

Several commenters raised concerns that registration of non-U.S. firms would lessen competition among public accounting firms by discouraging some firms from registering. As described above, the Board has eliminated and modified many of the disclosure requirements originally proposed. Given these modifications, the Board believes that the cost and effort for smaller firms to register with the Board will not be significantly disproportionate to that for larger firms and therefore would not have a significant impact on competition. Moreover, the Board believes that the 180-day deferral of registration for non-U.S. firms should also minimize the administrative burden for smaller non-U.S. firms, also diminishing any anti-competitive effect.

While the Board believes that it must require registration of non-U.S. firms, it also recognizes that it must be flexible about how registration operates in the case of those firms and that it may not be practical to treat foreign accounting firms as if they were, for purposes of the Board's regulation, in all respects the same as U.S.-based firms. The Board is prepared to work with its foreign counterparts to find ways to accomplish the goals of the Act without subjecting foreign firms to unnecessary burdens or conflicting requirements. Where possible, the Board will seek to build compliance with its requirements on compliance with foreign regulatory regimes. The proposed 180-day deferral of foreign firm registration will afford the Board the opportunity to explore ways of accomplishing that goal with non-U.S. accounting oversight bodies.

In addition, the nature of the oversight to be exercised over registered foreign public accounting firms is a matter the Board has yet to resolve. The Board is aware that several countries have adopted or proposed corporate reforms that include new regulatory oversight of the auditing profession, and many countries have already adopted or planned programs to register, inspect and discipline accounting firms that prepare and issue audit reports for filing in those respective jurisdictions. The Board expects that the various reforms being considered in other jurisdictions will continue to improve the quality of audit reports prepared by firms worldwide. In this regard, the Board has already commenced dialogue with other oversight bodies outside the United States in order to achieve its objectives

generally, as well as to try to find ways to reduce administrative burdens and to provide for coordination in areas where there is a common programmatic interest, such as annual reporting, inspection, and discipline.

III. Date of Effectiveness of the Proposed Rules 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 Board consents, the Commission will:

(A) By order approve such proposed rules; or

(B) Institute proceedings to determine whether the proposed rules should be disapproved.

IV. Solicitation of Comments

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views and arguments concerning the foregoing, including whether the proposed rules are consistent with the Act or as necessary or appropriate in the public interest or for the protection of investors. Persons making written submissions should file six copies thereof with the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 Fifth Street, NW., Washington, DC 20549-0609. Copies of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the proposed rules that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the proposed rules 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 Room. Copies of such filings will also be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the PCAOB. All submissions should refer to File No. PCAOB-2003-03 and should be submitted by July 2, 2003.

By the Commission.
Margaret H. McFarland,
Deputy Secretary.
 [FR Doc. 03-14715 Filed 6-10-03; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 8010-01-P

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-47974; File No. SR-Amex-2003-57]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change by the American Stock Exchange LLC To Extend the Suspension of Transaction Charges for Certain iShares Funds

June 4, 2003.

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 June 2, 2003, the American Stock Exchange LLC ("Amex" or "Exchange") filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC" or "Commission") the proposed rule change as described in Items I, II, and III below, which Items have been prepared by the Exchange. The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comments on the proposed rule change.

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

The Amex proposes to extend until June 30, 2003 the suspension of Exchange transaction charges for specialist, Registered Trader, and broker-dealer orders for the iShares Lehman 1-3 year Treasury Bond Fund and the iShares Lehman 7-10 year Treasury Bond Fund. Proposed new language is *italicized*; proposed deletions are in [brackets].

* * * * *

Amex Equity Fee Schedule

I. Transaction Charges

No change.

II. Regulatory Fee

No Change.

Notes:

1. and 2. No change.

3. Customer transaction charges for the following Portfolio Depository Receipts, Index Fund Shares, and Trust Issued Receipts have been suspended:

DIA-DIAMONDS®
 QQQ—Nasdaq—100® Index Tracking Stock
 SPY—SPDRs®

BHH-B2B Internet HOLDRs™
 BBH-Biotech HOLDRs
 BDH—Broadband HOLDRs

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

IVV—iShares S&P 500
 MDY—MidCap SPDRs
 XLY—Select Sector SPDR—Consumer Discretionary

XLP—Select Sector SPDR—Consumer Staples
 XLE—Select Sector SPDR—Energy
 XLF—Select Sector SPDR—Financial
 XLV—Select Sector SPDR—Health Care
 XLI—Select Sector SPDR—Industrial
 XLB—Select Sector SPDR—Materials
 XLK—Select Sector SPDR—Technology
 XLU—Select Sector SPDR—Utilities

EKH—Europe 2001 HOLDRs
 IAH—Internet Architecture HOLDRs
 HHH—Internet HOLDRs
 IIH—Internet Infrastructure HOLDRs
 MKH—Market 2000+HOLDRs
 OIH—Oil Service HOLDRs
 PPH—Pharmaceutical HOLDRs
 RKH—Regional Bank HOLDRs
 RTH—Retail HOLDRs
 SMH—Semiconductor HOLDRs
 SWH—Software HOLDRs
 TTH—Telecom HOLDRs
 UTH—Utilities HOLDRs
 WMH—Wireless HOLDRs
 SHY—iShares Lehman 1–3 Year Treasury Bond Fund
 IEF—iShares Lehman 7–10 Year Treasury Bond Fund
 TLT—iShares Lehman 20+ Year Treasury Bond Fund
 LQD—iShares GS \$ InvesTop Corporate Bond Fund
 [TFT—Treasury 1 FITR ETF
 TOU—Treasury 2 FITR ETF
 TFI—Treasury 5 FITR ETF
 TTE—Treasury 10 FITR ETF]

Customer transaction charges for the iShares S&P 100 Index Fund are \$.0015 per share (\$.15 per 100 shares), capped at \$100 per trade.

Until [May 31] June 30, 2003, transaction charges also have been suspended in SHY[,] and IEF[,] [TFT, TOU, TFI and TTE] for specialist, Registered Trader and broker dealer orders.

* * * * *

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

In its filing with the Commission, the Amex 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 Exchange 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

1. Purpose

The Exchange is extending until June 30, 2003 the suspension of transaction charges in iShares Lehman 1–3 year Treasury Bond Fund (Symbol: SHY) and iShares Lehman 7–10 year Treasury Bond Fund (Symbol: IEF) for specialist, Registered Trader and broker-dealer orders. The Exchange previously filed a suspension of such charges until November 30, 2002,³ December 31,

2002,⁴ January 31, 2003,⁵ February 28, 2003,⁶ March 31, 2003,⁷ April 30, 2003,⁸ and May 31, 2003.⁹

The fee suspension contained in the previous filings also applied to transactions in four Treasury FITR ETFs—the Treasury 10 FITR ETF (Symbol: TTE); Treasury 5 FITR ETF (Symbol: TFI); Treasury 2 FITR ETF (Symbol: TOU); and Treasury 1 FITR ETF (Symbol: TFT). The ETF Advisors Trust determined to liquidate the portfolios of these funds on or about May 27, 2003. Trading in these ETFs was halted on the Exchange on May 22, 2003, and they are no longer listed or traded on the Exchange. The amendment to the fee schedule, therefore, deletes reference to these funds.

The Exchange believes that a suspension of fees for the SHY and IEF is appropriate to enhance the competitiveness of executions in these securities on the Amex. The Exchange will reassess the fee suspension as appropriate, and will file any modification to the fee suspension with the Commission pursuant to section 19(b)(3)(A) of the 1934 Act.¹⁰

⁴ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 46996 (December 13, 2002), 67 FR 78264 (December 23, 2002) (SR-Amex-2002-98).

⁵ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 47141 (January 8, 2003), 68 FR 2090 (January 15, 2003) (SR-Amex-2002-115).

⁶ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 47361 (February 13, 2003), 68 FR 8534 (February 21, 2003) (SR-Amex-2003-04).

⁷ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 47455 (March 6, 2003), 68 FR 12111 (March 13, 2003) (SR-Amex-2003-15).

⁸ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 47668 (April 11, 2003), 68 FR 19241 (April 18, 2003) (SR-Amex 2003-22).

⁹ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 47858 (May 14, 2003), 68 FR 27872 (May 21, 2003) (SR-Amex 2003-40).

¹⁰ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change is consistent with section 6(b) of the Act¹¹ in general, and furthers the objectives of section 6(b)(4)¹² in particular, in that it provides for the equitable allocation of reasonable dues, fees and other charges among its members and other persons using its facilities.

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 Received From Members, Participants or Others

The Exchange has neither solicited nor received comments on the proposed rule change.

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

The foregoing rule change has become effective pursuant to section 19(b)(3)(A) of the Act and Rule 19b-4(f)(6)¹³ thereunder because the proposal: (i) Does not significantly affect the protection of investors or the public interest; (ii) does not impose any significant burden on competition; and (iii) does not become operative prior to 30 days after the date of filing or such shorter time as the Commission may designate if consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest; provided that the Exchange has given the Commission notice of its

¹¹ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

¹² 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(4).

¹³ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6).

³ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 46765 (November 1, 2002), 67 FR 68893 (November 13, 2002) (SR-Amex-2002-91).

intent to file the proposed rule change, along with a brief description and text of the proposed rule change, at least five business days prior to the date of filing of the proposed rule change, or such shorter time as designated by the Commission. At any time within 60 days of the filing of such proposed rule change, the Commission may summarily abrogate such rule change if it appears to the Commission that such action is necessary or appropriate in the public interest, for the protection of investors or otherwise in furtherance of the purposes of the Act.

The Amex has requested that the Commission waive the five-day pre-filing notice and the 30-day operative delay. The Commission believes that waiving the five-day pre-filing notice and the 30-day operative delay is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest. The Commission notes that fee suspensions for the exchange-traded funds that are the subject of this filing have been previously filed with the Commission.¹⁴ Further, extension of the fee suspension for specialist, Registered Trader, and broker-dealer orders will permit the fee suspensions to continue uninterrupted. For these reasons, the Commission designates the proposal to be effective and operative upon filing with the Commission.¹⁵

IV. Solicitation of Comments

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views, and arguments concerning the foregoing, including whether the proposed rule change is consistent with the Act. Persons making written submissions should file six copies thereof with the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 Fifth Street, NW., Washington, DC 20549-0609. 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 at the Commission's Public Reference Room. Copies of such filing will also be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. All

submissions should refer to File No. SR-Amex-2003-57 and should be submitted by July 2, 2003.

For the Commission, by the Division of Market Regulation, pursuant to delegated authority.¹⁶

J. Lynn Taylor,

Assistant Secretary.

[FR Doc. 03-14641 Filed 6-10-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010-01-P

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-47983; File No. SR-Amex-2003-45]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Notice of Filing and Order Granting Accelerated Approval of Proposed Rule Change and Amendment Nos. 1 and 2 Thereto by the American Stock Exchange LLC Relating to the Listing and Trading of Notes Linked to the Performance of the Standard & Poor's 500 Stock Index

June 4, 2003.

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 May 14, 2003, the American Stock Exchange LLC ("Amex" or "Exchange") filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC" or "Commission") the proposed rule change as described in Items I and II below, which Items have been prepared by the Exchange. On May 28, 2003, the Exchange filed Amendment No. 1 to the proposed rule change.³ On May 30, 2003, the Exchange filed Amendment No. 2 to the proposed rule change.⁴ The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comments on the proposed rule change, as amended, from interested persons and is approving the proposal on an accelerated basis.

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

The Exchange proposes to list and trade under Section 107A of the Amex Company Guide ("Company Guide"),

¹⁶ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).

¹⁵ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

³ See letter from Jeffrey P. Burns, Associate General Counsel, Amex, to Nancy Sanow, Assistant Director, Division of Market Regulation ("Division"), Commission, dated May 27, 2003. Amendment No. 1, corrects the formulas for determining payment at maturity of the Notes.

⁴ See letter from Jeffrey P. Burns, Associate General Counsel, Amex, to Nancy Sanow, Assistant Director, Division, Commission, dated May 28, 2003. Amendment No. 2, replaces in its entirety Amendment No. 1.

notes linked to the performance of the Standard & Poor's 500 Index ("Index").

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

In its filing with the Commission, the Amex 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 III below. The Amex 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

1. Purpose

Under Section 107A of the Company Guide, the Exchange may approve for listing and trading securities which cannot be readily categorized under the listing criteria for common and preferred stocks, bonds, debentures, or warrants.⁵ The Amex proposes to list for trading under Section 107A of the Company Guide notes, the performance which is linked to the Index (the "Accelerated Return Notes" or "Notes").⁶ The Index is determined, calculated and maintained solely by S&P.⁷ The Notes will provide for a multiplier of any positive performance

⁵ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 27753 (March 1, 1990), 55 FR 8626 (March 8, 1990) (order approving File No. SR-Amex-89-29).

⁶ Credit Suisse First Boston (USA), Inc. ("CSFB") and Standard & Poor's Corporation ("S&P") have entered into a non-exclusive license agreement providing for the use of the S&P 500 by CSFB and certain affiliates and subsidiaries in connection with certain securities including these Notes. S&P is not responsible and will not participate in the issuance and creation of the Notes.

The Exchange stated that the Index value will be disseminated at least once every fifteen seconds throughout the trading day. Telephone conversation between Jeffrey P. Burns, Associate General Counsel, Amex and Hong-Anh Tran, Special Counsel, Division, Commission, dated May 27, 2003.

⁷ The Index is a broad-based stock index, which provides an indication of the performance of the U.S. equity market. The Index is a capitalization-weighted index reflecting the total market value of 500 widely held component stocks relative to a particular base period. The Index is computed by dividing the total market value of the 500 stocks by an Index divisor. The Index Divisor keeps the Index comparable over time to its base period of 1941-1943 and is the reference point for all maintenance adjustments. The securities included in the Index are listed on the Amex, New York Stock Exchange, Inc. ("NYSE") or traded through the Nasdaq Stock Market, Inc. ("Nasdaq"). The Index reflects the price of the common stocks of 500 companies without taking into account the value of the dividend paid on such stocks.

¹⁴ See *supra* notes 3-9.

¹⁵ For purposes only of accelerating the operative date of this proposal, the Commission has considered the proposed rule's impact on efficiency, competition, and capital formation. 15 U.S.C. 78c(f).