

Section 1: 8-K (8-K)

**UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**
Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM 8-K

CURRENT REPORT
Pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d)
of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

Date of Report (Date of earliest event reported): August 16, 2019

MFA FINANCIAL, INC.

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Maryland
(State or other jurisdiction of
incorporation or organization)

1-13991
(Commission
File Number)

13-3974868
(IRS Employer
Identification No.)

350 Park Avenue, 20th Floor
New York, New York
(Address of principal executive offices)

10022
(Zip Code)

Registrant's telephone number, including area code: (212) 207-6400

Not Applicable
(Former name or former address, if changed since last report)

Check the appropriate box below if the Form 8-K filing is intended to simultaneously satisfy the filing obligation of the registrant under any of the following provisions (see General Instruction A.2. below):

- Written communications pursuant to Rule 425 under the Securities Act (17 CFR 230.425)
- Soliciting material pursuant to Rule 14a-12 under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14a-12)
- Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 14d-2(b) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14d-2(b))
- Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 13e-4(c) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.13e-4(c))

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:

Title of Each Class	Trading Symbol(s)	Name of Each Exchange on Which Registered
Common Stock, par value \$0.01 per share	MFA	New York Stock Exchange
7.50% Series B Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock, par value \$0.01 per share	MFA/PB	New York Stock Exchange
8.00% Senior Notes due 2042	MFO	New York Stock Exchange

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is an emerging growth company as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act of 1933 or Rule 12b-2 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

Emerging growth company

If an emerging growth company, indicate by check mark if the registrant has elected not to use the extended transition period for complying with any new or revised financial accounting standards provided pursuant to Section 13(a) of the Exchange Act.

Item 1.01. Material Definitive Agreement.

On August 16, 2019, MFA Financial, Inc., a Maryland corporation (the “Company”), entered into a Distribution Agreement (the “Agreement”) by and between (i) the Company and (ii) J.P. Morgan Securities LLC, Barclays Capital Inc., BofA Securities, Inc., Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC, Nomura Securities International, Inc. and RBC Capital Markets, LLC (the “Sales Agents”). Under the terms of the Agreement, the Company may offer and sell shares of its common stock, par value \$0.01 per share (“Common Stock”), having an aggregate offering price of up to \$400,000,000 (the “Shares”) from time to time through any of the Sales Agents.

Pursuant to the Agreement, the Shares may be offered and sold through the Sales Agents in transactions deemed to be “at-the-market” offerings as defined in Rule 415(a)(4) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended. Under the Agreement, each Sales Agent (at the Company’s election) will use commercially reasonable efforts consistent with its normal sales and trading practices to sell the Shares as directed by the Company. Under the Agreements, the Company will pay each of the Sales Agents a commission that will not exceed, but may be lower than, 2.0% of the gross sales price per share of Shares sold through it. The Sales Agreements contain customary representations, warranties and agreements of the Company and customary conditions to completing future sale transactions, indemnification rights and obligations of the parties and termination provisions

Shares sold under the Agreement, if any, will be issued pursuant to the Company’s registration statement on Form S-3ASR (No. 333-233337), and a related prospectus, filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “SEC”) on August 16, 2019, as supplemented by the prospectus supplement, filed with the SEC on August 16, 2019, as the same may be amended or supplemented, under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the “Securities Act”).

A copy of the Agreement is attached hereto as Exhibit 1.1 and is incorporated herein by reference. The foregoing summary does not purport to be complete and is qualified in its entirety by reference to the Agreement. In connection with the registration of the Shares under the Securities Act, the legal opinion of Venable LLP relating to the legality of the issuance and sale of the Shares is attached as Exhibit 5.1 to this Current Report on Form 8-K.

Item 9.01. Financial Statements and Exhibits.

(d) *Exhibits.* The following exhibits are being filed herewith:

- 1.1 [Distribution Agreement, dated August 16, 2019, by and between the Company and J.P. Morgan Securities LLC, Barclays Capital Inc., BofA Securities, Inc., Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC, Nomura Securities International, Inc. and RBC Capital Markets, LLC.](#)
- 5.1 [Opinion of Venable LLP regarding the legality of the Shares.](#)
- 23.1 [Consent of Venable LLP \(included in Exhibit 5.1 hereto\).](#)
- 104 Cover Page Interactive Data File - the cover page XBRL tags are embedded within the Inline XBRL document.

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned hereunto duly authorized.

Date: August 16, 2019

MFA FINANCIAL, INC.

By: /s/ Harold E. Schwartz
Harold E. Schwartz
Senior Vice President and General Counsel

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Section 2: EX-1.1 (EX-1.1)

Exhibit 1.1

DISTRIBUTION AGREEMENT

August 16, 2019

J.P. Morgan Securities LLC
383 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10179

Barclays Capital Inc.
745 7th Avenue
New York, New York, 10019

BofA Securities, Inc.
One Bryant Park
New York, New York 10036

Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC
200 West Street
New York, New York 10282-2198

Nomura Securities International, Inc.
Worldwide Plaza, 309 West 49th Street
New York, NY 10019

RBC Capital Markets, LLC
200 Vesey Street
New York, New York 10281

Ladies and Gentlemen:

MFA Financial, Inc., a Maryland corporation (the “**Company**”), confirms its agreement with J.P. Morgan Securities LLC, Barclays Capital Inc., BofA Securities, Inc., Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC, Nomura Securities International, Inc. and RBC Capital Markets, LLC, each as agent and/or principal under any Terms Agreement (as defined in Section 1(a) below) (each an “**Agent**” and collectively, the “**Agents**”), with respect to the issuance and sale from time to time by the Company, in the manner and subject to the terms and conditions described below in this Distribution Agreement (this “**Agreement**”), of shares of common stock, \$0.01 par value per share (the “**Common Stock**”), of the Company having an aggregate Gross Sales Price (as defined in Section 1(a) below) of up to \$400,000,000 (the “**Maximum Amount**”) on the terms set forth in Section 1 of this Agreement. Such shares are hereinafter collectively referred to as the “**Shares**” and are described in the Prospectus referred to below.

The Company has filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “**Commission**”) a registration statement on Form S-3 (No. 333-233337) (the “**registration statement**”) for the registration of the Shares and other securities of the Company under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and the rules and regulations of the Commission thereunder (collectively, the “**Act**”); and such registration statement sets forth the terms of the offering, sale and plan of distribution of the Shares and contains additional information concerning the Company and its business. Except where the context otherwise requires, “**Registration Statement**,” as used herein, means the registration statement, as amended at the

time of such registration statement's effectiveness for purposes of Section 11 of the Act, as such section applies to the Agents, and any subsequent registration statement filed by the Company to replace such Registration Statement in connection with its expiration pursuant to Rule 415(a)(5) and (6) under the Act, including (1) all documents filed as a part thereof or incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference therein and (2) any information contained or incorporated by reference in a prospectus filed with the Commission pursuant to Rule 424(b) under the Act, to the extent such information is deemed, pursuant to Rule 430B or Rule 430C under the Act, to be part of the registration statement at the effective time. "Basic Prospectus" means the prospectus dated August 16, 2019 filed as part of the Registration Statement, including the documents incorporated by reference therein as of the date of such prospectus; "Prospectus Supplement" means the most recent prospectus supplement relating to the Shares, to be filed by the Company with the Commission pursuant to Rule 424(b) under the Act on or before the second business day after the date of its first use in connection with a public offering or sale of Shares pursuant hereto (or such earlier time as may be required under the Act), in the form furnished by the Company to the Agents in connection with the offering of the Shares; "Prospectus" means the Prospectus Supplement (and any additional prospectus supplement prepared in accordance with the provision of Section 4(h) of this Agreement and filed in accordance with the provisions of Rule 424(b)) together with the Basic Prospectus attached to or used with the Prospectus Supplement; and "Permitted Free Writing Prospectus" has the meaning set forth in Section 3(b). Any reference herein to the Registration Statement, the Basic Prospectus, the Prospectus Supplement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus shall, unless otherwise stated, be deemed to refer to and include the documents, if any, incorporated by reference, or deemed to be incorporated by reference, therein (the "Incorporated Documents"), including, unless the context otherwise requires, the documents, if any, filed as exhibits to such Incorporated Documents. Any reference herein to the terms "amend," "amendment" or "supplement" with respect to the Registration Statement, the Basic Prospectus, the Prospectus Supplement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus shall, unless stated otherwise, be deemed to refer to and include the filing of any document under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, and the rules and regulations thereunder (collectively, the "Exchange Act") on or after the initial effective date of the Registration Statement, or the date of the Basic Prospectus, the Prospectus Supplement, the Prospectus or such Permitted Free Writing Prospectus, as the case may be, and deemed to be incorporated therein by reference. References in this Agreement to financial statements or other information that is "contained," "included," "described," "set forth" or "provided" in the Registration Statement, the Basic Prospectus, the Prospectus Supplement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus and any similar references shall, unless stated otherwise, include any information incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference therein.

The Company and each Agent agree as follows:

1. Issuance and Sale.

(a) Upon the basis of the representations, warranties and agreements and subject to the terms and conditions set forth herein and provided the Company provides the applicable Agent with any due diligence materials and information reasonably requested by such Agent necessary for such Agent to satisfy its due diligence obligations, on any Exchange Business Day (as defined below) selected by the Company, the Company and such Agent shall enter into an agreement in accordance with Section 2 hereof regarding the number of Shares to be placed by such Agent, as agent, and the manner in which and other terms upon which such placement is to occur (each such transaction being referred to as an "**Agency Transaction**"). The Company may also offer to sell the Shares directly to an Agent, as principal, in which event such parties shall enter into a separate agreement (each, a "**Terms Agreement**") in substantially the form of Exhibit A hereto (with such changes thereto as may be agreed upon by the Company and such Agent to accommodate a transaction involving more than one Agent), relating to such sale in accordance with Section 2(g) of this Agreement (each such transaction being referred to as a "**Principal**").

Transaction"). As used herein, (i) "**Gross Sales Price**" means the gross sales price of the Shares sold in an Agency Transaction or a Principal Transaction, as applicable, (ii) the "**Term**" shall be the period commencing on the date hereof and ending on the earlier of (x) the date on which the aggregate Gross Sales Price of Shares issued and sold pursuant to this Agreement and any Terms Agreement is equal to the Maximum Amount and (y) any termination of this Agreement pursuant to Section 8, (iii) an "**Exchange Business Day**" means any day during the Term that is a trading day for the Exchange other than a day on which trading on the Exchange is scheduled to close prior to its regular weekday closing time, and (iv) "**Exchange**" means the New York Stock Exchange.

(b) Subject to the terms and conditions set forth below, the Company appoints each Agent as agent in connection with the offer and sale of Shares in any Agency Transaction entered into hereunder. Each Agent will use commercially reasonable efforts, consistent with its normal trading and sales practices, to sell such Shares in accordance with the terms and subject to the conditions hereof and of the applicable Transaction Acceptance (as defined in Section 2(a) below). Neither the Company nor any Agent shall have any obligation to enter into an Agency Transaction. The Company shall be obligated to issue and sell through the Agents, and each of the Agents shall be obligated to use commercially reasonable efforts, consistent with its normal trading and sales practices and as provided herein and in the applicable Transaction Acceptance, to place Shares only if and when the Company makes a Transaction Proposal (as defined in Section 2(a) below) to such Agent related to such an Agency Transaction and a Transaction Acceptance related to such Agency Transaction has been delivered to the Company by such Agent as provided in Section 2 below.

(c) Each Agent, as agent in any Agency Transaction, hereby covenants and agrees not to make any sales of the Shares on behalf of the Company pursuant to this Agreement other than (A) by means of ordinary brokers' transactions between members of the Exchange that qualify for delivery of a Prospectus in accordance with Rule 153 under the Act and meet the definition of an "at the market offering" under Rule 415(a)(4) under the Act (such transactions are hereinafter referred to as "**At the Market Offerings**"), (B) to or through a market maker, (C) directly on or through any other existing trading market, (D) by any other method permitted by law, including but not limited to in privately negotiated transactions and (E) such other sales of the Shares on behalf of the Company in its capacity as agent of the Company as shall be agreed by the Company and such Agent in writing.

(d) If Shares are to be sold in an Agency Transaction in an At the Market Offering, the applicable Agent will confirm in writing to the Company the number of Shares sold on any Exchange Business Day and the related Gross Sales Price and Net Sales Price (as each such term is defined in Section 2(b) below) no later than the opening of trading on the immediately following Exchange Business Day.

(e) If the Company shall default on its obligation to deliver Shares to an Agent pursuant to the terms of any Agency Transaction or Terms Agreement, the Company shall (i) indemnify and hold harmless such Agent and its successors and assigns from and against any and all losses, claims, damages, liabilities and expenses arising from or as a result of such default by the Company and (ii) notwithstanding any such default, pay to such Agent the commission to which it would otherwise be entitled in connection with such sale in accordance with Section 2(b) below.

(f) The Company acknowledges and agrees that (i) there can be no assurance that an Agent will be successful in selling the Shares, (ii) no Agent shall incur any liability or obligation to the Company or any other person or entity if it does not sell Shares for any reason other than a failure by such Agent to use its commercially reasonable efforts consistent with its normal trading and sales practices and applicable law and regulations to sell such Shares in accordance with the terms of this Agreement, and (iii) no Agent shall be under any obligation to purchase Shares on a principal basis pursuant to this Agreement, except as may otherwise be specifically agreed by such Agent and the Company in a Terms Agreement.

2. Transaction Acceptances and Terms Agreements.

(a) The Company may, from time to time during the Term, propose to an Agent that they enter into an Agency Transaction to be executed on a specified Exchange Business Day or over a specified period of Exchange Business Days, which proposal shall be made to such Agent by telephone, email or any other means permissible under Section 10 hereof and shall set forth the information specified below (each, a “**Transaction Proposal**”). If such Agent agrees to the terms of such proposed Agency Transaction or if the Company and such Agent mutually agree to modified terms for such proposed Agency Transaction, then such Agent shall promptly deliver to the Company by any means permissible under Section 10 hereof a notice (each, a “**Transaction Acceptance**”) confirming the terms of such proposed Agency Transaction as set forth in such Transaction Proposal or setting forth the modified terms for such proposed Agency Transaction as agreed by the Company and such Agent, as the case may be, whereupon such Agency Transaction shall become a binding agreement between the Company and such Agent subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement. Each Transaction Proposal shall specify:

- (i) the Exchange Business Day(s) on which the Shares subject to such Agency Transaction are intended to be sold (each, a “**Purchase Date**”);
- (ii) the maximum number of Shares to be sold by such Agent (the “**Specified Number of Shares**”) on, or over the course of, such Purchase Date(s), or as otherwise agreed between the Company and such Agent and documented in the relevant Transaction Acceptance; and;
- (iii) the lowest price per Share, if any, at which the Company is willing to sell Shares on each such Purchase Date or a formula pursuant to which such lowest price shall be determined (each, a “**Floor Price**”); and
- (iv) if other than 2.0% of the Gross Sales Price, such Agent’s discount or commission.

A Transaction Proposal shall not set forth a Specified Number of Shares or Floor Price such that the Gross Sales Price contemplated by such Transaction Proposal, when added to the aggregate Gross Sales Price of Shares previously purchased and to be purchased pursuant to pending Transaction Acceptances (if any) hereunder and any Terms Agreements, results or could result in an aggregate Gross Sales Price that exceeds the Maximum Amount, nor shall it set forth a Floor Price which is lower than the minimum price authorized from time to time by the Company’s board of directors or, if permitted by applicable law and the Company’s charter and by-laws, a duly authorized committee thereof. The Company shall have responsibility for maintaining records with respect to the aggregate number and aggregate Gross Sales Price of Shares sold and for otherwise monitoring the availability of Shares for sale under the Registration Statement and for insuring that the aggregate number and aggregate Gross Sales Price of Shares offered and sold does not exceed, and the price at which any Shares are offered or sold is not lower than, the aggregate number and aggregate Gross Sales Price of Shares and the minimum price authorized from time to time by the Company’s board of directors or, if permitted by applicable law and the Company’s charter and by-laws, a duly authorized committee thereof. In the event that more than one Transaction Acceptance with respect to any Purchase Date(s) is delivered by the applicable Agent to the Company, the latest

Transaction Acceptance shall govern any sales of Shares for the relevant Purchase Date(s), except to the extent of any action occurring pursuant to a prior Transaction Acceptance and prior to the delivery to the Company of the latest Transaction Acceptance. The Company or the applicable Agent may, upon notice to the other such party either by email or telephone (confirmed promptly by e-mail), suspend or terminate the offering of the Shares pursuant to Agency Transactions for any reason; *provided, however*, that such suspension or termination shall not affect or impair the parties' respective obligations with respect to the Shares sold hereunder prior to the giving of such notice or their respective obligations under any Terms Agreement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the terms of any Agency Transaction contemplate that Shares shall be sold on more than one Purchase Date, then the Company and the applicable Agent shall mutually agree to such additional terms and conditions as they deem reasonably necessary in respect of such multiple Purchase Dates, and such additional terms and conditions shall be set forth in or confirmed by, as the case may be, the relevant Transaction Acceptance and be binding to the same extent as any other terms contained therein. During the term of any such suspension, the Company shall not, in connection with any such Agency Transaction, be obligated to deliver (or cause to be delivered) any of the documents referred to in Sections 6(b) through 6(d) hereof, be deemed to affirm any of the representations or warranties in this Agreement pursuant to Sections 3 or 6(a) hereof, or be obligated to cooperate with any due diligence review referred to in Section 6(f) hereof until the termination of the suspension and the recommencement of the offering of the Shares pursuant to the Agreement, at which time the Agent may request such documents or such due diligence review prior to recommencing any offering or sales of the Shares.

(b) The Purchase Date(s) in respect of the Shares deliverable pursuant to any Transaction Acceptance shall be set forth in or confirmed by, as the case may be, the applicable Transaction Acceptance. Except as otherwise agreed between the Company and an Agent, such Agent's commission for any Shares sold through the Agent pursuant to this Agreement shall be a percentage, not to exceed 2.0%, of the Gross Sales Price of such Shares, which commission shall be as set forth in or confirmed by, as the case may be, the applicable Transaction Acceptance; *provided, however*, that such commission shall not apply when an Agent acts as principal, in which case such commission or a discount shall be set forth in the applicable Terms Agreement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the event the Company engages an Agent for a sale of Shares that would constitute a "distribution," within the meaning of Rule 100 of Regulation M under the Exchange Act or a "block" within the meaning of Rule 10b-18(a)(5) under the Exchange Act, the Company will provide such Agent, at such Agent's request and upon reasonable advance notice to the Company, on or prior to the Settlement Date the opinions of counsel, accountants' letters and officers' certificates pursuant to Section 5(a) hereof, each dated the Settlement Date, and such other documents and information as such Agents shall reasonably request, and the Company and the Agent will agree to compensation that is customary for such Agent with respect to such transactions. The Gross Sales Price less the applicable Agent's commission and after deduction for any transaction fees, transfer taxes or similar taxes or fees imposed by any governmental, regulatory or self-regulatory organization in respect of the sale of the applicable Shares is referred to herein as the "**Net Sales Price**."

(c) Payment of the Net Sales Price for Shares sold by the Company on any Purchase Date pursuant to a Transaction Acceptance shall be made by the applicable Agent to the Company by wire transfer of immediately available funds to the account of the Company (which the Company shall provide to the applicable Agent at least one Exchange Business Day prior to the applicable Agency Settlement Date (as defined below)) against delivery of such Shares to such Agent's account, or an account of such Agent's designee, at The Depository Trust Company through its Deposit and Withdrawal at Custodian System ("**DWAC**") or by such other means of delivery as may be agreed to by the Company and such

Agent. Such payment and delivery shall be made at or about 10:00 a.m. (New York City time) on the second Exchange Business Day (or such other day as may, from time to time, become standard industry practice for settlement of such a securities issuance or as agreed to by the Company and such Agent) following each Purchase Date (each, an “**Agency Settlement Date**”). In the event that the applicable Agent delivers the aggregate Gross Sales Price to the Company at an Agency Settlement Date, the difference between the aggregate Gross Sales Price and the aggregate Net Sales Price for such Shares shall be set forth and invoiced in a periodic statement from the applicable Agent to the Company and payment of such amount shall be made promptly by the Company after its receipt thereof.

(d) If, as set forth in or confirmed by, as the case may be, the related Transaction Acceptance, a Floor Price has been agreed to by the parties with respect to a Purchase Date, and the applicable Agent thereafter determines and notifies the Company that the sales price per Share for such Agency Transaction would not be at least equal to such Floor Price, then the Company shall not be obligated to issue and sell through such Agent, and such Agent shall not be obligated to place, the Shares proposed to be sold pursuant to such Agency Transaction on such Purchase Date, unless the Company and such Agent otherwise agree in writing.

(e) If either the Company or an Agent has reason to believe that the exemptive provisions set forth in Rule 101(c)(1) of Regulation M under the Exchange Act are not satisfied with respect to the Shares, it shall promptly notify the other party and sales of the Shares under this Agreement, any Transaction Acceptance or any Terms Agreement shall be suspended until that or other exemptive provisions have been satisfied in the judgment of each party. On or prior to the delivery of a prospectus that is required (whether physically or through compliance with Rule 172 under the Act or any similar rule) in connection with the offering or sale of the Shares, the Company and such Agent shall calculate the average daily trading volume (as defined under “**ADTV**” by Rule 100 of Regulation M under the Exchange Act) of the Common Stock based on market data provided by Bloomberg L.P. or such other sources as agreed upon by the Company and the applicable Agent.

(f) (i) If the Company wishes to issue and sell the Shares pursuant to this Agreement but other than as set forth in Section 2(a) of this Agreement, it will notify the applicable Agent of the proposed terms of the Principal Transaction. If such Agent, acting as principal, wishes to accept such proposed terms (which it may decline to do for any reason in its sole discretion) or, following discussions with the Company, wishes to accept amended terms, the Company and such Agent shall enter into a Terms Agreement setting forth the terms of such Principal Transaction.

(ii) The terms set forth in a Terms Agreement shall not be binding on the Company or the applicable Agent unless and until the Company and such Agent have each executed and delivered such Terms Agreement accepting all of the terms of such Terms Agreement. In the event of a conflict between the terms of this Agreement and the terms of a Terms Agreement, the terms of such Terms Agreement shall control.

(g) Each sale of the Shares to an Agent in a Principal Transaction shall be made in accordance with the terms of this Agreement and a Terms Agreement, which shall provide for the sale of such Shares to, and the purchase thereof by, such Agent. A Terms Agreement may also specify certain provisions relating to the reoffering of such Shares by such Agent. The commitment of an Agent to purchase the Shares pursuant to any Terms Agreement shall be deemed to have been made on the basis of the representations, warranties and agreements of the Company contained, and shall be subject to the terms and conditions set forth, in this Agreement and such Terms Agreement. Any such Terms Agreement shall specify the number of the Shares to be purchased by the applicable Agent pursuant thereto, the price to be paid to the Company for such Shares, any provisions relating to rights of, and

default by, underwriters, if any, acting together with such Agent in the reoffering of the Shares, and the time and date (each such time and date being referred to herein as a “**Principal Settlement Date**”; and, together with any Agency Settlement Date, a “**Settlement Date**”) and place of delivery of and payment for such Shares.

(h) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Agreement and except as may otherwise be specifically agreed by the Agents and the Company with respect to clause (ii) below, the Company shall not offer, sell or deliver, or request the offer or sale, of any Shares pursuant to this Agreement (whether in an Agency Transaction or a Principal Transaction) and, by notice to each Agent given either by email or telephone (confirmed promptly by email), shall cancel any instructions for the offer or sale of any Shares, and none of the Agents shall be obligated to offer or sell any Shares, (i) during any period in which the Company’s insider trading policy, as it exists on the date of this Agreement and without regard to any waivers or exceptions that may be granted thereto, would prohibit the purchases or sales of the Company’s Common Stock by any of its officers or directors, (ii) during any period in which the Company is, or would be deemed to be, in possession of material non-public information or (iii) at any time from and including the date on which the Company shall issue a press release containing, or shall otherwise publicly announce, its earnings, revenues or other results of operations (an “**Earnings Announcement**”) through and including the time that is 24 hours after the time that the Company files a Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q or an Annual Report on Form 10-K that includes consolidated financial statements as of and for the same period or periods, as the case may be, covered by such Earnings Announcement.

(i) The Company agrees that any offer to sell, any solicitation of an offer to buy, or any sales of Shares by the Company shall only be effected by or through only one of the Agents on any Exchange Business Day and the Company shall in no event request that more than one Agent sell Shares on the same day; *provided, however*, that the foregoing limitation shall not preclude a Principal Transaction that is executed by more than one Agent.

(j) Anything in this Agreement to the contrary notwithstanding, the Company shall not authorize the issuance and sale of, and no Agent, as sales agent, shall be permitted or obligated to sell, any Shares at a price lower than the minimum price, or in a number or with an aggregate gross or net sales price in excess of the number or aggregate gross or net sales price, as the case may be, authorized from time to time to be issued and sold under this Agreement and any Terms Agreement, in each case by the Company’s board of directors or, if permitted by applicable law and the Company’s charter and by-laws, a duly authorized committee thereof, or in a number in excess of the number of Shares approved for listing on the Exchange, or in excess of the number or amount of Shares available for issuance on the Registration Statement or as to which the Company has paid the applicable registration fee, it being understood and agreed by the parties hereto that compliance with any such limitations shall be the sole responsibility of the Company.

3. **Representations and Warranties of the Company.** The Company represents and warrants to, and agrees with, the Agent, on and as of (i) the date hereof, (ii) each date on which the Company receives a Transaction Acceptance (the “**Time of Acceptance**”), (iii) each date on which the Company executes and delivers a Terms Agreement, (iv) each Time of Sale (as defined in Section 3(a)), (v) each Settlement Date and (vi) each Bring-Down Delivery Date (as defined in Section 6(b)) (each such date listed in (i) through (vi), a “**Representation Date**”), as follows:

(a) The Registration Statement, as amended, has heretofore become effective under the Act; no stop order of the Commission preventing or suspending the use of any Basic Prospectus, any Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus, or the effectiveness of the Registration Statement, as amended, has been issued, and no proceedings for such purpose have been instituted or, to the

Company's knowledge, are contemplated by the Commission; the Registration Statement complied each time it became effective, complies as of the date hereof and, as amended or supplemented, as of each other Representation Date will comply in all material respects, with the requirements of the Act; the conditions to the use of Form S-3 in connection with the offering and sale of the Shares as contemplated hereby have been satisfied; the Registration Statement constitutes an "automatic shelf registration statement" (as defined in Rule 405 under the Act); the Company has not received, from the Commission, a notice, pursuant to Rule 401(g)(2) under the Act, of objection to the use of the automatic shelf registration statement form; the Registration Statement meets, and the offering and sale of the Shares as contemplated hereby complies with, the requirements of Rule 415 under the Act (including, without limitation, Rule 415(a)(5) under the Act, if applicable); the Prospectus complied or will comply, at the time it was or will be filed with the Commission, and will comply, as then amended or supplemented, as of each Representation Date, in all material respects, with the requirements of the Act; the Registration Statement did not, as of the time of its initial effectiveness, and does not or will not, as then amended or supplemented, as of each Representation Date, contain an untrue statement of a material fact or omit to state a material fact required to be stated therein or necessary to make the statements therein not misleading; as of each Representation Date, the Prospectus, as then amended or supplemented, together with all of the then issued Permitted Free Writing Prospectuses, if any, will not contain an untrue statement of a material fact or omit to state a material fact necessary in order to make the statements therein, in the light of the circumstances under which they were made, not misleading; *provided, however*, that the Company makes no representation or warranty with respect to any statement contained in or omission from the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus made in reliance upon and in conformity with information concerning any Agent and furnished in writing by or on behalf of such Agent expressly for use in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or such Permitted Free Writing Prospectus (it being understood that such information consists solely of the information specified in Section 9(b)). As used herein, "**Time of Sale**" means (i) with respect to each offering of Shares pursuant to this Agreement, the time of the Agent's initial entry into contracts with investors for the sale of such Shares and (ii) with respect to each offering of Shares pursuant to any relevant Terms Agreement, the time of sale of such Shares.

(b) Prior to the execution of this Agreement, the Company has not, directly or indirectly, offered or sold any of the Shares by means of any "prospectus" (within the meaning of the Act) or used any "prospectus" (within the meaning of the Act) in connection with the offer or sale of the Shares, in each case other than the Basic Prospectus. The Company represents and agrees that, unless it obtains the prior consent of the Agent, until the termination of this Agreement, it has not made and will not make any offer relating to the Shares that would constitute an "issuer free writing prospectus" (as defined in Rule 433 under the Act) or that would otherwise constitute a "free writing prospectus" (as defined in Rule 405 under the Act) other than any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus. Any such free writing prospectus relating to the Shares consented to by the Agent (including any Free Writing Prospectus prepared by the Company solely for use in connection with the offering contemplated by a particular Terms Agreement) is hereinafter referred to as a "**Permitted Free Writing Prospectus**". The Company has complied and will comply in all material respects with the requirements of Rule 433 under the Act applicable to any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus, including timely filing with the Commission where required, legending and record keeping. The conditions set forth in one or more of subclauses (i) through (iv), inclusive, of Rule 433(b)(1) under the Act are satisfied, and the registration statement relating to the offering of the Shares contemplated hereby, as initially filed with the Commission, includes a prospectus that, other than by reason of Rule 433 or Rule 431 under the Act, satisfies the requirements of Section 10 of the Act; the Company is not disqualified, by reason of Rule 164(f) or (g) under the Act, from using, in connection with the offer and sale of the Shares, "free writing prospectuses" (as defined in Rule 405 under the Act) pursuant to Rules 164 and 433 under the Act; the Company was not as of each eligibility determination date for purposes of Rules 164 and 433 under the Act with respect to the offering of the Shares contemplated by the Registration Statement and this Agreement; and is not an "ineligible issuer"

and was as of each such eligibility date and is a “well-known seasoned issuer” (each as defined in Rule 405 under the Act). The Company has paid or, no later than the business day after the date of this Agreement, will pay the registration fee for the offering of the Maximum Amount pursuant to Rule 457 under the Act.

(c) The Incorporated Documents, when they were filed with the Commission (or, if any amendment with respect to any such document was filed, when such amendment was filed) or at the time such document became effective, as applicable, conformed in all material respects to the requirements of the Act or the Exchange Act, as applicable, and none of such documents contained any untrue statement of a material fact or omitted to state a material fact required to be stated therein or necessary to make the statements therein, in light of the circumstances under which they were made, not misleading; and any further documents so filed during the Term and incorporated by reference in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus, when such documents become effective or are filed with the Commission, as the case may be, will conform in all material respects to the requirements of the Act or the Exchange Act, as applicable, and will not contain any untrue statement of a material fact or omit to state a material fact required to be stated therein or necessary to make the statements therein, in light of the circumstances under which they were made, not misleading.

(d) The consolidated financial statements of the Company, together with the related schedules and notes thereto, set forth or included or incorporated by reference in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus comply in all material respects with the applicable requirements of the Act and the Exchange Act, as applicable, and are accurate in all material respects and fairly present in all material respects the financial condition of the Company as of the dates indicated and the results of operations, changes in financial position, stockholders’ equity and cash flows for the periods therein specified are in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles consistently applied throughout the periods involved (except as otherwise stated therein); the financial statements of any other business or entity and its consolidated subsidiaries (if any) and the related notes thereto included or incorporated by reference in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus comply in all material respects with the applicable requirements of the Act or the Exchange Act, as applicable, and fairly present in all material respects the consolidated (if applicable) financial position of such entity or business, as the case may be, and its subsidiaries (if any) as of the dates indicated and the results of its or their, as the case may be, operations and the changes in its or their, as the case may be, cash flows for the periods specified; and all such financial statements have been prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles (“GAAP”) applied on a consistent basis throughout the periods covered thereby, and all supporting schedules to such financial statements included or incorporated by reference in the Registration Statement fairly present in all material respects the information required to be stated therein. Any pro forma financial statements of the Company, and the related notes thereto, included or incorporated by reference in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus comply in all material respects with the applicable requirements of the Act and the Exchange Act, as applicable, present fairly in all material respects the information shown therein, have been prepared in accordance with the Commission’s rules and guidelines with respect to pro forma financial statements and have been properly compiled on the bases described therein, and the assumptions used in the preparation thereof are reasonable and the adjustments used therein are appropriate to give effect to the transactions and circumstances referred to therein.

(e) Since the respective dates as of which information is given in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus and any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus, except as otherwise stated therein, (i) there has not been any change in the capital stock (other than the issuance of shares of Common Stock upon exercise of stock options issued under, and the grant of options and awards under, equity incentive plans described in the Registration Statement and the Prospectus, the issuance of Shares pursuant to this

Agreement, and the issuance of shares of Common Stock pursuant to the Company's dividend reinvestment plans described in the Registration Statement and the Prospectus) or short-term debt or long-term debt (except for borrowings and the repayment of borrowings in the ordinary course of business) of the Company or any of its subsidiaries, or any dividend or distribution of any kind declared, set aside for payment, paid or made by the Company on any class of capital stock (other than regularly scheduled cash dividends in amounts that are consistent with past practice), or any material adverse change, or any development which is likely to cause material adverse change, in the business, properties, management or assets described or referred to in the Registration Statement or the Prospectus, or the results of operations, condition (financial or otherwise), net worth, business or operations of the Company and its subsidiaries taken as a whole; (ii) neither the Company nor any of its subsidiaries has entered into any transaction or agreement that is material to the Company and its subsidiaries taken as a whole, except transactions and agreements in the ordinary course of business, or incurred any liability or obligation, direct or contingent, that is material to the Company and its subsidiaries taken as a whole, except obligations in the ordinary course of business; and (iii) neither the Company nor any of its subsidiaries has sustained any loss or interference with its business that is material to the Company and its subsidiaries taken as a whole and that is either from fire, explosion, flood or other calamity, whether or not covered by insurance, or from any labor disturbance or dispute or any action, order or decree of any court or arbitrator or governmental or regulatory authority.

(f) The Company has been duly formed and incorporated and is validly existing as a corporation in good standing under the laws of the State of Maryland and is duly qualified to do business and is in good standing as a foreign corporation in each jurisdiction in which its ownership or lease of property or assets or the conduct of its business requires such qualification, except where the failure to so qualify would not have a material adverse effect on the business, assets, properties, prospects, financial condition or results of operations of the Company and the Significant Subsidiaries (as defined below) taken as a whole (a "**Material Adverse Effect**") and has full corporate power and authority necessary to own, hold, lease and/or operate its assets and properties, to conduct the business in which it is engaged and as described in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus and the Permitted Free Writing Prospectuses, if any, and to enter into and perform its obligations under this Agreement and any Terms Agreement, the issuance and sale of the Shares, the compliance by the Company with the terms hereof and of any Terms Agreement and the consummation of the transactions contemplated hereby or by any Terms Agreement and to consummate the transactions contemplated hereby and thereby, and the Company is in compliance in all material respects with the laws, orders, rules, regulations and directives issued or administered by any jurisdictions in which it owns or leases property or conducts business.

(g) The Company has no "significant subsidiaries" (as such term is defined in Rule 1-02 of Regulation S-X promulgated under the Act) other than MFA Securities Holdings LLC, MFA Securitization Holdings LLC, MFResidential Assets I, LLC, MFResidential Assets Holding Corp., Diplomat Property Holdings Corp. and MFA Kittiwake Investments Limited (collectively, the "**Significant Subsidiaries**") and, except for the equity of its consolidated subsidiaries, does not own, directly or indirectly, any shares of stock or any other equity or long-term debt securities of any corporation or have any equity interest in any firm, partnership, joint venture, association or other entity, except (a) that it owns the securities comprising the Company's investment portfolio, which consisted of the investments described in the Company's annual report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2018; (b) that it owns a \$5,000,000 junior note and 64,102 shares of common stock of South Street Securities Funding LLC, (c) that it owns 1,500 Class A Common Units and 17,000,000 Class C Preferred Units in Lima One Holdings, LLC and (d) as otherwise disclosed in (or incorporated by reference into) the Registration Statement and/or Prospectus. Complete and correct copies of the charter and of the bylaws or other formation documents of the Company and each of the Significant Subsidiaries, as applicable, and all amendments thereto have been made available to the Agent and its counsel. Each Significant Subsidiary has been duly formed and incorporated or organized and is validly existing as a

corporation, partnership or limited liability company in good standing under the laws of the jurisdiction of its incorporation or formation or organization, and each Significant Subsidiary is duly qualified to do business and is in good standing as a foreign corporation, partnership or limited liability company in each jurisdiction where the ownership or leasing of its properties or the conduct of its business requires such qualification, except where the failure to be so qualified would not have a Material Adverse Effect and each Significant Subsidiary has full corporate, partnership or limited liability power and authority, as applicable, necessary to own, hold, lease and/or operate its assets and properties and to conduct its business in which it is engaged and as described in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus and the Permitted Free Writing Prospectus, if any, and, each Significant Subsidiary is in compliance in all material respects with the laws, orders, rules, regulations and directives issued or administered by jurisdictions in which it owns or leases property or conducts business; all of the outstanding shares of capital stock or other equity interests, as the case may be, of each of the Significant Subsidiaries have been duly authorized and validly issued, are fully paid and nonassessable, and have been issued in compliance with all federal and state securities laws and were not issued in violation of any preemptive right, resale right, right of first refusal or similar right and are not subject to any security interest, other encumbrance or adverse claims; and no options, warrants or other rights to purchase, agreements or other obligations to issue or other rights to convert any obligation into shares of capital stock or ownership interests in the Significant Subsidiaries are outstanding.

(h) The Company has an authorized capitalization as set forth in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus and any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus. All of the issued and outstanding shares of capital stock of the Company have been duly and validly authorized and issued and are fully paid and nonassessable, have been issued in compliance with all federal and state securities laws and were not issued in violation of any preemptive right, resale right, right of first refusal or similar right.

(i) The Company has been, and upon the sale of the Shares will continue to be, organized and operated in conformity with the requirements for qualification and taxation as a “real estate investment trust” (a “REIT”) under Sections 856 through 860 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the “Code”), for all taxable years commencing with its taxable year ended December 31, 1998. The proposed method of operation of the Company as described in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus and any Permitted Free Writing Prospectuses will enable the Company to continue to meet the requirements for qualification and taxation as a REIT under the Code, and no actions have been taken (or not taken which are required to be taken) which would cause such qualification to be lost.

(j) With respect to the stock options (the “Stock Options”) granted pursuant to the stock-based compensation plans of the Company and its subsidiaries (the “Company Stock Plans”), (i) each Stock Option intended to qualify as an “incentive stock option” under Section 422 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the “Code”), so qualifies, (ii) each grant of a Stock Option was duly authorized no later than the date on which the grant of such Stock Option was by its terms to be effective (the “Grant Date”) by all necessary corporate action, including, as applicable, approval by the board of directors of the Company (or a duly constituted and authorized committee thereof) and any required stockholder approval by the necessary number of votes or written consents, and the award agreement governing such grant (if any) was duly executed and delivered by each party thereto, (iii) each such grant was made in accordance with the terms of the Company Stock Plans, the Exchange Act and all other applicable laws and regulatory rules or requirements, including the rules of the Exchange and any other exchange on which Company securities are traded, and (iv) each such grant was properly accounted for in accordance with GAAP in the financial statements (including the related notes) of the Company and disclosed in the Company’s filings with the Commission in accordance with the Exchange Act and all other applicable laws. The Company has not knowingly granted, and there is no and has been no policy or practice of the Company of granting, Stock Options prior to, or otherwise coordinating the grant of Stock Options with, the release or other public announcement of material information regarding the Company or its subsidiaries or their results of operations or prospects.

(k) This Agreement has been duly authorized, executed and delivered by the Company and any Terms Agreement will have been duly authorized, executed and delivered by the Company.

(l) The Shares to be issued and sold by the Company hereunder or under any Terms Agreement have been duly and validly authorized by the Company and, when issued and delivered to and paid for by the Agents as provided herein or in any Terms Agreement, as the case may be, will be duly and validly issued, will be fully paid and nonassessable and will conform to the description thereof in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus, and any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus; and the issuance and sale of the Shares are not and will not be subject to any preemptive or similar rights.

(m) The Company has full right, power and authority to execute and deliver this Agreement and any Terms Agreement and perform its obligations hereunder or thereunder, including the Company's issuance, sale and delivery of the Shares as provided herein and therein; and all action required to be taken for the due and proper authorization, execution and delivery by each of the Company of this Agreement and any Terms Agreement and the consummation by it of the transactions contemplated hereby and thereby has been duly and validly taken (or, in the case of any Terms Agreement, such action will have been duly and validly authorized).

(n) This Agreement conforms and each Terms Agreement will conform in all material respects to the description thereof contained in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus and any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus.

(o) Neither the Company nor any of the Significant Subsidiaries is in breach or violation of or in default under (nor has any event occurred which with notice, lapse of time or both would result in any breach or violation of or constitute a default under or give the holder of any indebtedness (or a person acting on such holder's behalf) the right to require the repurchase, redemption or repayment of all or a part of such indebtedness under) (i) its respective charter, bylaws, certificate of formation, partnership agreement or limited liability company agreement, as the case may be, or (ii) any indenture, mortgage, deed of trust, bank loan or credit agreement or other evidence of indebtedness, or any license, lease, contract or other agreement or instrument to which the Company or any of the Significant Subsidiaries is a party or by which any of them or any of their properties may be bound or affected, the effect of which breach, violation or default under this clause (ii) could reasonably be expected to result in a Material Adverse Effect. The execution, delivery and performance of this Agreement and any Terms Agreement, the issuance and sale of the Shares, the compliance by the Company with the terms hereof and of any Terms Agreement and the consummation of the transactions contemplated hereby or by any Terms Agreement will not conflict with, result in any breach or violation of or constitute a default under (nor constitute any event which with notice, lapse of time or both would result in any breach or violation of or constitute a default under) (i) the charter, bylaws, certificate of formation, partnership agreement or limited liability company agreement, as the case may be, of the Company or any of the Significant Subsidiaries, or (ii) any indenture, mortgage, deed of trust, bank loan or credit agreement or other evidence of indebtedness, or any license, lease, contract or other agreement or instrument to which the Company or any of the Significant Subsidiaries is a party or by which any of them or any of their respective properties may be bound or affected, the effect of which breach, violation or default under this clause (ii) could reasonably be expected to result in a Material Adverse Effect, or (iii) any federal, state, local or foreign law, regulation or rule or any decree, judgment or order applicable to the Company or any of the Significant Subsidiaries.

(p) No approval, authorization, consent, qualification or order of or filing with any national, state or local governmental or regulatory commission, board, body, authority or agency is required for the execution, delivery and performance by the Company of this Agreement or any Terms Agreement, the issuance and sale of the Shares, compliance by the Company with the terms of this Agreement or of any Terms Agreement and the consummation of the transactions contemplated by this Agreement or any Terms Agreement, except as have been made or obtained, except as may be required by and made in accordance with or obtained under state securities laws or regulations, and except for such filings of Permitted Free Writing Prospectuses and any amendments or supplements to the Registration Statement or the Prospectus or any documents incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference therein as may be required by the Act or the Exchange Act from time to time, and except for such filings as the Exchange may require from time to time.

(q) The descriptions in the Registration Statement and the Prospectus of the legal or governmental proceedings, affiliate transactions, off-balance sheet transactions, contracts, leases and other legal documents therein described present fairly the information required to be shown, and there are no legal or governmental proceedings, affiliate transactions, off-balance sheet transactions, contracts, leases, or other documents of a character required to be described in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectuses, or to be filed as exhibits to the Registration Statement which are not described or filed as required. All agreements between the Company and third parties expressly referenced in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectuses, are legal, valid and binding obligations of the Company enforceable in accordance with their respective terms, except to the extent enforceability may be limited by bankruptcy, insolvency, reorganization, moratorium or similar laws affecting creditors' rights generally and by general equitable principles.

(r) There are no actions, suits, claims, investigations, inquiries or proceedings pending or, to the best of the Company's knowledge, threatened to which either the Company or any Significant Subsidiaries or any of their respective officers or directors is a party or of which any of their respective properties or other assets is subject at law or in equity, or before or by any federal, state, local or foreign governmental or regulatory commission, board, body, authority or agency which could result in a judgment, decree or order having individually or in the aggregate a Material Adverse Effect or prevent, or interfere in any material respect with, the issuance and sale of the Shares and the consummation of the transactions contemplated hereby or by any Terms Agreement or the ability of the Company to perform its obligations under this Agreement and any Terms Agreement.

(s) KPMG LLP, whose report on the consolidated financial statements of the Company and its consolidated subsidiaries is included or incorporated by reference in the Registration Statement and the Prospectus, is an independent registered public accounting firm with respect to the Company and its subsidiaries within the applicable rules and regulations adopted by the Commission and the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board ("PCAOB") and as required by the Act. Each other independent registered public accounting firm, if any, that has certified or reported on any other financial statements included or incorporated by reference in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus is an independent registered public accounting firm with respect to the Company and its subsidiaries or other appropriate entity, as applicable, within the applicable rules and regulations adopted by the Commission and the PCAOB and as required by the Act.

(t) As of June 30, 2019, the investment portfolio (the "**Investment Portfolio**") of the Company consisted of the investments described in the Company's quarterly report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2019. As of the date of this Agreement and except as otherwise disclosed in the Registration Statement or Prospectus, the Company has no plan or intention to materially alter its stated investment policies and operating policies and strategies, as such are described in the Registration

Statement, the Prospectus and any Permitted Free Writing Prospectuses; the Company and the Significant Subsidiaries have good and marketable title to all properties and assets owned directly by them, in each case free and clear of all liens, security interests, pledges, charges, encumbrances, mortgages and defects (except for any security interest, lien encumbrance or claim that may otherwise exist under any applicable repurchase agreement or as otherwise disclosed in the Registration Statement and the Prospectus), except such as do not interfere with the use made or proposed to be made of such asset or property by the Company or any Significant Subsidiary, as the case may be; the Company does not directly own any real property; any real property and buildings held under lease directly by the Company are held under valid, existing and enforceable leases, with such exceptions, liens, security interests, pledges, charges, encumbrances, mortgages and defects, as are not material and do not interfere with the use made or proposed to be made of such property and buildings by the Company.

(u) The Company and each Significant Subsidiary owns or possesses adequate license or other rights to use all patents, trademarks, service marks, trade names, copyrights, software and design licenses, trade secrets, manufacturing processes, other intangible property rights and know-how, if any (collectively “**Intangibles**”), necessary to entitle the Company and each Significant Subsidiary to conduct its business as described in the Prospectus, and neither the Company nor any Significant Subsidiary has received notice of infringement of or conflict with (and knows of no such infringement of or conflict with) asserted rights of others with respect to any Intangibles which could have a Material Adverse Effect.

(v) No relationship, direct or indirect, exists between or among the Company or any Significant Subsidiary or any affiliate of them, on the one hand, and the directors, officers, stockholders or directors of the Company or any Significant Subsidiary, on the other hand, which is required by the rules of the FINRA to be described in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectuses, which is not so described. Except as otherwise disclosed in the Registration Statement and the Prospectus, there are no material outstanding loans or advances or material guarantees of indebtedness by the Company or any Significant Subsidiary or any affiliate of them to or for the benefit of any of the officers or directors of the Company or any Significant Subsidiary or any of the members of the families of any of them.

(w) None of the Company or any Significant Subsidiary or any employee or agent of the Company or any Significant Subsidiary, has made any payment of funds or received or retained any funds in violation of any law, rule or regulation or of a character required to be disclosed in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectuses. No relationship, direct or indirect, exists between or among the Company or any Significant Subsidiary or any affiliate of any of them, on the one hand, and the directors, officers and stockholders of the Company or any Significant Subsidiary, on the other hand, which is required by the Act to be described in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectuses that is not so described.

(x) Neither the Company, nor the Significant Subsidiaries, after giving effect to the offering and sale of the Shares and the application of the net proceeds thereof as described in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus, will be an “investment company” or an entity “controlled” by an “investment company,” as such terms are defined in the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (the “**Investment Company Act**”).

(y) The Company and each of the Significant Subsidiaries has filed on a timely basis (taking into account all applicable extensions) all necessary federal, state, local and foreign income and franchise tax returns, if any such returns were required to be filed, through the date hereof and have paid all taxes shown as due thereon; and no tax deficiency has been asserted against the Company or any of the Significant Subsidiaries, nor does the Company know of any tax deficiency which is likely to be asserted

against any such entity which, if determined adversely to any such entity, could have a Material Adverse Effect; all tax liabilities, if any, are adequately provided for on the books of the Company and the Significant Subsidiaries.

(z) The Company and its subsidiaries possess all licenses, certificates, permits and other authorizations issued by, and have made all declarations and filings with, the appropriate federal, state, local or foreign governmental or regulatory authorities that are necessary for the ownership or lease of their respective properties or the conduct of their respective businesses as described in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus and any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus, except where the failure to possess or make the same would not, individually or in the aggregate, have a Material Adverse Effect; and except as described in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus and any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus, neither the Company nor any of its subsidiaries has received notice of any revocation or modification of any such license, certificate, permit or authorization or has any reason to believe that any such license, certificate, permit or authorization will not be renewed in the ordinary course.

(aa) There are no existing or threatened labor disputes with the employees of the Company or any Significant Subsidiary which are likely to have individually or in the aggregate a Material Adverse Effect.

(bb) Neither the Company nor any of the Significant Subsidiaries has sustained since the date of the last audited financial statements included in the Registration Statement and the Prospectus any loss or interference with its respective business from fire, explosion, flood or other calamity, whether or not covered by insurance, or from any labor dispute or court or governmental action, order or decree.

(cc) Except as otherwise disclosed in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus and any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus, neither the Company nor any of the Significant Subsidiaries has authorized or conducted or has knowledge of the generation, transportation, storage, presence, use, treatment, disposal, release, or other handling of any hazardous substance, hazardous waste, hazardous material, hazardous constituent, toxic substance, pollutant, contaminant, asbestos, radon, polychlorinated biphenyls, petroleum product or waste (including crude oil or any fraction thereof), natural gas, liquefied gas, synthetic gas or other material defined, regulated, controlled or potentially subject to any remediation requirement under any environmental law (collectively, "**Hazardous Materials**"), on, in, under or affecting any real property currently leased or owned or by any means controlled by the Company or any Significant Subsidiary, including any real property underlying any loan held by any Significant Subsidiary (collectively, the "**Real Property**"), except in material compliance with applicable laws; to the knowledge of the Company, the Real Property, and the Company's and the Significant Subsidiaries' operations with respect to the Real Property, are in compliance with all federal, state and local laws, ordinances, rules, regulations and other governmental requirements relating to pollution, control of chemicals, management of waste, discharges of materials into the environment, health, safety, natural resources, and the environment (collectively, "**Environmental Laws**"), and the Company and the Significant Subsidiaries are in material compliance with, all licenses, permits, registrations and government authorizations necessary to operate under all applicable Environmental Laws; except as otherwise disclosed in the Prospectus, neither the Company nor the Significant Subsidiaries has received any written or oral notice from any governmental entity or any other Person and there is no pending or threatened claim, litigation or any administrative agency proceeding that: alleges a violation of any Environmental Laws by the Company or any of the Significant Subsidiaries; or that the Company or any of the Significant Subsidiaries is a liable party or a potentially responsible party under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, 42 U.S.C. ss. 9601, et seq., or any state superfund law; has resulted in or could result in the attachment of an environmental lien on any of the Real Property; or alleges that the Company or any of the Significant Subsidiaries is liable for any contamination of the environment, contamination of the Real Property, damage to natural resources,

property damage, or personal injury based on their activities or the activities of their predecessors or third parties (whether at the Real Property or elsewhere) involving Hazardous Materials, whether arising under the Environmental Laws, common law principles, or other legal standards.

(dd) Neither the Company nor any of the Significant Subsidiaries has incurred any liability for any prohibited transaction or accumulated funding deficiency or any complete or partial withdrawal liability with respect to any pension, profit sharing or other plan which is subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as amended (“ERISA”), to which the Company or any of the Significant Subsidiaries make a contribution and in which any employee of the Company or any such Significant Subsidiary is or has ever been a participant, which would, individually or in the aggregate, reasonably be expected to have a Material Adverse Effect. With respect to such plans, the Company and the Significant Subsidiaries are in compliance in all material respects with all applicable provisions of ERISA, except where the failure to so comply would not, individually or in the aggregate, reasonably be expected to have a Material Adverse Effect.

(ee) The Company has established and maintains and evaluates “disclosure controls and procedures” (as such term is defined in Rules 13a-15 and 15d-15 under the Exchange Act) and “internal control over financial reporting” (as such term is defined in Rules 13a-15 and 15d-15 under the Exchange Act (collectively, “**Internal Controls**”)); except as otherwise disclosed in the Registration Statement and the Prospectus, such disclosure controls and procedures are designed to ensure that material information relating to the Company, including its consolidated subsidiaries, is made known to the Company’s Chief Executive Officer and its Chief Financial Officer by others within those entities, and such disclosure controls and procedures are effective to perform the functions for which they were established; such system of internal control over financial reporting provides reasonable assurance that the interactive data in eXtensible Business Reporting Language incorporated by reference in the Registration Statement and the Prospectus fairly present the information called for in all material respects and are prepared in accordance with the Commission’s rules and guidelines applicable thereto; the principal executive officers (or their equivalents) and principal financial officers (or their equivalents) of the Company have made all certifications required by the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (the “**Sarbanes-Oxley Act**”) and any related rules and regulations promulgated by the Commission, and the statements contained in each such certification are complete and correct; the Company, the Significant Subsidiaries and the Company’s directors and officers are each in compliance in all material respects with all applicable effective provisions of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act and the rules and regulations of the Commission and the NYSE promulgated thereunder.

(ff) None of the Company or any of its Significant Subsidiaries or any director or officer thereof, or to the knowledge of the Company, any agent, employee or affiliate of the Company or any of its Significant Subsidiaries is aware of or has taken any action, directly or indirectly, that would result in a violation by such persons of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act of 1977, as amended, and the rules and regulations thereunder (collectively, the “**FCPA**”), including, without limitation, making use of the mails or any means or instrumentality of interstate commerce corruptly in furtherance of an offer, payment, promise to pay or authorization of the payment of any money, or other property, gift, promise to give, or authorization of the giving of anything of value to any “foreign official” (as such term is defined in the FCPA) or any foreign political party or official thereof or any candidate for foreign political office, in contravention of the FCPA, the Company, its Significant Subsidiaries and to the knowledge of the Company, their affiliates have conducted their businesses in compliance with the FCPA and have instituted and maintain policies and procedures designed to ensure, and which are reasonably expected to continue to ensure, continued compliance therewith. None of the Company or any of its Significant Subsidiaries will use, directly or indirectly, the proceeds of the offering of the Shares in furtherance of an offer, payment, promise to pay, or authorization of the payment or giving of money, or anything else of value, to any person in violation of any anti-corruption laws, including the FCPA.

(gg) The operations of the Company and its Significant Subsidiaries are and have been conducted at all times in compliance in all material respects with applicable financial recordkeeping and reporting requirements of the Currency and Foreign Transactions Reporting Act of 1970, as amended, the money laundering statutes of all applicable jurisdictions, the rules and regulations thereunder and any related or similar rules, regulations or guidelines issued, administered or enforced by any governmental agency (collectively, the “**Money Laundering Laws**”) and no action, suit or proceeding by or before any court or governmental agency, authority or body or any arbitrator involving the Company or any of its Significant Subsidiaries with respect to the Money Laundering Laws is pending or, to the best knowledge of the Company, threatened.

(hh) The Company maintains systems of “internal control over financial reporting” (as defined in Rule 13a-15(f) of the Exchange Act) that comply with the requirements of the Exchange Act and have been designed by, or under the supervision of, the Company’s principal executive officer and principal financial officer, or persons performing similar functions, to provide reasonable assurance regarding the reliability of financial reporting and the preparation of financial statements for external purposes in accordance with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles. The Company maintains internal accounting controls sufficient to provide reasonable assurance that (i) transactions are executed in accordance with management’s general or specific authorization; (ii) transactions are recorded as necessary to permit preparation of financial statements in conformity with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles and to maintain accountability for assets; (iii) access to assets is permitted only in accordance with management’s general or specific authorization; (iv) the recorded accountability for assets is compared with existing assets at reasonable intervals and appropriate action is taken with respect to any differences; and (v) interactive data in eXtensible Business Reporting Language included or incorporated by reference in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus and any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus is prepared in accordance with the Commission’s rules and guidelines applicable thereto.

(ii) The Registration Statement and the documents incorporated by reference therein include and incorporate by reference all XBRL Data required to be included therein; and the XBRL Data included or incorporated by reference in the Registration Statement or the documents incorporated by reference therein fairly present the information called for in all material respects and have been prepared in accordance with the Commission’s rules and guidelines applicable thereto.

(jj) The Company and each of the Significant Subsidiaries maintains insurance (issued by insurers of recognized financial responsibility) of the types and in the amounts generally deemed adequate, if any, for their respective businesses and consistent with insurance coverage maintained by similar companies in similar businesses, including, but not limited to, insurance covering real and personal property owned or leased by the Company and the Significant Subsidiaries against theft, damage, destruction, acts of vandalism and all other risks customarily insured against, all of which insurance is in full force and effect.

(kk) None of the Company or any of its Significant Subsidiaries or any director or officer thereof, or, to the knowledge of the Company, any agent, employee or affiliate of the Company or any of its Significant Subsidiaries is, or is owned or controlled by one or more persons that are, (i) currently subject to any U.S. sanctions administered or enforced by the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the U.S. Treasury Department (“**OFAC**”), the United Nations Security Council, the European Union, Her Majesty’s Treasury, or other relevant sanctions authority (collectively, “**Sanctions**”) or (ii) located, organized or resident in a country or territory that is the subject of Sanctions (including, without limitation, Crimea, Cuba, Iran, North Korea and Syria), and the Company will not directly or indirectly use the proceeds of the offering, or lend, contribute or otherwise make available such proceeds, to any subsidiary, joint venture partner or other person or entity, for the purpose of financing the activities of any person currently subject to any Sanctions or in any other manner that will result in a violation of

Sanctions by any person (including any person participating in the offering, whether as underwriter, advisor, investor or otherwise). For the past five years, the Company and its Significant Subsidiaries have not knowingly engaged in, are not now knowingly engaged in, and will not engage in, any dealings or transactions with any person, or in any country or territory, that at the time of the dealing or transaction is or was the subject of Sanctions.

(ll) No subsidiary of the Company is currently prohibited, directly or indirectly, under any agreement or other instrument to which it is a party or is subject, from paying any dividends to the Company, from making any other distribution on such subsidiary's capital stock, from repaying to the Company any loans or advances to such subsidiary from the Company or from transferring any of such subsidiary's properties or assets to the Company or any other subsidiary of the Company.

(mm) Neither the Company nor any of its affiliates (i) is required to register as a "broker" or "dealer" in accordance with the provisions of the Exchange Act or (ii) directly or indirectly through one or more intermediaries, controls or has any other association with (within the meaning of Article I of the Bylaws of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc. ("FINRA")) any member firm of the FINRA.

(nn) Neither the Company nor any of the Significant Subsidiaries is a party to any contract, agreement or understanding with any person (other than this Agreement or any Terms Agreement) that would give rise to a valid claim against the Company or any of the Significant Subsidiaries or the Agent for a brokerage commission, finder's fee or like payment in connection with the offering and sale of the Shares.

(oo) No person has the right to require the Company or any of its subsidiaries to register any securities for sale under the Act by reason of the filing of the Registration Statement with the Commission or the offering, issuance or sale of the Shares.

(pp) Neither the Company nor any of the Significant Subsidiaries nor any of their respective directors, officers or controlling persons has taken, directly or indirectly, any action designed, or which has constituted or might reasonably be expected to cause or result in, under the Act or otherwise, the stabilization or manipulation of the price of any security of the Company to facilitate the sale or resale of the Shares.

(qq) The application of the proceeds received by the Company from the issuance, sale and delivery of the Shares as described in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus and any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus will not violate Regulation T, U or X of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System or any other regulation of such Board of Governors.

(rr) No forward-looking statement (within the meaning of Section 27A of the Act and Section 21E of the Exchange Act) contained or incorporated by reference in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus has been made or reaffirmed without a reasonable basis or has been disclosed other than in good faith.

(ss) Nothing has come to the attention of the Company that has caused the Company to believe that the statistical and market-related data included in the Registration Statement, any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus and the Prospectus are not based on or derived from sources that are reliable and accurate in all material respects.

(tt) All of the Shares that have been or may be sold under this Agreement and any Terms Agreement have been approved for listing, subject only to official notice of issuance, on the Exchange.

(uu) The Common Stock is an “actively-traded security” excepted from the requirements of Rule 101 of Regulation M under the Exchange Act by Rule 101 (c)(1) thereunder.

(vv) The Company and its Significant Subsidiaries’ information technology assets and equipment, computers, systems, networks, hardware, software, websites, applications, and databases (collectively, “**IT Systems**”) are reasonably believed by the Company to be adequate in all material respects for, and operate and perform in all material respects as required in connection with, the operation of the business of the Company and its Significant Subsidiaries as currently conducted and, to the Company’s knowledge, are free and clear of all material bugs, errors, defects, Trojan horses, time bombs, malware and other corruptants. The Company and its Significant Subsidiaries have implemented and maintained commercially reasonable controls, policies, procedures, and safeguards to maintain and protect their material confidential information and the integrity, continuous operation, redundancy and security of all IT Systems and data (including all personal, personally identifiable, sensitive, confidential or regulated data (“**Personal Data**”)) used in connection with the business of the Company and its Significant Subsidiaries as currently conducted, and, to the knowledge of the Company, there have been no material breaches, violations, outages or unauthorized uses of or accesses to same, except for those that have been remedied without material cost or liability or the duty to notify any other person, nor any incidents under internal review or investigations relating to the same. The Company and its Significant Subsidiaries are presently in compliance with all applicable laws or statutes and all judgments, orders, rules and regulations of any court or arbitrator or governmental or regulatory authority, internal policies and contractual obligations relating to the privacy and security of IT Systems and Personal Data and to the protection of such IT Systems and Personal Data from unauthorized use, access, misappropriation or modification, except for such failures as would not, individually or in the aggregate, reasonably be expected to have a Material Adverse Effect.

(ww) Any certificate signed by any officer, general partner, managing member or other authorized representative of the Company or any subsidiary of the Company and delivered to the Agent or to counsel to the Agent pursuant to or in connection with this Agreement or any Terms Agreement shall be deemed a representation and warranty by the Company to the Agent as to the matters covered thereby.

4. Certain Covenants of the Company. The Company hereby agrees with the Agent:

(a) For so long as the delivery of a prospectus is required (whether physically or through compliance with Rule 172 under the Act or any similar rule) in connection with the offering or sale of Shares, before using or filing any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus and before using or filing any amendment or supplement to the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus (in each case, other than due to the filing of an Incorporated Document), to furnish to each Agent a copy of each such proposed Permitted Free Writing Prospectus, amendment or supplement within a reasonable period of time before filing with the Commission or using any such Permitted Free Writing Prospectus, amendment or supplement and the Company will not use or file any such Permitted Free Writing Prospectus or any such proposed amendment or supplement to which an Agent reasonably objects, unless the Company’s legal counsel has advised the Company that use or filing of such document is required by law.

(b) To file the Prospectus, each Prospectus Supplement and any other amendments or supplements to the Prospectus pursuant to, and within the time period required by, Rule 424(b) under the Act (without reference to Rule 424(b)(8)) and to file any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus to the extent required by Rule 433 under the Act and to provide copies of the Prospectus, each Prospectus Supplement, any other amendments or supplements to the Prospectus and each Permitted Free Writing Prospectus (to the extent not previously delivered or filed on the Commission’s Electronic Data Gathering, Analysis and Retrieval system or any successor system thereto (collectively, “**EDGAR**”)) to the Agents via e-mail in

“pdf” format on such filing date to an e-mail account designated by each Agent and, at an Agent’s request, to also furnish copies of the Prospectus, each Prospectus Supplement, any other amendments or supplements to the Prospectus and each Permitted Free Writing Prospectus to each exchange or market on which sales were effected as may be required by the rules or regulations of such exchange or market.

(c) To file timely all reports and any definitive proxy or information statements required to be filed by the Company with the Commission pursuant to Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act for so long as the delivery of a prospectus is required (whether physically or through compliance with Rule 172 under the Act or any similar rule) in connection with the offering or sale of the Shares, and during such same period to advise the Agent, promptly after the Company receives notice thereof, (i) of the time when any amendment to the Registration Statement has been filed or has become effective or any supplement to the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus or any amended Prospectus has been filed with the Commission; (ii) of the issuance by the Commission of any stop order or any order preventing or suspending the use of any prospectus relating to the Shares or the initiation or threatening of any proceeding for that purpose, pursuant to Section 8A of the Act; (iii) of any objection by the Commission to the use of Form S-3ASR by the Company pursuant to Rule 401(g)(2) under the Act; (iv) of the suspension of the qualification of the Shares for offering or sale in any jurisdiction or of the initiation or threatening of any proceeding for any such purpose; (v) of any request by the Commission for the amendment of the Registration Statement or the amendment or supplementation of the Prospectus (in each case including any documents incorporated by reference therein) or for additional information; (vi) of the occurrence of any event as a result of which the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus as then amended or supplemented includes any untrue statement of a material fact or omits to state a material fact required to be stated therein or necessary in order to make the statements therein, in the light of the circumstances existing when the Prospectus or any such Permitted Free Writing Prospectus is delivered to a purchaser, not misleading; and (vii) of the receipt by the Company of any notice of objection of the Commission to the use of the Registration Statement or any post-effective amendment thereto.

(d) In the event of the issuance of any such stop order or of any such order preventing or suspending the use of any such prospectus or suspending any such qualification, or of any notice of objection pursuant to Rule 401(g)(2) under the Act, to use promptly its commercially reasonable efforts to obtain its withdrawal.

(e) To furnish such information as may be required and otherwise cooperate in qualifying the Shares for offering and sale under the securities or blue sky laws of such states or other jurisdictions as the Agents may reasonably designate and to maintain such qualifications in effect so long as required for the distribution of the Shares; provided that the Company shall not be required to qualify as a foreign corporation, become a dealer of securities, or become subject to taxation in, or to consent to the service of process or take any action that would subject it to service of process under the laws of, any such state or other jurisdictions (except service of process with respect to the offering and sale of the Shares); and to promptly advise the Agents of the receipt by the Company of any notification with respect to the suspension of the qualification of the Shares for sale in any jurisdiction or the initiation of any proceeding for such purpose.

(f) To make available to the Agents at their respective offices in New York City, without charge, as soon as reasonably practicable after the Registration Statement becomes effective, and thereafter from time to time to furnish to the Agents, as many copies of the Prospectus and the Prospectus Supplement (or of the Prospectus or Prospectus Supplement as amended or supplemented if the Company shall have made any amendments or supplements thereto and documents incorporated by reference therein after the effective date of the Registration Statement) and each Permitted Free Writing Prospectus as the Agents may reasonably request for so long as the delivery of a prospectus is required (whether

physically or through compliance with Rule 172 under the Act or any similar rule); and for so long as this Agreement is in effect, the Company will prepare and file promptly such amendment or amendments to the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus as may be necessary to comply with the requirements of Section 10(a)(3) of the Act.

(g) To furnish or make available to the Agents during the Term (i) copies of any reports or other communications which the Company shall send to its shareholders or shall from time to time publish or publicly disseminate and (ii) copies of all annual, quarterly and current reports filed with the Commission on Forms 10-K, 10-Q and 8-K, or such other similar form as may be designated by the Commission, and to furnish to the Agents from time to time during the Term such other information as the Agents may reasonably request regarding the Company or its subsidiaries, in each case as soon as such reports, communications, documents or information becomes available or promptly upon the request of the Agents, as applicable; *provided, however*, that the Company shall have no obligation to provide the Agents with any document filed on EDGAR or included on the Company's Internet website.

(h) If, at any time during the Term, any event shall occur or condition shall exist as a result of which it is necessary in the reasonable opinion of counsel for the Agents or counsel for the Company, to further amend or supplement the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus as then amended or supplemented in order that the Prospectus or any such Permitted Free Writing Prospectus will not include an untrue statement of a material fact or omit to state any material fact required to be stated therein or necessary in order to make the statements therein not misleading, in light of the circumstances existing at the time the Prospectus or any such Permitted Free Writing Prospectus is delivered to a purchaser, or if it shall be necessary, in the reasonable opinion of either such counsel, to amend or supplement the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus in order to comply with the requirements of the Act, in the case of such a determination by counsel to the Company, immediate notice shall be given, and confirmed in writing, to the Agents to cease the solicitation of offers to purchase the Shares in the Agents' capacity as agent, and, in either case, the Company will, subject to Section 4(a) above, promptly prepare and file with the Commission such amendment or supplement, whether by filing documents pursuant to the Act, the Exchange Act or otherwise, as may be necessary to correct such untrue statement or omission or to make the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any such Permitted Free Writing Prospectus comply with such requirements.

(i) To generally make available to its security holders as soon as reasonably practicable, but not later than 16 months after the first day of each fiscal quarter referred to below, an earnings statement (in form complying with the provisions of Section 11(a) under the Act and Rule 158 of the Commission promulgated thereunder) covering each twelve-month period beginning, in each case, not later than the first day of the Company's fiscal quarter next following each "effective date" (as defined in such Rule 158) of the Registration Statement with respect to each sale of Shares.

(j) To apply the net proceeds from the sale of the Shares in the manner described in the Prospectus Supplement under the caption "Use of Proceeds."

(k) Not to, and to cause its subsidiaries not to, take, directly or indirectly, any action designed to cause or result in, or that constitutes or might reasonably be expected to constitute, the stabilization or manipulation of the price of any security of the Company to facilitate the sale or resale of the Shares; *provided* that nothing herein shall prevent the Company from filing or submitting reports under the Exchange Act or issuing press releases in the ordinary course of business.

(l) The Company will use its best efforts to continue to meet the requirements for qualification and taxation as a REIT under the Code for its taxable year ending December 31, 2019, and for its subsequent taxable years unless, in each case, the Company's board of directors determines that it is no longer in the best interest of the Company to be so qualified.

(m) The Company has retained KPMG LLP as its qualified accountants and qualified tax experts (i) to test procedures and conduct annual compliance reviews designed to determine compliance with the REIT provisions of the Code and (ii) to otherwise assist the Company in monitoring appropriate accounting systems and procedures designed to determine compliance with the REIT provisions of the Code.

(n) Except as otherwise agreed between the Company and the Agents, to pay all costs, expenses, fees and taxes in connection with (i) the preparation and filing of the Registration Statement, the Prospectus, any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus, and any amendments or supplements thereto, and the printing and furnishing of copies of each thereof to the Agents and to dealers (including costs of mailing and shipment), (ii) the registration, issue and delivery of the Shares, (iii) the qualification of the Shares for offering and sale under the securities or blue sky laws of such states or other jurisdictions as the Agents may reasonably designate as aforesaid (including filing fees and the reasonable legal fees and disbursements of counsel to the Agents in connection therewith) and the printing and furnishing of copies of any blue sky surveys to the Agents, (iv) the listing of the Shares on the Exchange and any registration thereof under the Exchange Act, (v) any filing for review, and any review, of the public offering of the Shares by FINRA (including filing fees and the reasonable legal fees and disbursements of counsel to the Agents in connection therewith), (vi) the fees and disbursements of counsel to the Company and of the Company's independent registered public accounting firm, (vii) (a) if Common Stock having an aggregate offering price of less than \$10,000,000 have been offered and sold under this Agreement in the aggregate by the two year anniversary of the date hereof (or such earlier date at which the Company terminates this Agreement) (the "**Determination Date**"), the Company shall reimburse the Agents for the fees and disbursements of counsel for the Agents incurred in connection with the negotiation and execution of this Agreement, as reasonably documented by the Agents by a paid invoice submitted by the Agents to the Company (the "**Establishment Expenses**"); (b) if Common Stock having an aggregate offering price of \$10,000,000 or more, but less than \$25,000,000, have been offered and sold under this Agreement in the aggregate by the Determination Date, the Company shall reimburse the Agents for 50% of the Establishment Expenses; (c) if Common Stock having an aggregate offering price of \$25,000,000 or more, but less than \$50,000,000, have been offered and sold under this Agreement in the aggregate by the Determination Date, the Company shall reimburse the Agents for 25% of the Establishment Expenses; and (d) if Common Stock having an aggregate offering price of more than \$50,000,000 have been offered and sold under this Agreement in the aggregate by the Determination Date, the Company shall not reimburse the Agents for any of the Establishment Expenses, provided, however, that the Company shall pay to the Agents no more than a maximum of \$120,000 in the aggregate for all Establishment Expenses; and further provided, however, that the Company shall not be responsible for paying any fees and disbursements of counsel for the Agents incurred in connection with any Bring-Down Delivery Date and (viii) the performance of the Company's other obligations hereunder and under any Terms Agreement; *provided that*, except as provided in the foregoing clauses (iii), (v) and (vii) and otherwise agreed with the Company, each Agent shall be responsible for any transfer taxes on resale of Shares by such Agent, any costs and expenses associated with the sale and marketing of such Shares, and the legal costs of such Agent.

(o) With respect to the offering(s) contemplated by this Agreement or any Terms Agreement, the Company will not offer shares of Common Stock or any securities convertible into or exchangeable or exercisable for shares of the Common Stock in a manner in violation of the Act or the Exchange Act; and the Company will not distribute any offering material in connection with the offer and sale of the Shares, other than the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus and any amendments or supplements thereto.

(p) If any Agency Transactions or Principal Transactions are pending, the Company will not, without (A) giving the Agents at least two Exchange Business Days' prior written notice specifying the nature of the proposed sale and the date of such proposed sale and (B) the Agents' suspending activity under this program for such period of time as requested by the Company or deemed appropriate by the Agents in light of the proposed sale, (i) offer, pledge, sell, contract to sell, sell any option or contract to purchase, purchase any option or contract to sell, grant any option, right or warrant to purchase, lend, or otherwise transfer or dispose of, directly or indirectly, any shares of Common Stock or other equity securities of the Company or any securities convertible into or exercisable, redeemable or exchangeable for Common Stock or other equity securities of the Company, or submit to, or file with, the Commission any registration statement under the Act with respect to any of the foregoing (other than a registration statement on Form S-8 or post-effective amendment to the Registration Statement), or publicly announce the intention to undertake any of the foregoing, or (ii) enter into any swap or other agreement that transfers, in whole or in part, any of the economic consequences of ownership of Common Stock or other equity securities of the Company, whether any such transaction described in clause (i) or (ii) above is to be settled by delivery of shares of Common Stock or other securities, in cash or otherwise. The foregoing sentence shall not apply to (A) Shares offered and sold under this Agreement or any Terms Agreement, (B) securities issued pursuant to any of the Company's equity incentive plans described in the Registration Statement and the Prospectus or upon the exercise of options granted thereunder, or (C) shares of Common Stock issued pursuant to the Company's dividend reinvestment plans described in the Registration Statement and the Prospectus. Any lock-up provisions relating to a Principal Transaction shall be set forth in the applicable Terms Agreement.

(q) The Company will, pursuant to reasonable procedures developed in good faith, retain copies of each Permitted Free Writing Prospectus that is not filed with the Commission in accordance with Rule 433 under the Act.

(r) The Company will use commercially reasonable efforts to cause the Shares to be listed on the Exchange.

(s) The Company consents to the Agent trading in the Common Stock for the Agent's own account and for the account of its clients at the same time as sales of the Shares occur pursuant to this Agreement or any Terms Agreement.

(t) If immediately prior to the third anniversary (the "Renewal Deadline") of the initial effective date of the Registration Statement, the aggregate Gross Sales Price of Shares sold by the Company is less than the Maximum Amount and this Agreement has not expired or been terminated in accordance with its terms, the Company will, prior to the Renewal Deadline, file, if it has not already done so and is eligible to do so, a new automatic shelf registration statement relating to the Shares, in a form satisfactory to the Agents. If the Company is no longer eligible to file an automatic shelf registration statement, the Company will, prior to the Renewal Deadline, if it has not already done so, file a new shelf registration statement relating to the Shares, in a form satisfactory to the Agents, and will use its best efforts to cause such registration statement to be declared effective within 60 days after the Renewal Deadline. The Company will take all other action necessary or appropriate to permit the issuance and sale of the Shares to continue as contemplated in the expired registration statement relating to the Shares. References herein to the Registration Statement shall include such new automatic shelf registration statement or such new shelf registration statement, as the case may be.

5. Execution of Agreement. The Agent's obligations under this Agreement shall be subject to the satisfaction of the following conditions in connection with and on the date of the execution of this Agreement:

(a) the Company shall have delivered to the Agent:

- (i) an officers' certificate signed by two officers of the Company (one of whom shall be the Chief Financial Officer or other senior financial officer) certifying as to the matters set forth in Exhibit B hereto;
- (ii) an opinion and, if not covered in such opinion, a negative assurance letter of Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP, special counsel for the Company, addressed to the Agent and dated the date of this Agreement, in the form of Exhibit C-1, hereto;
- (iii) an opinion of Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP, tax counsel for the Company, addressed to the Agent and dated the date of this Agreement, in the form of Exhibit C-2, hereto;
- (iv) an opinion of Venable LLP, special Maryland counsel for the Company addressed to the Agent and dated the date of this Agreement, in the form of Exhibit C-3, hereto;
- (v) an opinion of the General Counsel of the Company, addressed to the Agent and dated the date of this Agreement, in the form of Exhibit C-4, hereto;
- (vi) a "comfort" letter from KPMG LLP, addressed to the Agent and dated the date of this Agreement, addressing such matters as the Agent may reasonably request;
- (vii) if requested, a certificate signed by the Company's Chief Financial Officer, in the form of Exhibit D hereto, certifying as to certain financial, numerical and statistical data not covered by the "comfort" letter referred to in Section 5(a)(vi) hereof;
- (viii) evidence reasonably satisfactory to the Agent and its counsel that the Shares have been approved for listing on the Exchange, subject only to notice of issuance on or before the date hereof;
- (ix) resolutions duly adopted by the Company's board of directors, and certified by an officer of the Company, authorizing the Company's execution of this Agreement and the consummation by the Company of the transactions contemplated hereby, including the issuance and sale of the Shares; and
- (x) such other documents as the Agent shall reasonably request; and

(b) The Agent shall have received a letter or letters, which shall include legal opinions and negative assurance statements, of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, counsel to the Agent, addressed to the Agent and dated the date of this Agreement, addressing such matters as the Agent may reasonably request.

6. Additional Covenants of the Company. The Company further covenants and agrees with the Agent as follows:

(a) Each Transaction Proposal made by the Company that is accepted by the Agent by means of a Transaction Acceptance and each execution and delivery by the Company of a Terms Agreement shall be deemed to be (i) an affirmation that the representations, warranties and agreements of the

Company herein contained and contained in any certificate delivered to the Agent pursuant hereto are true and correct at such Time of Acceptance or the date of such Terms Agreement, as the case may be, and (ii) an undertaking that such representations, warranties and agreements will be true and correct on any applicable Time of Sale and Settlement Date, as though made at and as of each such time (it being understood that such representations, warranties and agreements shall relate to the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus as amended and supplemented to the time of such Transaction Acceptance or Terms Agreement, as the case may be).

(b) Each time that (i) the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus shall be amended or supplemented (including, except as noted in the proviso at the end of this Section 6(b), by the filing of any Incorporated Document), (ii) there is a Principal Settlement Date pursuant to a Terms Agreement, or (iii) the Agents shall reasonably request, *provided* that the Agents shall not make such a request during periods that there is no proposed Agency Transaction pursuant to a delivery of a Transaction Proposal (each date referred to clauses (i), (ii) and (iii) above, a “**Bring-Down Delivery Date**”), the Company shall, unless the Agents agree otherwise, furnish or cause to be furnished to the Agents certificates, dated as of such Bring-Down Delivery Date and delivered within three Exchange Business Days after the applicable Bring-Down Delivery Date or, in the case of a Bring-Down Delivery Date resulting from a Principal Settlement Date, delivered on such Principal Settlement Date, of the same tenor as the certificate referred to in Sections 5(a)(i) and, unless the Agent shall have requested that the Chief Financial Officers’ certificate cover different or additional data as aforesaid, 5(a)(vii) hereof furnished to Agent are true and correct as of such Bring-Down Delivery Date as though made at and as of such date (except that such statements shall be deemed to relate to the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus as amended and supplemented to the time of delivery of such certificate); *provided, however*, that the filing of a Current Report on Form 8-K will not constitute a Bring-Down Delivery Date under clause (i) above unless either (A) (x) such Current Report on Form 8-K is filed at any time during which either a Transaction Acceptance is binding and the Company has not suspended the use thereof (and prior to the settlement of the Shares specified therein) or a prospectus relating to the Shares is required to be delivered under the Act (whether physically or through compliance with Rule 172 under the Act or any similar rule) or such Current Report on Form 8-K is filed at any time from and including the date of a Terms Agreement through and including the related Settlement Date and (y) the Agents have reasonably requested that such date be deemed to be a Bring-Down Delivery Date based upon the event or events reported in such Current Report on Form 8-K or (B) such Current Report on Form 8-K contains capsule financial information, historical or pro forma financial statements, supporting schedules or other financial data, including any Current Report on Form 8-K or part thereof under Item 2.02 of Regulation S-K of the Commission that is considered “filed” under the Exchange Act but, for the avoidance of doubt, excluding any Current Report on Form 8-K or any part thereof under Item 2.02 or 7.01 that is “furnished”; and *provided, further*, that an amendment or supplement to the Registration Statement or the Prospectus relating to the offering of other securities pursuant to the Registration Statement will not constitute a Bring-Down Delivery Date.

(c) Each Bring-Down Delivery Date, the Company shall, unless the Agent agrees otherwise, cause to be furnished to Agent (A) the written opinion and, if not included in such opinion, negative assurance letter of Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP, counsel to the Company, the written opinion of Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP, tax counsel to the Company, the written opinion of Venable LLP, special Maryland counsel to the Company and the written opinion of the General Counsel of the Company, each dated as of the applicable Bring-Down Delivery Date and delivered within three Exchange Business Days after the applicable Bring-Down Delivery Date or, in the case of a Bring-Down Delivery Date resulting from a Principal Settlement Date, dated and delivered on such Principal Settlement Date, of the same tenor as the opinions and letters referred to in Sections 5(a)(ii) through (v) hereof, as applicable, but modified as necessary to relate to the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus

as amended and supplemented to the time of delivery of such opinions and letters, or, in lieu of such opinions and letters, such counsel shall furnish the Agent with a letter substantially to the effect that the Agent may rely on the opinions and letters of such counsel referred to in Section 5(a)(ii) through (v), as applicable, furnished to the Agent, to the same extent as though they were dated the date of such letters authorizing reliance (except that statements in such last opinions and letters of each counsel shall be deemed to relate to the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus as amended and supplemented to the time of delivery of such letters authorizing reliance).

(d) Each Bring-Down Delivery Date, the Company shall, unless the Agent agrees otherwise, cause KPMG LLP to furnish to the Agent a “comfort” letter, dated as of the applicable Bring-Down Delivery Date and delivered within three Exchange Business Days after the applicable Bring-Down Delivery Date or, in the case of a Bring-Down Delivery Date resulting from a Principal Settlement Date, delivered on such Principal Settlement Date, of the same tenor as the letter referred to in Section 5(a)(vi) hereof, but modified to relate to the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus as amended and supplemented to the date of such letter, and, if the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus shall include or incorporate by reference the financial statements of any entity or business (other than the consolidated financial statements of the Company and its subsidiaries), the Company shall, if requested by the Agent, cause a firm of independent public accountants to furnish to the Agent a “comfort” letter, dated as of the applicable Bring-Down Delivery Date and delivered within three Exchange Business Days after the applicable Bring-Down Delivery Date or, in the case of a Bring-Down Delivery Date resulting from a Principal Settlement Date, delivered on such Principal Settlement Date, addressing such matters as the Agent may reasonably request.

(e) (i) No order suspending the effectiveness of the Registration Statement shall be in effect, and no proceeding for such purpose or pursuant to Section 8A under the Act shall be pending before or threatened by the Commission; the Prospectus and each Permitted Free Writing Prospectus shall have been timely filed with the Commission under the Act (in the case of a Permitted Free Writing Prospectus, to the extent required by Rule 433 under the Act); and all requests by the Commission for additional information shall have been complied with to the satisfaction of the Agent and no suspension of the qualification of the Shares for offering or sale in any jurisdiction, or of the initiation or threatening of any proceedings for any of such purposes, shall have occurred and be in effect at the time the Company delivers a Transaction Proposal to the Agent or the time the Agent delivers a Transaction Acceptance to the Company; and (ii) the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus shall not contain an untrue statement of material fact or omit to state a material fact required to be stated therein or necessary to make the statements therein, in the light of the circumstances under which they were made, not misleading at the time the Company delivers a Transaction Proposal to the Agent or the time the Agent delivers a Transaction Acceptance to the Company.

(f) The Company shall reasonably cooperate with any reasonable due diligence review requested by the Agent or its counsel from time to time in connection with the transactions contemplated hereby or any Terms Agreement, including, without limitation, (i) at the commencement of each intended Purchase Date and any Time of Sale or Settlement Date, providing information and making available appropriate documents and appropriate corporate officers of the Company and, upon reasonable request, representatives of KPMG LLP (and, if the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free-Writing Prospectus shall include or incorporate by reference the financial statements of any entity or business (other than the consolidated financial statements of the Company and its subsidiaries), representatives of the independent public accountants that audited or reviewed such financial statements) for an update on diligence matters with representatives of the Agent and (ii) at each Bring-Down Delivery Date and otherwise as the Agent may reasonably request, providing information and making available documents and appropriate corporate officers of the Company and representatives of KPMG LLP (and, if

the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free-Writing Prospectus shall include or incorporate by reference the financial statements of any entity or business (other than the consolidated financial statements of the Company and its subsidiaries), representatives of the independent public accountants that audited or reviewed such financial statements) for one or more due diligence sessions with representatives of the Agent and its counsel.

(g) The Company shall disclose, in its quarterly reports on Form 10-Q and in its annual reports on Form 10-K to be filed by the Company with the Commission from time to time, the number of the Shares sold through the Agents under this Agreement and any Terms Agreement, and the gross and net proceeds to the Company from the sale of the Shares and the compensation paid by the Company with respect to sales of the Shares pursuant to this Agreement during the relevant quarter or, in the case of an Annual Report on Form 10-K, during the fiscal year covered by such Annual Report and the fourth quarter of such fiscal year.

All opinions, letters and other documents referred to in Sections 6(b) through (d) above shall be reasonably satisfactory in form and substance to the Agent. The Agent will provide the Company with such notice (which may be oral, and in such case, will be confirmed via e-mail as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter) as is reasonably practicable under the circumstances when requesting an opinion, letter or other document referred to in Sections 6(b) through (d) above.

7. Conditions of the Agent's Obligation. The Agent's obligation to solicit purchases on an agency basis for the Shares or otherwise take any action pursuant to a Transaction Acceptance and to purchase the Shares pursuant to any Terms Agreement shall be subject to the satisfaction of the following conditions:

(a) At the Time of Acceptance, at the time of the commencement of trading on the Exchange on the Purchase Date(s) and at the relevant Time of Sale and Agency Settlement Date, or with respect to a Principal Transaction pursuant to a Terms Agreement, at the time of execution and delivery of the Terms Agreement by the Company and at the relevant Time of Sale and Principal Settlement Date:

- (i) The representations, warranties and agreements on the part of the Company herein contained or contained in any certificate of an officer or officers, general partner, managing member or other authorized representative of the Company or any subsidiary of the Company delivered pursuant to the provisions hereof shall be true and correct at each such time, as the case may be, as though made at and as of each such time.
- (ii) The Company shall have performed and observed its covenants and other obligations hereunder and/or under any Terms Agreement, as the case may be, in all material respects.
- (iii) In the case of an Agency Transaction, from the Time of Acceptance until the Agency Settlement Date, or, in the case of a Principal Transaction pursuant to a Terms Agreement, from the time of execution and delivery of the Terms Agreement by the Company until the Principal Settlement Date, trading in the Common Stock on the Exchange shall not have been suspended.
- (iv) From the date of this Agreement, no event or condition of a type described in Section 3(e) hereof shall have occurred or shall exist, which event or condition is not described in a Permitted Free Writing Prospectus (excluding any amendment or supplement thereto) or the Prospectus (excluding any amendment or

supplement thereto) and the effect of which in the judgment of the Agent makes it impracticable or inadvisable to proceed with the offering, sale or delivery of the Shares on the applicable Settlement Date on the terms and in the manner contemplated by this Agreement, any Terms Agreement, any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus and the Prospectus.

- (v) Subsequent to the relevant Time of Acceptance or, in the case of a Principal Transaction, subsequent to execution of the applicable Terms Agreement, (A) no downgrading shall have occurred in the rating accorded any debt securities or preferred equity securities of or guaranteed by the Company or any of its subsidiaries by any “nationally recognized statistical rating organization”, as such term is defined by the Commission for purposes of Section 3(a)(62) of the Exchange Act and (B) no such organization shall have publicly announced that it has under surveillance or review, or has changed its outlook with respect to, its rating of any debt securities or preferred equity securities of or guaranteed by the Company or any of its subsidiaries (other than an announcement with positive implications of a possible upgrading) in each case that has not been described in any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus issued prior to any related Time of Sale.
- (vi) The Shares to be issued pursuant to the Transaction Acceptance or pursuant to a Terms Agreement, as applicable, shall have been approved for listing on the Exchange, subject only to notice of issuance.
- (vii) (A) No action shall have been taken and no statute, rule, regulation or order shall have been enacted, adopted or issued by any federal, state or foreign governmental or regulatory authority that would, as of the relevant Settlement Date, prevent the issuance or sale of the Shares and (B) no injunction or order of any federal, state or foreign court shall have been issued that would, as of the relevant Settlement Date, prevent the issuance or sale of the Shares.
- (viii) (A) No order suspending the effectiveness of the Registration Statement shall be in effect, no proceeding for such purpose or pursuant to Section 8A of the Act shall be pending before or, to the knowledge of the Company, threatened by the Commission and no notice of objection of the Commission to the use of the Registration Statement pursuant to Rule 401(g)(2) under the Act shall have been received by the Company; (B) the Prospectus and each Permitted Free Writing Prospectus shall have been timely filed with the Commission under the Act (in the case of any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus, to the extent required by Rule 433 under the Act); (C) all requests by the Commission for additional information shall have been complied with to the satisfaction of the Agent; and (D) no suspension of the qualification of the Shares for offering or sale in any jurisdiction, and no initiation or threatening of any proceedings for any of such purposes, shall have occurred and be in effect. The Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus shall not contain an untrue statement of material fact or omit to state a material fact required to be stated therein or necessary to make the statements therein, in the light of the circumstances under which they were made, not misleading at the time the Agent delivers a Transaction Acceptance to the Company or the Company and the Agent execute a Terms Agreement, as the case may be.

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- (ix) No amendment or supplement to the Registration Statement, the Prospectus or any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus shall have been filed to which the Agent shall have reasonably objected in writing.

(b) Within three Exchange Business Days after the applicable Bring-Down Delivery Date or, in the case of a Bring-Down Delivery Date resulting from a Principal Settlement Date, on such Principal Settlement Date, the Agent shall have received the officer's certificates, opinions and negative assurance letters of counsel and "comfort" letters and other documents provided for under Sections 6(b) through (d), inclusive. For purposes of clarity and without limitation to any other provision of this Section 7 or elsewhere in this Agreement, the parties hereto agree that the Agent's obligations, if any, to solicit purchases of Shares on an agency basis or otherwise take any action pursuant to a Transaction Acceptance shall, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Agent, be suspended during the period from and including a Bring-Down Delivery Date through and including the time that the Agent shall have received the documents described in the preceding sentence.

8. Termination.

- (a) (i) The Company may terminate this Agreement in its sole discretion at any time upon prior written notice to the Agent. Any such termination shall be without liability of any party to any other party, except that (A) with respect to any pending sale, the obligations of the Company, including in respect of compensation of the Agent, shall remain in full force and effect notwithstanding such termination; and (B) the provisions of Sections 3, 4 (except that if no Shares have been previously sold hereunder or under any Terms Agreement, only Section 4(l)), 9, 13, 14 and 16 of this Agreement shall remain in full force and effect notwithstanding such termination.
- (ii) In the case of any sale by the Company pursuant to a Terms Agreement, the obligations of the Company pursuant to such Terms Agreement and this Agreement may not be terminated by the Company without the prior written consent of the Agent.
- (b) (i) The Agent may terminate this Agreement in its sole discretion at any time upon giving prior written notice to the Company. Any such termination shall be without liability of any party to any other party, except that the provisions of Sections 3, 4 (except that if no Shares have been previously sold hereunder or under any Terms Agreement, only Section 4(l)), 9, 13, 14 and 16 of this Agreement shall remain in full force and effect notwithstanding such termination.
- (ii) In the case of any purchase by the Agent pursuant to a Terms Agreement, the obligations of the Agent pursuant to such Terms Agreement shall be subject to termination by the Agent at any time prior to or at the Principal Settlement Date if (A) since the time of execution of the Terms Agreement or the respective dates as of which information is given in the Registration Statement, the Prospectus and any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus, (i) trading generally shall have been suspended or materially limited on or by the New York Stock Exchange or the Nasdaq Stock Market; (ii) trading of any securities issued or guaranteed by the Company or any of its subsidiaries shall have been suspended on any exchange or in any over-the counter market, (iii) a general moratorium on commercial banking activities shall have been declared by federal or New York state authorities, (iv) there shall have occurred any outbreak or escalation of hostilities or any change in

financial markets or any calamity or crisis, either within or outside the United States, that, solely in the case of events and conditions described in this clause (iv), in the Agent's judgment, is material and adverse and makes it impracticable or inadvisable to proceed with the offering, sale or delivery of the Shares on the terms and in the manner contemplated in the Prospectus or such Terms Agreement. If the Agent elects to terminate its obligations pursuant to this Section 8(b)(ii), the Company shall be notified promptly in writing.

(c) This Agreement shall remain in full force and effect until the earliest of (A) termination of the Agreement pursuant to Section 8(a) or 8(b) above or otherwise by mutual written agreement of the parties, (B) such date that the Maximum Number of Shares has been sold in accordance with the terms of this Agreement and any Terms Agreements and (C) the third anniversary of the date of this Agreement, in each case except that the provisions of Section 3, 4 (except for Section 4(t) and except that if no Shares have been previously sold hereunder or under any Terms Agreement, only Section 4(l)), 9, 13, 14 and 16 of this Agreement shall remain in full force and effect notwithstanding such termination.

(d) Any termination of this Agreement shall be effective on the date specified in such notice of termination; *provided that*, notwithstanding the foregoing, such termination shall not be effective until the close of business on the date of receipt of such notice by the Agent or the Company, as the case may be, or such later date as may be required pursuant to Section 8(a) or (b). If such termination shall occur prior to the Settlement Date for any sale of Shares, such sale shall settle in accordance with the provisions of Section 2 hereof.

9. Indemnity and Contribution.

(a) The Company agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Agent, its affiliates, directors and officers and each person, if any, who controls the Agent within the meaning of Section 15 of the Act or Section 20 of the Exchange Act, from and against any and all losses, claims, damages and liabilities (including, without limitation, reasonable out of pocket legal fees and other expenses incurred in connection with any suit, action or proceeding or any claim asserted, as such fees and expenses are incurred), that arise out of, or are based upon, (i) any untrue statement or alleged untrue statement of a material fact contained in the Registration Statement (or any amendment thereto) or caused by any omission or alleged omission to state therein a material fact required to be stated therein or necessary in order to make the statements therein, not misleading or (ii) any untrue statement or alleged untrue statement of a material fact contained in the Prospectus (or any amendment or supplement thereto), any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus (or any amendment or supplement thereto), any "issuer information" filed or required to be filed pursuant to Rule 433(d) under the Act or any road show as defined in Rule 433(h) under the Act (a "**road show**"), or caused by any omission or alleged omission to state therein a material fact necessary in order to make the statements therein, in light of the circumstances under which they were made, not misleading, in each case except insofar as such losses, claims, damages or liabilities arise out of, or are based upon, any untrue statement or omission or alleged untrue statement or omission made in reliance upon and in conformity with any information relating to the Agent furnished to the Company in writing by the Agent expressly for use therein, it being understood and agreed that the only such information furnished by the Agent consists of the information described as such in subsection (b) below.

(b) The Agent agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Company, its directors, its officers who signed the Registration Statement and each person, if any, who controls the Company within the meaning of Section 15 of the Act or Section 20 of the Exchange Act to the same extent as the indemnity set forth in paragraph (a) above, but only with respect to any losses, claims, damages or liabilities that arise out of, or are based upon, any untrue statement or omission or alleged untrue statement or omission

made in reliance upon and in conformity with any information relating to the Agent furnished to the Company in writing by the Agent expressly for use in the Registration Statement (or any amendment thereto), the Prospectus (or any amendment or supplement thereto), any Permitted Free Writing Prospectus (or any amendment or supplement thereto) or any road show.

(c) If any suit, action, proceeding (including any governmental or regulatory investigation), claim or demand shall be brought or asserted against any person in respect of which indemnification may be sought pursuant to either Section 9(a) or 9(b) above, such person (the “**Indemnified Person**”) shall promptly notify the person against whom such indemnification may be sought (the “**Indemnifying Person**”) in writing; *provided* that the failure to notify the Indemnifying Person shall not relieve it from any liability that it may have under this Section 9 except to the extent that it has been materially prejudiced (through the forfeiture of substantive rights or defenses) by such failure; and *provided, further*, that the failure to notify the Indemnifying Person shall not relieve it from any liability that it may have to an Indemnified Person otherwise than under this Section 9. If any such proceeding shall be brought or asserted against an Indemnified Person and it shall have notified the Indemnifying Person thereof, the Indemnifying Person shall retain counsel reasonably satisfactory to the Indemnified Person (who shall not, without the consent of the Indemnified Person (whose consent shall not be unreasonably withheld), be counsel to the Indemnifying Person) to represent the Indemnified Person and any others entitled to indemnification pursuant to this Section 9 that the Indemnifying Person may designate in such proceeding and shall pay the reasonable fees and expenses of such counsel related to such proceeding, as incurred. In any such proceeding, any Indemnified Person shall have the right to retain its own counsel, but the fees and expenses of such counsel shall be at the expense of such Indemnified Person unless (i) the Indemnifying Person and the Indemnified Person shall have mutually agreed in writing to the contrary; (ii) the Indemnifying Person has failed within a reasonable time after notice from the Indemnified Person of commencement of such proceeding to retain counsel reasonably satisfactory to the Indemnified Person; (iii) the named parties in such proceeding (including any impleaded parties) include both the Indemnified Person and the Indemnifying Person and the Indemnified Person shall have reasonably concluded that there may be legal defenses available to it that are different from or in addition to those available to the Indemnifying Person; or (iv) the named parties in any such proceeding (including any impleaded parties) include both the Indemnifying Person and the Indemnified Person and representation of both parties by the same counsel would be inappropriate due to actual or potential differing interests between them. It is understood and agreed that the Indemnifying Person shall not, in connection with any proceeding or related proceeding in the same jurisdiction, be liable for the reasonable fees and expenses of more than one separate firm (in addition to any local counsel) for (A) the Agents and their affiliates, directors and officers and their control persons, if any, or (B) the Company, its directors, its officers who signed the Registration Statement and its control persons, if any, as the case may be, and that all such reasonable fees and expenses shall be paid or reimbursed as they are incurred. Any such separate counsel for the Agents and their affiliates, directors and officers and their control persons, if any, shall be designated in writing by the Agents, and any such separate counsel for the Company, its directors, its officers who signed the Registration Statement and its control persons, if any, shall be designated in writing by the Company. The Indemnifying Person shall not be liable for any settlement of any proceeding effected without its written consent, but if settled with such consent or if there is a final judgment for the plaintiff, the Indemnifying Person agrees to indemnify each Indemnified Person from and against any loss or liability by reason of such settlement or judgment in accordance with the provisions of this Section 9. No Indemnifying Person shall, without the written consent of the Indemnified Person, effect any settlement of any pending or threatened proceeding in respect of which any Indemnified Person is or could have been a party and indemnification is or could have been sought hereunder by such Indemnified Person, unless such settlement (x) includes an unconditional release of such Indemnified Person, in form and substance reasonably satisfactory to such Indemnified Person, from all liability on claims that are the subject matter of such proceeding and (y) does not include any statement as to or any admission of fault, culpability or a failure to act by or on behalf of any Indemnified Person. Notwithstanding the foregoing sentence, if at

any time an Indemnified Person shall have requested an Indemnifying Person to reimburse the Indemnified Person for fees and expenses of counsel as contemplated by this Section 9(c), the Indemnifying Person agrees that it shall be liable for any settlement of any proceeding effected without its written consent if (i) such settlement is entered into more than 60 days after receipt by such Indemnifying Person of the aforesaid request and (ii) such Indemnifying Person shall not have reimbursed the Indemnified Person in accordance with such request prior to the date of such settlement.

(d) If the indemnification provided for in Sections 9(a) and 9(b) above is unavailable to an Indemnified Person or insufficient in respect of any losses, claims, damages or liabilities referred to therein, then each Indemnifying Person under such Sections, in lieu of indemnifying such Indemnified Person thereunder, shall contribute to the amount paid or payable by such Indemnified Person as a result of such losses, claims, damages or liabilities (i) in such proportion as is appropriate to reflect the relative benefits received by the Company, on the one hand, and the Agent, on the other, from the offering of the Shares pursuant to this Agreement and any Terms Agreements or (ii) if the allocation provided by clause (i) is not permitted by applicable law, in such proportion as is appropriate to reflect not only the relative benefits referred to in clause (i) but also the relative fault of the Company, on the one hand, and the Agent, on the other, in connection with the statements or omissions that resulted in such losses, claims, damages or liabilities, as well as any other relevant equitable considerations. The relative benefits received by the Company, on the one hand, and the Agent, on the other, shall be deemed to be in the same respective proportions as the net proceeds (before deducting expenses) received by the Company from the sale of the Shares pursuant to this Agreement and any Terms Agreements and the total discounts and commissions received by the Agent in connection therewith bear to the aggregate Gross Sales Price of such Shares. The relative fault of the Company, on the one hand, and Agent, on the other, shall be determined by reference to, among other things, whether the untrue or alleged untrue statement of a material fact or the omission or alleged omission to state a material fact relates to information supplied by the Company, on the one hand, or by Agent, on the other hand, and the parties' relative intent, knowledge, access to information and opportunity to correct or prevent such statement or omission.

(e) The Company and the Agents agree that it would not be just and equitable if contribution pursuant to this Section 9 were determined by *pro rata* allocation or by any other method of allocation that does not take account of the equitable considerations referred to in Section 9(d) above. The amount paid or payable by an Indemnified Person as a result of the losses, claims, damages and liabilities referred to in Section 9(d) above shall be deemed to include, subject to the limitations set forth above, any reasonable and documented out-of-pocket legal or other expenses incurred by such Indemnified Person in connection with any such action or claim. Notwithstanding the provisions of this Section 9, in no event shall an Agent be required to contribute any amount in excess of the amount by which the total discounts and commissions received by such Agent with respect to the offering of the Shares pursuant to this Agreement and any Terms Agreements exceeds the amount of any damages that such Agent has otherwise been required to pay by reason of such untrue or alleged untrue statement or omission or alleged omission. No person guilty of fraudulent misrepresentation (within the meaning of Section 11(f) of the Act) shall be entitled to contribution from any person who was not guilty of such fraudulent misrepresentation.

(f) The remedies provided for in this Section 9 are not exclusive and shall not limit any rights or remedies which may otherwise be available to any Indemnified Person at law or in equity.

10. Notices. All notices and other communications under this Agreement and any Terms Agreement shall be in writing and shall be deemed to have been duly given if mailed or transmitted and confirmed by any standard form of communication, and, if to the Agents, shall be sufficient in all respects if delivered or sent to J.P. Morgan Securities LLC, 383 Madison Avenue, 7th Floor, New York, New York 10179, to the attention of Special Equities Group, Brett Chalmers (email brett.chalmers@jpmorgan.com), Stephanie

Little (email stephanie.y.little@jpmorgan.com) and Stefano Tognon (email stefano.x.tognon@jpmorgan.com), Barclays Capital Inc., 745 7th Avenue, New York, New York, 10019, to the attention of Syndicate Registration, (fax number: 646-834-8133), BofA Securities, Inc., One Bryant Park, New York, New York 10036, to the attention of Equity Capital Markets – ATM Execution, (email dg.atm_execution@bofa.com), Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC, 200 West Street, New York, New York 10282-2198, Attention: Registration Department, Nomura Securities International, Inc., Worldwide Plaza, 309 West 49th Street, New York, NY 10019, to the attention of: James Chenard, Head of Equity Capital Markets and Solutions (email: james.chenard@nomura.com) with a copy to: Oliver Trumbo, Head of IBD Legal (email: oliver.trumbo@nomura.com), RBC Capital Markets, LLC, 200 Vesey Street, New York, New York 10281, to the attention of: Andrew Jones, 212-428-6631 (email Andrew.jones@rbccm.com) and, if to the Company, shall be sufficient in all respects if delivered or sent to it at 350 Park Ave., 20th Floor, New York, New York 10022, Attn: Stephen Yarad (email syarad@mfafinancial.com), with a copy (which shall not constitute notice) to Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP, 2200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20037, Attention: Robert K. Smith. Notwithstanding the foregoing, Transaction Proposals shall be delivered by the Company to the Agent by telephone or email to Stephanie Little (telephone number (312) 732-3229; email stephanie.y.little@jpmorgan.com), Jemil Salih (telephone number (212) 622-2723; email jemil.d.salih@jpmorgan.com), Ara Movsesian (telephone number (212) 622-2619; email ara.movesian@jpmorgan.com), Brett Chalmers (telephone number (212) 622-2252; email brett.chalmers@jpmorgan.com) or Marlee Burr (telephone number (212) 622-8784; email marlee.k.burr@jpmorgan.com); and Transaction Acceptances shall be delivered by the Agent to the Company by email to Harold E. Schwartz (email hschwartz@mfafinancial.com).

11. No Fiduciary Relationship. The Company acknowledges and agrees that the Agent is acting solely in the capacity of an arm's length contractual counterparty to the Company with respect to the offering of Shares contemplated hereby and any Terms Agreements (including in connection with determining the terms of the offering) and not as a financial advisor or a fiduciary to, or an agent of, the Company or any other person. Additionally, the Agent is not advising the Company or any other person as to any legal, tax, investment, accounting or regulatory matters in any jurisdiction. The Company shall consult with its own advisors concerning such matters and shall be responsible for making its own independent investigation and appraisal of the transactions contemplated hereby, and the Agent shall have no responsibility or liability to the Company with respect thereto. Any review by the Agent of the Company, the transactions contemplated hereby or other matters relating to such transactions will be performed solely for the benefit of the Agent and shall not be on behalf of the Company.

12. Adjustments for Stock Splits. The parties acknowledge and agree that all share related numbers contained in this Agreement, any Transaction Proposal and any Transaction Acceptance shall be adjusted to take into account any stock split effected with respect to the Shares.

13. Miscellaneous.

(a) *Governing Law.* This Agreement, any Terms Agreement and any claim, controversy or dispute arising under or relating to this Agreement or any Terms Agreement shall be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the laws of the State of New York.

(b) *Submission to Jurisdiction.* The Company hereby submits to the exclusive jurisdiction of the U.S. federal and New York state courts in the Borough of Manhattan in The City of New York in any suit or proceeding arising out of or relating to this Agreement or the transactions contemplated hereby. The Company waives any objection which it may now or hereafter have to the laying of venue of any such suit or proceeding in such courts. The Company agrees that final judgment in any such suit, action or proceeding brought in such court shall be conclusive and binding upon the Company and may be enforced in any court to the jurisdiction of which Company is subject by a suit upon such judgment.

(c) *Waiver of Jury Trial.* Each of the parties hereto hereby waives any right to trial by jury in any suit or proceeding arising out of or relating to this Agreement and any Terms Agreement.

14. Persons Entitled to Benefit of Agreement. This Agreement and any Terms Agreement shall inure to the benefit of and be binding upon the parties hereto and thereto, respectively, and their respective successors and the officers, directors, affiliates and controlling persons referred to in Section 9 hereof. Nothing in this Agreement or any Terms Agreement is intended or shall be construed to give any other person any legal or equitable right, remedy or claim under or in respect of this Agreement or any such Terms Agreement or any provision contained herein or therein. No purchaser of Shares from or through the Agent shall be deemed to be a successor merely by reason of purchase.

15. Counterparts. This Agreement and any Terms Agreement may be signed in counterparts (which may include counterparts delivered by any standard form of telecommunication), each of which shall be an original and all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument.

16. Survival. The respective indemnities, rights of contribution, representations, warranties and agreements of the Company and the Agent contained in this Agreement or any Terms Agreement or made by or on behalf of the Company or the Agent pursuant to this Agreement or any Terms Agreement or any certificate delivered pursuant hereto or thereto shall survive the delivery of and payment for the Shares and shall remain in full force and effect, regardless of any termination of this Agreement or any Terms Agreement or any investigation made by or on behalf of the Company or the Agent.

17. Certain Defined Terms. For purposes of this Agreement, except where otherwise expressly provided, the term “affiliate” has the meaning set forth in Rule 405 under Act; the term “business day” means any day other than a day on which banks are permitted or required to be closed in New York City; and the term “subsidiary” has the meaning set forth in Rule 405 under the Act.

18. Recognition of the U.S. Special Resolution Regimes.

(a) In the event that any Agent that is a Covered Entity becomes subject to a proceeding under a U.S. Special Resolution Regime, the transfer from such Agent of this Agreement or any Terms Agreement, and any interest and obligation in or under this Agreement or any Terms Agreement, will be effective to the same extent as the transfer would be effective under the U.S. Special Resolution Regime if this Agreement or any Terms Agreement, and any such interest and obligation, were governed by the laws of the United States or a state of the United States.

(b) In the event that any Agent that is a Covered Entity or a BHC Act Affiliate of such Agent becomes subject to a proceeding under a U.S. Special Resolution Regime, Default Rights under this Agreement or any Terms Agreement that may be exercised against such Agent are permitted to be exercised to no greater extent than such Default Rights could be exercised under the U.S. Special Resolution Regime if this Agreement or any Terms Agreement were governed by the laws of the United States or a state of the United States.

As used in this Section 18:

“BHC Act Affiliate” has the meaning assigned to the term “affiliate” in, and shall be interpreted in accordance with, 12 U.S.C. § 1841(k).

“Covered Entity” means any of the following:

- (i) a “covered entity” as that term is defined in, and interpreted in accordance with, 12 C.F.R. § 252.82(b);
- (ii) a “covered bank” as that term is defined in, and interpreted in accordance with, 12 C.F.R. § 47.3(b); or
- (iii) a “covered FSI” as that term is defined in, and interpreted in accordance with, 12 C.F.R. § 382.2(b).

“Default Right” has the meaning assigned to that term in, and shall be interpreted in accordance with, 12 C.F.R. §§ 252.81, 47.2 or 382.1, as applicable.

“U.S. Special Resolution Regime” means each of (i) the Federal Deposit Insurance Act and the regulations promulgated thereunder and (ii) Title II of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act and the regulations promulgated thereunder.

19. Compliance with USA Patriot Act. In accordance with the requirements of the USA Patriot Act (Title III of Pub. L. 107-56 (signed into law October 26, 2001)), as amended, the Agent is required to obtain, verify and record information that identifies its clients, including the Company, which information may include the name and address of its clients, as well as other information that will allow the Agent to properly identify its clients.

20. Amendments or Waivers. No amendment or waiver of any provision of this Agreement or any Terms Agreement, nor any consent or approval to any departure therefrom, shall in any event be effective unless the same shall be in writing and signed by the parties hereto or thereto as the case may be.

21. Headings. The headings herein and in any Terms Agreement are included for convenience of reference only and are not intended to be part of, or to affect the meaning or interpretation of, this Agreement or any Terms Agreement.

[Signature Page Follows]

If the foregoing correctly sets forth the understanding between the Company and the Agent, please so indicate in the space provided below for that purpose, whereupon this letter and your acceptance shall constitute a binding agreement among the Company and the Agent.

Very truly yours,

MFA FINANCIAL, INC.

By: /s/ Craig L. Knutson

Name: Craig L. Knutson

Title: Chief Executive Officer and President

[Signature Page to Distribution Agreement]

Accepted and agreed to as of the
date first above written:

J.P. MORGAN SECURITIES LLC

By: /s/ Brett Chalmers
Name: Brett Chalmers
Title: Vice President

[Signature Page to Distribution Agreement]

Accepted and agreed as of
the date first above written:

BARCLAYS CAPITAL INC.

By: /s/ Geoffrey Feldkamp
Name: Geoffrey Feldkamp
Title: Managing Director

[Signature Page to Distribution Agreement]

Accepted and agreed as of
the date first above written:

BOFA SECURITIES, INC.

By: /s/ Ryan Carney _____

Name: Ryan Carney

Title: Managing Director

[Signature Page to Distribution Agreement]

Accepted and agreed as of
the date first above written:

GOLDMAN SACHS & CO. LLC

By: /s/ Daniel Young
Name: Daniel Young
Title: Managing Director

[Signature Page to Distribution Agreement]

Accepted and agreed as of
the date first above written:

NOMURA SECURITIES INTERNATIONAL, INC.

By: /s/ James Chenard
Name: James Chenard
Title: Managing Director

[Signature Page to Distribution Agreement]

Accepted and agreed as of
the date first above written:

RBC CAPITAL MARKETS, LLC

By: /s/ Jason Levitz
Name: Jason Levitz
Title: Managing Director

[Signature Page to Distribution Agreement]

Authorized Company Representatives

Stephen D. Yarad, Chief Financial Officer
Telephone: (212) 207-6400
Email: Syarad@mfafinancial.com

Craig Knutson, Chief Executive Officer and President
Telephone: (212) 207-6400
Email: Cknutson@mfafinancial.com

Gudmunder Kristjansson, Co-Chief Investment Officer
Telephone: (212) 207-6400
Email: Gkristjansson@mfafinancial.com

Bryan Wulfsohn, Co-Chief Investment Officer
Telephone: (212) 207-6400
Email: Bwulfsohn@mfafinancial.com

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Section 3: EX-5.1 (EX-5.1)

Exhibit 5.1

[LETTERHEAD OF VENABLE LLP]

August 16, 2019

MFA Financial, Inc.
350 Park Avenue, 20th Floor
New York, New York 10022

Re: Registration Statement on Form S-3

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We have served as Maryland counsel to MFA Financial, Inc., a Maryland corporation (the “Company”), in connection with certain matters of Maryland law arising out of the registration of shares of Common Stock, par value \$0.01 per share (the “Common Stock”), of the Company having an aggregate offering price of up to \$400,000,000 (the “Shares”), covered by the above-referenced Registration Statement, and all amendments thereto (collectively, the “Registration Statement”), filed by the Company with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (the “Commission”) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the “Securities Act”). The Shares are to be issued in an at-the-market public offering (the “Offering”) pursuant to a Distribution Agreement, dated August 16, 2019 (the “Distribution Agreement”), by and among the Company and J.P. Morgan Securities LLC, Barclays Capital Inc., BofA Securities, Inc., Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC, Nomura Securities International, Inc. and RBC Capital Markets, LLC.

In connection with our representation of the Company, and as a basis for the opinion hereinafter set forth, we have examined originals, or copies certified or otherwise identified to our satisfaction, of the following documents (hereinafter collectively referred to as the “Documents”):

1. The Registration Statement;
2. The Prospectus, dated August 16, 2019, as supplemented by a Prospectus Supplement, dated August 16, 2019 (the “Prospectus Supplement”), filed with the Commission pursuant to Rule 424(b) of the General Rules and Regulations promulgated under the Securities Act;
3. The charter of the Company (the “Charter”), certified by the State Department of Assessments and Taxation of Maryland (the “SDAT”);
4. The Amended and Restated Bylaws of the Company, certified as of the date hereof by an officer of the Company;

5. A certificate of the SDAT as to the good standing of the Company, dated as of a recent date;

6. Resolutions (the "Resolutions") adopted by the Board of Directors of the Company (the "Board") relating to, among other matters, (a) the sale and issuance of the Shares, (b) the execution, delivery and performance by the Company of the Distribution Agreement and (c) the delegation to designated officers of the Company of the power to determine the number and price of the Shares and certain other matters in connection with the registration, sale and issuance of the Shares, subject to the Resolutions, certified as of the date hereof by an officer of the Company;

7. A certificate executed by an officer of the Company, dated as of the date hereof; and

8. Such other documents and matters as we have deemed necessary or appropriate to express the opinion set forth below, subject to the assumptions, limitations and qualifications stated herein.

In expressing the opinion set forth below, we have assumed the following:

1. Each individual executing any of the Documents, whether on behalf of such individual or another person, is legally competent to do so.

2. Each individual executing any of the Documents on behalf of a party (other than the Company) is duly authorized to do so.

3. Each of the parties (other than the Company) executing any of the Documents has duly and validly executed and delivered each of the Documents to which such party is a signatory, and such party's obligations set forth therein are legal, valid and binding and are enforceable in accordance with all stated terms.

4. All Documents submitted to us as originals are authentic. The form and content of all Documents submitted to us as unexecuted drafts do not differ in any respect relevant to this opinion from the form and content of such Documents as executed and delivered. All Documents submitted to us as certified or photostatic copies conform to the original documents. All signatures on all Documents are genuine. All public records reviewed or relied upon by us or on our behalf are true and complete. All representations, warranties, statements and information contained in the Documents are true and complete. There has been no oral or written modification of or amendment to any of the Documents, and there has been no waiver of any provision of any of the Documents, by action or omission of the parties or otherwise.

5. The Shares will not be issued or transferred in violation of any restriction or limitation contained in Article Ninth of the Charter.

6. Upon the issuance of any of the Shares, the total number of shares of Common Stock issued and outstanding will not exceed the total number of shares of Common Stock that the Company is then authorized to issue under the Charter.

7. Prior to the issuance of any of the Shares, the Board, a duly authorized pricing committee of the Board or a duly authorized officer of the Company will determine the number, price and certain other terms of issuance of such Shares in accordance with the Maryland General Corporation Law, the Charter, the Bylaws, the Registration Statement and the Resolutions (the "Corporate Proceedings").

Based upon the foregoing, and subject to the assumptions, limitations and qualifications stated herein, it is our opinion that:

1. The Company is a corporation duly incorporated and validly existing under and by virtue of the laws of the State of Maryland and is in good standing with the SDAT.

2. The issuance of the Shares has been duly authorized and, when and to the extent issued against payment therefor in accordance with the Corporate Proceedings, the Distribution Agreement, the Registration Statement, the Prospectus Supplement and the Resolutions, the Shares will be validly issued, fully paid and nonassessable.

The foregoing opinion is limited to the laws of the State of Maryland and we do not express any opinion herein concerning federal or any other state law. We express no opinion as to the applicability or effect of federal or state securities laws, including the securities laws of the State of Maryland, or as to federal or state laws regarding fraudulent transfers. To the extent that any matter as to which our opinion is expressed herein would be governed by the laws of any jurisdiction other than the State of Maryland, we do not express any opinion on such matter. The opinion expressed herein is subject to the effect of any judicial decision which may permit the introduction of parol evidence to modify the terms or the interpretation of agreements.

The opinion expressed herein is limited to the matters specifically set forth herein and no other opinion shall be inferred beyond the matters expressly stated. We assume no obligation to supplement this opinion if any applicable law changes after the date hereof or if we become aware of any fact that might change the opinion expressed herein after the date hereof.

This opinion is being furnished to you for submission to the Commission as an exhibit to the Company's Current Report on Form 8-K relating to the Offering (the "Current Report"), which is incorporated by reference in the Registration Statement. We hereby consent to the filing of this opinion as an exhibit to the Current Report and to the use of the name of our firm therein. In giving this consent, we do not admit that we are within the category of persons whose consent is required by Section 7 of the Securities Act.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Venable LLP

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