

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34–99304; File No. SR–FINRA–2023–010]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc.; Notice of Designation of a Longer Period for Commission Action on Proceedings To Determine Whether To Approve or Disapprove a Proposed Rule Change To Provide Relief Relating to Specified Option Transactions Under FINRA Rule 4210 (Margin Requirements)

January 9, 2024.

On June 30, 2023, the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc. (“FINRA”) filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC” or “Commission”), pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities and Exchange Act of 1934 (“Exchange Act”) ¹ and Rule 19b–4 thereunder, ² a proposed rule change to amend FINRA Rule 4210 (Margin Requirements) to provide margin relief for specified index option transactions, known as “protected options,” and to make other minor conforming revisions with regard to the margin relief. The proposed rule change was published for comment in the *Federal Register* on July 19, 2023. ³

On August 31, 2023, FINRA extended the time period in which the Commission must approve the proposed rule change, disapprove the proposed rule change, or institute proceedings to determine whether to approve or disapprove the proposed rule change to October 17, 2023. ⁴ On September 28, 2023, the Commission instituted proceedings to determine whether to approve or disapprove the proposed rule change. ⁵

Section 19(b)(2) of the Exchange Act ⁶ provides that, after initiating proceedings, the Commission shall issue an order approving or disapproving the proposed rule change not later than 180 days after the date of publication of notice of filing of the proposed rule change. The Commission may extend the period for issuing an order approving or disapproving the proposed rule change, however, by not more than

60 days if the Commission determines that a longer period is appropriate and publishes reasons for such determination. The proposed rule change was published for notice and comment in the *Federal Register* on July 19, 2023. ⁷ The 180th day after publication of the proposed rule change is January 15, 2024. The Commission is extending the time period for approving or disapproving the proposed rule change for an additional 60 days.

The Commission finds it appropriate to designate a longer period within which to issue an order approving or disapproving the proposed rule change so that it has sufficient time to consider the proposed rule change and the issues raised therein. Accordingly, the Commission, pursuant to Section 19(b)(2) of the Exchange Act, ⁸ designates March 15, 2024, as the date by which the Commission shall either approve or disapprove the proposed rule change (File No. SR–FINRA–2023–010).

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

[Release No. 34–99302; File No. SR–CboeEDGX–2024–001]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Cboe EDGX Exchange, Inc.; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of a Proposed Rule Change To Amend Its Fee Schedule

January 9, 2024.

Pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the “Act”), ¹ and Rule 19b–4 thereunder, ² notice is hereby given that on January 2, 2024, Cboe EDGX Exchange, Inc. (the “Exchange” or “EDGX”) filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “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.

⁷ See *supra* note 3 and accompanying text.

⁸ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(2).

⁹ 17 CFR 200.30–3(a)(57).

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b–4.

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

Cboe EDGX Exchange, Inc. (the “Exchange” or “EDGX”) proposes to amend its Fee Schedule. The text of the proposed rule change is provided in Exhibit 5.

The text of the proposed rule change is also available on the Exchange’s website (http://markets.cboe.com/us/options/regulation/rule_filings/edgx/), at the Exchange’s Office of the Secretary, 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 Exchange proposes to amend its Fee Schedule, effective January 2, 2024. The Exchange first notes that it operates in a highly competitive market in which market participants can readily direct order flow to competing venues if they deem fee levels at a particular venue to be excessive or incentives to be insufficient. More specifically, the Exchange is only one of 17 options venues to which market participants may direct their order flow. Based on publicly available information, no single options exchange has more than 12% of the market share. ³ Thus, in such a low-concentrated and highly competitive market, no single options exchange, including the Exchange, possesses significant pricing power in the execution of option order flow. The Exchange believes that the ever-shifting market share among the exchanges from month to month demonstrates that market participants can shift order flow or discontinue to reduce use of certain categories of products, in response to fee

³ See Cboe Global Markets U.S. Options Market Monthly Volume Summary (December 19, 2023), available at https://markets.cboe.com/us/options/market_statistics/.

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b–4.

³ See Exchange Act Release No. 97898 (Jul. 13, 2023), 88 FR 46204.

⁴ See Letter from Adam Arkel, Associate General Counsel, FINRA, to Sheila Swartz, Division of Trading and Markets, Commission (Aug. 31, 2023).

⁵ See Exchange Act Release No. 34–98628 (Sep. 28, 2023), 88 FR 68855 (Oct. 4, 2023). All comments received on the proposed rule change are available at <https://www.sec.gov/comments/sr-finra-2023-010/srfinra2023010.htm>.

⁶ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(2).

changes. Accordingly, competitive forces constrain the Exchange's transaction fees, and market participants can readily trade on competing venues if they deem pricing levels at those other venues to be more favorable.

The Exchange's Fee Schedule sets forth standard rebates and rates applied per contract. For example, the Exchange provides standard rebates ranging from \$0.01 up to \$0.22 per contract for Customer orders in both Penny and Non-Penny Securities. The Fee Codes and Associated Fees section of the Fees Schedule also provides for certain fee codes associated with certain order types and market participants that provide for various other fees or rebates. For example, the Exchange assesses a fee of \$0.70 per contract for Market Maker orders that remove liquidity in Non-Penny Securities, yielding fee code NT. The Exchange now proposes to decrease the standard fee for Market Maker orders that remove liquidity in Non-Penny Securities (*i.e.*, yield fee code NT) from \$0.70 per contract to \$0.30 per contract.

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the "Act") and the rules and regulations thereunder applicable to the Exchange and, in particular, the requirements of Section 6(b) of the Act.⁴ Specifically, the Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the Section 6(b)(5)⁵ requirements that the rules of an exchange be 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. Additionally, the Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the Section 6(b)(5)⁶ requirement that the rules of an exchange not be designed to permit unfair discrimination between customers, issuers, brokers, or dealers. The Exchange also believes the proposed rule change is consistent with Section 6(b)(4) of the Act,⁷ which requires that Exchange rules provide for the equitable allocation of reasonable

dues, fees, and other charges among its Trading Permit Holders and other persons using its facilities.

As described above, the Exchange operates in a highly competitive market in which market participants can readily direct order flow to competing venues if they deem fee levels at a particular venue to be excessive or incentives to be insufficient. The proposed rule change reflects a competitive pricing structure designed to incentivize market participants to direct their order flow to the Exchange, which the Exchange believes would enhance market quality to the benefit of all market participants. The Exchange is only one of several options venues to which market participants may direct their order flow, and it represents a small percentage of the overall market. The proposed fee changes reflect a competitive pricing structure designed to incentivize market participants to direct their order flow, which the Exchange believes would enhance market quality to the benefit of all Members.

The Exchange believes the proposed change to decrease the standard fee for Market Maker orders that remove liquidity in Non-Penny Securities (*i.e.*, yield fee code NT) from \$0.70 to \$0.30 is reasonable, equitable, and not unfairly discriminatory. The Exchange believes the proposed rate change is reasonable because, as stated above, in order to operate in the highly competitive options markets, the Exchange and its competing exchanges seek to offer similar pricing structures, including assessing comparable rates for various types of orders. Thus, the Exchange believes the proposed rate is reasonable as it is lower than the amounts assessed for similar Market Maker orders on other options exchanges.⁸ The Exchange also believes that amending the standard fee amount associated with fee code NT represents an equitable allocation of fees and is not unfairly discriminatory because the fee will continue to automatically and uniformly apply to all Members' respective qualifying Market Maker orders.

The Exchange believes that the proposed change will incentivize Market Maker order flow in Non-Penny Securities, which may lead to an increase in liquidity on the Exchange.

⁸ See, *e.g.*, MEMX Options Exchange Fee Schedule, Transactions Fees, which assesses a charge of \$1.10 for Market Maker orders that remove liquidity in Non-Penny Securities; and NYSE Arca Fee Schedule, Transaction Fee for Electronic Executions—Per Contract, which provides Market Makers that remove liquidity are assessed \$1.10 per contract in Non-Penny Issues.

An overall increase in liquidity benefits all market participants by providing more trading opportunities, which attracts Market Makers. An increase in Market Maker activity in turn facilitates tighter spreads, which may cause an additional corresponding increase in order flow from other market participants.

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. The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any burden on intramarket competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act, as the proposed fee code change applies uniformly and automatically to all Members' respective qualifying orders. Overall, the proposed change is designed to attract additional Market Maker order flow to the Exchange and overall order flow directly to the Exchange's Book. The Exchange believes that the fee change will attract further Market Maker activity, further incentivize the provision of liquidity and continued order flow to the Book, and improve price transparency on the Exchange. Greater overall order flow and pricing transparency benefits all market participants on the Exchange by generally providing a cycle of more trading opportunities, enhancing market quality, and continuing to encourage Members to submit order flow and continue to contribute towards a robust and well-balanced market ecosystem to the benefit of all market participants.

Next, the Exchange believes the proposed rule change does not impose any burden on intermarket competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. As previously discussed, the Exchange operates in a highly competitive market. Members have numerous alternative venues that they may participate on and direct their order flow, including 16 other options exchanges and off-exchange venues and alternative trading systems. Additionally, the Exchange represents a small percentage of the overall market. Based on publicly available information, no single options exchange has more than 12% of the market share.⁹ Therefore, no exchange possesses significant pricing power in the execution of order flow. Indeed, participants can readily choose to send their orders to other exchange and off-

⁹ See *supra* note 1.

⁴ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

⁵ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(4).

exchange venues if they deem fee levels at those other venues to be more favorable. Moreover, the Commission has repeatedly expressed its preference for competition over regulatory intervention in determining prices, products, and services in the securities markets. Specifically, in Regulation NMS, 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.”¹⁰ The fact that this market is competitive has also 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’”¹¹ Accordingly, the Exchange does not believe its proposed fee change imposes any burden on competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act.

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

The Exchange 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 Act¹² and paragraph (f) of Rule 19b-4¹³ thereunder. 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 will institute proceedings to determine whether the proposed rule change 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-CboeEDGX-2024-001 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-CboeEDGX-2024-001. 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-CboeEDGX-2024-001 and should be submitted on or before February 6, 2024.

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.¹⁴

Sherry R. Haywood,

Assistant Secretary.

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-99298; File No. SR-NYSEARCA-2021-90]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; NYSE Arca, Inc.; Notice of Filing of Amendment No. 2 to a Proposed Rule Change To List and Trade Shares of Grayscale Bitcoin Trust Under NYSE Arca Rule 8.201-E (Commodity-Based Trust Shares)

January 9, 2024.

On October 19, 2021, NYSE Arca, Inc. (“NYSE Arca” or “Exchange”) filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (“Commission”), pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (“Act” or “Exchange Act”)¹ and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,² a proposed rule change to list and trade shares (“Shares”) of Grayscale Bitcoin Trust (“Trust”) under NYSE Arca Rule 8.201-E (Commodity-Based Trust Shares). The proposed rule change was published for comment in the **Federal Register** on November 8, 2021.³ On December 15, 2021, pursuant to Section 19(b)(2) of the Exchange Act,⁴ the Commission designated a longer period within which to approve the proposed rule change, disapprove the proposed rule change, or institute proceedings to determine whether to disapprove the proposed rule change.⁵ On February 4, 2022, the Commission instituted proceedings under Section 19(b)(2)(B) of the Exchange Act⁶ to determine whether to disapprove the proposed rule change.⁷ On April 21, 2022, the Exchange filed Amendment

¹⁴ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

³ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 93504 (Nov. 2, 2021), 86 FR 61804. Comments received on the proposed rule change are available at: <https://www.sec.gov/comments/sr-nysearca-2021-90/srnysearca202190.htm>.

⁴ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(2).

⁵ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 93788, 86 FR 72291 (Dec. 21, 2021).

⁶ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(2)(B).

⁷ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 94151, 87 FR 7889 (Feb. 10, 2022).

¹⁰ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 51808 (June 9, 2005), 70 FR 37496, 37499 (June 29, 2005).

¹¹ See *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)).

¹² 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

¹³ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f).