

For the Commission, by the Division of Investment Management, pursuant to delegated authority.

Margaret H. McFarland,
Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 95-31510 Filed 12-28-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010-01-M

[Release No. 34-36625; File No. SR-Phlx-95-90]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Notice of Filing of Proposed Rule Change by the Philadelphia Stock Exchange, Inc. Relating to Listing Standards for Options on Equity Securities Issued in a Reorganization Transaction Pursuant to a Public Offering or a Rights Distribution

December 21, 1995.

Pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 ("Act"),¹ and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,² notice is hereby given that on December 19, 1995, the Philadelphia Stock Exchange, Inc. ("Phlx" or "Exchange") filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("Commission") the proposed rule change as described in Items I, II, and III below, which Items have been prepared by the Phlx. The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comments on the proposed rule change from interested persons.

I. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Terms of Substance of the Proposed Rule Change

The Phlx proposes to amend its listing standards in respect of options on equity securities issues in a spin-off, reorganization, recapitalization, restructuring or similar transaction where the issuance is made pursuant to a public offering or a rights distribution. The text of the proposed rule change is available at the Office of the Secretary, Phlx, and at the Commission.

II. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

In its filing with the Commission, Phlx included statements concerning the purpose of and basis for the proposed rule change and discussed any comments it received on the proposed rule change. The text of these statements may be examined at the places specified in Item IV below. The Phlx has prepared summaries, set forth in sections (A), (B), and (C) below, of the most significant aspects of such statements.

A. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

The purpose of the proposed rule change is to amend the special listing standards set forth in Phlx Rule 1009, Commentary .05 that apply to options on equity securities issued in certain spin-offs, reorganizations, recapitalizations, restructurings or similar transactions (referred to herein as "restructuring transactions") so as to also include securities issued pursuant to a public offering or a rights distribution that is part of a restructuring transaction.

The proposed amendment to Rule 1009, Commentary .05 is intended to facilitate the listing of options on equity securities issued in restructuring transactions (referred to as "Restructure Securities") by permitting the Exchange to base its determination as to the satisfaction of certain of the listing standards set forth in Exchange Rule 1009 and Commentary .01 thereunder by reference to (1) specified characteristics of the "Original Security" in respect of which the Restructure Security was issued or distributed; (2) the trading market of the Original Security; (3) the number of shares of the Restructure Security issued and outstanding; or (4) to the listing standards of the exchange on which the Restructure Security is listed. Rule 1009, Commentary .05 would permit the Exchange to certify a Restructure Security as options eligible sooner than if it had to wait until it could base its certification on characteristics of the Restructure Security itself, but only in circumstances where the factors relied upon make it reasonable to conclude that the Restructure Security will in fact satisfy applicable listing criteria.

As recently approved by the Commission, Phlx Rule 1009, Commentary .05 does not extend to restructuring transactions involving the issuance of a Restructure Security in a public offering or a rights distribution.³ The questions raised by the proposed extension of Commentary .05 to Phlx Rule 1009 to reorganization transactions involving public offering or rights distributions reflect that when a Restructure Security is issued in a public offering or pursuant to a rights distribution, it cannot automatically be assumed that the shareholder population of the Restructure Security and the Original Security will be the same. Instead, the holders of a

Restructure Security issued in a public offering will be those persons who subscribed for and purchased the security in the offering, and the holders of a Restructure Security issued in a rights distribution will be those persons who elected to exercise their rights. Even in the case of a distribution of nontransferable rights to shareholders of the Original Security, not all such shareholders may choose to exercise their rights. As a result, it cannot be assumed that the Restructure Security will necessarily satisfy listing criteria pertaining to minimum number of holders, minimum public float and trading volume simply because the Original Security satisfied these criteria.

On the other hand, the Exchange believes that the same reasons for wanting to make an options market available without delay to holders of securities issued in reorganizations that do not involve public offerings or rights distributions apply with equal force to securities issued in reorganizations that do involve public offerings or rights distributions, so long as there can be reasonable assurance that the securities satisfy applicable options listing standards. That is, holders of an Original Security who utilize options to manage the risks of their stock positions may well find themselves to be holders of both the Original Security and the Restructure Security following a reorganization because they chose to purchase the Restructure Security in a public offering or to exercise rights in order to maintain the same investment position they had prior to the reorganization. Such holders may want to continue to use options to manage the risks of their combined stock position after the reorganization, but they can do so only if options on the Restructure Security are available. The Exchange believes that it is important to avoid any undue delay in the introduction of options trading in such a Restructure Security in circumstances where there is sound reason to believe that the Restructure Security does in fact satisfy options listing standards.

Accordingly, the Phlx proposes to add new paragraph (d) to Commentary .05 of Rule 1009, to address situations where a Restructure Security is issued pursuant to a public offering or rights distribution. Pursuant to the proposed rule change, the Exchange may certify the Restructure Security as satisfying minimum shareholder and minimum public float requirements on the basis provided for in approved Commentary .05(c), only after at least five days of "regular way" trading. Moreover, after due diligence, the Exchange must have no reason to believe that the Restructure

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

³ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 36020 (July 24, 1995), 60 FR 39039 (July 31, 1995) (order approving Commentary .05 to Phlx Rule 1009).

Security does not satisfy these requirements. Additionally, in order to base certification on Commentary .05 of Rule 1009, the closing prices of the Restructure Security on each of the five or more trading days prior to the selection date must be at least \$7.50. Finally, as is required for all underlying securities selected for options trading, trading volume in the Restructure Security must be at least 2,400,000 shares during a period of twelve months or less up to the time the security is so selected.

The effect of the proposed rule change is that a Restructure Security issued pursuant to a public offering or a rights distribution that is part of a reorganization will be eligible for options trading only if it satisfies all of the existing standards applicable to the selection of underlying securities generally, except that (A) the Exchange may assume the satisfaction of the minimum public ownership requirement of 7,000,000 shares and the minimum 2,000 shareholders requirement if (i) either the percentage of value tests of subparagraph (a)(1) of Commentary .05 are met or the aggregate market value represented by the Restructure Security is at least \$500,000,000; and if (ii) the Restructure Security is listed on an exchange or an automatic quotation system having equivalent listing requirements or at least 40,000,000 shares of the Restructure Security are issued and outstanding, and if (iii) after the Restructure Security has traded "regular way" for at least five trading days and after having conducted due diligence in the matter, the Exchange has no reason to believe that these requirements are not met, and (B) subject to the same percentage of value or aggregate market value requirements, the Restructure Security may be deemed to satisfy the minimum market price per share requirement if it has a closing market price per share of at least \$7.50 during each of the five or more trading days preceding the date of selection, instead of having to satisfy this requirement over a majority of days over a period of three months. (In the event the Restructure Security has a closing price that is less than \$7.50 on any of the trading days preceding its selection, it will have to satisfy this requirement on a majority of trading days over a period of three months before it can be certified as eligible for options trading.) For any Restructure Security issued in a public offering or a rights distribution that does satisfy these requirements, the effect of the proposed rule change will be to permit its certification of options

trading to take place as early as on the sixth day after trading in the stock commences, instead of having to wait for three months of trading.

The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change is consistent with Section 6(b) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 in general, and furthers the objectives of Section 6(b)(5) in particular, by removing impediment to a free and open market in options covering securities issued in public offerings or pursuant to rights distributions as part of restructuring transactions and other similar corporate reorganizations.

B. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Burden on Competition

The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any burden on competition.

C. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Comments on the Proposed Rule Change Received From Members, Participants or Others

No written comments were solicited or received with respect to the proposed rule change.

III. Date of Effectiveness of the Proposed Rule Change and Timing for Commission Action

Within 35 days of the date of publication of this notice in the Federal Register or within such longer period (i) as the Commission may designate up to 90 days of such date if it finds such longer period to be appropriate and publishes its reasons for so finding or (ii) as to which the self-regulatory organization consents, the Commission will:

(A) by order approve such proposed rule change, or

(B) institute proceedings to determine whether the proposed rule change should be disapproved.

IV. Solicitation of Comments

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views and arguments concerning the foregoing. Persons making written submissions should file six copies thereof with the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 Fifth Street, NW., Washington, D.C. 20549. Copies of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the proposed rule change that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the proposed rule change between the Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the public in accordance with the

provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be available for inspection and copying in the Commission's Public Reference Section, 450 Fifth Street, NW., Washington, D.C. 20549. Copies of such filing will also be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Phlx. All submissions should refer to the File No. SR-Phlx-95-90 and should be submitted by January 19, 1996.

For the Commission, by the Division of Market Regulation, pursuant to delegated authority.⁴

Margaret H. McFarland,
Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 95-31504 Filed 12-28-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010-01-M

[Release No. 34-36623; File No. SR-CBOE-95-51]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Order Approving a Proposed Rule Change and Notice of Filing and Order Granting Accelerated Approval of Amendment No. 1 to the Proposed Rule Change by the Chicago Board Options Exchange, Incorporated, Relating to the Listing of the Trading of Options and Long-Term Options on the CBOE Automotive Index and Long-Term Options on a Reduced-Value CBOE Automotive Index

December 21, 1995.

I. Introduction

On August 31, 1995, the Chicago Board Options Exchange, Inc. ("CBOE" or "Exchange") submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission ("Commission"), pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 ("Act")¹ and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,² a proposed rule change to provide for the listing and trading of index options on the CBOE Automotive Index ("Automotive Index" or "Index"). Notice of the proposal appeared in the Federal Register on October 5, 1995.³ No comment letters were received on the proposed rule change. On December 14, 1995, the Exchange filed with the Commission Amendment No. 1 to the proposed change.⁴ This order approves the Exchange's proposal, as amended.

¹ 17 CFR 200.30-(a)(12).

² 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

³ 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

⁴ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 36295 (September 28, 1995), 60 FR 52229.

⁵ In Amendment No. 1, as discussed more fully herein, the Exchange proposed certain maintenance standards for the Automotive Index. See Letter from Eileen Smith, Director, Product Development, Research Department, CBOE, to John Ayanian, Attorney, Office of Market Supervision ("OMS"),