providing the purchase is made for investment purposes and such securities will not be resold except through redemption or repurchase);
- iii. offers of Class A shares to any other investment company to effect the combination of such company with the Fund by merger, acquisition of assets or otherwise;
- iv. purchases by shareholders who have redeemed Class A shares in the Fund (or Class A shares of another fund sold by the Distributor (excluding Putnam Investments Funds) that is offered with a sales charge) and who wish to reinvest their redemption proceeds in the Fund, provided the reinvestment is made within 90 calendar days of the redemption;
- v. purchases by certain separate accounts used to fund unregistered variable annuity contracts;
- vi. purchases by investors participating in "wrap fee" or asset allocation programs or other fee-based arrangements sponsored by broker/dealers and other financial institutions that have entered into agreements with the Distributor;
- vii. purchases by direct retail investment platforms through mutual fund "supermarkets," where the sponsor links its client's account (including IRA accounts on such platforms) to a master account in the sponsor's name;
- viii. sales through Service Agents who have entered into an agreement with the Distributor to offer shares to self-directed investment brokerage accounts that may or may not charge a transaction fee to their customers;
- ix. purchases of Class A shares by shareholders investing through Distributor Accounts;
- x. investors investing through certain retirement plans;

- xi. investors who rollover Fund shares from an employer-sponsored retirement plan into an individual retirement account administered on the same retirement plan platform; and
- xii. purchases by or through a Franklin Templeton donor-advised fund (such as the Franklin or Fiduciary Trust Charitable Programs).

In order to obtain such discounts, the purchaser must provide sufficient information at the time of purchase to permit verification that the purchase qualifies for the elimination of the initial sales charge.

All existing retirement plan shareholders who purchased Class A shares at NAV prior to November 20, 2006, are permitted to purchase additional Class A shares at NAV. Certain existing programs for current and prospective retirement plan investors sponsored by Service Agents approved by the Distributor prior to November 20, 2006 will also remain eligible to purchase Class A shares at NAV.

There are several ways you can combine multiple purchases of Class A shares of funds sold by the Distributor (excluding Putnam Investments Funds) or units of a Section 529 college savings plan managed by a Franklin Templeton affiliate (a "Section 529 plan"), to take advantage of the breakpoints in the Class A shares sales charge schedule. In order to take advantage of reductions in sales charges that may be available to you when you purchase Fund shares, you must inform your Service Agent or the Fund if you believe you are eligible for a Letter of Intent or a right of accumulation. Whether you purchased shares of funds and/or units of a Section 529 Plan through one or more Service Agents, directly from the Fund or through a combination of the foregoing, it is your responsibility to inform your Service Agent or the Fund if you own shares of other funds or units of a Section 529 plan that you believe are eligible to be aggregated with your purchases. **If you do not do so, you may not receive all sales charge reductions for which you are eligible.** Account statements may be necessary in order to verify your eligibility for a reduced sales charge.

Accumulation Privilege. The accumulation privilege allows you to combine the dollar amount of your next purchase of Class A shares of the Fund, as applicable, with the current or cost value, whichever is higher, of shares of other funds sold by the Distributor held in Eligible Accounts (as defined below), for purposes of calculating the initial sales charges.

If you hold fund shares or units of a Section 529 plan in accounts at two or more Service Agents, please contact your Service Agents to determine whether your shares or units may be combined.

Shares of certain money market funds sold by the Distributor may be combined for purposes of the accumulation privilege. Please contact your Service Agent or the Fund for additional information.

Certain trustees and other fiduciaries may be entitled to combine accounts in determining their sales charge.

Letter of Intent. A Letter of Intent allows you to combine the current or cost value, whichever is higher, of Eligible Fund Purchases in Eligible Accounts with the value that you intend to purchase within the next 13-months, which would, if bought all at once, qualify you for a reduced Class A sales charge. In addition, current holdings under the accumulation privilege (as described above) may be included in the Letter of Intent. See the Fund's Prospectus for the sales charges and breakpoints applicable to Class A shares of the Fund. Sales charges and breakpoints vary among the funds sold by the Distributor.

Purchases of Class A shares or units of a Section 529 plan may be aggregated for purposes of calculating each breakpoint. You may purchase Class A shares of funds sold by the Distributor (excluding Putnam Investments Funds) or units of a Section 529 plan managed by a Franklin Templeton affiliate over a 13-month period and pay the same sales charge, if any, as if all shares or units had been purchased at once.

At the time you enter into a Letter of Intent, you select your asset goal amount. Each time you make a Class A purchase under a Letter of Intent, you will be entitled to pay the sales charge that is applicable to the amount of your asset goal amount. For example, if your asset goal amount is \$100,000, any Class A investments you make under a Letter of Intent would be subject to the sales charge of the specific fund you are investing in for purchases of \$100,000.

When you enter into a Letter of Intent, you agree to purchase in Eligible Accounts over a 13-month period Eligible Fund Purchases in an amount equal to the asset goal amount you have selected. You may also credit towards your asset goal amount any Eligible Fund Purchases made in Eligible Accounts at any time prior to entering into the Letter of Intent that have not been sold or redeemed, based on the current value or cost value, whichever is higher, of those shares as of the date of calculation. The current value of shares is determined by multiplying the number of shares as of the day prior to your current purchase by their

public offering price. The cost value of shares is determined by aggregating the amount of Eligible Fund Purchases in Eligible Accounts (including reinvested dividends and capital gains, but excluding capital appreciation), less any withdrawals, as of the date prior to your current purchase. The cost value of Eligible Fund Purchases in Eligible Accounts, however, may only be aggregated for share purchases that took place within 18 months of the Letter of Intent start date.

Your commitment will be met if at any time during the 13-month period the value, as so determined, of eligible holdings is at least equal to your asset goal amount. All reinvested dividends and distributions on shares acquired under the Letter of Intent will be credited towards your asset goal amount. You may include any Eligible Fund Purchases toward the asset goal amount, including shares of classes other than Class A shares. However, a Letter of Intent will not entitle you to a reduction in the sales charge payable on any shares other than Class A shares, and if any shares, including Class A shares, are subject to a contingent deferred sales charge, you will still be subject to that contingent deferred sales charge with respect to those shares. You must make reference to the Letter of Intent each time you make a purchase under the Letter of Intent.

Eligible Fund Purchases. Eligible Fund Purchases include: (i) any class of shares of any other Legg Mason or Franklin Templeton fund other than shares of such funds offered through separately managed accounts that are managed by a Franklin Templeton affiliate; and (ii) units of a Section 529 Plan managed by a Franklin Templeton affiliate. Shares of certain money market funds sold by the Distributor may be combined for purposes of the Letter of Intent. Eligible funds may change from time to time, investors should check with their Service Agent to see which funds or Section 529 plans may be eligible.

For purposes of a letter of intent and the accumulation privilege, Legg Mason and Franklin Templeton funds include BrandywineGLOBAL funds, ClearBridge Investments funds, and Western Asset funds. They do not include the funds in the Franklin Templeton Variable Insurance Products Trust, Legg Mason Partners Variable Equity Trust, Legg Mason Partners Variable Income Trust or Legg Mason Partners Money Market Trust (except for shares held in Distributor Accounts). Please contact your Service Agent or the Fund for more information.

Eligible Accounts. Eligible Accounts include shares of Legg Mason or Franklin Templeton funds registered to (or held by a financial intermediary for):

- You, individually;
- Your "family member" defined as your spouse or domestic partner, as recognized by applicable state law, or your children under the age of 21;
- You jointly with one or more family members;
- You jointly with one or more persons who are not family members if that other person has not included the value of the jointly-owned shares for purposes of the accumulation privilege for that person's separate investments in Legg Mason or Franklin Templeton fund shares;
- A Coverdell Education Savings account for which you or a family member is the identified responsible person;
- A trustee/custodian of an IRA (which includes a Roth IRA and an employer sponsored IRA such as a SIMPLE IRA) or your non-ERISA covered 403(b) plan account, if the shares are registered/recorded under your or a family member's Social Security number;
- A 529 college savings plan over which you or a family member has investment discretion and control;
- Any entity over which you or a family member has individual or shared authority, as principal, has investment discretion and control (for example, an UGMA/UTMA account for a child on which you or a family member is the custodian, a trust on which you or a family member is the trustee, a business account (not to include retirement plans) for your solely owned business (or the solely owned business of a family member) on which you or a family member is the authorized signer); or
- A trust established by you or a family member as grantor.

You may need to provide certain records, such as account statements, in order to verify your eligibility for reduced sales charges. Contact your Service Agent to see which accounts may be credited toward your asset goal amount. A Letter of Intent is not available to Distributor Accounts.

Increasing the Amount of the Letter of Intent. You may at any time increase your asset goal amount. You must, however, contact your Service Agent, or if you purchase your shares directly through the transfer agent, contact the transfer agent, prior to making any purchases in an amount in excess of your current asset goal amount. Upon such an increase, you will be credited by way of additional shares at the then-current offering price for the difference between:

- i. the aggregate sales charges actually paid for shares already purchased under the Letter of Intent; and
- ii. the aggregate applicable sales charges for the increased asset goal amount.

However, you must contact your Service Agent before purchasing shares in excess of the asset goal amount as no retroactive adjustments can be made. The 13-month period during which the asset goal amount must be achieved will remain unchanged.

Sales and Exchanges. Shares acquired pursuant to a Letter of Intent, other than Escrowed Shares as defined below, may be redeemed or exchanged at any time, although any shares that are redeemed prior to meeting your asset goal amount will no longer count towards meeting your asset goal amount. However, complete liquidation of purchases made under a Letter of Intent prior to meeting the asset goal amount will result in the cancellation of the Letter of Intent. See "Failure to Meet Asset Goal Amount" below. Exchanges in accordance with the Fund's Prospectus are permitted, and shares so exchanged will continue to count towards your asset goal amount, as long as the exchange results in an Eligible Fund Purchase.

Cancellation of the Letter of Intent. You may cancel a Letter of Intent by notifying your Service Agent, or if you purchase your shares directly through the transfer agent, by notifying the transfer agent. The Letter of Intent will be automatically cancelled if all shares are sold or redeemed as set forth above. See "Failure to Meet Asset Goal Amount" below.

Escrowed Shares. Shares equal in value to five percent (5%) of your asset goal amount as of the date your Letter of Intent (or the date of any increase in the amount of the Letter of Intent) is accepted will be held in escrow during the term of your Letter of Intent. The Escrowed Shares will be included in the total shares owned as reflected in your account statement and any dividends and capital gains distributions applicable to the Escrowed Shares will be credited to your account and counted towards your asset goal amount or paid in cash upon request. The Escrowed Shares will be released from escrow if all the terms of your Letter of Intent are met.

Failure to Meet Asset Goal Amount. If the total assets under your Letter of Intent within its 13-month term are less than your asset goal amount whether because you made insufficient Eligible Fund Purchases, redeemed all of your holdings or otherwise cancelled the Letter of Intent before reaching your asset goal amount, you will be liable for the difference between: (a) the sales charge actually paid and (b) the sales charge that would have applied if you had not entered into the Letter of Intent. You may, however, be entitled to any breakpoints that would have been available to you under the accumulation privilege. An appropriate number of shares in your account will be redeemed to realize the amount due. For these purposes, by entering into a Letter of Intent, you irrevocably appoint your Service Agent, or if you purchase your shares directly through the transfer agent, the transfer agent, as your attorney-in-fact for the purposes of holding the Escrowed Shares and surrendering shares in your account for redemption. If there are insufficient assets in your account, you will be liable for the difference. Any Escrowed Shares remaining after such redemption will be released to your account.

Contingent Deferred Sales Charge Provisions

Class A Shares.

- *Class A shares that were purchased without an initial sales charge but are subject to a contingent deferred sales charge.* A contingent deferred sales charge may be imposed on certain redemptions of these shares. Class A shares that are contingent deferred sales charge shares are subject to a contingent deferred sales charge if redeemed within 18 months of purchase.
- *Class A shares that are not subject to a contingent deferred sales charge.* If Class A shares of the Fund are exchanged for shares of another fund sold by the Distributor that are subject to a contingent deferred sales charge, you may pay a contingent deferred sales charge if the shares acquired by exchange are redeemed within 18 months of purchase.

Class C Shares.

- *Class C shares that are subject to a contingent deferred sales charge.* A contingent deferred sales charge will be imposed if shares are redeemed within 12 months of purchase.
- *Class C shares that are not subject to a contingent deferred sales charge.* If Class C shares of the Fund are exchanged for shares of another fund sold by the Distributor that are subject to a contingent deferred sales charge, you may pay a contingent deferred sales charge if the shares acquired by exchange are redeemed within 12 months from the date of such exchange.

Class C1 Shares.

- *Class C1 shares that are subject to a contingent deferred sales charge.* A contingent deferred sales charge will be imposed if shares are redeemed within 12 months of purchase. If Class C1 shares of the Fund are exchanged for Class C1 shares (or, if not available, Class C shares) of another fund sold by the Distributor, any contingent deferred sales charge that applies to the Class C1 shares of the other fund will apply to the Class C1 shares (or Class C shares, as applicable) acquired in exchange for the Class C1 shares of the Fund, and that contingent deferred sales charge will be measured from the date the shares exchanged were initially acquired.
- *Class C1 shares that are not subject to a contingent deferred sales charge.* Class C1 shares of the Fund are not subject to a contingent deferred sales charge, but if Class C1 shares of the Fund are exchanged for Class C1 shares (or, if not available, Class C shares) of another fund sold by the Distributor that are subject to a contingent deferred sales charge, any contingent deferred sales charge that applies to the Class C1 shares of the other fund will apply to the Class C1 shares (or Class C shares, as applicable) acquired in exchange for the Class C1 shares of the Fund, and that contingent deferred sales charge will be measured from the date of such exchange.

Any applicable contingent deferred sales charge will be assessed on the NAV at the time of purchase or redemption, whichever is less.

In determining the applicability of any contingent deferred sales charge, it will be assumed that a redemption is made first of shares representing capital appreciation, next of shares representing the reinvestment of dividends and capital gain distributions, next of shares that are not subject to the contingent deferred sales charge and finally of other shares held by the shareholder for the longest period of time. Unless otherwise noted above, the length of time that contingent deferred sales charge shares acquired through an exchange have been held will be calculated from the date the shares exchanged were initially acquired in one of the other funds sold by the Distributor. For U.S. federal income tax purposes, the amount of the contingent deferred sales charge will reduce the gain or increase the loss, as the case may be, on the amount realized on redemption. The Distributor receives contingent deferred sales charges in partial consideration for its expenses in selling shares.

Waivers of Contingent Deferred Sales Charge

The contingent deferred sales charge will be waived on:

- exchanges (see "Exchange of Shares");
- redemptions through a systematic withdrawal plan, up to 1% monthly, 3% quarterly, 6% semiannually or 12% annually of your account's net asset value depending on the frequency of your plan (see "Systematic Withdrawal Plan");
- redemptions of shares within 12 months following the death or disability (as defined by the Code) of the shareholder;
- mandatory post-retirement distributions from retirement plans or IRAs commencing on or after attainment of a specific age required by law (except that shareholders of certain retirement plans or IRAs established prior to May 23, 2005 will be eligible to obtain a waiver of the contingent deferred sales charge on all funds held in those accounts at age 59 1/2 and may be required to demonstrate such eligibility at the time of redemption);
- involuntary redemptions;
- redemptions of shares to effect a combination of the Fund with any investment company by merger, acquisition of assets or otherwise;
- effective May 1, 2020, on redemptions with respect to investors where the Distributor did not pay the Service Agent a commission;
- tax-free returns of an excess contribution to any retirement plan;
- certain redemptions of shares of the Fund in connection with lump-sum or other distributions made by eligible retirement plans or redemption of shares by participants in certain "wrap fee" or asset allocation programs sponsored

by broker/dealers and other financial institutions that have entered into agreements with the Distributor or the Manager;

- x. Class A shares held through Distributor Accounts; and
- xi. redemptions of Class A shares purchased by or through a Franklin Templeton donor-advised fund (such as the Franklin or Fiduciary Trust Charitable Programs).

The contingent deferred sales charge is also waived on Class C and Class C1 shares purchased by retirement plans with omnibus accounts held on the books of the Fund. Different Service Agents may offer different contingent deferred sales charge waivers. For more information, see the appendix to the Prospectus titled "Appendix: Waivers and Discounts Available from Certain Service Agents."

A shareholder who has redeemed shares from another fund sold by the Distributor (excluding Putnam Investments Funds) may, under certain circumstances, reinvest all or part of the redemption proceeds within 90 days in another fund sold by the Distributor (excluding Putnam Investments Funds) and receive pro rata credit for any contingent deferred sales charge imposed on the prior redemption.

To have a contingent deferred sales charge waived, you or your Service Agent must let the Fund know at the time you redeem shares that you qualify for such a waiver. Contingent deferred sales charge waivers will be granted subject to confirmation by the Distributor or the transfer agent of the shareholder's status or holdings, as the case may be.

Grandfathered Retirement Program with Exchange Features

Certain retirement plan programs with exchange features in effect prior to November 20, 2006 (collectively, the "Grandfathered Retirement Program") that are authorized by the Distributor to offer eligible retirement plan investors the opportunity to exchange all of their Class C shares or Class C1 shares, if applicable, for Class A shares of the same fund, are permitted to maintain such share class exchange features for current and prospective retirement plan investors.

Under the Grandfathered Retirement Program, Class C shares and Class C1 shares of the Fund may be purchased by plans investing less than \$3,000,000. Class C shares and Class C1 shares are eligible for exchange into Class A shares not later than eight years after the plan joins the program. They are eligible for exchange in the following circumstances: For participating plans established with the Fund or another fund for which FTFA or any predecessor serves or has served as investment manager or administrator (each a "Grandfathered Retirement Program Fund") prior to June 2, 2003, if such plan's total Class C and Class C1 holdings in all Grandfathered Retirement Program Funds (excluding money market funds) equal at least \$1,000,000 at the end of the fifth year after the date the participating plan enrolled in the Grandfathered Retirement Program, the participating plan will be permitted to exchange all of its Class C shares and Class C1 shares for Class A shares of the Fund. For participating plans established with the Fund or another Grandfathered Retirement Program Fund on or after June 2, 2003, if such plan's total Class C and Class C1 holdings in all Grandfathered Retirement Program Funds (excluding money market funds) equal at least \$3,000,000 at the end of the fifth year after the date the participating plan enrolled in the Grandfathered Retirement Program, the participating plan will be permitted to exchange all of its Class C shares and Class C1 shares for Class A shares of the Fund.

Unless the exchange offer has been rejected in writing, the exchange will automatically occur within approximately 30 days after the fifth anniversary date. If the participating plan does not qualify for the five-year exchange to Class A shares, a review of the participating plan's holdings will be performed each quarter until either the participating plan qualifies or the end of the eighth year.

Any participating plan that has not previously qualified for an exchange into Class A shares will be offered the opportunity to exchange all of its Class C shares and Class C1 shares for Class A shares of the same fund regardless of asset size at the end of the eighth year after the date the participating plan enrolled in the Grandfathered Retirement Program. Unless the exchange has been rejected in writing, the exchange will automatically occur on or about the eighth anniversary date. Once an exchange has occurred, a participating plan will not be eligible to acquire additional Class C shares and Class C1 shares but instead may acquire Class A shares of the same fund. Any Class C shares and Class C1 shares not converted will continue to be subject to the distribution fee.

For further information regarding the Grandfathered Retirement Program, contact your Service Agent or the transfer agent. Participating plans that enrolled in the Grandfathered Retirement Program prior to June 2, 2003 should contact the transfer agent for information regarding Class C shares and Class C1 shares exchange privileges applicable to their plan.

Determination of Public Offering Price

The Fund offers its shares to the public on a continuous basis. The public offering price for each class of shares of the Fund is equal to the net asset value per share at the time of purchase, plus for Class A shares, an initial sales charge based on the aggregate amount of the investment.

Set forth below is an example of the method of computing the offering price of the Class A shares of the Fund based on the net asset value of a share of the Fund as of October 31, 2025:

Class A

Net Asset Value Per Share (\$)	29.28
Maximum Initial Sales Charge Percentage (%)	5.50
Offering Price (\$)	31.12

REDEMPTION OF SHARES

Redemptions of Fund shares are discussed under the “Exchanging shares” and “Redeeming shares” sections of the Fund’s Prospectus; this information is incorporated herein by reference.

The right of redemption may be suspended or the date of payment postponed:

- i. for any period during which the NYSE is closed (other than for customary weekend and holiday closings);
- ii. when trading in the markets the Fund normally utilizes is restricted, or an emergency exists, as determined by the SEC, so that disposal of the Fund’s investments or determination of NAV is not reasonably practicable; or
- iii. for such other periods as the SEC by order may permit for protection of the Fund’s shareholders.

In the case of any such suspension, you may either withdraw your request for redemption or receive payment based upon the NAV next determined after the suspension is lifted.

The Fund’s transfer agent, acting on behalf of the Fund, may place a temporary hold for up to 25 business days on the disbursement of redemption proceeds from an account held directly with the Fund if the transfer agent, in consultation with the Fund, reasonably believes that financial exploitation of a Specified Adult (as defined below) has occurred, is occurring, has been attempted, or will be attempted. In order to delay payment of redemption proceeds under these circumstances, the Fund and the transfer agent must adopt certain policies and procedures and otherwise comply with the terms and conditions of no-action relief provided by the SEC staff. Financial exploitation means: (i) the wrongful or unauthorized taking, withholding, appropriation, or use of a Specified Adult’s funds or securities; or (ii) any act or omission by a person, including through the use of a power of attorney, guardianship, or any other authority regarding a Specified Adult, to (a) obtain control, through deception, intimidation or undue influence, over the Specified Adult’s money, assets or property, or (b) convert the Specified Adult’s money, assets or property. The transfer agent and/or the Fund may not be aware of factors suggesting financial exploitation of a Specified Adult and may not be able to identify Specified Adults in all circumstances. Furthermore, the transfer agent is not required to delay the disbursement of redemption proceeds and does not assume any obligation to do so. For purposes of this paragraph, the term “Specified Adult” refers to an individual who is a natural person (i) age 65 and older, or (ii) age 18 and older and whom the Fund’s transfer agent reasonably believes has a mental or physical impairment that renders the individual unable to protect his or her own interests.

Unless otherwise instructed, redemption proceeds will be mailed to an investor’s address of record. The transfer agent may require additional supporting documents for redemptions made by corporations, executors, administrators, trustees or

guardians. A redemption request will not be deemed properly received until the transfer agent receives all required documents in proper form.

If a shareholder holds shares in more than one class, any request for redemption must specify the class being redeemed. In the event of a failure to specify which class, or if the investor owns fewer shares of the class than specified, the redemption request will be delayed until the transfer agent receives further instructions. Redemption proceeds for shares purchased by check, other than a certified or official bank check, will be remitted upon clearance of the check, which may take up to ten days. Each Service Agent is responsible for transmitting promptly orders for its customers.

The Service Agent may charge you a fee for executing your order. The amount and applicability of such a fee is determined and should be disclosed to its customers by each Service Agent.

The Fund reserves the right to modify or terminate telephonic, electronic or other redemption services described in the Prospectus and this SAI at any time.

Systematic Withdrawal Plan

The Systematic Withdrawal Plan permits you to have a specified dollar amount automatically withdrawn from your account on a regular basis (i.e., on a monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual basis). The Systematic Withdrawal Plan is available to those shareholders who own shares directly with the Fund. You should contact your Service Agent to determine if it offers a similar service.

Class A, Class C, Class C1 and Class D Shareholders. Class A, Class C, Class C1 and Class D shareholders having an account with a balance of \$5,000 or more may elect to make withdrawals of a minimum of \$50 per transaction per month. For retirement plans subject to mandatory distribution requirements, the minimum withdrawal amounts will not apply. There are two ways to receive payment of proceeds of redemptions made through the Systematic Withdrawal Plan: (1) Check mailed by the Fund's transfer agent—Fund shares will be redeemed on the day of the month indicated on your account application, (or if no day is indicated, on the 20th day of the month) or the next business day and a check for the proceeds will be mailed within three business days. Available processing dates currently are the 1st, 5th, 10th, 15th, 20th and 25th days of the month; or (2) electronic transfer (ACH) to checking or savings account—redemptions of Fund shares may occur on any business day of the month and the checking or savings account will be credited with the proceeds in approximately two business days. You may change the amount to be paid to you or terminate the Systematic Withdrawal Plan at any time, without charge or penalty, by contacting the Fund or your Service Agent. The Fund, its transfer agent, and the Distributor also reserve the right to modify or terminate the Systematic Withdrawal Plan at any time. See "Waivers of Contingent Deferred Sales Charge," above, for information about application of the contingent deferred sales charge to withdrawals under the Systematic Withdrawal Plan.

Class FI, Class I and Class IS Shareholders. Certain shareholders of the Fund's Class FI, Class I and Class IS shares with an initial NAV of \$1,000,000 or more, or certain other shareholders authorized by the Distributor, may be eligible to participate in the Systematic Withdrawal Plan. Receipt of payment of proceeds of redemptions made through the Systematic Withdrawal Plan will be wired through electronic transfer (ACH) to your checking or savings account—redemptions of Fund shares may occur on any business day of the month and the checking or savings account will be credited with the proceeds in approximately two business days. Requests to change or discontinue the Systematic Withdrawal Plan may be made at the Fund's website, www.franklintempleton.com/prospectus, by calling the Fund at 877-6LM-FUND/656-3863, or by writing to the Fund or your Service Agent. You may change the amount to be paid to you or terminate the Systematic Withdrawal Plan at any time, without charge or penalty, by notifying the Fund or your Service Agent. The Fund, its transfer agent, and the Distributor also reserve the right to modify or terminate the Systematic Withdrawal Plan at any time.

In General. The amounts paid to you each redemption period are obtained by redeeming sufficient shares from your account to provide the withdrawal amount that you have specified.

Redemptions will be made at the NAV per share, determined as of the scheduled close of regular trading on the NYSE (normally 4:00 p.m., Eastern time) on the day corresponding to the redemption option designated by the investor, less any applicable contingent deferred sales charge. If the NYSE is not open for business on that day, the shares will be redeemed at the per share NAV determined as of the scheduled close of regular trading on the NYSE on the next day the NYSE is open, less any applicable contingent deferred sales charge. See "Valuation of Shares" below for additional information about the NYSE's holiday schedule.

Withdrawal payments are treated as a sale of shares rather than as a dividend or other distribution. A payment is taxable to the extent that the total amount of the payment exceeds the tax basis in the shares deemed sold. Other taxes or tax-related consequences may apply, and you should consult your tax professional before establishing a Systematic Withdrawal Plan. If the periodic withdrawals exceed reinvested dividends and other distributions, the amount of your original investment may be correspondingly reduced.

Ordinarily, you should not purchase additional shares of a fund in which you have an account if you maintain a Systematic Withdrawal Plan because there are tax disadvantages associated with such purchases and withdrawals.

Redemptions In Kind

The Fund reserves the right, under certain conditions, to honor any request for a redemption by making payment in whole or in part by delivering securities valued in accordance with the procedures described under "Share price" in the Fund's Prospectus. Because redemption in kind may be used at times of unusual illiquidity in the markets, these valuation methods may include fair value estimations. If payment is made in securities, a shareholder should expect to incur brokerage expenses in converting those securities into cash, and the market price of those securities will be subject to fluctuation until they are sold. In addition, a redemption is generally a taxable event for shareholders, regardless of whether the redemption is satisfied in cash or in kind. The securities delivered may not be representative of the entire Fund portfolio, may represent only one issuer or a limited number of issuers and may be securities that the Fund would otherwise sell. The Fund will not use securities to pay redemptions by the Distributor or other affiliated persons of the Fund, except as permitted by law, SEC rules or orders, or interpretive guidance from the SEC staff or other proper authorities.

Shares Purchased and Redeemed Through Another Service Agent

The Fund has authorized certain Service Agents to receive on its behalf purchase and redemption orders. Such Service Agents are authorized to designate plan administrator intermediaries to receive purchase and redemption orders on the Fund's behalf. The Fund will be deemed to have received a purchase or redemption order when an authorized Service Agent or, if applicable, a Service Agent's authorized designee, receives the order. Orders will be priced at the Fund's NAV next computed after they are received by an authorized Service Agent or the Service Agent's authorized designee and accepted by the Fund.

Transferring Fund Shares to Another Service Agent

You may transfer Fund shares only to a Service Agent that has entered into an agreement with the Distributor or one of its affiliates with respect to the Fund. Some Service Agents may have agreements with the Distributor or one of its affiliates with respect to some funds and not others. Depending on the Service Agent to which you transfer the shares, certain shareholder services may not be available for the transferred shares. After the transfer, you may purchase additional Fund shares. All future trading of Fund shares, including exchanges, is subject to the rules of the Service Agent and its continued agreement with the Distributor that permits such trading.

You should contact your Service Agent or the appropriate fund for further information on transferring Fund shares.

EXCHANGE OF SHARES

Exchanges of Fund shares are discussed under the "Buying shares," "Exchanging shares," and "Redeeming shares" sections of the Fund's Prospectus; this information is incorporated herein by reference. The exchange privilege enables shareholders to acquire shares of the same class in another fund sold by the Distributor (excluding Putnam Investments Funds). If the fund into which you wish to exchange your shares does not offer the class of shares in which you are currently invested, you may be able to exchange for a different share class (see the Fund's Prospectus for more information). This privilege is available to shareholders residing in any state in which the Fund shares being acquired may legally be sold. Prior to any exchange, the shareholder should obtain and review a copy of the current prospectus of each fund into which an exchange is being considered. The Prospectus describes the requirements for exchanging shares of the Fund and may be obtained as described on the cover page of this SAI.

Upon receipt of proper instructions and all necessary supporting documents, shares submitted for exchange are redeemed at the then-current NAV, and the proceeds, net of any applicable sales charge, are immediately invested in shares of

the fund being acquired at that fund's then current NAV. The Distributor reserves the right to reject any exchange request. The exchange privilege may be modified or terminated at any time after written notice to shareholders.

Class A, Class FI, Class R, Class I and Class IS Exchanges. Class A, Class FI, Class R, Class I and Class IS shareholders of the Fund who wish to exchange all or a portion of their shares for shares of the respective class in another fund may do so without imposition of any initial sales charge (if shares being exchanged were subject to an initial sales charge) but subject to a contingent deferred sales charge, if applicable. An exchange of shares that were not subject to any sales charge will be subject to any applicable initial sales charge or contingent deferred sales charge upon exchange.

Class C Exchanges. Class C shares of the Fund may be exchanged for other Class C shares without imposition of any charge but subject to a contingent deferred sales charge, if applicable. Upon an exchange, the new Class C shares will be deemed to have been purchased on the same date as the Class C shares of the Fund that have been exchanged.

Class C1 Exchanges. Investors that hold Class C1 shares may exchange those shares for Class C1 shares of another fund, or if a fund does not offer Class C1, for Class C shares, in each case without imposition of any charge but subject to a contingent deferred sales charge, if applicable. However, once an investor exchanges Class C1 shares for Class C shares, the investor would not be permitted to exchange from Class C shares back to Class C1 shares.

Class D Exchanges. Class D shares of the Fund may not be exchanged.

Class 1 Exchanges. Class 1 shareholders who wish to exchange all or a portion of their shares may exchange Class 1 shares for Class A shares of certain funds available for exchange. Ask your Service Agent about the funds available for exchange.

Certain retirement plan programs with exchange features in effect prior to November 20, 2006, as approved by the Distributor, will remain eligible for exchange from Class C shares or Class C1 shares to Class A shares in accordance with the program terms. See "Grandfathered Retirement Program with Exchange Features" for additional information.

Additional Information Regarding the Exchange Privilege

The Fund is not designed to provide investors with a means of speculation on short-term market movements. A pattern of frequent exchanges by investors can be disruptive to efficient portfolio management and, consequently, can be detrimental to the Fund and its shareholders. See "Frequent trading of fund shares" in the Prospectus.

During times of drastic economic or market conditions, the Fund may suspend the exchange privilege temporarily without notice and treat exchange requests based on their separate components—redemption orders with a simultaneous request to purchase the other fund's shares. In such a case, the redemption request would be processed at the Fund's next determined NAV but the purchase order would be effective only at the NAV next determined after the fund being purchased formally accepts the order, which may result in the purchase being delayed.

Certain shareholders may be able to exchange shares by telephone. See the Fund's Prospectus for additional information. Exchanges will be processed at the NAV next determined. Redemption procedures discussed above are also applicable for exchanging shares, and exchanges will be made upon receipt of all supporting documents in proper form. If the account registration of the shares of the fund being acquired is identical to the registration of the shares of the fund exchanged, no signature guarantee is required.

The exchange privilege may be modified or terminated at any time and is available only in those jurisdictions where such exchanges legally may be made. An exchange is treated as a sale of the shares exchanged and could result in taxable gain or loss to the shareholder making the exchange. Other taxes or tax-related consequences may apply, and you should consult your tax professional before requesting an exchange.

VALUATION OF SHARES

The NAV per share of each class of the Fund is generally calculated as of the close of regular trading (normally 4:00 p.m., Eastern time) on each day on which the NYSE is open. As of the date of this SAI, the NYSE is normally open for trading every weekday except in the event of an emergency or for the following holidays (or the days on which they are observed): New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Juneteenth National Independence Day,

Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. Because of the differences in distribution fees and class specific expenses, the per share NAV of each class of the Fund will differ. Please see the Fund's Prospectus for a description of the procedures used by the Fund in valuing its assets.

UNCLAIMED SHARE ACCOUNTS

The Fund may be required to close your account after a period of inactivity, as determined by applicable U.S. state or territory abandoned or unclaimed property laws and regulations, and transfer your shares to the appropriate U.S. state or territory. Please be advised that abandoned or unclaimed property laws and regulations for certain U.S. states or territories require financial organizations to transfer (escheat) unclaimed property to the appropriate U.S. state or territory if no activity occurs in an account for a period of time as specified by applicable laws and regulations. These laws and regulations may require the transfer of shares of the Fund, including shares held through a traditional or Roth IRA account. For traditional IRA accounts escheated to a U.S. state or territory under these abandoned or unclaimed property laws and regulations, the escheatment will generally be treated as a taxable distribution from your IRA to you; U.S. federal and any applicable state income tax may be withheld. This may apply to Roth IRA accounts in addition to traditional IRA accounts. For more information on unclaimed property and how to maintain an active account, please contact your Service Agent or the Fund's transfer agent.

PROXY VOTING GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

The Manager delegates to the Subadviser the responsibility for voting proxies for the Fund through its contracts with the Subadviser. The Subadviser may use its own proxy voting policies and procedures to vote proxies of the Fund if the Fund's Board reviews and approves the use of those policies and procedures. Accordingly, the Manager does not expect to have proxy-voting responsibility for the Fund.

Should the Manager become responsible for voting proxies for any reason, such as the inability of the Subadviser to provide investment advisory services, the Manager shall utilize the proxy voting guidelines established by the most recent Subadviser to vote proxies until a new subadviser is retained and the use of its proxy voting policies and procedures is authorized by the Board. In the case of a material conflict between the interests of the Manager (or its affiliates if such conflict is known to persons responsible for voting at the Manager) and any fund, the Board of Directors of the Manager shall consider how to address the conflict and/or how to vote the proxies. The Manager shall maintain records of all proxy votes in accordance with applicable securities laws and regulations.

The Manager shall be responsible for gathering relevant documents and records related to proxy voting from the Subadviser and providing them to the Fund as required for the Fund to comply with applicable rules under the 1940 Act. The Manager shall also be responsible for coordinating the provision of information to the Board with regard to the proxy voting policies and procedures of the Subadviser, including the actual proxy voting policies and procedures of the Subadviser, changes to such policies and procedures, and reports on the administration of such policies and procedures.

The Subadviser's proxy voting policies and procedures govern in determining how proxies relating to the Fund's portfolio securities are voted. A copy of the proxy voting policies and procedures is attached as Appendix A to this SAI. Information regarding how the Fund voted proxies (if any) relating to portfolio securities during the most recent twelve month period ended June 30 is available without charge (1) by calling 877-6LM-FUND/656-3863, (2) on www.franklintempleton.com/prospectus (click on the name of the Fund), and (3) on the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>.

DISCLOSURE OF PORTFOLIO HOLDINGS

The Fund's Board has adopted policies and procedures (the "policy") developed by the Manager with respect to the disclosure of the Fund's portfolio securities and any ongoing arrangements to make available information about the Fund's portfolio securities. The Manager believes the policy is in the best interests of the Fund and its shareholders and that it strikes an appropriate balance between the desire of investors for information about fund portfolio holdings and the need to protect the Fund from potentially harmful disclosures.

General Rules/Website Disclosure

The policy provides that information regarding the Fund's portfolio holdings may be shared at any time with employees of the Manager, the Fund's Subadviser and other affiliated parties involved in the management, administration or operations of the Fund (referred to as fund-affiliated personnel). With respect to non-money market funds, the Fund's complete list of holdings (including the size of each position) may be made available to investors, potential investors, third parties and Franklin Templeton personnel that are not fund-affiliated personnel (i) upon the filing of portfolio holdings reports in accordance with SEC rules, provided that such filings are not made until 15 calendar days following the end of the period covered by the applicable holdings report or (ii) no sooner than 8 business days after month end, provided that such information has been made available through public disclosure. Typically, public disclosure is achieved by required filings with the SEC and/or posting the information to the Fund's Internet site that is accessible by the public, or through public release by a third party vendor.

The Fund currently discloses its complete portfolio holdings 14 calendar days after month-end. The Fund discloses this information on the Fund's website: www.franklintempleton.com/prospectus (click on the name of the Fund).

Ongoing Arrangements

Under the policy, the Fund may release portfolio holdings information on a regular basis to a custodian, sub-custodian, fund accounting agent, proxy voting provider, rating agency or other vendor or service provider for a legitimate business purpose, where the party receiving the information is under a duty of confidentiality, including a duty to prohibit the sharing of non-public information with unauthorized sources and trading upon non-public information. The Fund may enter into other ongoing arrangements for the release of portfolio holdings information, but only if such arrangements serve a legitimate business purpose and are with a party who is subject to a confidentiality agreement and restrictions on trading upon non-public information. None of the Fund, Franklin Templeton or any other affiliated party may receive compensation or any other consideration in connection with such arrangements. Ongoing arrangements to make available information about the Fund's portfolio securities will be reviewed at least annually by the Fund's Board.

Set forth below is a list, as of December 1, 2025, of those parties with whom the Manager, on behalf of the Fund, has authorized ongoing arrangements that include the release of portfolio holdings information in accordance with the policy, as well as the maximum frequency of the release under such arrangements, and the minimum length of the lag, if any, between the date of the information and the date on which the information is disclosed. The ongoing arrangements may vary for each party, and it is possible that not every party will receive information for the Fund. The parties identified below as recipients are service providers, fund rating agencies, consultants and analysts.

Recipient	Frequency	Delay Before Dissemination
Barclays Bank PLC	Daily	None
Bloomberg AIM	Daily	None
Bloomberg L.P.	Daily	None
Bloomberg Portfolio Analysis	Daily	None
Brown Brothers Harriman	Daily	None
Charles River	Daily	None
Citco	Daily	None
Eagle Investment Systems Corp	Daily	None
Emerging Portfolio Fund Research, Inc. (EPFR), an Informa Company	Monthly	None
Enfusion Systems	Daily	None
ENSO LP	Daily	None

eVestment Alliance	Quarterly	8-10 Days
FactSet	Daily	None
HSBC Global Asset Management	Daily	None
Institutional Shareholder Services	Daily	None
ITG	Daily	None
Kailash Concepts	Monthly	None
Middle Office Solutions, LLC	Daily	None
Morgan Stanley Capital Inc.	Daily	None
Morningstar	Daily	None
NaviSite, Inc.	Daily	None
StarCompliance	Daily	None
State Street Bank and Trust Company	Daily	None
STP Investments	Daily	None
SunGard/Protegent (formerly Dataware)	Daily	None
The Bank of New York Mellon	Daily	None
The Northern Trust Company	Daily	None
The Northern Trust Melbourne	Daily	None
Thomson	Semi-annually	None
Thomson Reuters	Daily	None
VPD Financial Software Consulting	Daily	None
Wilshire Analytics (Axiom and Compass)	Daily	None

Portfolio holdings information for the Fund may also be released from time to time pursuant to ongoing arrangements with the following parties:

Recipient	Frequency	Delay Before Dissemination
Broadridge	Daily	None
Deutsche Bank	Monthly	6-8 Business Days
DST International plc (DSTi)	Daily	None
Electra Information Systems	Daily	None
Fidelity	Quarterly	5 Business Days
Fitch	Monthly	6-8 Business Days
Frank Russell	Monthly	1 Day
Glass Lewis & Co.	Daily	None
Informa Investment Solutions	Quarterly	8-10 Days

Interactive Data Corp	Daily	None
Liberty Hampshire	Weekly and Month End	None
RBC Investor and Treasury Services	Daily	None
S&P (Rating Agency)	Weekly Tuesday Night	1 Business Day
SunTrust	Weekly and Month End	None

Excluded from the lists of ongoing arrangements set forth above are ongoing arrangements where either (i) the disclosure of portfolio holdings information occurs concurrently with or after the time at which the portfolio holdings information is included in a public filing with the SEC that is required to include the information, or (ii) the Fund's portfolio holdings information is made available no earlier than the day next following the day on which the Fund makes the information available on its website, as disclosed in the Fund's Prospectus. The approval of the Fund's Chief Compliance Officer, or designee, must be obtained before entering into any new ongoing arrangement or altering any existing ongoing arrangement to make available portfolio holdings information, or with respect to any exceptions from the policy.

Release of Limited Portfolio Holdings Information

In addition to the ongoing arrangements described above, the Fund's complete or partial list of holdings (including size of positions) may be released to another party on a one-time basis, provided the party receiving the information has executed a non-disclosure and confidentiality agreement and provided that the specific release of information has been approved by the Fund's Chief Compliance Officer or designee as consistent with the policy. By way of illustration and not of limitation, release of non-public information about the Fund's portfolio holdings may be made (i) to a proposed or potential adviser or Subadviser(s) or other investment manager asked to provide investment management services to the Fund, or (ii) to a third party in connection with a program or similar trade.

In addition, the policy permits the release to investors, potential investors, third parties and Franklin Templeton personnel that are not fund-affiliated personnel of limited portfolio holdings information in other circumstances, including:

- The Fund's top ten securities, current as of month-end, and the individual size of each such security position may be released at any time following month-end with simultaneous public disclosure.
- The Fund's top ten securities positions (including the aggregate but not individual size of such positions) may be released at any time with simultaneous public disclosure.
- A list of securities (that may include fund holdings together with other securities) followed by an investment professional (without position sizes or identification of particular funds) may be disclosed to sell-side brokers at any time for the purpose of obtaining research and/or market information from such brokers.
- A trade in process may be discussed only with counterparties, potential counterparties and others involved in the transaction (i.e., brokers and custodians).
- The Fund's sector weightings, yield and duration (for fixed income and money market funds), performance attribution (e.g., analysis of the Fund's out-performance or underperformance of its benchmark based on its portfolio holdings) and other summary and statistical information that does not include identification of specific portfolio holdings may be released, even if non-public, if such release is otherwise in accordance with the policy's general principles.
- A small number of the Fund's portfolio holdings (including information that the Fund no longer holds a particular holding) may be released, but only if the release of the information could not reasonably be seen to interfere with current or future purchase or sales activities of the Fund and is not contrary to law.
- The Fund's portfolio holdings may be released on an as-needed basis to its legal counsel, counsel to its Independent Trustees and its independent public accounting firm, in required regulatory filings or otherwise to governmental agencies and authorities.

Exceptions to the Policy

The Fund's Chief Compliance Officer, or designee, may, as is deemed appropriate, approve exceptions from the policy. Exceptions are granted only after a thorough examination and consultation with the Manager's legal department, as necessary. Exceptions from the policy are reported annually to the Fund's Board.

Limitations of Policy

The Fund's portfolio holdings policy is designed to prevent sharing of portfolio information with third parties that have no legitimate business purpose for accessing the information. The policy may not be effective to limit access to portfolio holdings information in all circumstances, however. For example, the Manager or the Subadviser may manage accounts other than the Fund that have investment objectives and strategies similar to those of the Fund. Because these accounts, including the Fund, may be similarly managed, portfolio holdings may be similar across the accounts. In that case, an investor in another account managed by the Manager or the Subadviser may be able to infer the portfolio holdings of the Fund from the portfolio holdings in that investor's account.

THE TRUST

The certificate of trust to establish the Trust was filed with the State Department of Assessments and Taxation of Maryland on October 4, 2006. The Fund is a series of the Trust. Prior to September 1, 2021, the Trust was named "Legg Mason Partners Equity Trust". As of April 16, 2007, the Fund was redomiciled as a series of the Trust. Prior to April 16, 2007, the Fund was a series of Legg Mason Partners Investment Trust, a Massachusetts business trust. Prior to the reorganization of the Fund as a series of such Massachusetts business trust, the Fund was a series of Legg Mason Partners Trust II, a Massachusetts business trust. Prior to August 7, 2021, the Fund was named "QS Global Equity Fund." Prior to April 1, 2016, the Fund was named "QS Batterymarch Global Equity Fund." Prior to June 30, 2014, the Fund was named "Legg Mason Batterymarch Global Equity Fund." Prior to October 5, 2009, the Fund was named "Legg Mason Partners Global Equity Fund."

The Trust is a Maryland statutory trust. A Maryland statutory trust is an unincorporated business association that is established under, and governed by, Maryland law. Maryland law provides a statutory framework for the powers, duties, rights and obligations of the trustees and shareholders of a statutory trust, while the more specific powers, duties, rights and obligations of the trustees and the shareholders are determined by the trustees as set forth in a trust's declaration of trust. The Trust's Declaration of Trust (the "Declaration") provides that by becoming a shareholder of the Fund, each shareholder shall be expressly held to have agreed to be bound by the provisions of the Declaration and any other governing instrument of the Trust, such as the by-laws of the Trust, which contain additional rules governing the conduct of the business of the Trust.

Some of the more significant provisions of the Declaration are summarized below. The following summary is qualified in its entirety by reference to the applicable provisions of the Declaration.

Shareholder Voting

Under the Declaration, the Trustees have broad authority to direct the business and affairs of the Trust. The Declaration provides for shareholder voting as required by the 1940 Act or other applicable laws but otherwise permits, consistent with Maryland law, actions by the Trustees without seeking the consent of shareholders. For example, the Trustees are empowered to amend the Declaration or authorize the merger or consolidation of the Trust into another trust or entity, reorganize the Trust or any series or class into another trust or entity or a series or class of another entity, sell all or substantially all of the assets of the Trust or any series or class to another entity, or a series or class of another entity, terminate the Trust or any series or class, or adopt or amend the by-laws of the Trust, in each case without shareholder approval if the 1940 Act would not require such approval.

The Fund is not required to hold an annual meeting of shareholders, but the Fund will call special meetings of shareholders whenever required by the 1940 Act or by the terms of the Declaration. The Declaration provides for "dollar-weighted voting" which means that a shareholder's voting power is determined, not by the number of shares he or she owns, but by the dollar value of those shares determined on the record date. All shareholders of record of all series and classes of the Trust vote together, except where required by the 1940 Act to vote separately by series or by class, or when the Trustees have determined that a matter affects only the interests of one or more series or classes of shares. There is no cumulative voting on any matter submitted to a vote of the shareholders.

Election and Removal of Trustees

The Declaration provides that the Trustees may establish the number of Trustees and that vacancies on the Board may be filled by the remaining Trustees, except when election of Trustees by the shareholders is required under the 1940 Act. When a vote of shareholders is required to elect Trustees, the Declaration provides that such Trustees shall be elected by a plurality of votes cast by shareholders at a meeting at which a quorum is present. The Declaration also provides that a mandatory retirement age may be set by action of two-thirds of the Trustees and that Trustees may be removed, with or without cause, by a vote of shareholders holding two-thirds of the voting power of the Trust, or by a vote of two-thirds of the remaining Trustees. The provisions of the Declaration relating to the election and removal of Trustees may not be amended without the approval of two-thirds of the Trustees.

Amendments to the Declaration

The Trustees are authorized to amend the Declaration without the vote of shareholders, but no amendment may be made that impairs the exemption from personal liability granted in the Declaration to persons who are or have been shareholders, Trustees, officers or, employees of the Trust or that limits the rights to indemnification, advancement of expenses or insurance provided in the Declaration with respect to actions or omissions of persons entitled to indemnification, advancement of expenses or insurance under the Declaration prior to the amendment.

Issuance and Redemption of Shares

The Fund may issue an unlimited number of shares for such consideration and on such terms as the Trustees may determine. All shares offered pursuant to the Prospectus of the Fund, when issued, will be fully paid and non-assessable. Shareholders are not entitled to any appraisal rights with respect to their shares and, except as the Trustees may determine, shall have no preemptive, conversion, exchange or similar rights. The Fund may involuntarily redeem a shareholder's shares upon certain conditions as may be determined by the Trustees, including, for example, if the shareholder fails to provide the Fund with identification required by law, or if the Fund is unable to verify the information received from the shareholder. Additionally, as discussed below, shares may be redeemed in connection with the closing of small accounts.

Disclosure of Shareholder Holdings

The Declaration specifically requires shareholders, upon demand, to disclose to the Fund such information with respect to their ownership of shares of the Fund, whether direct or indirect, as the Trustees may deem necessary in order to comply with various laws or regulations or for such other purpose as the Trustees may decide. The Fund may disclose such ownership information if required by law or regulation, or as the Trustees otherwise decide.

Small Accounts

The Declaration provides that the Fund may close out a shareholder's account by redeeming all of the shares in the account if the account falls below a minimum account size (which may vary by class) that may be set by the Trustees from time to time. Alternately, the Declaration permits the Fund to assess a fee for small accounts (which may vary by class) and redeem shares in the account to cover such fees, or convert the shares into another share class that is geared to smaller accounts.

Series and Classes

The Declaration provides that the Trustees may establish series and classes in addition to those currently established and that the Trustees may determine the rights and preferences, limitations and restrictions, including qualifications for ownership, conversion and exchange features, minimum purchase and account size, expenses and charges, and other features of the series and classes. The Trustees may change any of those features, terminate any series or class, combine series with other series in the Trust, combine one or more classes of a series with another class in that series or convert the shares of one class into shares of another class.

Each share of the Fund, as a series of the Trust, represents an interest in the Fund only and not in the assets of any other series of the Trust.

Shareholder, Trustee and Officer Liability

The Declaration provides that shareholders are not personally liable for the obligations of the Fund and requires the Fund to indemnify a shareholder against any loss or expense claimed solely because of the shareholder's being or having been a

shareholder. The Fund will assume the defense of any claim against a shareholder for personal liability at the request of the shareholder. The Declaration further provides that a Trustee acting in his or her capacity as a Trustee is not personally liable to any person, other than the Trust or its shareholders, in connection with the affairs of the Trust. Each Trustee is required to perform his or her duties in good faith and in a manner he or she believes to be in the best interests of the Trust. All actions and omissions of Trustees are presumed to be in accordance with the foregoing standard of performance, and any person alleging the contrary has the burden of proving that allegation.

The Declaration limits a Trustee's liability to the Trust or any shareholder to the fullest extent permitted under current Maryland law by providing that a Trustee is liable to the Trust or its shareholders for monetary damages only (a) to the extent that it is proved that he or she actually received an improper benefit or profit in money, property, or services or (b) to the extent that a judgment or other final adjudication adverse to the Trustee is entered in a proceeding based on a finding in the proceeding that the Trustee's action, or failure to act, was the result of active and deliberate dishonesty and was material to the cause of action adjudicated in the proceeding. The Declaration requires the Trust to indemnify any persons who are or who have been Trustees, officers or employees of the Trust to the fullest extent permitted by law against liability and expenses in connection with any claim or proceeding in which he or she is involved by virtue of having been a Trustee, officer or employee. Subject to applicable federal law, expenses related to the defense against any claim to which indemnification may apply shall be advanced by the Trust upon receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the recipient of those expenses to repay the advanced amount if it is ultimately found that he or she is not entitled to indemnification. In making any determination as to whether a person has engaged in conduct for which indemnification is not available, or as to whether there is reason to believe that such person ultimately will be found entitled to indemnification, such person shall be afforded a rebuttable presumption that he or she did not engage in conduct for which indemnification is not available.

The Declaration provides that any Trustee who serves as chair of the Board, a member or chair of a committee of the Board, lead independent Trustee, audit committee financial expert, or in any other similar capacity will not be subject to any greater standard of care or liability because of such position.

Derivative Actions

The Declaration provides a detailed process for the bringing of derivative actions by shareholders in order to permit legitimate inquiries and claims while avoiding the time, expense, distraction, and other harm that can be caused to the Fund or its shareholders as a result of spurious shareholder demands and derivative actions. Prior to bringing a derivative action, a demand by no fewer than three unrelated shareholders must be made on the Trustees. The Declaration details information, certifications, undertakings and acknowledgements that must be included in the demand. The Trustees are not required to consider a demand that is not submitted in accordance with the requirements contained in the Declaration. The Declaration also requires that, in order to bring a derivative action, the complaining shareholders must be joined in the action by shareholders owning, at the time of the alleged wrongdoing, at the time of demand, and at the time the action is commenced, shares representing at least 5% of the voting power of the affected funds. The Trustees have a period of 90 days, which may be extended for an additional period not to exceed 60 days, to consider the demand. If a majority of the Trustees who are considered independent for the purposes of considering the demand determine that a suit should be maintained, then the Trust will commence the suit and the suit will proceed directly and not derivatively. If a majority of the independent Trustees determines that maintaining the suit would not be in the best interests of the Fund, the Trustees are required to reject the demand and the complaining shareholders may not proceed with the derivative action unless the shareholders are able to sustain the burden of proof to a court that the decision of the Trustees not to pursue the requested action was not consistent with the standard of performance required of the Trustees in performing their duties. If a demand is rejected, the complaining shareholders will be responsible for the costs and expenses (including attorneys' fees) incurred by the Trust in connection with the consideration of the demand, if, in the judgment of the independent Trustees, the demand was made without reasonable cause or for an improper purpose. If a derivative action is brought in violation of the Declaration, the shareholders bringing the action may be responsible for the Fund's costs, including attorneys' fees.

The Declaration further provides that the Fund shall be responsible for payment of attorneys' fees and legal expenses incurred by a complaining shareholder only if required by law, and any attorneys' fees that the Fund is obligated to pay shall be calculated using reasonable hourly rates. The Declaration also requires that actions by shareholders against the Trust or the Fund be brought only in the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland (Baltimore Division), or if such action may not be brought in

that court, then such action shall be brought in the Circuit Court for Baltimore City and that the right to jury trial be waived to the fullest extent permitted by law.

The Declaration further provides that no provision of the Declaration will be effective to require a waiver of compliance with any provision of the 1933 Act, the 1934 Act or the 1940 Act, or of any valid rule, regulation or order of the Commission thereunder.

TAXES

The following is a summary of certain material U.S. federal (and, where noted, state and local) income tax considerations affecting the Fund and its shareholders. This discussion is very general and does not address all the potential U.S. federal income tax consequences that may be applicable to the Fund or to all categories of investors, some of which may be subject to special tax rules. This summary is based upon the Code, its legislative history, Treasury regulations (including temporary and proposed regulations), published rulings, and court decisions, each as of the date of this SAI and all of which are subject to change, possibly with retroactive effect, which could affect the continuing accuracy of this discussion. This discussion assumes that each shareholder holds its shares of the Fund as capital assets for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Current and prospective shareholders are urged to consult their own tax professionals with respect to the specific U.S. federal, state, local, and non-U.S. tax consequences of investing in the Fund.

Tax Treatment of the Fund

The Fund has elected to be treated, and intends to qualify each year, as a “regulated investment company” under Subchapter M of the Code. To qualify as such, the Fund must, among other things: (a) derive at least 90% of its gross income in each taxable year from dividends, interest, payments with respect to certain securities loans, gains from the sale or other disposition of stock, securities or foreign currencies, other income (including, but not limited to, gains from options, futures, or forward contracts) derived with respect to its business of investing in such stock, securities or currencies, and net income derived from interests in “qualified publicly traded partnerships” (*i.e.*, partnerships (x) the interests in which are traded on an established securities market or are readily tradable on a secondary market or the substantial equivalent thereof, and (y) that derive less than 90% of their income from sources described in this subparagraph (a) other than qualified publicly traded partnerships); and (b) diversify its holdings so that, at the end of each quarter of the Fund’s taxable year, (i) at least 50% of the market value of the Fund’s assets consists of cash and cash items (including receivables), securities of other regulated investment companies, U.S. government securities, and other securities, with such other securities limited, in respect of any one issuer, to an amount not greater than 5% of the value of the Fund’s assets and not more than 10% of the outstanding voting securities of such issuer and (ii) not more than 25% of the value of the Fund’s assets is invested, including through corporations in which the Fund owns a 20% or larger voting stock interest, (x) in the securities (other than U.S. government securities or securities of other regulated investment companies) of any one issuer, (y) in the securities (other than the securities of other regulated investment companies) of any two or more issuers that the Fund controls and that are treated as engaged in the same, similar, or related trades or businesses, or (z) in the securities of one or more “qualified publicly traded partnerships,” which generally include master limited partnerships.

In general, for purposes of the 90% gross income test described above, income derived from a partnership will be treated as qualifying income only to the extent such income is attributable to items of income of the partnership which would be qualifying income if realized directly by the Fund. However, 100% of the net income derived from an interest in a qualified publicly traded partnership will be treated as qualifying income. In general, qualified publicly traded partnerships will be treated as partnerships for U.S. federal income tax purposes because they meet a passive income requirement under the Code. In addition, although in general the passive loss rules of the Code do not apply to regulated investment companies, such rules do apply to a regulated investment company with respect to items attributable to interests in qualified publicly traded partnerships. The Fund’s investments in partnerships, if any, including in qualified publicly traded partnerships, may result in the Fund being subject to U.S. federal, state, local, or non-U.S. income, franchise, or withholding tax liabilities.

For purposes of the diversification test described above, the term “outstanding voting securities of such issuer” will include the equity securities of a qualified publicly traded partnership. Also, for purposes of the diversification test, the identification of the issuer (or, in some cases, issuers) of a particular Fund investment can depend on the terms and conditions of that investment. In some cases, identification of the issuer (or issuers) is uncertain under current law, and an adverse

determination or future guidance by the IRS with respect to issuer identification for a particular type of investment may adversely affect the Fund's ability to meet the diversification test.

As a regulated investment company, the Fund will not be subject to U.S. federal income tax on the portion of its taxable investment income and capital gains that it distributes, provided that it satisfies a minimum distribution requirement. To satisfy the minimum distribution requirement, the Fund must distribute at least the sum of (i) 90% of its "investment company taxable income" (*i.e.*, generally, its taxable income other than the excess of its net long-term capital gain over its net short-term capital loss, plus or minus certain other adjustments, and calculated without regard to the deduction for dividends paid), and (ii) 90% of its net tax-exempt income for the taxable year. The Fund will be subject to income tax at the regular corporate tax rate on any taxable income or gains that it does not distribute.

If, for any taxable year, the Fund were to fail to qualify as a regulated investment company under the Code or were to fail to meet the distribution requirement, it would be taxed in the same manner as an ordinary corporation, and distributions would not be deductible by the Fund in computing its taxable income. In addition, in the event of a failure to qualify, the Fund's distributions, including any distributions of net tax-exempt income and net long-term capital gains, would be taxable to shareholders as ordinary dividend income for U.S. federal income tax purposes to the extent of the Fund's current and accumulated earnings and profits. However, such dividends would be eligible, subject to any generally applicable limitations, (i) to be treated as qualified dividend income in the case of shareholders taxed as individuals and (ii) for the dividends-received deduction in the case of corporate shareholders. Moreover, if the Fund were to fail to qualify as a regulated investment company in any year, it would be required to pay out its earnings and profits accumulated in that year in order to qualify again as a regulated investment company. If the Fund were to fail to meet the income, diversification, or distribution test described above, the Fund could in some cases cure such failure, including by paying a Fund-level tax, paying interest, making additional distributions, or disposing of certain assets. In particular, if in the first instance, the Fund does not satisfy the diversification test as of a particular quarter end, it will have up to 30 days after that quarter end to adjust its holdings in order to comply with the test retroactively. Portfolio transactions executed by the Fund in order to comply with the diversification test will increase the Fund's portfolio turnover and trading costs and may increase the amount of taxes payable by shareholders to the extent any capital gains are realized as a result of such transactions. If the Fund were to fail to qualify as a regulated investment company for a period greater than two taxable years, the Fund would generally be required to recognize any net built-in gains with respect to certain of its assets upon a disposition of such assets within five years of qualifying as a regulated investment company in a subsequent year.

If the Fund were to fail to distribute in a calendar year at least the sum of (i) 98% of its ordinary income for that year and (ii) 98.2% of its capital gain net income (*i.e.*, the excess of all gains from sales or exchanges of capital assets over the losses from such sales or exchanges) for the one-year period ending October 31 of that year (or November 30 or December 31 of that year if the Fund is permitted to elect and so elects), it would be subject to a 4% nondeductible excise tax. For this purpose, however, any ordinary income or capital gain net income that is retained by the Fund and subject to corporate income tax will be considered to have been distributed by year end. In addition, the minimum amounts that must be distributed in any year to avoid the excise tax will be increased or decreased to reflect any under-distribution or overdistribution, as the case may be, from the previous year. For purposes of the required excise tax distribution, a regulated investment company's ordinary gains and losses from the sale, exchange or other taxable disposition of property that would otherwise be taken into account after October 31 of a calendar year (or November 30 of that year if the regulated investment company makes the election described above) generally are treated as arising on January 1 of the following calendar year; in the case of a fund with a December 31 year end that makes the election described above, no such gains or losses will be so treated. The Fund anticipates that it will pay such dividends and will make such distributions as are necessary to avoid the application of this excise tax, but there can be no assurance that it will be able to do so. In determining its net capital gain (*i.e.*, net realized long-term capital gains in excess of net realized short-term capital losses, including any capital loss carryforwards), its taxable income, and its earnings and profits, a regulated investment company generally is permitted to elect to treat part or all of any post-October capital loss (defined as any net capital loss attributable to the portion of the taxable year after October 31, or if there is no such loss, the net long-term capital loss or net short-term capital loss attributable to such portion of the taxable year), or late-year ordinary loss (generally, the sum of its (i) net ordinary loss from the sale, exchange or other taxable disposition of property, attributable to the portion of the taxable year after October 31 and its (ii) other net ordinary loss attributable to the portion of the taxable year after December 31) as if incurred in the succeeding taxable year.

Tax Treatment of the Fund's Investments

The Fund's transactions in zero coupon securities, foreign currencies, forward contracts, options, and futures contracts (including options and futures contracts on foreign currencies), if any, will be subject to special provisions of the Code (including provisions relating to "hedging transactions" and "straddles") that, among other things, may affect the character of gains and losses realized by the Fund (*i.e.*, may affect whether gains or losses are ordinary or capital), accelerate recognition of income to the Fund, and defer Fund losses. These rules could therefore affect the character, amount, and timing of distributions to shareholders. These provisions also (a) will require the Fund to "mark to market" certain types of the positions in its portfolio (*i.e.*, require the Fund to treat all unrealized gains and losses with respect to those positions as though they were realized at the end of each year) and (b) may cause the Fund to recognize income prior to or without receiving cash with which to pay dividends or make distributions in amounts necessary to satisfy the distribution requirements for avoiding income and excise taxes. In order to distribute this income and avoid a tax at the Fund level, the Fund might be required to sell portfolio securities that it might otherwise have continued to hold, potentially resulting in additional taxable gain or loss.

As a result of entering into swap contracts, if any, the Fund may make or receive periodic net payments. The Fund may also make or receive a payment when a swap is terminated prior to maturity through an assignment of the swap or other closing transaction. Periodic net payments will generally constitute ordinary income or deductions, while termination of a swap will generally result in capital gain or loss (which will be a long-term capital gain or loss if the Fund has been a party to the swap for more than one year). With respect to certain types of swaps, the Fund may be required to recognize currently income or loss with respect to future payments on such swaps or may elect under certain circumstances to mark such swaps to market annually for tax purposes as ordinary income or loss.

Any investments by the Fund in so-called "section 1256 contracts," such as regulated futures contracts, most foreign currency forward contracts traded in the interbank market, and non-equity options written or purchased by the Fund on U.S. exchanges (including options on broad-based equity indices and debt securities), are subject to special tax rules. Any section 1256 contracts held by the Fund at the end of its taxable year (and, for purposes of the 4% excise tax, on certain later dates as prescribed under the Code) are required to be marked to their market value, and any unrealized gain or loss on those positions will be included in the Fund's income as if each position had been sold for its fair market value at the end of the taxable year. The resulting gain or loss will be combined with any gain or loss realized by the Fund from positions in section 1256 contracts closed during the taxable year. Provided such positions were held as capital assets and were neither part of a "hedging transaction" nor part of a "straddle," 60% of the resulting net gain or loss will be treated as long-term capital gain or loss, and 40% of such net gain or loss will be treated as short-term capital gain or loss, regardless of the period of time the positions were actually held by the Fund. Section 1256 contracts do not include any interest rate swap, currency swap, basis swap, interest rate cap, interest rate floor, commodity swap, equity swap, equity index swap, credit default swap, or similar agreement.

In general, option premiums received by the Fund are not immediately included in the income of the Fund. Instead, the premiums are recognized when the option contract expires, the option is exercised by the holder, or the Fund transfers or otherwise terminates the option (e.g., through a closing transaction). If a call option written by the Fund is exercised and the Fund sells or delivers the underlying security, the Fund generally will recognize capital gain or loss equal to (a) the sum of the strike price and the option premium received by the Fund minus (b) the Fund's basis in the security. Such gain or loss generally will be short-term or long-term depending upon the holding period of the underlying security. If securities are purchased by the Fund pursuant to the exercise of a put option written by it, the Fund generally will subtract the premium received for purposes of computing its cost basis in the securities purchased. Gain or loss arising in respect of a termination of the Fund's obligation under an option other than through the exercise of the option will be short-term gain or loss depending on whether the premium income received by the Fund is greater or less than the amount paid by the Fund (if any) in terminating the transaction. Thus, for example, if an option written by the Fund expires unexercised, the Fund generally will recognize short-term gain equal to the premium received.

In general, gain or loss on a short sale is recognized when the Fund closes the sale by delivering the borrowed property to the lender, not when the borrowed property is sold. Gain or loss from a short sale is generally considered as capital gain or loss to the extent that the property used to close the short sale constitutes a capital asset in the Fund's hands. Except with respect to certain situations where the property used by the Fund to close a short sale has a long-term holding period on the date of the short sale, special rules generally treat the gains on short sales as short-term capital gains. These rules may also terminate the running of the holding period of "substantially identical property" held by the Fund. Moreover, a loss on a short

sale will be treated as a long-term capital loss if, on the date of the short sale, "substantially identical property" has been held by the Fund for more than one year.

The Fund may purchase debt obligations with original issue discount ("OID"), market discount, or acquisition discount. Some debt obligations with a fixed maturity date of more than one year from the date of issuance (and all zero-coupon debt obligations with a fixed maturity date of more than one year from the date of issuance) will be treated as debt obligations that are issued with OID. Generally, the amount of the OID is treated as interest income and is included in taxable income (and is accordingly required to be distributed by the Fund) over the term of the debt security, even though payment of that amount is not received until a later time, usually when the debt security matures. Periodic adjustments for inflation in the principal value of inflation-indexed bonds also may be treated as OID that is includible in the Fund's gross income on a current basis.

Some debt obligations with a fixed maturity date of more than one year from the date of issuance that are acquired in the secondary market may be treated as having "market discount." Very generally, market discount is the excess of the stated redemption price of a debt obligation (or in the case of an obligation issued with OID, its "revised issue price") over the purchase price of such obligation. Under the Code, generally, any gain recognized on the disposition of, and any partial payment of principal on, a debt security having market discount is treated as ordinary income to the extent the gain, or principal payment, does not exceed the "accrued market discount" on such debt security. Alternatively, the Fund may elect to accrue market discount currently, in which case the Fund will be required to include the accrued market discount in the Fund's income (as ordinary income) and thus distribute it over the term of the debt security, even though payment of that amount is not received until a later time, upon partial or full repayment or disposition of the debt security. If the Fund elects to accrue market discount currently, the rate at which the market discount accrues, and thus is included in the Fund's income, will depend upon which of the permitted accrual methods the Fund elects.

Some debt obligations with a fixed maturity date of one year or less from the date of issuance that are acquired by the Fund may be treated as having OID or, in certain cases, "acquisition discount" (very generally, the excess of the stated redemption price over the purchase price). The Fund will be required to include the OID or acquisition discount in income (as ordinary income) and thus distribute it over the term of the debt security, even though payment of that amount is not received until a later time, upon partial or full repayment or disposition of the debt security. The rate at which OID or acquisition discount accrues, and thus is included in the Fund's income, will depend upon which of the permitted accrual methods the Fund elects.

Because the OID, market discount, or acquisition discount earned by the Fund in a taxable year may exceed the total amount of cash interest the Fund receives from the relevant debt obligations, the Fund may have to dispose of one or more of its investments, including at a time when it is not advantageous to do so, and use the proceeds thereof to make distributions in amounts necessary to satisfy the distribution requirements. The Fund may realize capital gains or losses from such dispositions, which would increase or decrease the Fund's investment company taxable income and/or net capital gain.

In addition, payment-in-kind securities held by the Fund, if any, will give rise to income which is required to be distributed and is taxable even though the Fund receives no interest payment in cash on the security during the year.

Very generally, where the Fund purchases a bond at a price that exceeds the redemption price at maturity (*i.e.*, a premium), the premium is amortizable over the remaining term of the bond. In the case of a taxable bond, if the Fund makes an election applicable to all such bonds it purchases, which election is irrevocable without consent of the IRS, the Fund reduces the current taxable income from the bond by the amortized premium and reduces its tax basis in the bond by the amount of such offset; upon the disposition or maturity of such bonds acquired on or after January 4, 2013, the Fund is permitted to deduct any remaining premium allocable to a prior period. In the case of a tax-exempt bond, tax rules require the Fund to reduce its tax basis by the amount of amortized premium.

The Fund may invest in debt obligations that are in the lowest rating categories or are unrated, including debt obligations of issuers not currently paying interest or that are in default. Investments in debt obligations that are at risk of or in default present special tax issues for the Fund. Tax rules are not entirely clear about issues such as when the Fund may cease to accrue interest, OID or market discount, when and to what extent deductions may be taken for bad debts or worthless securities, and how payments received on obligations in default should be allocated between principal and income. These and other related issues will be addressed by the Fund when, as, and if it invests in such securities, in order to seek to ensure that it distributes sufficient income to preserve its eligibility for treatment as a regulated investment company and does not become subject to U.S. federal income or excise tax.

A portion of the interest paid or accrued on high yield obligations may not (and interest paid on debt obligations, if any, that are considered for tax purposes to be payable in the equity of the issuer or a related party will not) be deductible to the issuer. If a portion of the interest paid or accrued on certain high yield discount obligations is not deductible by the issuer, that portion will be treated as a dividend for purposes of the corporate dividends-received deduction. In such cases, if the issuer of the high yield discount obligations is a domestic corporation, dividend payments by the Fund may be eligible for the dividends-received deduction to the extent of the deemed dividend portion of such accrued interest.

The Fund may be required to treat amounts as taxable income or gain, subject to the distribution requirements referred to above, even though no corresponding amounts of cash are received concurrently, as a result of (1) mark-to-market rules, constructive sale rules or rules applicable to passive foreign investment companies ("PFICs"), to partnerships or trusts in which the Fund invests or to certain options, futures, or forward contracts, or "appreciated financial positions," (2) the inability to obtain cash distributions or other amounts due to currency controls or restrictions on repatriation imposed by a non-U.S. country with respect to the Fund's investments (including through depositary receipts) in issuers in such country, or (3) tax rules applicable to debt obligations acquired with OID, including zero-coupon or deferred payment bonds and pay-in-kind debt obligations, or to market discount if the Fund elects to accrue such market discount currently. In order to distribute this income and avoid a tax on the Fund, the Fund might be required to liquidate portfolio securities that it might otherwise have continued to hold, potentially resulting in additional taxable gain or loss. The Fund might also meet the distribution requirements by borrowing the necessary cash, thereby incurring interest expenses.

Non-U.S. Investments

Dividends, interest or other income (including, in some cases, capital gains) received by the Fund from investments in non-U.S. securities may be subject to withholding and other taxes imposed by non-U.S. countries. Even if the Fund is entitled to seek a refund in respect of such taxes, it may choose not to. Tax conventions between certain countries and the United States may reduce or eliminate such taxes in some cases. If more than 50% of the value of the Fund's assets at the close of any taxable year consists of stock or securities of non-U.S. corporations, which for this purpose may include obligations of non-U.S. governmental issuers, the Fund may elect, for U.S. federal income tax purposes, to treat non-U.S. income taxes paid by the Fund, if any, as paid by its shareholders. For any year that the Fund is eligible for and makes such an election, shareholders of the Fund will be required to include in income an amount equal to their portion of qualified non-U.S. income taxes paid by the Fund, and shareholders will be entitled, subject to certain holding period requirements and other limitations, to credit their portions of these amounts against their U.S. federal income tax due, if any, or to deduct their portions from their U.S. taxable income, if any. No deductions for non-U.S. taxes paid by the Fund may be claimed, however, by non-corporate shareholders who do not itemize deductions and no deductions for non-U.S. taxes will be permitted to individuals in computing their U.S. federal alternative minimum tax liability. Even if the Fund qualifies to make this election, it may choose not to do so; in that case, non-U.S. taxes that the Fund pays will nonetheless reduce the Fund's taxable income. Non-U.S. taxes paid by the Fund may reduce the return from the Fund's investments.

Under certain circumstances, if the Fund receives a refund of non-U.S. taxes paid in respect of a prior year, the value of Fund shares could be affected or any foreign tax credits or deductions passed through to shareholders in respect of the Fund's non-U.S. taxes for the current year could be reduced.

Under Section 988 of the Code, gains or losses attributable to fluctuations in exchange rates between the time the Fund accrues income or receivables or expenses or other liabilities denominated in a foreign currency and the time the Fund actually collects such income or pays such liabilities are generally treated as ordinary income or ordinary loss. Similarly, gains or losses on foreign currency, foreign currency forward contracts, certain foreign currency options or futures contracts and the disposition of debt securities denominated in foreign currency, to the extent attributable to fluctuations in exchange rates between the acquisition and disposition dates, are also treated as ordinary income or loss unless the Fund were to elect otherwise.

Passive Foreign Investment Companies. If the Fund purchases equity interests (including certain interests treated as equity interests) in non-U.S. entities treated as PFICs for U.S. federal income tax purposes, and does not timely make certain elections, it may be subject to U.S. federal income tax on a portion of any "excess distribution" or gain from the disposition of such shares even if such income is distributed as a taxable dividend by the Fund to its shareholders. Additional charges in the nature of interest may be imposed on the Fund in respect of deferred taxes arising from such distributions or gains.

In general, a PFIC is any non-U.S. corporation in which (i) 75% or more of the gross income for the taxable year is passive income, or (ii) the average percentage of the assets (generally by value, but by adjusted tax basis in certain cases) that produce, or are held for the production of, passive income is at least 50%. Generally, passive income for this purpose means dividends, interest (including income equivalent to interest), royalties, rents, annuities, the excess of gains over losses from certain property transactions and commodities transactions, income from certain notional principal contracts, and foreign currency gains. Passive income for this purpose does not include certain types of passive income excepted by the Code and other guidance.

If the Fund were to invest in a PFIC and timely elect to treat the PFIC as a "qualified electing fund" under the Code for the first year of its holding period in the PFIC stock, in lieu of the foregoing requirements, the Fund would generally be required to include in income each year a portion of the ordinary earnings and net capital gains of the qualified electing fund, even if not distributed to the Fund. The Fund might have to distribute such amounts to satisfy the 90% distribution requirement and to avoid imposition of the 4% excise tax. In order to distribute this income and avoid a tax at the Fund level, the Fund might be required to liquidate portfolio securities that it might otherwise have continued to hold, potentially resulting in additional taxable gain or loss. In order to make the "qualified electing fund" election, the Fund would be required to obtain certain annual information from the PFICs in which it invests, which may be difficult or impossible to obtain. Dividends paid by PFICs will not be eligible to be treated as "qualified dividend income."

If the Fund were to invest in a PFIC and make a mark-to-market election, the Fund would be treated as if it had sold and repurchased its stock in that PFIC at the end of each year. In such case, the Fund would report any such gains as ordinary income and would deduct any such losses as ordinary losses to the extent of previously recognized gains. Such an election must be made separately for each PFIC owned by the Fund and, once made, would be effective for all subsequent taxable years of the Fund, unless revoked with the consent of the IRS. By making the election, the Fund could potentially ameliorate the adverse tax consequences with respect to its ownership of shares in a PFIC, but in any particular year might be required to recognize income in excess of the distributions it receives from PFICs and its proceeds from dispositions of PFIC stock. The Fund might have to distribute such excess income and gain to satisfy the 90% distribution requirement and to avoid imposition of the 4% excise tax. In order to distribute this income and avoid a tax at the Fund level, the Fund might be required to liquidate portfolio securities that it might otherwise have continued to hold, potentially resulting in additional taxable gain or loss.

No Capital Loss Carryforwards

As of October 31, 2025, the Fund had no unused capital loss carryforwards.

Taxation of U.S. Shareholders

Dividends and Distributions. Dividends and other distributions by the Fund are generally treated under the Code as received by the shareholders at the time the dividend or distribution is made. However, if any dividend or distribution is declared by the Fund in October, November, or December of any calendar year and payable to shareholders of record on a specified date in such a month but is actually paid during the following January, such dividend or distribution will be deemed to have been received by each shareholder on December 31 of the year in which the dividend was declared.

The Fund intends to distribute annually substantially all of its investment company taxable income (determined without regard to the dividends-paid deduction), and any net capital gain. However, if the Fund retains for investment an amount equal to all or a portion of its net capital gain, it will be subject to a corporate tax on the amount retained. In that event, the Fund may designate such retained amounts as undistributed capital gains in a notice to its shareholders who, in turn, (a) will be required to include in income for U.S. federal income tax purposes, as long-term capital gains, their proportionate shares of the undistributed amount, (b) will be entitled to credit their proportionate shares of the income tax paid by the Fund on the undistributed amount against their U.S. federal income tax liabilities, if any, and to claim refunds on a properly filed U.S. tax return to the extent their credits exceed their liabilities, if any, and (c) will be entitled to increase their tax basis, for U.S. federal income tax purposes, in their shares by an amount equal to their share of the excess of the amount of undistributed net capital gain included in their income over the income tax paid by the Fund on the undistributed amount. Organizations or persons not subject to U.S. federal income tax on such capital gains will be entitled to a refund of their pro rata share of such taxes paid by the Fund upon timely filing appropriate returns or claims for refund with the IRS.

Distributions of net investment income and of net realized short-term capital gains, whether paid in cash or in shares, are taxable to a U.S. shareholder as ordinary income or, if certain conditions are met, as "qualified dividend income," taxable to

individual and certain other non-corporate shareholders at the rates applicable to long-term capital gain. Distributions of net capital gain, if any, that the Fund reports as capital gain dividends ("Capital Gain Dividends") are taxable as long-term capital gains, whether paid in cash or in shares, and regardless of how long a shareholder has held shares of the Fund. The IRS and the Department of the Treasury have issued regulations that impose special reporting of Capital Gain Dividends by the Fund in order to allow Capital Gain Dividends to be taxable at reduced rates in the hands of certain non-corporate taxpayers who hold shares of the Fund through entities treated as partnerships.

In general, dividends may be reported by the Fund as qualified dividend income if they are attributable to qualified dividend income received by the Fund. Qualified dividend income generally means dividend income received from the Fund's investments in common and preferred stock of U.S. corporations and stock of certain qualified foreign corporations, provided that certain holding period and other requirements are met by both the Fund and the shareholders. If 95% or more of the Fund's gross income (calculated without taking into account net capital gain derived from sales or other dispositions of stock or securities) consists of qualified dividend income, the Fund may report all distributions of such income as qualified dividend income.

A non-U.S. corporation is treated as a qualified foreign corporation for this purpose if it is incorporated in a possession of the United States or it is eligible for the benefits of certain income tax treaties with the United States and meets certain additional requirements. Certain non-U.S. corporations that are not otherwise qualified foreign corporations will be treated as qualified foreign corporations with respect to dividends paid by them if the stock with respect to which the dividends are paid is readily tradable on an established securities market in the United States. PFICs are not qualified foreign corporations for this purpose. Dividends received by the Fund from REITs generally are not expected to qualify for treatment as qualified dividend income.

A dividend that is attributable to qualified dividend income of the Fund that is paid by the Fund to a shareholder will not be taxable as qualified dividend income to such shareholder (1) if the dividend is received with respect to any share of the Fund held for fewer than 61 days during the 121-day period beginning on the date that is 60 days before the date on which such share became ex-dividend with respect to such dividend, (2) to the extent that the shareholder is under an obligation (whether pursuant to a short sale or otherwise) to make related payments with respect to positions in substantially similar or related property, or (3) if the shareholder elects to have the dividend treated as investment income for purposes of the limitation on deductibility of investment interest. The "ex-dividend" date is the date on which the owner of the share at the commencement of such date is entitled to receive the next issued dividend payment for such share even if the share is sold by the owner on that date or thereafter.

Certain dividends received by the Fund from U.S. corporations (generally, dividends received by the Fund in respect of any share of stock (1) with a tax holding period of at least 46 days during the 91-day period beginning on the date that is 45 days before the date on which the stock becomes ex-dividend as to that dividend and (2) that is held in an unleveraged position) and distributed and appropriately so reported by the Fund may be eligible for the dividends-received deduction generally available to corporations under the Code. Certain preferred stock must have a holding period of at least 91 days during the 181-day period beginning on the date that is 90 days before the date on which the stock becomes ex-dividend as to that dividend in order to be eligible. In order to qualify for the deduction, corporate shareholders must meet the minimum holding period requirement stated above with respect to their Fund shares, taking into account any holding period reductions from certain hedging or other transactions or positions that diminish their risk of loss with respect to their Fund shares, and, if they borrow to acquire or otherwise incur debt attributable to Fund shares, they may be denied a portion of the dividends-received deduction with respect to those shares. Any corporate shareholder should consult its tax professional regarding the possibility that its tax basis in its shares may be reduced, for U.S. federal income tax purposes, by reason of "extraordinary dividends" received with respect to the shares and, to the extent such basis would be reduced below zero, current recognition of income may be required.

A non-corporate taxpayer is generally eligible for a deduction of up to 20% of the taxpayer's "qualified REIT dividends." If the Fund receives dividends (other than capital gain dividends) in respect of REIT shares, the Fund may report its own dividends as eligible for the 20% deduction, to the extent the Fund's income is derived from such qualified REIT dividends, as reduced by allocable Fund expenses. In order for the Fund's dividends to be eligible for this deduction when received by a non-corporate shareholder, the Fund must meet certain holding period requirements with respect to the REIT shares on which the Fund received the eligible dividends, and the non-corporate shareholder must meet certain holding period requirements with respect to the Fund shares.

Under Section 163(j) of the Code, a taxpayer's business interest expense is generally deductible to the extent of the taxpayer's business interest income plus certain other amounts. If the Fund earns business interest income, it may report a portion of its dividends as "Section 163(j) interest dividends," which its shareholders may be able to treat as business interest income for purposes of Section 163(j) of the Code. The Fund's "Section 163(j) interest dividend" for a tax year will be limited to the excess of its business interest income over the sum of its business interest expense and other deductions properly allocable to its business interest income. In general, the Fund's shareholders may treat a distribution reported as a Section 163(j) interest dividend as interest income only to the extent the distribution exceeds the sum of the portions of the distribution reported as other types of tax-favored income. To be eligible to treat a Section 163(j) interest dividend as interest income, a shareholder may need to meet certain holding period requirements in respect of the Fund shares and must not have hedged its position in the Fund shares in certain ways.

The Code generally imposes a 3.8% Medicare contribution tax on the net investment income of U.S. individuals to the extent their income exceeds certain threshold amounts. The 3.8% tax also applies to all or a portion of the undistributed net investment income of certain shareholders that are estates and trusts. For these purposes, "net investment income" generally includes, among other things, (i) distributions paid by the Fund of net investment income and capital gains as described above, and (ii) any net gain from the sale, redemption, exchange or other taxable disposition of Fund shares.

Certain tax-exempt educational institutions will be subject to an excise tax on net investment income. For these purposes, certain dividends and capital gain distributions, and certain gains from the disposition of Fund shares (among other categories of income), are generally taken into account in computing a shareholder's net investment income.

Distributions in excess of the Fund's current and accumulated earnings and profits will, as to each shareholder, be treated as a tax-free return of capital to the extent of the shareholder's basis in shares of the Fund, and as a capital gain thereafter (assuming the shareholder holds shares of the Fund as capital assets). One or more of the Fund's distributions during the year may include such a return of capital distribution. Shareholders who receive taxable distributions in the form of additional shares will be treated for U.S. federal income tax purposes as if receiving distributions of cash in amounts equal to the amounts they would have received if they had instead elected to receive cash distributions. Those shareholders' aggregate tax basis in shares of the Fund will be increased by those amounts.

Investors considering buying shares just prior to a dividend or capital gain distribution should be aware that, although the price of shares purchased at that time may reflect the amount of the forthcoming distribution, such dividend or distribution may nevertheless be taxable to them.

If Fund shares are held through a qualified retirement plan entitled to tax-advantaged treatment for U.S. federal income tax purposes, distributions will generally not be taxable currently but may be subject to U.S. federal income taxes upon a later withdrawal of monies from the plan. Special tax rules apply to such retirement plans. You should consult your tax professional regarding the tax treatment of distributions (which may include amounts attributable to Fund distributions) which may be taxable when distributed from the retirement plan.

Sale, Exchange or Other Taxable Disposition of Shares. Upon the sale or exchange of a shareholder's shares, the shareholder will generally recognize a taxable gain or loss equal to the difference between the amount realized and the shareholder's basis in the shares. A redemption of shares by the Fund will be treated as a sale for this purpose. Such gain or loss will be treated as capital gain or loss if the shares are capital assets in the shareholder's hands, and will be long-term capital gain or loss if the shareholder held such shares for more than one year and short-term capital gain or loss if the shareholder held such shares for one year or less. Any loss realized on a sale, exchange or other taxable disposition will be disallowed to the extent the shares disposed of are replaced, including by reinvesting dividends or capital gains distributions in the Fund, within a 61-day period beginning 30 days before and ending 30 days after the disposition of the shares. In such a case, the basis of the shares acquired will be increased to reflect the disallowed loss. Any loss realized by a shareholder on the sale of Fund shares held by the shareholder for six months or less will be treated for U.S. federal income tax purposes as a long-term capital loss to the extent of any distributions or deemed distributions of long-term capital gains received by the shareholder (including amounts credited to the shareholder as undistributed capital gains) with respect to such shares during that six-month period.

If a shareholder incurs a sales charge in acquiring shares of the Fund, disposes of those shares within 90 days and then by January 31 of the calendar year following the year of disposition acquires shares in a mutual fund for which the otherwise applicable sales charge is reduced by reason of a reinvestment right (*e.g.*, an exchange privilege), the original sales charge will

not be taken into account in computing gain or loss on the original shares to the extent the subsequent sales charge is reduced. Instead, the disregarded portion of the original sales charge will be added to the tax basis of the newly acquired shares. Furthermore, the same rule also applies to a disposition of the newly acquired shares made within 90 days of the second acquisition. This provision prevents a shareholder from immediately deducting the sales charge by shifting his or her investment within a family of mutual funds.

If a shareholder recognizes a loss with respect to the Fund's shares of at least \$2 million in any single taxable year or \$4 million in any combination of taxable years for an individual shareholder or at least \$10 million in any taxable year or \$20 million in any combination of taxable years for a corporate shareholder, the shareholder must file with the IRS a disclosure statement on IRS Form 8886. Direct shareholders of portfolio securities are in many cases excepted from this reporting requirement, but under current guidance, shareholders of a regulated investment company are not excepted. The fact that a loss is so reportable does not affect the legal determination of whether the taxpayer's treatment of the loss is proper.

If a shareholder's shares are redeemed to pay a fee because the shareholder's account balance is less than a certain threshold, the redemption will be treated as a taxable sale or exchange of shares, as described above. Such a fee generally will not be deductible by a shareholder that is an individual.

Basis Reporting. The Fund, or, in the case of a shareholder holding shares through a Service Agent, the Service Agent, will report to the IRS the amount of proceeds that a shareholder receives from a redemption or exchange of Fund shares. For redemptions or exchanges of shares acquired on or after January 1, 2012, the Fund will also report the shareholder's cost basis in those shares and the character of any gain or loss (i.e., short-term or long-term) that the shareholder realizes on the redemption or exchange, and certain related tax information. If a shareholder has a different cost basis for different shares of the Fund in the same account (e.g., if a shareholder purchased Fund shares held in the same account when the shares were at different prices), the Fund will by default report the cost basis of the shares redeemed or exchanged using the average basis method, under which the cost basis per share is the average of the cost bases of all the shareholder's Fund shares in the account. For these purposes, shares acquired prior to January 1, 2012 and shares acquired on or after January 1, 2012 will generally be treated as held in separate accounts.

A shareholder may instruct the Fund to use a method other than average basis for an account. If redemptions, including in connection with payment of an account fee, or exchanges have occurred in an account to which the average basis method applied, the basis of the Fund shares remaining in the account will continue to reflect the average basis notwithstanding the shareholder's subsequent election of a different method. For further assistance, shareholders who hold their shares directly with the Fund may call the Fund at 877-6LM-FUND/656-3863. Shareholders who hold shares through a Service Agent should contact the Service Agent for further assistance or for information regarding the Service Agent's default method for calculating basis and procedures for electing to use an alternative method. Shareholders should consult their tax professionals concerning the tax consequences of applying the average basis method or electing another method of basis calculation and should consider electing such other method prior to making redemptions or exchanges in their accounts.

Backup Withholding. The Fund may be required in certain circumstances to apply backup withholding on dividends, distributions and redemption proceeds payable to non-corporate shareholders who fail to provide the Fund with their correct taxpayer identification numbers or to make required certifications, or who have been notified by the IRS that they are subject to backup withholding. Certain shareholders are exempt from backup withholding. Backup withholding is not an additional tax and any amount withheld may be credited against a shareholder's U.S. federal income tax liability, provided the appropriate information is furnished to the IRS.

Notices. Shareholders will receive, if appropriate, various written notices after the close of the Fund's taxable year regarding the U.S. federal income tax status of certain dividends, distributions and redemption proceeds that were paid (or that are treated as having been paid) by the Fund during the preceding taxable year. In certain cases, the Fund may be required to amend the tax information reported to you with respect to a particular year. In this event, you may be required to file amended U.S. federal income or other tax returns with respect to such amended information and, if applicable, to pay additional taxes (including potentially interest and penalties) or to seek a tax refund and may incur other related costs.

Other Taxes

Dividends, distributions and redemption proceeds may also be subject to additional state, local and non-U.S. taxes depending on each shareholder's particular situation. Generally, shareholders will have to pay state or local taxes on Fund

dividends and other distributions, although distributions derived from interest on U.S. government obligations (but not distributions of gain from the sale of such obligations) may be exempt from certain state and local taxes.

Taxation of Non-U.S. Shareholders

Distributions by the Fund to shareholders that are not “U.S. persons” within the meaning of the Code (“non-U.S. shareholders”) properly reported by the Fund as (1) capital gain dividends, (2) short-term capital gain dividends, and (3) interest-related dividends, each as defined and subject to certain conditions described below, generally are not subject to withholding of U.S. federal income tax.

In general, the Code defines (1) “short-term capital gain dividends” as distributions of net short-term capital gains in excess of net long-term capital losses and (2) “interest-related dividends” as distributions derived from U.S.-source interest income of types similar to those not subject to U.S. federal income tax if earned directly by an individual non-U.S. shareholder, in each case to the extent such distributions are properly reported as such by the Fund in a written notice to shareholders. The exceptions to withholding for capital gain dividends and short-term capital gain dividends do not apply to (A) distributions to an individual non-U.S. shareholder who is present in the United States for a period or periods aggregating 183 days or more during the year of the distribution and (B) distributions attributable to gain that is treated as effectively connected with the conduct by the non-U.S. shareholder of a trade or business within the United States, under special rules regarding the disposition of “United States real property interests” (“USRPIs”) as described below. The exception to withholding for interest-related dividends does not apply to distributions to a non-U.S. shareholder (A) that has not provided a satisfactory statement that the beneficial owner is not a U.S. person, (B) to the extent that the dividend is attributable to certain interest on an obligation if the non-U.S. shareholder is the issuer or is a 10% shareholder of the issuer, (C) that is within certain non-U.S. countries that have inadequate information exchange with the United States, or (D) to the extent the dividend is attributable to interest paid by a person that is a related person of the non-U.S. shareholder and the non-U.S. shareholder is a controlled foreign corporation. Although the Fund may be eligible to report interest-related and/or short-term capital gain dividends, the Fund is not required to do so. In the case of shares held through an intermediary, the intermediary may withhold even if the Fund reports all or a portion of a payment as an interest-related or short-term capital gain dividend to shareholders. Non-U.S. shareholders should contact their intermediaries regarding the application of these rules to their accounts.

Distributions by the Fund to non-U.S. shareholders other than (1) capital gain dividends, (2) short-term capital gain dividends, and (3) interest-related dividends (e.g., dividends attributable to dividend and foreign-source interest income or to short-term capital gains or U.S. source interest income to which the exception from withholding described above does not apply) are generally subject to withholding of U.S. federal income tax at a rate of 30% (or lower applicable treaty rate).

If income from the Fund is treated as effectively connected with a trade or business conducted by a non-U.S. shareholder within the United States, the income will in general be subject to U.S. federal income tax at the rates applicable to U.S. citizens, residents or domestic corporations, as applicable, whether such income is received in cash or reinvested in shares of the Fund, and, in the case of a non-U.S. corporation, may also be subject to a branch profits tax. If a non-U.S. shareholder is eligible for the benefits of a tax treaty, the shareholder’s effectively connected income or gain will generally be subject to U.S. federal income tax on a net basis only if it is also attributable to a permanent establishment maintained by the shareholder in the United States. More generally, non-U.S. shareholders who are residents in a country with an income tax treaty with the United States may obtain different tax results than those described herein, and are urged to consult their tax professionals.

A non-U.S. shareholder is not, in general, subject to U.S. federal income tax on gains (and is not allowed a deduction for losses) realized on the sale of shares of the Fund unless (i) such gain is effectively connected with the conduct of a trade or business carried on by the non-U.S. shareholder within the United States, (ii) in the case of a non-U.S. shareholder that is an individual, the holder is present in the United States for a period or periods aggregating 183 days or more during the year of the sale and certain other conditions are met or (iii) the special rules relating to gain attributable to the sale, exchange or other taxable disposition of USRPIs apply to the non-U.S. shareholder’s sale of shares of the Fund.

Special rules would apply if the Fund were a qualified investment entity (“QIE”) because it is either a “United States real property holding corporation” (“USRPHC”) or would be a USRPHC but for the operation of certain exceptions to the definition of USRPIs described below. Very generally, a USRPHC is a domestic corporation that holds USRPIs the fair market value of which equals or exceeds 50% of the sum of the fair market values of the corporation’s USRPIs, interests in real property located outside the United States, and other trade or business assets. USRPIs are generally defined as any interest in U.S. real property and any

interest (other than solely as a creditor) in a USRPHC or, very generally, an entity that has been a USRPHC in the last five years. A regulated investment company that holds, directly or indirectly, significant interests in real estate investment trusts (“REITs”) may be a USRPHC. Interests in domestically controlled QIEs, including REITs and regulated investment companies that are QIEs, not-greater-than-10% interests in publicly traded classes of stock in REITs and not-greater-than-5% interests in publicly traded classes of stock in regulated investment companies generally are not USRPIs, but these exceptions do not apply for purposes of determining whether the Fund is a QIE. If an interest in the Fund were a USRPI, the Fund would be required to withhold U.S. tax on the proceeds of a share redemption by a greater-than-5% non-U.S. shareholder, in which case such non-U.S. shareholder generally would also be required to file U.S. federal income tax returns and pay any additional taxes due in connection with the redemption.

If the Fund were a QIE, under a special “look through” rule, any distributions by the Fund to a non-U.S. shareholder (including, in certain cases, distributions made by the Fund in redemption of its shares) attributable directly or indirectly to (i) distributions received by the Fund from a lower-tier regulated investment company or REIT that the Fund is required to treat as USRPI gain in its hands and (ii) gains realized on the disposition of USRPIs by the Fund would retain their character as gains realized from USRPIs in the hands of the non-U.S. shareholder and would be subject to U.S. tax withholding. In addition, such distributions could result in the non-U.S. shareholder being required to file a U.S. federal income tax return and pay tax on the distributions at regular U.S. federal income tax rates. The consequences to a non-U.S. shareholder, including the rate of such withholding and character of such distributions (*e.g.*, as ordinary income or USRPI gain), would vary depending upon the extent of the non-U.S. shareholder’s current and past ownership of the Fund.

In order to qualify for any exemptions from withholding described above or for lower withholding tax rates under income tax treaties, or to establish an exemption from backup withholding, a non-U.S. shareholder must comply with special certification and filing requirements relating to its non-U.S. status (including, in general, furnishing an IRS Form W-8BEN, W-8BEN-E or substitute form). Non-U.S. shareholders should consult their tax advisers in this regard. Special rules (including withholding and reporting requirements) apply to non-U.S. partnerships and those holding Fund shares through non-U.S. partnerships. Additional considerations may apply to non-U.S. trusts and estates. Investors holding Fund shares through non-U.S. entities should consult their tax advisers about their particular situation.

A non-U.S. shareholder may be subject to state and local tax and to the U.S. federal estate tax in addition to the U.S. federal income tax referred to above.

Under legislation commonly known as “FATCA,” the Fund is required to withhold 30% of certain ordinary dividends it pays to shareholders that fail to meet prescribed information reporting or certification requirements. In general, no such withholding will be required with respect to a U.S. person or non-U.S. individual that timely provides the certifications required by the Fund or its agent on a valid IRS Form W-9 or applicable IRS Form W-8, respectively. Shareholders potentially subject to withholding include foreign financial institutions (“FFIs”), such as non-U.S. investment funds, and non-financial foreign entities (“NFFEs”). To avoid withholding under FATCA, an FFI generally must enter into an information sharing agreement with the IRS in which it agrees to report certain identifying information (including name, address, and taxpayer identification number) with respect to its U.S. account holders (which, in the case of an entity shareholder, may include its direct and indirect U.S. owners), and an NFFE generally must identify and provide other required information to the Fund or other withholding agent regarding its U.S. owners, if any. Such non-U.S. shareholders also may fall into certain exempt, excepted or deemed compliant categories as established by regulations and other guidance. A non-U.S. shareholder in a country that has entered into an intergovernmental agreement with the U.S. to implement FATCA will be exempt from FATCA withholding provided that the shareholder and the applicable foreign government comply with the terms of such agreement.

A non-U.S. entity that invests in the Fund will need to provide the Fund with documentation properly certifying the entity’s status under FATCA in order to avoid FATCA withholding.

Non-U.S. investors should consult their own tax professionals regarding the impact of these requirements on their investment in the Fund.

CODES OF ETHICS

Pursuant to Rule 17j-1 under the 1940 Act, the Fund, the Manager, the Subadviser and the Distributor each has adopted a code of ethics that permits its personnel to invest in securities for their own accounts, including securities that may be

purchased or held by the Fund. All personal securities transactions by employees must adhere to the requirements of the codes of ethics. Copies of the codes of ethics applicable to personnel of the Fund, the Manager, the Subadviser, the Distributor and the Independent Trustees are on file with the SEC.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Fund's audited annual financial statements for the fiscal period ended October 31, 2025, including the accompanying notes and the report of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, as filed on Form N-CSR, are incorporated by reference into this SAI (https://www.sec.gov/ix?doc=/Archives/edgar/data/880366/000113322825014009/fgef-efp20751_ncsr.htm). These audited financial statements are available free of charge upon request by calling the Fund at 877-6LM-FUND/656-3863.

Proxy Voting Policies**FRANKLIN TEMPLETON INVESTMENT SOLUTIONS
PROXY VOTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
An SEC Compliance Rule Policy and Procedures¹**

March 2025

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE INVESTMENT MANAGERS TO VOTE PROXIES

Franklin Templeton Investment Solutions, a separate investment group within Franklin Templeton, comprised of investment personnel from the SEC-registered investment advisers listed on Appendix A (hereinafter individually an "Investment Manager" and collectively the "Investment Managers") have delegated the administrative duties with respect to voting proxies for securities to the Franklin Templeton Proxy Group. Proxy duties consist of disseminating proxy materials and analyses of issuers whose stock is owned by any client (including both investment companies and any separate accounts managed by the Investment Managers) that has either delegated proxy voting administrative responsibility to the Investment Managers or has asked for information and/or recommendations on the issues to be voted. The Investment Managers will inform advisory clients that have not delegated the voting responsibility but that have requested voting advice about the Investment Managers' views on such proxy votes. The Proxy Group also provides these services to other advisory affiliates of the Investment Managers.

The Proxy Group will process proxy votes on behalf of, and the Investment Managers vote proxies solely in the best interests of, separate account clients, the Investment Managers'-managed investment company shareholders, or shareholders of funds that have appointed Franklin Templeton International Services S.à.r.l. ("FTIS S.à.r.l.") as the Management Company, provided such funds or clients have properly delegated such responsibility in writing, or, where employee benefit plan assets subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as amended, are involved ("ERISA accounts"), in the best interests of the plan participants and beneficiaries (collectively, "Advisory Clients"), unless (i) the power to vote has been specifically retained by the named fiduciary in the documents in which the named fiduciary appointed the Investment Managers or (ii) the documents otherwise expressly prohibit the Investment Managers from voting proxies. The Investment Managers recognize that the exercise of voting rights on securities held by ERISA plans for which the Investment Managers have voting responsibility is a fiduciary duty that must be exercised with care, skill, prudence and diligence.

In certain circumstances, Advisory Clients are permitted to direct their votes in a solicitation pursuant to the Investment Management Agreement. An Advisory Client that wishes to direct its vote shall give reasonable prior written notice to the Investment Managers indicating such intention and provide written instructions directing the Investment Managers or the Proxy Group to vote regarding the solicitation. Where such prior written notice is received, the Proxy Group will vote proxies in accordance with such written notification received from the Advisory Client.

The Investment Managers have adopted and implemented Proxy Voting Policies and Procedures ("Proxy Policies") that they believe are reasonably designed to ensure that proxies are voted in the best interest of Advisory Clients in accordance with their fiduciary duties and rule 206(4)-6 under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. To the extent that the Investment Managers have a subadvisory agreement with an affiliated investment manager (the "Affiliated Subadviser") with respect to a particular Advisory Client, the Investment Managers may delegate proxy voting responsibility to the Affiliated Subadviser. The Investment Managers may also delegate proxy voting responsibility to a subadviser that is not an Affiliated Subadviser in certain limited situations as disclosed to fund shareholders (e.g., where an Investment Manager to a pooled investment vehicle has engaged a subadviser that is not an Affiliated Subadviser to manage all or a portion of the assets).

¹ Rule 38a-1 under the Investment Company Act of 1940 ("1940 Act") and Rule 206(4)-7 under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 ("Advisers Act") (together the "Compliance Rule") require registered investment companies and registered investment advisers to, among other things, adopt and implement written policies and procedures reasonably designed to prevent violations of the federal securities laws ("Compliance Rule Policies and Procedures").

HOW THE INVESTMENT MANAGERS VOTE PROXIES

Proxy Services

All proxies received by the Proxy Group will be voted based upon the Investment Managers' instructions and/or policies. To assist it in analyzing proxies of equity securities, the Investment Managers subscribe to Institutional Shareholder Services Inc. ("ISS"), an unaffiliated third-party corporate governance research service that provides in-depth analyses of shareholder meeting agendas and vote recommendations. In addition, the Investment Managers subscribe to ISS's Proxy Voting Service and Vote Disclosure Service. These services include receipt of proxy ballots, custodian bank relations, account maintenance, vote execution, ballot reconciliation, vote record maintenance, comprehensive reporting capabilities, and vote disclosure services. Also, the Investment Managers subscribe to Glass, Lewis & Co., LLC ("Glass Lewis"), an unaffiliated third-party analytical research firm, to receive analyses and vote recommendations on the shareholder meetings of publicly held U.S. companies, as well as a limited subscription to its international research.

Although analyses provided by ISS, Glass Lewis, and/or another independent third-party proxy service provider (each a "Proxy Service") are thoroughly reviewed and considered in making a final voting decision, the Investment Managers do not consider recommendations from a Proxy Service or any third-party to be determinative of the Investment Managers' ultimate decision. Rather, the Investment Managers exercise their independent judgment in making voting decisions. As a matter of policy, the officers, directors and employees of the Investment Managers and the Proxy Group will not be influenced by outside sources whose interests conflict with the interests of Advisory Clients.

For ease of reference, the Proxy Policies often refer to all Advisory Clients. However, our processes and practices seek to ensure that proxy voting decisions are suitable for individual Advisory Clients. In some cases, the Investment Managers' evaluation may result in an individual Advisory Client or Investment Manager voting differently, depending upon the nature and objective of the fund or account, the composition of its portfolio, whether the Investment Manager has adopted a specialty or custom voting policy, and other factors.

Conflicts of Interest

All conflicts of interest will be resolved in the best interests of the Advisory Clients. The Investment Managers are affiliates of a large, diverse financial services firm with many affiliates and make their best efforts to mitigate conflicts of interest. However, as a general matter, the Investment Managers take the position that relationships between certain affiliates that do not use the "Franklin Templeton" name ("Independent Affiliates") and an issuer (e.g., an investment management relationship between an issuer and an Independent Affiliate) do not present a conflict of interest for an Investment Manager in voting proxies with respect to such issuer because: (i) the Investment Managers operate as an independent business unit from the Independent Affiliate business units, and (ii) informational barriers exist between the Investment Managers and the Independent Affiliate business units.

Material conflicts of interest could arise in a variety of situations, including as a result of the Investment Managers' or an affiliate's (other than an Independent Affiliate as described above): (i) material business relationship with an issuer or proponent; (ii) direct or indirect pecuniary interest in an issuer or proponent; or (iii) significant personal or family relationship with an issuer or proponent. Material conflicts of interest are identified by the Proxy Group based upon analyses of client, distributor, broker dealer, and vendor lists, information periodically gathered from directors and officers, and information derived from other sources, including public filings. The Proxy Group gathers and analyzes this information on a best-efforts basis, as much of this information is provided directly by individuals and groups other than the Proxy Group, and the Proxy Group relies on the accuracy of the information it receives from such parties.

Nonetheless, even though a potential conflict of interest between the Investment Managers or an affiliate (other than an Independent Affiliate as described above) and an issuer may exist: (1) the Investment Managers may vote in opposition to the recommendations of an issuer's management even if contrary to the recommendations of a third-party proxy voting research provider; (2) if management has made no recommendations, the Proxy Group may defer to the voting instructions of the Investment Managers; and (3) with respect to shares held by Franklin Resources, Inc. or its affiliates for their own corporate accounts, such shares may be voted without regard to these conflict procedures.

Otherwise, in situations where a material conflict of interest is identified between the Investment Managers or one of its affiliates (other than Independent Affiliates) and an issuer, the Proxy Group may vote consistent with the voting

recommendation of a Proxy Service or send the proxy directly to the relevant Advisory Clients with the Investment Managers' recommendation regarding the vote for approval. To address certain affiliate conflict situations, the Investment Managers will employ pass-through voting or mirror voting when required pursuant to a fund's governing documents or applicable law.

Where the Proxy Group refers a matter to an Advisory Client, it may rely upon the instructions of a representative of the Advisory Client, such as the board of directors or trustees, a committee of the board, or an appointed delegate in the case of a U.S. registered investment company, a conducting officer in the case of a fund that has appointed FTIS S.à.r.l as its Management Company, the Independent Review Committee for Canadian investment funds, or a plan administrator in the case of an employee benefit plan. A quorum of the board of directors or trustees or of a committee of the board can be reached by a majority of members, or a majority of non-recused members. The Proxy Group may determine to vote all shares held by Advisory Clients of the Investment Managers and affiliated Investment Managers (other than Independent Affiliates) in accordance with the instructions of one or more of the Advisory Clients.

The Investment Managers may also decide whether to vote proxies for securities deemed to present conflicts of interest that are sold following a record date, but before a shareholder meeting date. The Investment Managers may consider various factors in deciding whether to vote such proxies, including the Investment Managers' long-term view of the issuer's securities for investment, or it may defer the decision to vote to the applicable Advisory Client. The Investment Managers also may be unable to vote, or choose not to vote, a proxy for securities deemed to present a conflict of interest for any of the reasons outlined in the first paragraph of the section of these policies entitled "Proxy Procedures."

Weight Given Management Recommendations

One of the primary factors the Investment Managers consider when determining the desirability of investing in a particular company is the quality and depth of that company's management. Accordingly, the recommendation of management on any issue is a factor that the Investment Managers consider in determining how proxies should be voted. However, the Investment Managers do not consider recommendations from management to be determinative of the Investment Managers' ultimate decision. Each issue is considered on its own merits, and the Investment Managers will not support the position of a company's management in any situation where it determines that the ratification of management's position would adversely affect the investment merits of owning that company's shares.

Engagement with Issuers

The Investment Managers believe that engagement with issuers is important to good corporate governance and to assist in making proxy voting decisions. The Investment Managers may engage with issuers to discuss specific ballot items to be voted on in advance of an annual or special meeting to obtain further information or clarification on the proposals. The Investment Managers may also engage with management on a range of issues throughout the year.

THE PROXY GROUP

The Proxy Group's full-time staff members and support staff are devoted to proxy voting administration and oversight and providing support and assistance where needed. On a daily basis, the Proxy Group will review each proxy upon receipt as well as any agendas, materials and recommendations that they receive from a Proxy Service or other sources. The Proxy Group maintains a record of all shareholder meetings that are scheduled for companies whose securities are held by the Investment Managers' managed funds and accounts. For each shareholder meeting, a member of the Proxy Group will consult with the research analyst that follows the security and provide the analyst with the agenda, analyses of one or more Proxy Services, recommendations and any other information provided to the Proxy Group. Except in situations identified as presenting material conflicts of interest, the Investment Managers' research analyst and relevant portfolio manager(s) are responsible for making the final voting decision based on their review of the agenda, analyses of one or more Proxy Services, proxy statements, their knowledge of the company and any other information publicly available.

In situations where the Investment Managers have not responded with vote recommendations to the Proxy Group by the deadline date, the Proxy Group may vote consistent with the vote recommendations of a Proxy Service. Except in cases where the Proxy Group is voting consistent with the voting recommendation of a Proxy Service, the Proxy Group must obtain voting instructions from the Investment Managers' research analysts, relevant portfolio manager(s), legal counsel and/or the Advisory Client prior to submitting the vote. In the event that an account holds a security that an Investment Manager did not purchase on

its behalf, and the Investment Manager does not normally consider the security as a potential investment for other accounts, the Proxy Group may vote consistent with the voting recommendations of a Proxy Service or take no action on the meeting.

PROXY ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURES

Situations Where Proxies Are Not Voted

The Proxy Group is fully cognizant of its responsibility to process proxies and maintain proxy records as may be required by relevant rules and regulations. In addition, the Investment Managers understand their fiduciary duty to vote proxies and that proxy voting decisions may affect the value of shareholdings. Therefore, the Investment Managers will generally attempt to process every proxy they receive for all domestic and foreign securities.

However, there may be situations in which the Investment Managers may be unable to successfully vote a proxy, or may choose not to vote a proxy, such as where: (i) a proxy ballot was not received from the custodian bank; (ii) a meeting notice was received too late; (iii) there are fees imposed upon the exercise of a vote and it is determined that such fees outweigh the benefit of voting; (iv) there are legal encumbrances to voting, including blocking restrictions in certain markets that preclude the ability to dispose of a security if an Investment Manager votes a proxy or where the Investment Manager is prohibited from voting by applicable law, economic or other sanctions, or other regulatory or market requirements, including but not limited to, effective Powers of Attorney; (v) additional documentation or the disclosure of beneficial owner details is required; (vi) the Investment Managers held shares on the record date but has sold them prior to the meeting date; (vii) the Advisory Client held shares on the record date, but the Advisory Client closed the account prior to the meeting date; (viii) a proxy voting service is not offered by the custodian in the market; (ix) due to either system error or human error, the Investment Managers' intended vote is not correctly submitted; (x) the Investment Managers believe it is not in the best interest of the Advisory Client to vote the proxy for any other reason not enumerated herein; or (xi) a security is subject to a securities lending or similar program that has transferred legal title to the security to another person.

Rejected Votes

Even if the Investment Managers use reasonable efforts to vote a proxy on behalf of their Advisory Clients, such vote or proxy may be rejected because of (a) operational or procedural issues experienced by one or more third parties involved in voting proxies in such jurisdictions; (b) changes in the process or agenda for the meeting by the issuer for which the Investment Managers do not have sufficient notice; or (c) the exercise by the issuer of its discretion to reject the vote of the Investment Managers. In addition, despite the best efforts of the Proxy Group and its agents, there may be situations where the Investment Managers' votes are not received, or properly tabulated, by an issuer or the issuer's agent.

Securities on Loan

The Investment Managers or their affiliates may, on behalf of one or more of the proprietary registered investment companies advised by the Investment Managers or their affiliates, make efforts to recall any security on loan where the Investment Manager or its affiliates (a) learn of a vote on an event that may materially affect a security on loan and (b) determine that it is in the best interests of such proprietary registered investment companies to recall the security for voting purposes. The ability to timely recall shares is not entirely within the control of the Investment Managers. Under certain circumstances, the recall of shares in time for such shares to be voted may not be possible due to applicable proxy voting record dates or other administrative considerations.

Split Voting

There may be instances in certain non-U.S. markets where split voting is not allowed. Split voting occurs when a position held within an account is voted in accordance with two differing instructions. Some markets and/or issuers only allow voting on an entire position and do not accept split voting. In certain cases, when more than one Franklin Templeton investment manager has accounts holding shares of an issuer that are held in an omnibus structure, the Proxy Group will seek direction from an appropriate representative of the Advisory Client with multiple Investment Managers (such as a conducting officer of the Management Company in the case of a SICAV), or the Proxy Group will submit the vote based on the voting instructions provided by the Investment Manager with accounts holding the greatest number of shares of the security within the omnibus structure.

Bundled Items

If several issues are bundled together in a single voting item, the Investment Managers will assess the total benefit to shareholders and the extent that such issues should be subject to separate voting proposals.

PROCEDURES FOR MEETINGS INVOLVING FIXED INCOME SECURITIES & PRIVATELY HELD ISSUERS

From time to time, certain custodians may process events for fixed income securities through their proxy voting channels rather than corporate action channels for administrative convenience. In such cases, the Proxy Group will receive ballots for such events on the ISS voting platform. The Proxy Group will solicit voting instructions from the Investment Managers for each account or fund involved. If the Proxy Group does not receive voting instructions from the Investment Managers, the Proxy Group will take no action on the event. The Investment Managers may be unable to vote a proxy for a fixed income security, or may choose not to vote a proxy, for the reasons described under the section entitled "Proxy Procedures."

In the rare instance where there is a vote for a privately held issuer, the decision will generally be made by the relevant portfolio managers or research analysts.

The Proxy Group will monitor such meetings involving fixed income securities or privately held issuers for conflicts of interest in accordance with these procedures. If a fixed income or privately held issuer is flagged as a potential conflict of interest, the Investment Managers may nonetheless vote as it deems in the best interests of its Advisory Clients. The Investment Managers will report such decisions on an annual basis to Advisory Clients as may be required.

Appendix A

These Proxy Policies apply to accounts managed by personnel within Franklin Templeton Investment Solutions, which includes the following Investment Managers:

Franklin Advisers, Inc. (FAV)

Franklin Advisory Services, LLC (FASL)

Franklin Mutual Advisers LLC (FMA)

Franklin Templeton Investments Corp. (FTIC)

Franklin Templeton Investment Management Limited (FTIML)

Templeton Asset Management Ltd. (TAML)

The following Proxy Policies apply to FAV, FMA, FTIC, FTIML, and TAML only:

HOW THE INVESTMENT MANAGERS VOTE PROXIES

Proxy Services

Certain of the Investment Managers' separate accounts or funds (or a portion thereof) are included under Franklin Templeton Investment Solutions ("FTIS"), a separate investment group within Franklin Templeton, and employ a quantitative strategy.

For such accounts, FTIS's proprietary methodologies rely on a combination of quantitative, qualitative, and behavioral analysis rather than fundamental security research and analyst coverage that an actively managed portfolio would ordinarily employ.

Accordingly, absent client direction, in light of the high number of positions held by such accounts and the considerable time and effort that would be required to review proxy statements and ISS or Glass Lewis recommendations, the Investment Manager may review ISS's guidelines or Glass Lewis's US guidelines (the "the ISS and Glass Lewis Proxy Voting Guidelines") and determine, consistent with the best interest of its clients, to provide standing instructions to the Proxy Group to vote proxies according to the recommendations of ISS or Glass Lewis.

In addition, the Investment Managers may request in-house voting research from Franklin Templeton's Stewardship Team (FT Stewardship). FT Stewardship provides customized research on specific corporate governance issues that is tailored to the investment manager and corporate engagement undertaken. This research may include opinions on voting decisions; however, there is no obligation or inference for the investment manager to formally vote in line with these opinions. This research supports the independent vote decision making process, and may reduce reliance on third-party advice for certain votes.

The Investment Manager, however, retains the ability to vote a proxy differently than ISS or Glass Lewis recommends if the Investment Manager determines that it would be in the best interests of Advisory Clients.

The following Proxy Policies apply to FASL only:

HOW THE INVESTMENT MANAGERS VOTE PROXIES

Proxy Services

Passively managed exchange traded funds (collectively, "ETFs"), seek to track a particular securities index. As a result, each ETF may hold the securities of hundreds of issuers. Because the primary criteria for determining whether a security should be included (or continued to be included) in an ETF's investment portfolio is whether such security is a representative component of the securities index that the ETF is seeking to track, the ETFs do not require the fundamental security research and analyst coverage that an actively managed portfolio would require. Accordingly, in light of the high number of positions held by an ETF and the considerable time and effort that would be required to review proxy statements and ISS or Glass Lewis recommendations, the Investment Manager may review ISS's guidelines or Glass Lewis's US guidelines (the "ISS and Glass Lewis Proxy Voting Guidelines") and determine, consistent with the best interest of its clients, to provide standing instructions to

the Proxy Group to vote proxies according to the recommendations of ISS or Glass Lewis rather than analyze each individual proxy vote. Permitting the Investment Manager of the ETFs to defer its judgment for voting on a proxy to the recommendations of ISS or Glass Lewis may result in a proxy related to the securities of a particular issuer held by an ETF being voted differently from the same proxy that is voted on by other funds managed by the Investment Managers.

In addition, the investment managers may request in-house voting research from Franklin Templeton's Stewardship Team (FT Stewardship). FT Stewardship provides customized research on specific corporate governance issues that is tailored to the investment manager and corporate engagement undertaken. This research may include opinions on voting decisions; however, there is no obligation or inference for the investment manager to formally vote in line with these opinions. This research supports the independent vote decision making process, and may reduce reliance on third-party advice for certain votes.

The following Proxy Policies apply to FTIC, FTIML, and TAML only:

HOW THE INVESTMENT MANAGERS VOTE PROXIES

Proxy Services

For accounts managed by the Templeton Global Equity Group ("TGEG"), in making voting decisions, the Investment Manager may consider Glass Lewis's Proxy Voting Guidelines, ISS's Policies and TGEG's custom sustainability guidelines, where appropriate.

The following Proxy Policies apply to FTIC only:

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE INVESTMENT MANAGERS TO VOTE PROXIES

To the extent that the Investment Manager has a subadvisory agreement with an affiliated investment manager (the "Affiliated Subadviser") with respect to a particular Advisory Client or the Investment Manager chooses securities for an Advisory Client's portfolios that are recommended by an Affiliated Subadviser, the Investment Manager may delegate proxy voting responsibility to the Affiliated Subadviser or vote proxies in accordance with the Affiliated Subadviser's recommendations.

[This page intentionally left blank.]

Credit Ratings

DESCRIPTION OF RATINGS

The ratings of Moody's Investors Service, Inc., S&P Global Ratings and Fitch Ratings represent their opinions as to the quality of various debt obligations. It should be emphasized, however, that ratings are not absolute standards of quality. Consequently, debt obligations with the same maturity, coupon and rating may have different yields while debt obligations of the same maturity and coupon with different ratings may have the same yield. As described by the rating agencies, ratings are generally given to securities at the time of issuances. While the rating agencies may from time to time revise such ratings, they undertake no obligation to do so.

Moody's Investors Service, Inc. Global Rating Scales

Credit ratings are assigned on Moody's global long-term and short-term rating scales and are forward-looking opinions of the relative credit risks of financial obligations issued by non-financial corporates, financial institutions, structured finance vehicles, project finance vehicles, and public sector entities. Moody's defines credit risk as the risk that an entity may not meet its contractual financial obligations as they come due and any estimated financial loss in the event of default or impairment. The contractual financial obligations¹ addressed by Moody's ratings are those that call for, without regard to enforceability, the payment of an ascertainable amount, which may vary based upon standard sources of variation (e.g., floating interest rates), by an ascertainable date. Moody's rating addresses the issuer's ability to obtain cash sufficient to service the obligation, and its willingness to pay.² Moody's ratings do not address non-standard sources of variation in the amount of the principal obligation (e.g., equity indexed), absent an express statement to the contrary in a press release accompanying an initial rating.³ Long-term ratings are assigned to issuers or obligations with an original maturity of eleven months or more and reflect both on the likelihood of a default or impairment on contractual financial obligations and the expected financial loss suffered in the event of default or impairment. Short-term ratings are assigned to obligations with an original maturity of thirteen months or less and reflect both on the likelihood of a default or impairment on contractual financial obligations and the expected financial loss suffered in the event of default or impairment.^{4, 5, 6} Moody's issues ratings at the issuer level and instrument level on both the long-term scale and the short-term scale. Typically, ratings are made publicly available although private and unpublished ratings may also be assigned.⁷

Moody's differentiates structured finance ratings from fundamental ratings (i.e., ratings on nonfinancial corporate, financial institution, and public sector entities) on the global long-term scale by adding (sf) to all structured finance ratings.⁸ The addition of (sf) to structured finance ratings should eliminate any presumption that such ratings and fundamental ratings at the same letter grade level will behave the same.

¹ In the case of impairments, there can be a financial loss even when contractual obligations are met.

² In some cases the relevant credit risk relates to a third party, in addition to, or instead of the issuer. Examples include credit-linked notes and guaranteed obligations.

³ Because the number of possible features or structures is limited only by the creativity of issuers, Moody's cannot comprehensively catalogue all the types of non-standard variation affecting financial obligations, but examples include equity indexed principal values and cash flows, prepayment penalties, and an obligation to pay an amount that is not ascertainable at the inception of the transaction.

⁴ For certain preferred stock and hybrid securities in which payment default events are either not defined or do not match investors' expectations for timely payment, long-term and short-term ratings reflect the likelihood of impairment and financial loss in the event of impairment.

⁵ Debts held on the balance sheets of official sector institutions – which include supranational institutions, central banks and certain government-owned or controlled banks – may not always be treated the same as debts held by private investors and lenders. When it is known that an obligation is held by official sector institutions as well as other investors, a rating (short-term or long-term) assigned to that obligation reflects only the credit risks faced by non-official sector investors.

⁶ Where grace periods are disproportionately long relative to the stated maturity, Moody's may choose not to rate the Instrument. This is particularly relevant in the commercial paper market where maturities may be 30 days or less with strong investor expectation of prompt payment.

⁷ For information on how to obtain a Moody's credit rating, including private and unpublished credit ratings, please see [Moody's Investors Service Products](#). Please note that Moody's always reserves the right to choose not to assign or maintain a credit rating for its own business reasons.

⁸ Like other global scale ratings, (sf) ratings reflect both the likelihood of a default and the expected loss suffered in the event of default. Ratings are assigned based on a rating committee's assessment of a security's expected loss rate (default probability multiplied by expected loss severity), and may be subject to the constraint that the final expected loss rating assigned would not be more than a certain number of notches, typically three to five notches, above the rating that would be assigned based on an assessment of default probability alone. The magnitude of this constraint may vary with the level of the rating, the seasoning of the transaction, and the uncertainty around the assessments of expected loss and probability of default.

The (sf) indicator for structured finance security ratings indicates that otherwise similarly rated structured finance and fundamental securities may have different risk characteristics. Through its current methodologies, however, Moody's aspires to achieve broad expected equivalence in structured finance and fundamental rating performance when measured over a long period of time.

Description of Moody's Investors Service, Inc.'s Global Long-Term Ratings:

Aaa—Obligations rated Aaa are judged to be of the highest quality, subject to the lowest level of credit risk.

Aa—Obligations rated Aa are judged to be of high quality and are subject to very low credit risk.

A—Obligations rated A are judged to be upper-medium grade and are subject to low credit risk.

Baa—Obligations rated Baa are judged to be medium-grade and subject to moderate credit risk and as such may possess certain speculative characteristics.

Ba—Obligations rated Ba are judged to be speculative and are subject to substantial credit risk.

B—Obligations rated B are considered speculative and are subject to high credit risk.

Caa—Obligations rated Caa are judged to be speculative of poor standing and are subject to very high credit risk.

Ca—Obligations rated Ca are highly speculative and are likely in, or very near, default, with some prospect of recovery of principal and interest.

C—Obligations rated C are the lowest rated and are typically in default, with little prospect for recovery of principal or interest.

Note: *Moody's appends numerical modifiers 1, 2, and 3 to each generic rating classification from Aa through Caa. The modifier 1 indicates that the obligation ranks in the higher end of its generic rating category; the modifier 2 indicates a mid-range ranking; and the modifier 3 indicates a ranking in the lower end of that generic rating category. Additionally, a "(hyb)" indicator is appended to all ratings of hybrid securities issued by banks, insurers, finance companies, and securities firms.**

**By their terms, hybrid securities allow for the omission of scheduled dividends, interest, or principal payments, which can potentially result in impairment if such an omission occurs. Hybrid securities may also be subject to contractually allowable write-downs of principal that could result in impairment. Together with the hybrid indicator, the long-term obligation rating assigned to a hybrid security is an expression of the relative credit risk associated with that security.*

Description of Moody's Investors Service, Inc.'s Global Short-Term Ratings:

P-1—Ratings of Prime-1 reflect a superior ability to repay short-term debt obligations.

P-2—Ratings of Prime-2 reflect a strong ability to repay short-term debt obligations.

P-3—Ratings of Prime-3 reflect an acceptable ability to repay short-term debt obligations.

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

Description of Moody's Investors Service, Inc.'s US Municipal Ratings:

US Municipal Short-Term Debt and Demand Obligation Ratings:

Moody's uses the global short-term Prime rating scale for commercial paper issued by US municipalities and nonprofits. These commercial paper programs may be backed by external letters of credit or liquidity facilities, or by an issuer's self-liquidity.

For other short-term municipal obligations, Moody's uses one of two other short-term rating scales, the Municipal Investment Grade (MIG) and Variable Municipal Investment Grade (VMIG) scales discussed below.

MIG Ratings:

Moody's uses the MIG scale for US municipal cash flow notes, bond anticipation notes and certain other short-term obligations, which typically mature in three years or less.

MIG 1—This designation denotes superior credit quality. Excellent protection is afforded by established cash flows, highly reliable liquidity support, or demonstrated broad-based access to the market for refinancing.

MIG 2—This designation denotes strong credit quality. Margins of protection are ample, although not as large as in the preceding group.

MIG 3—This designation denotes acceptable credit quality. Liquidity and cash-flow protection may be narrow, and market access for refinancing is likely to be less well-established.

SG—This designation denotes speculative grade credit quality. Debt instruments in this category may lack sufficient margins of protection.

VMIG Ratings:

For variable rate demand obligations (VRDOs), Moody's assigns both a long-term rating and a short-term payment obligation rating. The long-term rating addresses the issuer's ability to meet scheduled principal and interest payments. The short-term payment obligation rating addresses the ability of the issuer or the liquidity provider to meet any purchase price payment obligation resulting from optional tenders ("on demand") and/or mandatory tenders of the VRDO. The short-term payment obligation rating uses the VMIG scale. Transitions of VMIG ratings with conditional liquidity support differ from transitions of Prime ratings reflecting the risk that external liquidity support will terminate if the issuer's long-term rating drops below investment grade.

For VRDOs, Moody's typically assigns a VMIG rating if the frequency of the payment obligation is less than every three years. If the frequency of the payment obligation is less than three years, but the obligation is payable only with remarketing proceeds, the VMIG short-term rating is not assigned and it is denoted as "NR". Industrial development bonds in the US where the obligor is a corporate may carry a VMIG rating that reflects Moody's view of the relative likelihood of default and loss. In these cases, liquidity assessment is based on the liquidity of the corporate obligor.

VMIG 1—This designation denotes superior credit quality. Excellent protection is afforded by the superior short-term credit strength of the liquidity provider and structural and legal protections.

VMIG 2—This designation denotes strong credit quality. Good protection is afforded by the strong short-term credit strength of the liquidity provider and structural and legal protections.

VMIG 3—This designation denotes acceptable credit quality. Adequate protection is afforded by the satisfactory short-term credit strength of the liquidity provider and structural and legal protections.

SG—This designation denotes speculative-grade credit quality. Demand features rated in this category may be supported by a liquidity provider that does not have a sufficiently strong short-term rating or may lack the structural or legal protections.

Description of Moody's Investors Service, Inc.'s National Scale Long-Term Ratings:

Moody's long-term National Scale Ratings (NSRs) are opinions of the relative creditworthiness of issuers and financial obligations within a particular country. NSRs are not designed to be compared among countries; rather, they address relative credit risk within a given country. Moody's assigns national scale ratings in certain local capital markets in which investors have found the global rating scale provides inadequate differentiation among credits or is inconsistent with a rating scale already in common use in the country.

In each specific country, the last two characters of the rating indicate the country in which the issuer is located or the financial obligation was issued (e.g., Aaa.ke for Kenya).

Long-Term NSR Scale

Aaa.n Issuers or issues rated Aaa.n demonstrate the strongest creditworthiness relative to other domestic issuers and issuances.

Aa.n Issuers or issues rated Aa.n demonstrate very strong creditworthiness relative to other domestic issuers and issuances.

A.n Issuers or issues rated A.n demonstrate above-average creditworthiness relative to other domestic issuers and issuances.

Baa.n Issuers or issues rated Baa.n demonstrate average creditworthiness relative to other domestic issuers and issuances.

Ba.n Issuers or issues rated Ba.n demonstrate below-average creditworthiness relative to other domestic issuers and issuances.

B.n Issuers or issues rated B.n demonstrate weak creditworthiness relative to other domestic issuers and issuances.

Caa.n Issuers or issues rated Caa.n demonstrate very weak creditworthiness relative to other domestic issuers and issuances.

Ca.n Issuers or issues rated Ca.n demonstrate extremely weak creditworthiness relative to other domestic issuers and issuances.

C.n Issuers or issues rated C.n demonstrate the weakest creditworthiness relative to other domestic issuers and issuances.

Note: Moody's appends numerical modifiers 1, 2, and 3 to each generic rating classification from Aa through Caa. The modifier 1 indicates that the obligation ranks in the higher end of its generic rating category; the modifier 2 indicates a mid-range ranking; and the modifier 3 indicates a ranking in the lower end of that generic rating category.

Description of S&P Global Ratings' Long-Term Issue Credit Ratings:

Issue credit ratings are based, in varying degrees, on S&P Global Ratings' analysis of the following considerations:

- The likelihood of payment—the capacity and willingness of the obligor to meet its financial commitments on an obligation in accordance with the terms of the obligation;
- The nature and provisions of the financial obligation, and the promise S&P Global Ratings imputes; and
- The protection afforded by, and relative position of, the financial obligation in the event of a bankruptcy, reorganization, or other arrangement under the laws of bankruptcy and other laws affecting creditors' rights.

An issue rating is an assessment of default risk but may incorporate an assessment of relative seniority or ultimate recovery in the event of default. Junior obligations are typically rated lower than senior obligations, to reflect lower priority in bankruptcy, as noted above. (Such differentiation may apply when an entity has both senior and subordinated obligations, secured and unsecured obligations, or operating company and holding company obligations.)

AAA—An obligation rated "AAA" has the highest rating assigned by S&P Global Ratings. The obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation is extremely strong.

AA—An obligation rated "AA" differs from the highest-rated obligations only to a small degree. The obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation is very strong.

A—An obligation rated "A" is somewhat more susceptible to the adverse effects of changes in circumstances and economic conditions than obligations in higher-rated categories. However, the obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation is still strong.

BBB—An obligation rated "BBB" exhibits adequate protection parameters. However, adverse economic conditions or changing circumstances are more likely to weaken the obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation.

BB, B, CCC, CC, and C—Obligations rated "BB", "B", "CCC", "CC", and "C" are regarded as having significant speculative characteristics. "BB" indicates the least degree of speculation and "C" the highest. While such obligations will likely have some quality and protective characteristics, these may be outweighed by large uncertainties or major exposure to adverse conditions.

BB—An obligation rated “BB” is less vulnerable to nonpayment than other speculative issues. However, it faces major ongoing uncertainties or exposure to adverse business, financial, or economic conditions that could lead to the obligor’s inadequate capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation.

B—An obligation rated “B” is more vulnerable to nonpayment than obligations rated “BB”, but the obligor currently has the capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation. Adverse business, financial, or economic conditions will likely impair the obligor’s capacity or willingness to meet its financial commitments on the obligation.

CCC—An obligation rated “CCC” is currently vulnerable to nonpayment and is dependent upon favorable business, financial, and economic conditions for the obligor to meet its financial commitments on the obligation. In the event of adverse business, financial, or economic conditions, the obligor is not likely to have the capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation.

CC—An obligation rated “CC” is currently highly vulnerable to nonpayment.

The “CC” rating is used when a default has not yet occurred but S&P Global Ratings expects default to be a virtual certainty, regardless of the anticipated time to default.

C—An obligation rated “C” is currently highly vulnerable to nonpayment, and the obligation is expected to have lower relative seniority or lower ultimate recovery compared with obligations that are rated higher.

D—An obligation rated “D” is in default or in breach of an imputed promise. For non-hybrid capital instruments, the “D” rating category is used when payments on an obligation are not made on the date due, unless S&P Global Ratings believes that such payments will be made within the next five business days in the absence of a stated grace period or within the earlier of the stated grace period or the next 30 calendar days. The “D” rating also will be used upon the filing of a bankruptcy petition or the taking of similar action and where default on an obligation is a virtual certainty, for example due to automatic stay provisions. A rating on an obligation is lowered to “D” if it is subject to a distressed debt restructuring.

Note: The ratings from “AA” to “CCC” may be modified by the addition of a plus (+) or minus (-) sign to show relative standing within the rating categories.

Description of S&P Global Ratings’ Short-Term Issue Credit Ratings:

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

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

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

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

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

D—A short-term obligation rated “D” is in default or in breach of an imputed promise. For non-hybrid capital instruments, the “D” rating category is used when payments on an obligation are not made on the date due, unless S&P Global Ratings believes that such payments will be made within any stated grace period. However, any stated grace period longer than five business days will be treated as five business days. The “D” rating also will be used upon the filing of a bankruptcy petition or the taking of a similar action and where default on an obligation is a virtual

certainty, for example due to automatic stay provisions. A rating on an obligation is lowered to “D” if it is subject to a distressed debt restructuring.

Description of S&P Global Ratings’ Municipal Short-Term Note Ratings:

An S&P Global Ratings U.S. municipal note rating reflects S&P Global Ratings’ opinion about the liquidity factors and market access risks unique to the notes. Notes due in three years or less will likely receive a note rating. Notes with an original maturity of more than three years will most likely receive a long-term debt rating. In determining which type of rating, if any, to assign, S&P Global Ratings’ analysis will review the following considerations:

- Amortization schedule—the larger the final maturity relative to other maturities, the more likely it will be treated as a note; and
- Source of payment—the more dependent the issue is on the market for its refinancing, the more likely it will be treated as a note.

SP-1—Strong capacity to pay principal and interest. An issue determined to possess a very strong capacity to pay debt service is given a plus (+) designation.

SP-2—Satisfactory capacity to pay principal and interest, with some vulnerability to adverse financial and economic changes over the term of the notes.

SP-3—Speculative capacity to pay principal and interest.

D—“D” is assigned upon failure to pay the note when due, completion of a distressed debt restructuring, or the filing of a bankruptcy petition or the taking of similar action and where default on an obligation is a virtual certainty, for example due to automatic stay provisions.

Description of S&P Global Ratings’ Long-Term Issuer Credit Ratings

AAA An obligor rated “AAA” has extremely strong capacity to meet its financial commitments. “AAA” is the highest issuer credit rating assigned by S&P Global Ratings.

AA An obligor rated “AA” has very strong capacity to meet its financial commitments. It differs from the highest-rated obligors only to a small degree.

A An obligor rated “A” has strong capacity to meet its financial commitments but is somewhat more susceptible to the adverse effects of changes in circumstances and economic conditions than obligors in higher-rated categories.

BBB An obligor rated “BBB” has adequate capacity to meet its financial commitments. However, adverse economic conditions or changing circumstances are more likely to weaken the obligor’s capacity to meet its financial commitments.

BB, B, CCC, and CC Obligor rated “BB”, “B”, “CCC”, and “CC” are regarded as having significant speculative characteristics. “BB” indicates the least degree of speculation and “CC” the highest. While such obligors will likely have some quality and protective characteristics, these may be outweighed by large uncertainties or major exposure to adverse conditions.

BB An obligor rated “BB” is less vulnerable in the near term than other lower-rated obligors. However, it faces major ongoing uncertainties and exposure to adverse business, financial, or economic conditions that could lead to the obligor’s inadequate capacity to meet its financial commitments.

B An obligor rated “B” is more vulnerable than the obligors rated “BB”, but the obligor currently has the capacity to meet its financial commitments. Adverse business, financial, or economic conditions will likely impair the obligor’s capacity or willingness to meet its financial commitments.

CCC An obligor rated “CCC” is currently vulnerable and is dependent upon favorable business, financial, and economic conditions to meet its financial commitments.

CC An obligor rated “CC” is currently highly vulnerable. The “CC” rating is used when a default has not yet occurred but S&P Global Ratings expects default to be a virtual certainty, regardless of the anticipated time to default.

SD and D An obligor is rated “SD” (selective default) or “D” if S&P Global Ratings considers there to be a default on one or more of its financial obligations, whether long- or short-term, including rated and unrated obligations but excluding hybrid instruments classified as regulatory capital or in nonpayment according to terms. A “D” rating is assigned when S&P Global Ratings believes that the default will be a general default and that the obligor will fail to pay all or substantially all of its obligations as they come due. An “SD” rating is assigned when S&P Global Ratings believes that the obligor has selectively defaulted on a specific issue or class of obligations but it will continue to meet its payment obligations on other issues or classes of obligations in a timely manner. A rating on an obligor is lowered to “D” or “SD” if it is conducting a distressed debt restructuring.

Ratings from “AA” to “CCC” may be modified by the addition of a plus (+) or minus (-) sign to show relative standing within the rating categories.

Description of S&P Global Ratings’ Short-Term Issuer Credit Ratings

- A-1** An obligor rated “A-1” has strong capacity to meet its financial commitments. It is rated in the highest category by S&P Global Ratings. Within this category, certain obligors are designated with a plus sign (+). This indicates that the obligor’s capacity to meet its financial commitments is extremely strong.
- A-2** An obligor rated “A-2” has satisfactory capacity to meet its financial commitments. However, it is somewhat more susceptible to the adverse effects of changes in circumstances and economic conditions than obligors in the highest rating category.
- A-3** An obligor rated “A-3” has adequate capacity to meet its financial obligations. However, adverse economic conditions or changing circumstances are more likely to weaken the obligor’s capacity to meet its financial commitments.
- B** An obligor rated “B” is regarded as vulnerable and has significant speculative characteristics. The obligor currently has the capacity to meet its financial commitments; however, it faces major ongoing uncertainties that could lead to the obligor’s inadequate capacity to meet its financial commitments.
- C** An obligor rated “C” is currently vulnerable to nonpayment that would result in an “SD” or “D” issuer rating and is dependent upon favorable business, financial, and economic conditions to meet its financial commitments.

SD and D An obligor is rated “SD” (selective default) or “D” if S&P Global Ratings considers there to be a default on one or more of its financial obligations, whether long- or short-term, including rated and unrated obligations but excluding hybrid instruments classified as regulatory capital or in nonpayment according to terms. A “D” rating is assigned when S&P Global Ratings believes that the default will be a general default and that the obligor will fail to pay all or substantially all of its obligations as they come due. An “SD” rating is assigned when S&P Global Ratings believes that the obligor has selectively defaulted on a specific issue or class of obligations but it will continue to meet its payment obligations on other issues or classes of obligations in a timely manner. A rating on an obligor is lowered to “D” or “SD” if it is conducting a distressed debt restructuring.

Description of S&P Global Ratings’ Dual Ratings:

Dual ratings may be assigned to debt issues that have a put option or demand feature. The first component of the rating addresses the likelihood of repayment of principal and interest as due, and the second component of the rating addresses only the demand feature. The first component of the rating can relate to either a short-term or long-term transaction and accordingly use either short-term or long-term rating symbols. The second component of the rating relates to the put option and is assigned a short-term rating symbol (for example, “AAA/A-1+” or “A-1+/A-1”). With U.S. municipal short-term demand debt, the U.S. municipal short-term note rating symbols are used for the first component of the rating (for example, “SP-1+/A-1+”).

Description of S&P Global Ratings’ Active Qualifiers:

S&P Global Ratings uses the following qualifiers that limit the scope of a rating. The structure of the transaction can require the use of a qualifier such as a “p” qualifier, which indicates the rating addresses the principal portion of the obligation only. A qualifier appears as a suffix and is part of the rating.

Federal deposit insurance limit: “L” qualifier. Ratings qualified with “L” apply only to amounts invested up to federal deposit insurance limits.

Principal: “p” qualifier. This suffix is used for issues in which the credit factors, the terms, or both that determine the likelihood of receipt of payment of principal are different from the credit factors, terms, or both that determine the likelihood of receipt of interest on the obligation. The “p” suffix indicates that the rating addresses the principal portion of the obligation only and that the interest is not rated.

Preliminary ratings: “prelim” qualifier. Preliminary ratings, with the “prelim” suffix, may be assigned to obligors or obligations, including financial programs, in the circumstances described below. Assignment of a final rating is conditional on the receipt by S&P Global Ratings of appropriate documentation. S&P Global Ratings reserves the right not to issue a final rating. Moreover, if a final rating is issued, it may differ from the preliminary rating.

- Preliminary ratings may be assigned to obligations, most commonly structured and project finance issues, pending receipt of final documentation and legal opinions.
- Preliminary ratings may be assigned to obligations that will likely be issued upon the obligor’s emergence from bankruptcy or similar reorganization, based on late-stage reorganization plans, documentation, and discussions with the obligor. Preliminary ratings may also be assigned to the obligors. These ratings consider the anticipated general credit quality of the reorganized or post-bankruptcy issuer as well as attributes of the anticipated obligation(s).
- Preliminary ratings may be assigned to entities that are being formed or that are in the process of being independently established when, in S&P Global Ratings’ opinion, documentation is close to final. Preliminary ratings may also be assigned to the obligations of these entities.
- Preliminary ratings may be assigned when a previously unrated entity is undergoing a well-formulated restructuring, recapitalization, significant financing, or other transformative event, generally at the point that investor or lender commitments are invited. The preliminary rating may be assigned to the entity and to its proposed obligation(s). These preliminary ratings consider the anticipated general credit quality of the obligor, as well as attributes of the anticipated obligation(s), assuming successful completion of the transformative event. Should the transformative event not occur, S&P Global Ratings would likely withdraw these preliminary ratings.
- A preliminary recovery rating may be assigned to an obligation that has a preliminary issue credit rating.

Termination structures: “t” qualifier. This symbol indicates termination structures that are designed to honor their contracts to full maturity or, should certain events occur, to terminate and cash settle all their contracts before their final maturity date.

Counterparty instrument rating: “cir” qualifier. This symbol indicates a counterparty instrument rating (CIR), which is a forward-looking opinion about the creditworthiness of an issuer in a securitization structure with respect to a specific financial obligation to a counterparty (including interest rate swaps, currency swaps, and liquidity facilities). The CIR is determined on an ultimate payment basis; these opinions do not take into account timeliness of payment.

Description of Fitch Ratings’ Corporate Finance Obligations:

Ratings of individual securities or financial obligations of a corporate issuer address relative vulnerability to default on an ordinal scale. In addition, for financial obligations in corporate finance, a measure of recovery given default on that liability is also included in the rating assessment. This notably applies to covered bonds ratings, which incorporate both an indication of the probability of default and of the recovery given a default of this debt instrument. On the contrary, ratings of debtor-in-possession (DIP) obligations incorporate the expectation of full repayment.

The relationship between the issuer scale and obligation scale assumes a generic historical average recovery. Individual obligations can be assigned ratings higher, lower, or the same as that entity’s issuer rating or Issuer Default Rating (IDR), based on their relative ranking, relative vulnerability to default or based on explicit Recovery Ratings.

As a result, individual obligations of entities, such as corporations, are assigned ratings higher, lower, or the same as that entity's issuer rating or IDR, except DIP obligation ratings that are not based off an IDR and senior tranches of Enhanced Equipment Trust Certificates, for which IDRs are secondary dependencies, as Fitch focuses primarily on structure, collateral and legal protection.

At the lower end of the ratings scale, Fitch publishes explicit Recovery Ratings in many cases to complement issuer and obligation ratings.

AAA: Highest Credit Quality. "AAA" ratings denote the lowest expectation of credit risk. They are assigned only in cases of exceptionally strong capacity for payment of financial commitments. This capacity is highly unlikely to be adversely affected by foreseeable events.

AA: Very High Credit Quality. "AA" ratings denote expectations of very low credit risk. They indicate very strong capacity for payment of financial commitments. This capacity is not significantly vulnerable to foreseeable events.

A: High Credit Quality. "A" ratings denote expectations of low credit risk. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered strong. This capacity may, nevertheless, be more vulnerable to adverse business or economic conditions than is the case for higher ratings.

BBB: Good Credit Quality. "BBB" ratings indicate that expectations of credit risk are currently low. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered adequate, but adverse business or economic conditions are more likely to impair this capacity.

BB: Speculative. "BB" ratings indicate an elevated vulnerability to credit risk, particularly in the event of adverse changes in business or economic conditions over time; however, business or financial alternatives may be available to allow financial commitments to be met.

B: Highly Speculative. "B" ratings indicate that material credit risk is present.

CCC: Substantial Credit Risk. "CCC" ratings indicate that substantial credit risk is present.

CC: Very High Levels of Credit Risk. "CC" ratings indicate very high levels of credit risk.

C: Exceptionally High Levels of Credit Risk. "C" indicates exceptionally high levels of credit risk.

The ratings of corporate finance obligations are linked to IDRs (or sometimes Viability Ratings for banks and non-bank financial institutions) by i) recovery expectations, including as often indicated by Recovery Ratings assigned in the case of low speculative grade issuers and ii) for banks and non-bank financial institutions an assessment of nonperformance risk relative to the risk captured in the IDR or Viability Ratings (e.g. in respect of certain hybrid securities).

For performing obligations, the obligation rating represents the risk of default including the effect of expected recoveries on the credit risk should a default occur.

If the obligation rating is higher than the rating of the issuer, this indicates above average recovery expectations in the event of default. If the obligations rating is lower than the rating of the issuer, this indicates low expected recoveries should default occur.

Ratings in the categories of "CCC", "CC" and "C" can also relate to obligations or issuers that are in default. In this case, the rating does not opine on default risk but reflects the recovery expectation only.

Description of Fitch Ratings' Issuer Default Ratings:

Rated entities in several sectors, including financial and non-financial corporations, sovereigns, insurance companies and some sectors within public finance, are generally assigned IDRs. IDRs are also assigned to certain entities or enterprises in global infrastructure, project finance and public finance. IDRs opine on an entity's relative vulnerability to default – including by way of a distressed debt exchange (DDE) – on financial obligations. The threshold default risk addressed by the IDR is generally that of the financial obligations whose non-payment would best reflect the uncured failure of that entity. As such, IDRs also address relative vulnerability to bankruptcy, administrative receivership or similar concepts.

In aggregate, IDRs provide an ordinal ranking of issuers based on the agency's view of their relative vulnerability to default, rather than a prediction of a specific percentage likelihood of default.

AAA: Highest Credit Quality. "AAA" ratings denote the lowest expectation of default risk. They are assigned only in cases of exceptionally strong capacity for payment of financial commitments. This capacity is highly unlikely to be adversely affected by foreseeable events.

AA: Very High Credit Quality. "AA" ratings denote expectations of very low default risk. They indicate very strong capacity for payment of financial commitments. This capacity is not significantly vulnerable to foreseeable events.

A: High Credit Quality. "A" ratings denote expectations of low default risk. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered strong. This capacity may, nevertheless, be more vulnerable to adverse business or economic conditions than is the case for higher ratings.

BBB: Good Credit Quality. "BBB" ratings indicate that expectations of default risk are currently low. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered adequate, but adverse business or economic conditions are more likely to impair this capacity.

BB: Speculative. "BB" ratings indicate an elevated vulnerability to default risk, particularly in the event of adverse changes in business or economic conditions over time; however, business or financial flexibility exists that supports the servicing of financial commitments.

B: Highly Speculative. "B" ratings indicate that material default risk is present, but a limited margin of safety remains. Financial commitments are currently being met; however, capacity for continued payment is vulnerable to deterioration in the business and economic environment.

CCC: Substantial Credit Risk. Default is a real possibility.

CC: Very High Levels of Credit Risk. Very low margin for safety. Default of some kind appears probable.

C: Near Default. A default or default-like process has begun, or for a closed funding vehicle, payment capacity is irrevocably impaired. Conditions that are indicative of a "C" category rating for an issuer include:

- The issuer has entered into a grace or cure period following non-payment of a material financial obligation;
- The formal announcement by the issuer or their agent of a distressed debt exchange ("DDE");
- A closed financing vehicle where payment capacity is irrevocably impaired such that it is not expected to pay interest and/or principal in full during the life of the transaction, but where no payment default is imminent

RD: Restricted Default. "RD" ratings indicate an issuer that in Fitch's opinion has experienced:

- An uncured payment default or DDE on a bond, loan or other material financial obligations, but has not entered into bankruptcy filing, administration, receivership, liquidation, or other formal winding-up procedure, and
- Has not otherwise ceased operating.

This would include:

- The selective payment default on a specific class or currency of debt;
- The uncured expiry of any applicable original grace period, cure period or default forbearance period following a payment default on a bank loan, capital markets security or other material financial obligation;

D: Default. "D" ratings indicate an issuer that in Fitch's opinion has entered into bankruptcy filings, administration, receivership, liquidation or other formal winding-up procedure or which has otherwise ceased business.

Default ratings are not assigned prospectively to entities or their obligations; within this context, non-payment on an instrument that contains a deferral feature or grace period will generally not be considered a default until after the expiration of the deferral or grace period, unless a default is otherwise driven by bankruptcy or other similar circumstance, or by a distressed debt exchange.

In all cases, the assignment of a default rating reflects the agency's opinion as to the most appropriate rating category consistent with the rest of its universe of ratings and may differ from the definition of default under the terms of an issuer's financial obligations or local commercial practice.

Description of Fitch Ratings' Structured Finance Long-Term Obligation Ratings:

Ratings of structured finance obligations on the long-term scale consider the obligations' relative vulnerability to default. These ratings are typically assigned to an individual security or tranche in a transaction and not to an issuer.

AAA: Highest Credit Quality.

"AAA" ratings denote the lowest expectation of default risk. They are assigned only in cases of exceptionally strong capacity for payment of financial commitments. This capacity is highly unlikely to be adversely affected by foreseeable events.

AA: Very High Credit Quality.

"AA" ratings denote expectations of very low default risk. They indicate very strong capacity for payment of financial commitments. This capacity is not significantly vulnerable to foreseeable events.

A: High Credit Quality.

"A" ratings denote expectations of low default risk. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered strong. This capacity may, nevertheless, be more vulnerable to adverse business or economic conditions than is the case for higher ratings.

BBB: Good Credit Quality.

"BBB" ratings indicate that expectations of default risk are currently low. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered adequate, but adverse business or economic conditions are more likely to impair this capacity.

BB: Speculative.

"BB" ratings indicate an elevated vulnerability to default risk, particularly in the event of adverse changes in business or economic conditions over time.

B: Highly Speculative.

"B" ratings indicate that material default risk is present, but a limited margin of safety remains. Financial commitments are currently being met; however, capacity for continued payment is vulnerable to deterioration in the business and economic environment.

CCC: Substantial Credit Risk.

Very low margin for safety. Default is a real possibility.

CC: Very High Levels of Credit Risk.

Default of some kind appears probable.

C: Exceptionally High Levels of Credit Risk.

Default appears imminent or inevitable.

D: Default.

Indicates a default. Default generally is defined as one of the following:

- Failure to make payment of principal and/or interest under the contractual terms of the rated obligation;
- Bankruptcy filings, administration, receivership, liquidation or other winding-up or cessation of the business of an issuer/obligor; or
- Distressed exchange of an obligation, where creditors were offered securities with diminished structural or economic terms compared with the existing obligation to avoid a probable payment default.

Description of Fitch Ratings' Country Ceilings Ratings:

Country Ceilings are expressed using the symbols of the long-term issuer primary credit rating scale and relate to sovereign jurisdictions also rated by Fitch on the IDR scale. They reflect the agency's judgment regarding the risk of capital and exchange controls being imposed by the sovereign authorities that would prevent or materially impede the private sector's ability

to convert local currency into foreign currency and transfer to non-resident creditors — transfer and convertibility (T&C) risk. They are not ratings but expressions of a cap for the foreign currency issuer ratings of most, but not all, issuers in a given country. Intervention through capital or currency controls where an issuer is prevented comprehensively by its own government from paying out on cross-border bonds, held by investors both inside and outside its borders, would typically lead to a T&C default.

Description of Fitch Ratings' Sovereigns, Public Finance and Global Infrastructure Obligations:

Ratings of public finance obligations, infrastructure and project finance obligations on the long-term scale, structured finance and fund finance obligations only consider the obligations' relative vulnerability to default.

In limited cases in U.S. public finance, where Chapter 9 of the Bankruptcy Code provides reliably superior prospects for ultimate recovery to local government obligations that benefit from a statutory lien on revenues, Fitch reflects this in a security rating with limited notching above the IDR. Recovery expectations can also be reflected in a security rating in the U.S. during the pendency of a bankruptcy proceeding under the Code if there is sufficient visibility on potential recovery prospects.

Recovery Ratings are only assigned to infrastructure and project finance obligations, to indicate likely recovery prospects upon request. They are assessed in parallel to instrument ratings and typically do not influence the obligation rating, which remains premised on vulnerability to default.

AAA: Highest Credit Quality. "AAA" ratings denote the lowest expectation of default risk. They are assigned only in cases of exceptionally strong capacity for payment of financial commitments. This capacity is highly unlikely to be adversely affected by foreseeable events.

AA: Very High Credit Quality. "AA" ratings denote expectations of very low default risk. They indicate very strong capacity for payment of financial commitments. This capacity is not significantly vulnerable to foreseeable events.

A: High Credit Quality. "A" ratings denote expectations of low default risk. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered strong. This capacity may, nevertheless, be more vulnerable to adverse business or economic conditions than is the case for higher ratings.

BBB: Good Credit Quality. "BBB" ratings indicate that expectations of default risk are currently low. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered adequate, but adverse business or economic conditions are more likely to impair this capacity.

BB: Speculative. "BB" ratings indicate an elevated vulnerability to default risk, particularly in the event of adverse changes in business or economic conditions over time.

B: Highly Speculative. "B" ratings indicate that material default risk is present, but a limited margin of safety remains. Financial commitments are currently being met; however, capacity for continued payment is vulnerable to deterioration in the business and economic environment.

CCC: Substantial Credit Risk. Very low margin for safety. Default is a real possibility.

CC: Very High Levels of Credit Risk. Default of some kind appears probable.

C: Exceptionally High Levels of Credit Risk. Default appears imminent or inevitable.

D: Default. Indicates a default. Default generally is defined as one of the following:

- Failure to make payment of principal and/or interest under the contractual terms of the rated obligation;
- Bankruptcy filings, administration, receivership, liquidation or other winding-up or cessation of the business of an issuer/obligor where payment default on an obligation is a virtual certainty; or
- Distressed exchange of an obligation, where creditors were offered securities with diminished structural or economic terms compared with the existing obligation to avoid a probable payment default.

Notes: In U.S. public finance, obligations may be pre-refunded, where funds sufficient to meet the requirements of the respective obligations are placed in an escrow account. When obligation ratings are maintained based on the escrowed funds and their structural elements, the ratings carry the suffix "pre" (e.g. "AAApre", "AA+pre").

Structured Finance Defaults

Imminent default, categorized under “C”, typically refers to the occasion where a payment default has been intimated by the issuer and is all but inevitable. This may, for example, be where an issuer has missed a scheduled payment but (as is typical) has a grace period during which it may cure the payment default. Another alternative would be where an issuer has formally announced a distressed debt exchange, but the date of the exchange still lies several days or weeks in the immediate future.

Additionally, in structured finance transactions, where analysis indicates that an instrument is irrevocably impaired such that it is not expected to pay interest and/or principal in full in accordance with the terms of the obligation’s documentation during the life of the transaction, but where no payment default in accordance with the terms of the documentation is imminent, the obligation will typically be rated in the “C” category.

Structured Finance Write-downs

Where an instrument has experienced an involuntary and, in the agency’s opinion, irreversible write-down of principal (i.e. other than through amortization, and resulting in a loss to the investor), a credit rating of “D” will be assigned to the instrument. Where the agency believes the write-down may prove to be temporary (and the loss may be written up again in future if and when performance improves), then a credit rating of “C” will typically be assigned. Should the write-down then later be reversed, the credit rating will be raised to an appropriate level for that instrument. Should the write-down later be deemed as irreversible, the credit rating will be lowered to “D”.

Notes:

In the case of structured finance, while the ratings do not address the loss severity given default of the rated liability, loss severity assumptions on the underlying assets are nonetheless typically included as part of the analysis. Loss severity assumptions are used to derive pool cash flows available to service the rated liability.

The suffix “sf” denotes an issue that is a structured finance transaction.

Description of Fitch Ratings’ Short-Term Ratings Assigned to Issuers and Obligations:

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

F1: Highest Short-Term Credit Quality. Indicates the strongest intrinsic capacity for timely payment of financial commitments; may have an added “+” to denote any exceptionally strong credit feature.

F2: Good Short-Term Credit Quality. Good intrinsic capacity for timely payment of financial commitments.

F3: Fair Short-Term Credit Quality. The intrinsic capacity for timely payment of financial commitments is adequate.

B: Speculative Short-Term Credit Quality. Minimal capacity for timely payment of financial commitments, plus heightened vulnerability to near term adverse changes in financial and economic conditions.

C: High Short-Term Default Risk. Default is a real possibility.

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

D: Default. Indicates a broad-based default event for an entity, or the default of a short-term obligation.