

participants to transact in the index and ETF options listed pursuant to the proposed rule change based on their timing as needed and allow them to tailor their investment and hedging needs more effectively.¹⁷ Further, the Exchange notes the proposed terms of Monthly Options Series, including the limitation to five index and ETF option classes, are substantively the same as the current terms of Quarterly Options Series.¹⁸ The Exchange states that it currently lists Quarterly Options Series in certain index¹⁹ and ETF classes, which expire at the close of business at the end of each calendar quarter, and has not experienced any market disruptions nor issues with capacity.²⁰ The Exchange believes limiting Monthly Options Series to five classes will ensure the addition of these new series will have a negligible impact on the Exchange's and Options Price Reporting Authority's quoting capacity.²¹ The Exchange represents it has the necessary systems capacity to support new options series that will result from the introduction of Monthly Options Series.²²

The Exchange represents its current surveillance programs will apply to Monthly Options Series and will properly monitor trading in the proposed Monthly Options Series.²³ The Exchange's surveillance programs currently in place to support and properly monitor trading in Quarterly Options Series, as well as Short Term Option Series and standard expiration series, will apply to the proposed Monthly Options Series.²⁴ The Exchange believes its surveillances continue to be designed to deter and detect violations of its Rules, including position and exercise limits and possible manipulative behavior, and these surveillances will apply to Monthly Options Series.²⁵ Further, the Exchange does not believe the proposed rule change raises any unique regulatory concerns because existing safeguards—such as position and exercise limits (and the aggregation of options overlying the same index or ETF) and

reporting requirements—would continue to apply.²⁶

As noted above, the Exchange currently has Quarterly Options Series for up to five ETF or index classes. In addition, the Commission recently approved a proposal by the Exchange to permanently establish a Nonstandard Expiration Program, which permits, among other things, the listing and trading of broad-based index options with end of month expirations.²⁷ The Commission believes that the proposed Monthly Options Series, which the Exchange proposes to limit to a total of five ETF or index classes, strikes a reasonable balance between the Exchange's desire to offer a wider array of investment opportunities and the need to avoid unnecessary proliferation of options series and the corresponding increase in quotes. Further, the Exchange has represented that it has an adequate surveillance program in place to detect manipulative trading in the Monthly Options Series and has the necessary systems capacity to support the new options series.²⁸ The Commission expects the Exchange, consistent with its Monthly Options Series delisting policy, to continue to monitor for option series with little or no open interest and trading activity and to act promptly to delist such options in order to mitigate the number of options series with no open interest.

Accordingly, the Commission finds that the proposed rule change is consistent with Section 6(b)(5) of the Act²⁹ and the rules and regulations thereunder applicable to a national securities exchange.

IV. Conclusion

It is therefore ordered, pursuant to Section 19(b)(2) of the Act,³⁰ that the proposed rule change (SR-CBOE-2023-049) be, and hereby is, approved.

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.³¹

Sherry R. Haywood,
Assistant Secretary.

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²⁶ See *id.*

²⁷ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 98456 (September 20, 2023), 88 FR 66091 at 66092 (September 26, 2023) (SR-CBOE-2023-020).

²⁸ See *supra* notes 23–25 and accompanying text.

²⁹ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

³⁰ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(2).

³¹ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-98912; File No. SR-NASDAQ-2023-043]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; The Nasdaq Stock Market LLC; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change To Amend Equity 7, Section 118

November 13, 2023.

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 November 1, 2023, The Nasdaq Stock Market LLC (“Nasdaq” 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 from interested persons.

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

The Exchange proposes to amend the Exchange's schedule of credits and fees at Equity 7, Section 118(a) as described further below. The text of the proposed rule change is available on the Exchange's website at <https://listingcenter.nasdaq.com/rulebook/nasdaq/rules>, 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 Exchange 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 purpose of the proposed rule change is to (i) eliminate a credit to members for displayed quotes/orders

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

¹⁷ See Notice, *supra* note 3 at 68835.

¹⁸ Compare proposed Rules 4.5(g) and 4.13(a)(2)(C) to Rules 4.5(e) and 4.13(a)(2)(B), respectively. See Notice, *supra* note 3 at 68835.

¹⁹ The Exchange notes it currently lists quarterly expirations on index options pursuant to Rule 4.13(c) (regarding quarterly index expirations).

²⁰ See Notice, *supra* note 3 at 68835.

²¹ See *id.*

²² See *id.*

²³ See *id.*

²⁴ See *id.*

²⁵ See *id.*

(other than Supplemental Orders or Designated Retail Orders) that provide liquidity and (ii) eliminate a fee for routing orders at Equity 7, Section 118(a).

The Exchange proposes to eliminate the \$0.0026 per share executed credit for securities in Tapes A, B, and C offered to a member that, through one or more of its Nasdaq Market Center MPIDs: (i) provides shares of liquidity in all securities that represent equal to or greater than 0.15% of Consolidated Volume; (ii) increases the extent to which it provides liquidity in all securities as a percentage of Consolidated Volume by 20% or more during the month relative to the month of May 2021; and (iii) has a ratio of at least 50% NBBO liquidity provided (as defined in Equity 7, Section 114(g)) to liquidity provided by displayed quotes/orders (other than Supplemental Orders or Designated Retail Orders) during the month. The Exchange proposes to eliminate this credit because it is not heavily utilized and includes a baseline month of May 2021 for the growth element of the credit, which is no longer a relevant benchmark. As such, this credit no longer provides a growth incentive that is aligned with the Exchange's needs. The Exchange also seeks to simplify its schedule of credits. The Exchange has limited resources to allocate to incentives and it must, from time to time, reallocate those resources to maximize their net impact on the Exchange, market quality, and participants.

Additionally, the Exchange proposes to eliminate the \$0.01 per order charge for round lot or mixed lot DOTI Orders, incurred when, during the month: (i) a market participant sends an average of more than 10,000 DOTI Orders per day through one or more of its MPIDs; and (ii) the ratio of DOTI Orders to executions exceeds 300 to 1.³ The Exchange seeks to simplify its charges for routed orders by eliminating such fee. The Exchange has limited resources to devote to incentive programs, and it is appropriate for the Exchange to reallocate these incentives periodically in a manner that best achieves the Exchange's overall mix of objectives.

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that its proposal is consistent with Section 6(b) of the Act,⁴ in general, and furthers the objectives of Sections 6(b)(4) and 6(b)(5)

of the Act,⁵ in particular, in that it provides for the equitable allocation of reasonable dues, fees and other charges among members and issuers and other persons using any facility, and is not designed to permit unfair discrimination between customers, issuers, brokers, or dealers.

The Exchange's proposed changes to its schedule of credits and fees are reasonable in several respects. As a threshold matter, the Exchange is subject to significant competitive forces in the market for equity securities transaction services that constrain its pricing determinations in that market. The fact that this market is competitive has long been recognized by the courts. In *NetCoalition v. Securities and Exchange Commission*, the D.C. Circuit stated as follows: "[n]o one disputes that competition for order flow is 'fierce.' . . . As the SEC explained, '[i]n the U.S. national market system, buyers and sellers of securities, and the broker-dealers that act as their order-routing agents, have a wide range of choices of where to route orders for execution'; [and] 'no exchange can afford to take its market share percentages for granted' because 'no exchange possesses a monopoly, regulatory or otherwise, in the execution of order flow from broker dealers' . . ."⁶

The Commission and the courts have repeatedly expressed their preference for competition over regulatory intervention in determining prices, products, and services in the securities markets. In Regulation NMS, while adopting a series of steps to improve the current market model, the Commission highlighted the importance of market forces in determining prices and SRO revenues and, also, recognized that current regulation of the market system "has been remarkably successful in promoting market competition in its broader forms that are most important to investors and listed companies."⁷

Numerous indicia demonstrate the competitive nature of this market. For example, clear substitutes to the Exchange exist in the market for equity security transaction services. The Exchange is only one of several equity venues to which market participants may direct their order flow. Competing equity exchanges offer similar tiered pricing structures to that of the Exchange, including schedules of

rebates and fees that apply based upon members achieving certain volume thresholds.

Within this environment, market participants can freely and often do shift their order flow among the Exchange and competing venues in response to changes in their respective pricing schedules. As such, the proposal represents a reasonable attempt by the Exchange to increase its liquidity and market share relative to its competitors.

The Exchange believes it is reasonable, equitable, and not unfairly discriminatory to eliminate the Exchange's \$0.0026 per share executed transaction credit and the Exchange's \$0.01 fee for routing orders. The Exchange seeks to simplify and streamline its schedule of credits by eliminating the \$0.0026 per share executed credit that is not heavily utilized and is no longer based on a relevant benchmark, as described above. The Exchange also seeks to eliminate the \$0.01 charge for round lot or mixed lot DOTI Orders described above in an effort to simplify and streamline its fees for routing orders. Together, the proposed changes are designed to better align with the Exchange's needs. The Exchange has limited resources to devote to incentive programs, and it is appropriate for the Exchange to reallocate these incentives periodically in a manner that best achieves the Exchange's overall mix of objectives.

Those participants that are dissatisfied with the eliminations from the Exchange's schedule of credits and fees are free to shift their order flow to competing venues that provide incentives or qualifying criteria more in line with participants' objectives.

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 not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act.

Intramarket Competition

The Exchange does not believe that its proposals will place any category of Exchange participant at a competitive disadvantage.

The Exchange intends for the proposed changes to simplify its credit and fee schedule, remove a credit with an outdated benchmark month, preserve its limited resources for optimized effect, and better align the schedule of credits and fees with the Exchange's overall mix of objectives. The Exchange notes that its members are free to trade on other venues to the extent they believe that these proposals are not

⁵ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(4) and (5).

⁶ *NetCoalition v. SEC*, 615 F.3d 525, 539 (D.C. Cir. 2010) (quoting Securities Exchange Act Release No. 59039 (December 2, 2008), 73 FR 74770, 74782-83 (December 9, 2008) (SR-NYSEArca-2006-21)).

⁷ Securities Exchange Act Release No. 51808 (June 9, 2005), 70 FR 37496, 37499 (June 29, 2005) ("Regulation NMS Adopting Release").

³ The fee applies to each DOTI Order that exceeds the 300 to 1 ratio. In calculating daily average DOTI Orders, the Exchange excludes the day with the highest ratio of DOTI Orders to executions.

⁴ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

attractive. As one can observe by looking at any market share chart, price competition between exchanges is fierce, with liquidity and market share moving freely between exchanges in reaction to fee and credit changes.

Intermarket Competition

In terms of inter-market competition, the Exchange notes that it operates in a highly competitive market in which market participants can readily favor competing venues if they deem fee levels at a particular venue to be excessive, or rebate opportunities available at other venues to be more favorable. In such an environment, the Exchange must continually adjust its credits and fees to remain competitive with other exchanges and with alternative trading systems that have been exempted from compliance with the statutory standards applicable to exchanges. Because competitors are free to modify their own credits and fees in response, and because market participants may readily adjust their order routing practices, the Exchange believes that the degree to which credit or fee changes in this market may impose any burden on competition is extremely limited. The proposals are reflective of this competition.

Even as one of the largest U.S. equities exchanges by volume, the Exchange has less than 20% market share, which in most markets could hardly be categorized as having enough market power to burden competition. Moreover, as noted above, price competition between exchanges is fierce, with liquidity and market share moving freely between exchanges in reaction to fee and credit changes. This is in addition to free flow of order flow to and among off-exchange venues, which comprises upwards of 40% of industry volume.

In sum, if the change proposed herein is unattractive to market participants, it is likely that the Exchange will lose market share as a result. Accordingly, the Exchange does not believe that the proposed change will impair the ability of members or competing order execution venues to maintain their competitive standing in the financial markets.

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

No written comments were either solicited or received.

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)(ii) of the Act.⁸

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: (i) necessary or appropriate in the public interest; (ii) for the protection of investors; or (iii) 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 (<https://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>); or
- Send an email to rule-comments@sec.gov. Please include file number SR-NASDAQ-2023-043 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-NASDAQ-2023-043. 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 (<https://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 a.m. and 3 p.m. Copies of the filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. Do not include personal identifiable information in submissions; you should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. We may redact in part or withhold entirely from publication submitted material that is obscene or subject to copyright protection. All submissions should refer to file number SR-NASDAQ-2023-043 and should be submitted on or before December 8, 2023.

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.⁹

Sherry R. Haywood,

Assistant Secretary.

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[SEC File No. 270-182, OMB Control No. 3235-0237]

Proposed Collection; Comment Request; Extension: Form N-54A

Upon Written Request, Copies Available From: Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of FOIA Services, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549-2736.

Notice is hereby given that, pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), the Securities and Exchange Commission ("Commission") has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget a request for extension of the previously approved collection of information discussed below.

Under the Investment Company Act of 1940 (15 U.S.C. 80a-1 *et seq.*) (the "Investment Company Act"), certain investment companies can elect to be regulated as business development companies, as defined in Section 2(a)(48) of the Investment Company Act (15 U.S.C. 80a-2(a)(48)). Under Section 54(a) of the Investment Company Act (15 U.S.C. 80a-53(a)), any company defined in Section 2(a)(48)(A) and (B) may elect to be subject to the provisions of Sections 55 through 65 of the Investment Company Act (15 U.S.C. 80a-54 to 80a-64) by filing with the Commission a notification of election, if such company has: (1) a class of equity securities registered under Section 12 of

⁸ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A)(ii).

⁹ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).