funds, trading a spot bitcoin-based ETP on a national securities exchange could provide some additional protection to investors, or that the Shares would provide more efficient exposure to bitcoin than other products on the market such as CME bitcoin futures ETFs/ETPs, the Commission must consider this potential benefit in the broader context of whether the proposal meets each of the applicable requirements of the Exchange Act. 185 Pursuant to Section 19(b)(2) of the Exchange Act, the Commission must approve a proposed rule change filed by a national securities exchange if it finds that the proposed rule change is consistent with the applicable requirements of the Exchange Act including the requirement under Section 6(b)(5) that the rules of a national securities exchange be designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices—and it must disapprove the filing if it does not make such a finding. 186 Thus, even if a proposed rule change purports to protect investors from a particular type of investment risk—such as experiencing a potentially high premium/discount by investing in OTC bitcoin funds or roll costs by investing in bitcoin futures ETFs/ETPs—or purports to provide benefits to investors and the public interest—such as enhancing competition—the proposed rule change may still fail to meet the requirements under the Exchange Act. 187

For the reasons discussed above, BZX has not met its burden of demonstrating that the proposal is consistent with Exchange Act Section 6(b)(5),¹⁸⁸ and, accordingly, the Commission must disapprove the proposal.¹⁸⁹

IV. Conclusion

For the reasons set forth above, the Commission does not find, pursuant to Section 19(b)(2) of the Exchange Act, that the proposed rule change is consistent with the requirements of the

Exchange Act and the rules and regulations thereunder applicable to a national securities exchange, and in particular, with Section 6(b)(5) of the Exchange Act.

It Is Therefore Ordered, pursuant to Section 19(b)(2) of the Exchange Act, that proposed rule change SR–CboeBZX–2022–035 be, and it hereby is, disapproved.

By the Commission.

J. Matthew DeLesDernier,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2023–05298 Filed 3–14–23; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8011-01-P

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-97088; File No. SR-NYSEARCA-2023-23]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; NYSE Arca, Inc.; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change To Amend Rule 6.62P–O(i)(2)

March 9, 2023.

Pursuant to Section 19(b)(1)¹ of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 ("Act")² and Rule 19b–4 thereunder,³ notice is hereby given that on March 3, 2023, NYSE Arca, Inc. ("NYSE Arca" or the "Exchange") filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("Commission") the proposed rule change as described in Items I and II below, which Items have been prepared by the Exchange. 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 Exchange proposes to amend Rule 6.62P–O(i)(2) to enhance the Exchange's existing Self Trade Prevention modifiers. The proposed rule change is available on the Exchange's website at www.nyse.com, at the principal office of the Exchange, and at the Commission's Public Reference Room.

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 self-regulatory organization 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 those 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 parts of such statements.

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

1. Purpose

The Exchange proposes to amend Rule 6.62P-O(i)(2) to enhance the Exchange's existing Self Trade Prevention ("STP") modifiers. Specifically, the Exchange proposes to allow OTP Holders or OTP Firms (collectively referred to as "OTP Holders" herein) the option to apply STP modifiers to orders or quotes submitted not only from the same market participant identifier ("MPID") and, if specified, any subidentifier of that MPID, as the current rule provides, but also to orders or quotes submitted from (i) other MPIDs associated with the same Client ID (as designated by the OTP Holder); and (ii) Affiliates of the OTP Holder.

Background

Currently, Rule 6.62P–O(i)(2) offers optional anti-internalization functionality to OTP Holders in the form of STP modifiers that enable an OTP Holder to prevent two of its orders or quotes from executing against each other.⁴ Currently, OTP Holders can set the STP modifier to apply at the MPID level and, if specified, at the subidentifier of that MPID level.⁵ The STP modifier on the order or quote with the most recent time stamp controls the interaction between two orders or quotes marked with STP modifiers. STP functionality assists market participants

¹⁸⁵ See supra note 177.

¹⁸⁶ See Exchange Act Section 19(b)(2)(C), 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(2)(C). See also Affiliated Ute Citizens of Utah v. United States, 406 U.S. 128, 151 (1972) (Congress enacted the Exchange Act largely "for the purpose of avoiding frauds"); Gabelli v. SEC, 568 U.S. 442, 451 (2013) (The "SEC's very purpose" is to detect and mitigate fraud.).

¹⁸⁷ See SolidX Order, 82 FR at 16259; Previous VanEck Order, 86 FR at 54550–51; WisdomTree Order, 86 FR at 69344; Kryptoin Order, 86 FR at 74179; Valkyrie Order, 86 FR at 74163; SkyBridge Order, 87 FR at 3881; Wise Origin Order, 87 FR at 5538.

^{188 15} U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

¹⁸⁹ In disapproving the proposed rule change, the Commission has considered its impact on efficiency, competition, and capital formation. *See* 15 U.S.C. 78c(f).

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 15 U.S.C. 78a

^{3 17} CFR 240.19b-4.

⁴ See Rule 6.62P–O(i)(2) (providing that "[a]n Aggressing Order or Aggressing Quote to buy (sell) designated with one of the STP modifiers in this paragraph will be prevented from trading with a resting order or quote to sell (buy) also designated with an STP modifier from the same MPID, and, if specified, any subidentifier of that MPID.").

⁵The Exchange will refer simply to "orders" and "quotes" throughout this filing for brevity, but acknowledges that Rule 6.62P–O(i)(2) prevents certain "Aggressing Orders" or "Aggressing Quotes" marked with an STP modifier from trading with certain resting orders or quotes also designated with an STP modifier. Rule 6.76P–O(a)(5) defines "Aggressing Orders" and "Aggressing Quotes" as "a buy (sell) order or quote that is or becomes marketable against sell (buy) interest on the Consolidated Book" and further provides that "[a] resting order or quote may become an Aggressing Order or Aggressing Quote if its working price changes, the NBBO is updated, there are changes to other orders or quotes on the Consolidated Book, or when processing inbound messages."

by allowing firms to better prevent unintended executions with themselves and to reduce the potential for "wash sales" that may occur as a result of the velocity of trading in a high-speed marketplace. STP functionality also assists market participants in reducing trading costs from unwanted executions potentially resulting from the interaction of executable buy and sell trading interest from the same firm.

Proposed Amendment

The Exchange proposes to amend the Rule 6.62P–O(i)(2) to enhance OTP Holders' flexibility over the levels at which orders or quotes may be grouped for the purposes of applying the Exchange's existing STP modifiers.

First, the Exchange proposes to amend Rule 6.62P–O(i)(2) to permit an OTP Holder to set the STP modifiers to prevent orders or quotes from different MPIDs from executing against each other. The proposed amendment would address this by allowing OTP Holders to apply STP modifiers at the level of ''Client ID,'' which would be an identifier designated by the OTP Holder. As proposed, a Client ID would function similarly to an MPID in that it would be a unique identifier assigned to an OTP Holder. The Exchange believes that this proposed enhancement would provide OTP Holders with greater flexibility in how they instruct the Exchange to apply STP modifiers to their orders and quotes. The Exchange notes that it is not novel for an exchange to provide its members with multiple methods by which to designate anti-internalization instructions, except that the proposed functionality (consistent with current functionality) would apply to both orders and quotes.7

Second, the Exchange proposes to amend Rule 6.62P–O(i)(2) to permit OTP Holders to direct orders or quotes not to execute against orders or quotes entered across MPIDs associated with Affiliates of the OTP Holder that are also OTP Holders.⁸ This change would expand the availability of the STP functionality to OTP Holders that have divided their business activities between separate corporate entities without disadvantaging them when compared to OTP Holders that operate their business activities within a single corporate entity.

The Exchange believes that these enhancements will all provide helpful flexibility for OTP Holders by expanding their ability to apply STP modifiers at multiple levels, including across multiple MPIDs of the same Client ID, and across multiple MPIDs of the OTP Holder and its Affiliate. These proposed changes would help OTP Holders better manage their quotes and order flow and prevent undesirable executions or the potential for "wash sales" that might otherwise occur.

To effect these changes, the Exchange proposes to amend the first sentence of Rule 6.62P–O(i)(2) and add a new sentence as follows (proposed text italicized): "An Aggressing Order or Aggressing Quote to buy (sell) designated with one of the STP modifiers in this paragraph will be prevented from trading with a resting order or quote to sell (buy) also designated with an STP modifier and from the same Client ID; the same MPID, and, if specified, any subidentifier of that MPID; or an Affiliate (as defined in Rule 1.1) identifier (any such identifier, a "Unique Identifier"). The Exchange further proposes to replace references to "MPID" in Rules 6.62P-O(i)(2)(A)-(C) with the term "Unique Identifier."

While this proposal would expand how an OTP Holder can designate orders and quotes with an STP modifier, nothing in this proposal would make substantive changes to the STP modifiers themselves or how they would function with respect to two orders or quotes interacting within a relevant level.

The Exchange notes that, as with its current anti-internalization

functionality, use of the proposed revised Rule 6.62P–O(i)(2) will not alleviate or otherwise exempt OTP Holders from their best execution obligations. As such, OTP Holders using the proposed enhanced STP functionality will continue to be obligated to take appropriate steps to ensure that Customer orders that do not execute because they were subject to anti-internalization ultimately receive the same price, or a better price, than they would have received had execution of such orders not been inhibited by anti-internalization.

Timing and Implementation

The Exchange proposes to implement this proposed rule change within 60 days of the effectiveness of this rule filing, but in no case later than the end of the second quarter of 2023.

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change is consistent with Section 6(b) of the Act,9 in general, and furthers the objectives of Section 6(b)(5) of the Act,¹⁰ in particular, because it is designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices, to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to foster cooperation and coordination with persons engaged in regulating, clearing, settling, processing information with respect to, and facilitating transactions in securities, to remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system, and, in general, to protect investors and the public interest, and because it is not designed to permit unfair discrimination between customers, issuers, brokers, or dealers.

Specifically, the Exchange believes that the proposed rule change will remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system and is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest because enhancing how OTP Holders may apply STP modifiers will provide OTP Holders with additional flexibility with respect to how they implement self-trade protections provided by the Exchange that may better support their trading strategies.

The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change does not unfairly discriminate among OTP Holders because the proposed STP protections will be available to all OTP Holders, and OTP Holders that prefer setting STP modifiers at the MPID level and, if

⁶ Options Market Makers enter quotes and orders, which orders and quotes the Exchange processes together with respect to ranking and display. For this reason, STP Modifier instructions can be added to both orders and quotes. Providing STP functionality for quotes facilitates risk management for Market Makers.

See, e.g., MIAX Pearl, LLC ("MIAX Pearl Equities") Rule 2614(f) (specifying that Self-Trade Prevention Modifiers will be applicable to orders "from the same MPID, Exchange member identifier, trading group identifier, or Equity Member Affiliate (any such identifier, a 'Unique Identifier')"). The Exchange's affiliated national securities exchanges likewise offer similar STP functionality. See NYSE Arca Equities Rule 7.31–E(i)(2) (providing STP functionality consistent with proposed Rule 6.62P-O(i)(2), except that for purposes of that rule an "Affiliate" refers to entities under 75% common ownership, which definition aligns with the definition set forth in that exchange's fee schedule): NYSE American LLC Rule 7.31E(i)(2) (same); NYSE LLC Rule 7.31(i)(2) (same); NYSE National, Inc. Rule 7.31(i)(2) (same); and NYSE Chicago, Inc. Rule 7.31(i)(2) (same). As noted herein, the proposed STP functionality differs from functionality offered on these equities exchanges (including the Exchange's affiliated equities exchanges) because it extends to Market Maker quotes for options trading.

⁸Per Rule 1.1, "[a]n 'affiliate' of, or person 'affiliated' with a specific person, is a person that directly, or indirectly through one or more intermediaries, controls or is controlled by, or is under common control with, the person specified." The Exchange notes that relying on the established definition of affiliate for purposes of the proposed STP functionality is not new or novel. See, e.g., MIAX Pearl Equities Rule 2614(f) (for purposes of n STP "Unique Identifier," cross-referencing the definition of affiliate in regards to what constitutes "Equity Member Affiliates").

^{9 15} U.S.C. 78f(b).

^{10 15} U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

specified, at the subidentifier of that MPID level, will still be able to do so. In addition, allowing OTP Holders to apply STP modifiers to trades submitted by their Affiliates that are also OTP Holders is intended to avoid disparate treatment of firms that have divided their various business activities between separate corporate entities as compared to firms that operate those business activities within a single corporate entity.

Finally, the Exchange notes that other exchanges have rules that allow affiliate grouping for their own anti-internalization functionality. ¹¹ Consequently, the Exchange does not believe that this change raises new or novel issues not already considered by the Commission.

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 that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. To the contrary, the proposal is designed to enhance the Exchange's competitiveness by providing additional flexibility over the levels at which orders and quotes may be grouped for STP purposes, thereby incentivizing OTP Holders to send orders and quotes to the Exchange and increase the liquidity available on the Exchange. The Exchange also notes that the proposed new STP grouping options, like the Exchange's current anti-internalization functionality, are completely optional and OTP Holders can determine whether to apply antiinternalization protections to orders and quotes submitted to the Exchange, and if so, at what level to apply those protections (e.g., MPID, subidentifier, Client ID, or Affiliate level). There is no barrier to other national securities exchanges adopting similar antiinternalization groupings as those proposed herein.

C. 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

Because the foregoing proposed rule change does not: (i) significantly affect the protection of investors or the public interest; (ii) impose any significant burden on competition; and (iii) become operative for 30 days after the date of the filing, or such shorter time as the Commission may designate if consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest, it has become effective pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A) of the Act ¹² and Rule 19b–4(f)(6) ¹³ thereunder.

A proposed rule change filed under Rule 19b-4(f)(6) 14 normally does not become operative prior to 30 days after the date of the filing. However, pursuant to Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii),15 the Commission may designate a shorter time if such action is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest. The Exchange has asked the Commission to waive the 30-day operative delay so that the proposed rule change may become operative upon filing. The Exchange requested the waiver because it would enable the Exchange to compete with other exchanges that have recently amended their rules to expand the levels at which orders may be grouped for STP purposes. The Exchange also states that it is currently working on technological solutions to meet this competition and to make similar offerings available to market participants as soon as possible. The Exchange expects to begin rolling out this functionality within 60 days from the date of filing, and thus requests waiver of the operative delay in order to promptly meet market competition. For these reasons, and because the proposed rule change does not raise any novel regulatory issues, the Commission believes that waiving the 30-day operative delay is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest. Therefore, the Commission hereby waives the operative delay and designates the proposal operative upon filing.16

At any time within 60 days of the filing of the proposed rule change, the Commission summarily may temporarily suspend 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. If the Commission takes such action, the Commission shall institute proceedings to determine whether the proposed rule should be approved or disapproved.

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. Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

Electronic Comments

- Use the Commission's internet comment form (http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml); or
- Send an email to rule-comments@ sec.gov. Please include File Number SR– NYSEARCA-2023-23 on the subject line.

Paper Comments

• Send paper comments in triplicate to Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549–1090.

All submissions should refer to File Number SR-NYSEARCA-2023-23. This file number should be included on the subject line if email is used. To help the Commission process and review your comments more efficiently, please use only one method. The Commission will post all comments on the Commission's internet website (http://www.sec.gov/ rules/sro.shtml). 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 website viewing and printing in the Commission's Public Reference Room, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549, on official business days between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Copies of the filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. All comments received will be posted without change. Persons submitting comments are cautioned that we do not redact or edit personal identifying information from comment submissions. You should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. All submissions should refer to File Number SR-NYSEARCA-2023-23 and

¹¹ See supra note 7.

^{12 15} U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

¹³ 17 CFR 240.19b–4(f)(6). In addition, Rule 19b–4(f)(6) requires a self-regulatory organization to give the Commission written notice of its 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. The Exchange has satisfied this requirement.

^{14 17} CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6).

^{15 17} CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6)(iii).

¹⁶ For purposes only of waiving the 30-day operative delay, the Commission has considered the proposed rule's impact on efficiency, competition, and capital formation. *See* 15 U.S.C. 78c(f).

should be submitted on or before April 5, 2023.

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority. 17

Sherry R. Haywood,

Assistant Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2023-05270 Filed 3-14-23; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8011-01-P

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

[License No. 02/02-0694]

Cephas Capital Partners III, LP; Notice Seeking Exemption Under Section 312 of the Small Business Investment Act, Conflicts of Interest

Notice is hereby given that Cephas Capital Partners III, LP, 11 Schoen Place, 8th Floor, Pittsford, NY 14534, a Federal Licensee under the Small Business Investment Act of 1958, as amended ("the Act"), in connection with the financing of a small concerns, has sought an exemption under section 312 of the Act and 13 CFR 107.730, Financings which Constitute Conflicts of Interest of the Code of Federal Regulations. Cephas Capital Partners III, LP is proposing to provide financing to Air-Flo Mfg. Co, Inc. et al, 365 Upper Oakwood Avenue, Elmira Heights, New York, 14903 to support the company's growth and refinance existing company debt.

The proposed transaction is brought within the purview of § 107.730 of the Regulations because Cephas Capital Partners III, LP is an Associate of Cephas Capital Partners II, LP by virtue of Common Control as defined at 13 CFR 107.50, holds an investment in Air-Flo Mfg. Co, Inc. and the proposed transaction represents a conflict of interest because Cephas Capital Partners III, LP and its Associates did not previously invest in the small business at the same time and on the same terms and conditions, and the proposed financing to Air-Flo Mfg. Co, Inc. will discharge an obligation to Associates or free other funds to pay such obligation.

Therefore, the proposed transaction is considered self-deal pursuant to 13 CFR 107.730 and requires a regulatory exemption. Notice is hereby given that any interested person may submit written comments on the transaction within fifteen days of the date of this publication to Associate Administrator for Investment, U.S. Small Business

Administration, 409 Third Street SW, Washington, DC 20416.

Bailey DeVries,

Associate Administrator, Office of Investment and Innovation

[FR Doc. 2023-05078 Filed 3-14-23; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8026-09-P

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice: 12003]

U.S. Department of State Advisory Committee on Private International Law: Notice of Annual Meeting

The Department of State's Advisory Committee on Private International Law (ACPIL) will hold its annual meeting in hybrid format on Monday, April 24, 2023. The meeting will be held at the Georgetown University Law Center, Gewirz Student Center, 600 New Jersey Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20001. The program is scheduled to run from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The meeting will include discussions on commercial arbitration, digital and financial law, and plans for the upcoming Special Commission on the Practical Operation of the 1980 Child Abduction Convention. It will also address private international law developments over the last year and possible future work. If time allows other topics of interest may be discussed.

Time and Place: The meeting will take place on Monday, April 24, 2023, at Georgetown University Law Center, Gewirz Student Center, 600 New Jersey Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20001. Those who cannot participate by either format but wish to comment are welcome to do so by email to Sharla Draemel at pil@state.gov.

Public Participation: This meeting is open to the public. Anyone attending in-person will be required to follow Georgetown University's COVID regulations and procedures, including (1) completing the online COVID clearance registration form not later than Thursday, April 20 (the link for the form will be provided once you register); (2) presenting your completed vaccination form upon arrival at the Law Center; and (3) wearing a mask throughout the meeting.

Priority for in-person seating will be given to members of the Advisory Committee, and remaining seating will be reserved based upon when persons contact *pil@state.gov*. Those planning to attend should provide their name, affiliation and contact information to *pil@state.gov* no later than April 12, 2023, stating in their response whether

they will attend in-person or virtually. Room information for in-person attendance and a Zoom link for virtual attendance will be provided following registration. A member of the public needing reasonable accommodation should notify *pil@state.gov* not later than April 10, 2023. Requests made after that date will be considered but might not be able to be fulfilled. A more detailed agenda will be available to registered participants in advance of the meeting. Persons who wish to have their views considered are encouraged, but not required, to submit written comments in advance. Comments should be sent electronically to pil@ state.gov. When you register, please indicate whether attending in-person or via Zoom. If you are attending virtually, please indicate if you require captioning.

Zachary A. Parker,

Director, Office of Directives Management, U.S. Department of State.

[FR Doc. 2023-05260 Filed 3-14-23; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710-08-P

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

[Docket No. FD 36674]

Ottawa Northern Railroad LLC— Acquisition and Change in Operator Exemption—Midland Historical Railway Association

Ottawa Northern Railroad LLC (ONR), a noncarrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.31 to acquire and operate as a common carrier over approximately 11.09 miles of rail line owned by the Midland Historical Railway Association (MHRA) between milepost 14.95 near Baldwin City, Kan., and milepost 26.04 at Ottawa, Kan. (the Line).

This transaction is related to a concurrently filed verified notice of exemption in Chicago Rock Island & Pacific Railroad—Continuance in Control Exemption—Ottawa Northern Railroad, Docket No. FD 36675, in which ONR's parent company, Chicago Rock Island & Pacific Railroad LLC, seeks to continue in control of ONR upon ONR's becoming a Class III rail carrier.

According to the verified notice, ONR and MHRA have reached an agreement pursuant to which ONR will acquire the Line and, upon consummation of the acquisition transaction, replace Leavenworth, Lawrence & Galveston Railroad d/b/a the Baldwin City & Southern Railroad Company (BC&S) as the common carrier service provider on

^{17 17} CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).