
Section 1: S-3ASR (S-3ASR)

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As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on October 15, 2019

Registration No. 333-

**UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**
Washington, DC 20549

**FORM S-3
REGISTRATION STATEMENT**
*UNDER
THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933*

MFA FINANCIAL, INC.

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Maryland
(State or other jurisdiction of
incorporation or organization)

350 Park Avenue, 20th Floor
New York, New York 10022
(212) 207-6400
(Address, including zip code, and telephone number,
including area code, of registrant's principal executive offices)

13-3974868
(I.R.S. Employer
Identification No.)

Craig L. Knutson
Chief Executive Officer
MFA Financial, Inc.
350 Park Avenue, 20th Floor
New York, New York 10022
(212) 207-6400
(Name, address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of agent for service)

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350 Park Avenue, 20th Floor
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Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP
2200 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20037
(202) 955-1500

Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public:
From time to time after the effective date of this registration statement.

If the only securities being registered on this Form are being offered pursuant to dividend or interest reinvestment plans, please check the

following box:

If any of the securities being registered on this Form are to be offered on a delayed or continuous basis pursuant to Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, other than securities offered only in connection with dividend or interest reinvestment plans, check the following box.

If this Form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act, please check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.

If this Form is a post-effective amendment filed pursuant to Rule 462(c) under the Securities Act, check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.

If this Form is a registration statement pursuant to General Instruction I.D. or a post-effective amendment thereto that shall become effective upon filing with the Commission pursuant to Rule 462(e) under the Securities Act, check the following box.

If this Form is a post-effective amendment to a registration statement filed pursuant to General Instruction I.D. filed to register additional securities or additional classes of securities pursuant to Rule 413(b) under the Securities Act, check the following box.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, a smaller reporting company, or an emerging growth company. See the definitions of "large accelerated filer," "accelerated filer," "smaller reporting company" and "emerging growth company" in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act.

Large accelerated filer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Accelerated filer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-accelerated filer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Smaller reporting company	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Emerging growth company	<input type="checkbox"/>

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

Title of Each Class of Securities To be Registered	Amount to be Registered	Proposed Maximum Offering Price Per Share ⁽¹⁾	Proposed Maximum Aggregate Offering Price ⁽¹⁾	Amount of Registration Fee ⁽²⁾
Common stock, par value \$.01 per share	9,000,000	\$7.445	\$67,005,000	\$8,698

- (1) Estimated solely for the purpose of computing the amount of the registration fee in accordance with Rule 457(c) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended. Estimate based on the high and low prices of the registrant's common stock as reported on the New York Stock Exchange on October 9, 2019 pursuant to Rule 457(c) under the Securities Act of 1933.
- (2) Pursuant to Rule 457(p) under the Securities Act, filing fees aggregating \$11,352.18 have already been paid with respect to securities registered pursuant to the Registrant's registration statement on Form S-3 (File No. 333-213678) initially filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on September 16, 2016, of which \$8,799.02 relate to unsold securities and is being carried forward. As a result, the Registrant is offsetting the registration fee of \$8,698 due for this offering against the \$8,799.02 that is remaining from the registration fee previously paid.

PROSPECTUS

MFA FINANCIAL, INC.

Discount Waiver, Direct Stock Purchase And Dividend Reinvestment Plan

Our Discount Waiver, Direct Stock Purchase and Dividend Reinvestment Plan (or the Plan) provides new investors and existing holders of our common stock with a convenient and economical method to purchase shares of our common stock. By participating in the Plan, you may purchase additional shares of our common stock by reinvesting some or all of the cash dividends that you receive on your shares of our common stock. If you elect to participate in the Plan, you may also make optional cash purchases of shares of our common stock of between \$50 (or \$1,000 for new investors) and \$10,000 per month and, with our prior approval, in excess of \$10,000 per month. Shares of our common stock purchased under the Plan will be purchased by the Plan Administrator, at our option, directly from us or in the open market. The purchase price for shares of our common stock acquired directly from us will be equal to the volume-weighted average price (less any applicable discount) of our common stock as reported by the NYSE on the applicable Dividend Payment Date (as defined herein) or the applicable Cash Purchase Investment Date (as defined herein). The purchase price deemed to be paid for shares of our common stock acquired in the open market on any given day will be the weighted average of the actual prices paid for all shares acquired on that date, including any trading fees and service charges (less any applicable discount). Shares of our common stock purchased under the Plan may be acquired at discounts of up to 5% from the prevailing market price as determined and set by us from time to time.

Features of the Plan include:

- Any registered holder of our common stock may elect to participate in the Plan.
- Interested new investors who are not currently holders of our common stock may make their initial purchase through the Plan.
- Up to a 5% discount, as determined and set by us from time to time, on shares of our common stock purchased under the Plan.
- Full or partial dividend reinvestment options.
- Optional cash purchases of between \$50 (or \$1,000 for new investors) and \$10,000 per month and, with our prior approval, optional cash purchases in excess of \$10,000 per month.
- Available certificate safekeeping in book-entry form at no charge to you.
- Detailed recordkeeping and reporting will be provided at no charge to you.
- Optional automatic investment withdrawals from your bank account.

This prospectus relates to the offer and sale of up to 9,000,000 authorized but unissued shares of our common stock under the Plan. Participants should retain this prospectus for future reference.

Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange (or NYSE) under the symbol "MFA."

On October 9, 2019, the last reported sale price of our common stock on the NYSE was \$7.45 per share.

Investing in our common stock involves certain risks. Before buying any shares, you should read the material risks of investing in our common stock referenced under the caption "[Risk Factors](#)" on page 3 of this prospectus.

NEITHER THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION NOR ANY STATE SECURITIES COMMISSION HAS APPROVED OR DISAPPROVED OF THESE SECURITIES OR DETERMINED THAT THIS PROSPECTUS IS TRUTHFUL OR COMPLETE. ANY REPRESENTATION TO THE CONTRARY IS A CRIMINAL OFFENSE.

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We are responsible for the information contained in, or incorporated by reference into, this prospectus. We have not authorized any other person to provide you with any other information, and take no responsibility for any other information that others may give you. We are not making an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference is accurate only as of its respective date or dates or on the date or dates which are specified in these documents. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates.

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FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus contains or incorporates by reference certain forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (or the Securities Act), and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (or the Exchange Act). When used, statements which are not historical in nature, including those containing words such as “will,” “believe,” “expect,” “anticipate,” “estimate,” “plan,” “continue,” “intend,” “should,” “could,” “would,” “may” and variations of these terms and similar expressions, or the negatives of these terms or similar expressions, are intended to identify forward-looking statements and, as such, may involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and assumptions.

These forward-looking statements are subject to various risks and uncertainties, including, but not limited to, those relating to:

- changes in interest rates and the market (i.e., fair) value of our residential mortgage-backed securities (or MBS); residential whole loans, CRT securities and other assets;
- changes in the prepayment rates on residential mortgage assets, an increase of which could result in a reduction of the yield on certain investments in our portfolio and could require us to reinvest the proceeds received by us as a result of such prepayments in investments with lower coupons, while a decrease in which could result in an increase in the interest rate duration of certain investments in our portfolio making their valuation more sensitive to changes in interest rates and could result in lower forecasted cash flows or, in certain circumstances, other-than-temporary impairment on certain Legacy Non-Agency MBS, which include MBS issued prior to 2008, purchased at a discount;
- credit risks underlying our assets, including changes in the default rates and management’s assumptions regarding default rates on the mortgage loans securing our MBS that are not guaranteed by any U.S. Government agency or any federally chartered corporation (or Non-Agency MBS) and relating to our residential whole loan portfolio;
- our ability to borrow to finance our assets and the terms; including the cost, maturity and other terms of any such borrowings;
- implementation of or changes in government regulations or programs affecting our business;
- our estimates regarding taxable income, the actual amount of which is dependent on a number of factors, including, but not limited to, changes in the amount of interest income and financing costs, the method elected by us to accrete the market discount on Non-Agency MBS and residential whole loans and the extent of prepayments, realized losses and changes in the composition of our residential MBS that are issued or guaranteed as to principal and/or interest by a federally chartered corporation (or Agency MBS) such as Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac, or an agency of the U.S. Government, such as Ginnie Mae, Non-Agency MBS and residential whole loan portfolios that may occur during the applicable tax period, including gain or loss on any MBS disposals and whole loan modifications, foreclosures and liquidations;
- the timing and amount of distributions to stockholders, which are declared and paid at the discretion of our board of directors and will depend on, among other things, our taxable income, our financial results and overall financial condition and liquidity, maintenance of our real estate investment trust (or REIT) qualification and such other factors as our board of directors deems relevant;
- our ability to maintain our qualification as a REIT for federal income tax purposes;
- our ability to maintain our exemption from registration under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (or the Investment Company Act), including statements regarding the concept release issued by the Securities and Exchange Commission (or the SEC) relating to interpretive issues under the Investment Company Act with respect to the status under the Investment Company Act of certain companies that are engaged in the business of acquiring mortgages and mortgage-related interests;
- our ability to continue growing our residential whole loan portfolio, which is dependent on, among other things, the supply of loans offered for sale in the market;
- expected returns on our investments in nonperforming residential whole loans (or NPLs), which are affected by, among other things, the length of time required to foreclose upon, sell, liquidate or otherwise reach a resolution of the property underlying the NPL, home price values, amounts advanced to carry the asset (e.g., taxes, insurance, maintenance expenses, etc. on the underlying property) and the amount ultimately realized upon resolution of the asset;
- targeted or expected returns on our investments in recently-originated loans, the performance of which is, similar to our other mortgage loan investments, subject to, among other things, differences in prepayment risk, credit risk and financing cost associated with such investments; and

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- risks associated with our investments in mortgage servicing rights or (MSR) related assets, including servicing, regulatory and economic risks, and risks associated with investing in real estate assets, including changes in business conditions and the general economy.

These and other risks, uncertainties and factors, including those identified in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, and those discussed in any of our subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q or Current Reports on Form 8-K, could cause our actual results to differ materially from those projected in any forward-looking statements we make. All forward-looking statements are based on beliefs, assumptions and expectations of our future performance, taking into account all information currently available. You are cautioned not to place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date they are made. New risks and uncertainties arise over time and it is not possible to predict those factors or how they may affect us. Except as required by law, we are not obligated to, and are not undertaking to, update or revise any forward-looking statements.

The following information is qualified in its entirety by the more detailed information and financial statements and notes thereto appearing elsewhere in, or incorporated by reference into, this prospectus. We encourage you to read this prospectus, as well as the information which is incorporated by reference herein, in its entirety. You should carefully consider the material risks of investing in our common stock referenced under the caption “Risk Factors” of this prospectus before making a decision to participate in the Plan. All references to “we,” “us” or “our company” in this prospectus mean MFA Financial, Inc. The following defines certain of the terms used in this prospectus: MBS refers to mortgage-backed securities secured by pools of residential mortgage loans; Agency MBS refers to MBS that are guaranteed by a corporation under federal conservatorship, such as Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac, or issued by an agency of the U.S. Government, such as Ginnie Mae; Non-Agency MBS are MBS that are not guaranteed or issued by any agency of the U.S. Government or any corporation under federal conservatorship; Legacy Non-Agency MBS refers to Non-Agency MBS issued prior to 2008; and CRT securities refer to credit risk transfer securities which are general obligations of government-sponsored entities (e.g., Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac).

MFA FINANCIAL, INC.

Our Business

We are an internally-managed REIT primarily engaged in the real estate finance business. We engage in our business through subsidiaries that invest, on a leveraged basis, in residential mortgage assets, including residential whole loans, residential mortgage securities and MSR-related assets. Our principal business objective is to deliver shareholder value through the generation of distributable income and through asset performance linked to residential mortgage credit fundamentals. We selectively invest in residential mortgage assets with a focus on credit analysis, projected prepayment rates, interest rate sensitivity and expected return.

At June 30, 2019, we had total assets of approximately \$13.2 billion, of which \$5.9 billion, or approximately 45%, represents residential whole loans acquired through interests in certain trusts established to acquire the loans. Our purchased performing loans, which as of June 30, 2019 comprised approximately 62% of our residential whole loans, include: (i) loans to finance (or refinance) one-to-four family residential properties that are not considered to meet the definition of a “Qualified Mortgage” in accordance with guidelines adopted by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, (ii) short-term business purpose loans collateralized by residential properties made to non-occupant borrowers who intend to rehabilitate and sell the property for a profit, (iii) loans to finance (or refinance) non-owner occupied one-to-four family residential properties that are rented to one or more tenants, and (iv) previously originated loans secured by residential real estate that is generally owner occupied. In addition, at June 30, 2019, we had approximately \$5.4 billion in investments in residential mortgage securities, which represented approximately 41% of our total assets. At such date, our portfolio includes \$2.3 billion of Agency MBS, \$2.7 billion of Non-Agency MBS and \$407.3 million of CRT securities. Non-Agency MBS is comprised of \$1.7 billion of Legacy Non-Agency MBS and \$1.0 billion of RPL/NPL MBS. These RPL/NPL MBS are backed by securitized re-performing and non-performing loans and are generally structured with a contractual coupon step-up feature where the coupon increases from 300-400 basis points at 36-48 months from issuance or sooner. At June 30, 2019, our investments in MSR-related assets were \$1.2 billion, or 9% of our total assets. Our MSR-related assets include term notes whose cash flows are considered to be largely dependent on MSR collateral and loan participations to provide financing to mortgage originators who own MSRs. Our remaining investment-related assets, which represented approximately 4% of our total assets at June 30, 2019, were primarily comprised of real estate owned (or REO) and MBS and loan-related receivables.

Compliance with REIT Requirements and the Investment Company Act of 1940

We have elected to be treated as a REIT for U.S. federal income tax purposes. In order to maintain our qualification as a REIT, we must comply with a number of requirements under U.S. federal income tax law that are discussed under the heading “Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations” in this prospectus. If we fail to maintain our qualification as a REIT, we would be subject to U.S. federal income tax, which could have an adverse impact on our business. In addition, we at all times intend to conduct our business so as to maintain our exempt status under, and not to become regulated as an investment company for purposes of, the Investment Company Act. If we fail to maintain our exempt status under the Investment Company Act, we would be unable to

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conduct our business as described in this prospectus. See “Risk Factors—Maintaining our exemption from registration under the Investment Company Act imposes significant limits on our operations” in our annual report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2018, which is incorporated by reference into this prospectus.

General Information

We were incorporated in Maryland on July 24, 1997, and began operations on April 10, 1998. Our principal executive offices are located at 350 Park Avenue, 20th Floor, New York, New York 10022. Our telephone number is (212) 207-6400. Our common stock, our 7.50% Series B Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock and our 8.00% Senior Notes due 2042 are listed on the NYSE under the symbols “MFA”, “MFA PrB” and “MFO”, respectively. We maintain a website at www.mfafinancial.com. Information contained on our website is not, and should not be interpreted to be, part of this prospectus.

RISK FACTORS

Investment in our common stock involves risk. Before choosing to participate in the Plan and acquiring any shares of our common stock offered pursuant to this prospectus, you should carefully consider the risks of an investment in our company set forth under the caption “Item 1A. Risk Factors” (or similar captions) in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and under the caption “Item 1A. Risk Factors” (or similar captions) in our subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, which risks are incorporated herein by reference. In the future, you should also carefully consider the disclosures relating to the risks of an investment in our company contained in the reports or documents we subsequently file under Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act, which reports and documents will deemed to be incorporated by reference into this prospectus upon their filing to the extent set forth under “Incorporation of Certain Documents by Reference,” below.

USE OF PROCEEDS

We will receive proceeds from the sale of shares of our common stock that the Plan Administrator (as defined herein) purchases directly from us on behalf of the Plan. We intend to use the net proceeds from the sales for general working capital purposes, including to invest in additional residential mortgage-related assets, including but not limited to, residential whole loans, MBS, CRT securities and investments related to mortgage servicing rights, and for working capital, which may include, among other things, the repayment of amounts outstanding under our repurchase agreements. We have no basis for estimating either the number of shares of common stock that will be sold directly by us to the Plan or the prices at which such shares will be sold. We will not receive any proceeds from the sale of our common stock that the Plan Administrator purchases on behalf of the Plan in the open market or in privately negotiated transactions.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAN

Our Discount Waiver, Direct Stock Purchase and Dividend Reinvestment Plan is described in the following questions and answers:

1. Why is the Plan being offered?

The purpose of the Plan is to provide a convenient and economical method for our current stockholders to automatically reinvest all or a portion of their cash dividends in additional shares of our common stock. The Plan also provides our current stockholders and new investors with an economical way to acquire shares of our common stock by directly investing additional cash amounts. In these ways, the Plan is intended to benefit our long-term investors by allowing them to increase their investment in our common stock. The Plan also provides us with a cost-efficient way to raise additional capital through the direct sale of our common stock to participants in the Plan.

2. How does the Plan work?

The dividend reinvestment component of the Plan permits our stockholders to designate that all or a portion of their cash dividends on our common stock be reinvested in additional shares of our common stock. The optional cash purchase component of the Plan permits current stockholders and new investors to purchase shares of our common stock in amounts, subject to certain exceptions (see Question 16), ranging from \$50 to \$10,000 on a monthly basis or, with our prior approval, in excess of \$10,000 (see Question 17). Funds invested pursuant to the Plan are fully invested through the purchase of both whole and fractional shares of our common stock and, under the dividend reinvestment component, proportionate cash dividends on fractional shares of our common stock held in a participant’s Plan Account are used to purchase additional shares under the Plan.

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3. What are the advantages of participating in the Plan?

The Plan provides participants with the opportunity to acquire additional shares of our common stock directly from us without having to pay, subject to certain exceptions, the trading fees or service charges associated with an independent purchase (see Question 27). If we issue new shares of our common stock to participants in the Plan, we may sell them at a discount of up to 5% from the current market price of our common stock. If the Plan Administrator acquires our shares in the open market for participants in the Plan, we may discount such shares by paying up to 5% of the purchase price for such shares. You should note, however, that we are not required to offer shares at a discount or to pay discounts, fees and service charges. We may change the discount percentage offered, apply a discount only to shares purchased through the dividend reinvestment feature or only to shares purchased with cash or discontinue to offer this feature of the Plan, at any time or from time to time (see Question 12).

The Plan also offers a “share safekeeping” service that allows you to deposit your share certificates with the Plan Administrator and have your share ownership maintained on the Plan Administrator’s records as part of your Plan Account. There is no charge for this service.

4. What are the disadvantages of participating in the Plan?

Investing in our common stock through the Plan is no different from, and is subject to, the same risks as investing in our common stock directly. This includes the risk that the market price for our common stock may decline. See “Risk Factors.”

NEITHER WE NOR THE PLAN ADMINISTRATOR CAN GUARANTEE THAT SHARES OF OUR COMMON STOCK PURCHASED UNDER THE PLAN WILL BE WORTH MORE OR LESS THAN THEIR PURCHASE PRICE AT ANY PARTICULAR TIME.

Amounts contributed to the Plan will not necessarily be invested by the Plan Administrator immediately upon receipt. Likewise, there may be delays in the delivery of moneys to be returned to you under the Plan. The Plan will not pay interest to you on funds held pending investment or pending return to you.

Purchases and sales of our common stock under the Plan will be effected by the Plan Administrator only as soon as practicable after it receives investment instructions. Therefore, if you participate in the Plan, you may not be able to control the specific timing of purchases and sales made for you under the Plan. The market price of our common stock may fluctuate between the time an investment instruction is received by the Plan Administrator and the time shares are purchased or sold for you under the Plan.

You will not be able to pledge any shares of our common stock held in your Plan Account until a certificate for those shares is issued to you.

If you reinvest your cash dividends, you will be treated as having received dividend income for U.S. federal income tax purposes, but will not receive a dividend check. There may be other tax-related disadvantages applicable to your participation in the Plan (see Question 33). See “Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations.”

There are certain fees that will be charged to you by the Plan Administrator (see Question 27).

5. Who is eligible to participate?

Anyone is potentially eligible to participate in the Plan. You may participate in the Plan if: (i) you are a “registered holder” of our common stock; that is, your shares are registered in your name on our stock transfer books; (ii) you are a “beneficial owner” of our common stock; that is, your shares are registered in a name other than your own name (i.e., in the name of a broker, bank or other nominee); or (iii) you are not presently a stockholder, but wish to acquire shares of our common stock. Registered holders may participate in the Plan directly. If you are a beneficial owner, you must either become a registered holder by having your shares transferred into your own name or make arrangements with your broker, bank or other nominee to participate in the Plan on your behalf (see Question 6).

You will not be allowed to participate if you live in a jurisdiction that makes it unlawful for us to permit your participation in the Plan. Persons who are citizens or residents of a country other than the United States, its territories and possessions should make certain that their participation does not violate local laws governing such things as taxes, currency and exchange controls, share registration, foreign investments and related matters. We reserve the right to terminate anyone’s participation in the Plan if we deem it advisable under any applicable laws or regulations. We also reserve the right, in our sole discretion, to exclude anyone from the Plan who fails to comply with the requirements of the Plan, including, but not limited to, those seeking to use the Plan to engage in short-term trading activities that may cause aberrations in the trading volume of our common stock or who use multiple Plan Accounts to circumvent the Plan’s standard \$10,000 per month investment maximum.

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6. How do I enroll in the Plan?

If you hold shares of our common stock in your own name or if you are a new investor, you may enroll in the Plan and/or make optional cash purchases by completing your plan enrollment online via Computershare's website at www.computershare.com/investor. Alternatively, you may enroll in the Plan by obtaining a plan enrollment form by calling, toll free, 1-866-249-2610 and mailing your completed form to the Plan Administrator in care of Computershare, P.O. Box 505000, Louisville, KY 40233-5000. If your shares are registered in a name other than your own name (i.e., in the name of a broker, bank or other nominee), then you must either (i) have your shares reregistered in your own name and then complete your plan enrollment as discussed above or (ii) make arrangements with your nominee holder to participate on your behalf. You will need to confirm that your nominee holder is able to accommodate your participation in the Plan.

An eligible person may elect to become a participant in the Plan at any time, subject to our right to modify, suspend, terminate or refuse participation in the Plan. Your completed plan enrollment appoints the Plan Administrator as your agent for purposes of the Plan and permits it to reinvest dividends in the number of shares you designate and to make optional cash purchases on your behalf as you direct.

If you are enrolling for dividend reinvestment, the Plan Administrator must receive your completed plan enrollment at least one business day prior to the record date established for a particular dividend in order for you to be eligible for reinvestment of that dividend payment under the Plan (see Question 15). Otherwise, reinvestment of your dividends will begin with the next dividend payment.

If you are enrolling in the Plan by making an optional cash purchase (see Question 9), the Plan Administrator must receive your completed plan enrollment and investment funds at least one business day before the date such funds are scheduled to be invested for a particular month (see Question 15). If your completed plan enrollment and investment funds are received after that date, your funds will be held in your Plan Account until the next Cash Purchase Investment Date; provided, however, that if your funds are not fully invested within 35 days of the next Cash Purchase Investment Date, your uninvested funds will be returned to you without interest. If you are not a current stockholder, you must submit your initial investment with your completed plan enrollment.

7. Who is the Plan Administrator?

The Plan is being administered by Computershare Trust Company, N.A., (or "the Plan Administrator"). Certain administrative support services to the Plan Administrator will be performed by its designated affiliates. Information on how to contact the Plan Administrator is described in Question 35. The Plan Administrator, along with its affiliates, keeps records, sends statements of account to each participant in the Plan and performs other duties related to the Plan, including the safekeeping of the shares purchased for each participant. The Plan Administrator, along with its affiliates, also acts as the dividend disbursing agent, transfer agent and registrar for our common stock.

8. How will I keep track of my investments?

The Plan Administrator will send you a transaction advice confirming the details of each Plan transaction you make, including the number of shares purchased and the price paid. If you continue to participate in the Plan, but have no transactions, the Plan Administrator will send you an annual statement after the end of the year detailing the status of your holdings of our common stock in your Plan Account. The statement will also include specific cost basis information in accordance with applicable law. You may also keep track of your investments online at www.computershare.com/investor. There you will be able to view sales, purchases, balances, prices, dividends reinvested, cost basis and other information.

You will also receive annual income tax information on Form 1099. These statements are your record of the cost of your purchases and should be retained for income tax and other purposes.

All notices from the Plan Administrator to you will be mailed to your last address of record. However, if your shares are registered in a name other than your own name, communications regarding the Plan will be made through your nominee holder.

9. What investment options are available under the Plan?

You can purchase shares of our common stock under the Plan through the following investment options:

Dividend Reinvestment. You can instruct the Plan Administrator to apply the cash dividends paid on all or any portion of the shares of our common stock designated by you for reinvestment. In order to participate in the Plan, you do not have to submit the shares of our common stock currently held by you or on your behalf to your Plan Account in order to elect to reinvest the dividends on

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all or a portion of such shares, although share safekeeping is one of the benefits available under the Plan (see Question 21). You may choose one of the following options when enrolling in the Plan:

Full Dividend Reinvestment. If you select this option, the Plan Administrator will reinvest all cash dividends paid on all shares of our common stock and you will be able to make optional cash payments for the purchase of additional shares in accordance with the Plan.

Partial Dividend Reinvestment. If you select this option, the Plan Administrator will pay you dividends in cash on the number of shares of common stock that you specify in the appropriate space on the enrollment form and apply the balance of your dividends toward the purchase of additional shares in accordance with the Plan. This option also permits you to make optional cash payments for the purchase of additional shares in accordance with the Plan.

Voluntary Cash Payments Only (No Dividend Reinvestment). If you select this option, your dividends will not be reinvested. Instead, you will receive payment by check or automatic deposit for all of your cash dividends. This option also permits you to make optional cash payments for the purchase of additional shares in accordance with the Plan.

You may select any of the above investment options. If no option is selected by you on the enrollment form which you return, you will be enrolled in the Full Dividend Reinvestment Option. Regardless of your investment choice, all shares purchased for you through the Plan will be credited to your account by the Plan Administrator until you direct that these shares be sold or issued to you in certificate form.

Optional Cash Purchases. You can make voluntary cash contributions to your Plan Account at any time, even if you are not currently reinvesting dividends paid to you on our common stock. Payment for these optional cash purchases can be made by check in U.S. dollars and drawn on a U.S. bank or electronic funds transfer from a pre-designated U.S. bank account. The Plan Administrator will not accept cash, traveler's checks, money orders or third-party checks. The Plan Administrator will use these funds to purchase shares of our common stock on a monthly basis. If you are already a stockholder, the minimum cash purchase is \$50 per month. If you are using this feature to make your initial investment in our common stock, the minimum cash purchase is \$1,000. You may not make optional cash purchases of more than \$10,000 per month without our prior written approval (see Question 17). Dividends paid on shares of our common stock that are purchased for your Plan Account with voluntary cash contributions will automatically be reinvested in our common stock, unless you instruct the Plan Administrator otherwise.

10. Can I change my dividend reinvestment options?

Yes. You may change your dividend reinvestment options at any time online through Investor Center at www.computershare.com/investor or by completing a new plan enrollment and submitting it to the Plan Administrator at least one business day prior to the record date for the next dividend payment.

11. What is the source of shares purchased by the Plan?

We may either issue new shares of our common stock directly to the Plan or instruct the Plan Administrator to acquire currently outstanding shares in the open market. Open market purchases may be made, at the Plan Administrator's option, on the NYSE or any other securities exchange where our common stock is traded, in the over-the-counter market or in negotiated transactions with third persons.

12. At what price will shares be acquired?

Shares Acquired Directly from Us. The purchase price to be paid by any participant for shares acquired directly from us pursuant to the Plan will be equal to 100% of the volume-weighted average price (less any applicable discount), rounded to four decimal places, if necessary, of our common stock as reported by the NYSE only, obtained from Bloomberg, LP for the trading hours from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Eastern Time, on the applicable Dividend Payment Date or the applicable Cash Purchase Investment Date. Shares of our common stock acquired directly from us pursuant to the Plan may be acquired at a discount rate, as determined and set by us from time to time, ranging from 0% to 5% from the volume-weighted average price.

Shares Acquired on the Open Market. The Plan Administrator may combine Plan participant purchase requests with other purchase requests received from other Plan participants and will generally batch purchase types (dividend and optional cash investments) for separate execution by the Plan Administrator's broker. The Plan Administrator may also direct its broker to execute each purchase type in several batches throughout a trading day. Depending on the number of shares being purchased and current trading volume in the shares, the Plan Administrator's broker may execute purchases for any batch or batches in multiple transactions and over more than one day. If different purchase types are batched, the price per share of the common shares purchased for each participant's account, whether purchased with reinvested dividends, with initial cash investments, or with optional cash, shall be the weighted average price of the specific batch for each shares purchased by the Plan Administrator's broker on that investment date. All shares of our common stock purchased by the Plan Administrator in the open market may be acquired at a discount rate, as determined and set by us from time to time, ranging from 0% to 5% from the prevailing market price, which will be paid by us. Open market purchases may be made on such terms as to price, delivery and otherwise as the Plan Administrator determines.

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We are not required to sell shares issued by us at a discount to the Plan or to pay a discount with respect to shares purchased by the Plan Administrator in the open market, and the discount rate we offer is subject to change or discontinuance at our discretion and without prior notice to participants in the Plan. In addition, we may choose, at our sole discretion, to apply a discount only to those shares of our common stock purchased pursuant to the reinvestment of cash dividends or only to those shares of our common stock purchased with cash, but are not obligated to apply an equal discount to both at any given time. The discount rate, if any, will be determined by us from time to time based on a review of current market conditions, the level of participation in the Plan, our current and projected capital needs and other factors that we deem to be relevant.

There are special rules for cash purchases in excess of \$10,000 per month (see Question 17).

13. When are the shares purchased for the Plan?

We typically pay dividends on a quarterly basis. If these dividends are used to acquire new shares directly from us, the Plan Administrator will reinvest dividends on the applicable date on which we pay dividends (or a Dividend Payment Date). If these dividends are used to acquire shares through open market purchases, the Plan Administrator will purchase all shares within 30 days of the applicable Dividend Payment Date. If the dividends are not able to be fully invested within this 30-day period, the uninvested dividends will be distributed in full, without interest, by the Plan Administrator to the stockholders participating in the Plan. Payment of dividends is always announced in advance. You may learn the date of any announced dividend payment by calling the Plan Administrator at 1-866-249-2610.

Funds for optional cash purchases may be deposited into your Plan Account at any time and will be used to acquire shares on the last business day of each month (or a Cash Purchase Investment Date). If these funds deposited during a particular calendar month are used to acquire new shares directly from us, they will be invested on the Cash Purchase Investment Date. If these funds are used to acquire shares through open market purchases, the Plan Administrator will purchase all shares within 35 days of the Cash Purchase Investment Date. If any funds deposited for optional cash purchases are not able to be fully invested within this 35-day period, the uninvested funds will be returned in full, without interest, by the Plan Administrator to the applicable stockholders and/or new investors.

There are special rules for cash purchases in excess of \$10,000 per month (see Question 17).

14. Will I earn interest on funds in my Plan Account prior to investment or return to me?

No. Interest will not be paid on funds deposited by you in your Plan Account pending investment or return to you.

15. What are the procedures for cash purchases?

If you are not already a stockholder, you are required under the Plan to make an initial investment of at least \$1,000, but not more than \$10,000, except in the case of Large Cash Purchases (as defined herein) (see Question 17). Your initial investment can be made online through www.computershare.com/investor by authorizing a one-time deduction from your designated U.S. bank account or by completing an Initial Enrollment form and submitting it with your check made payable to Computershare/MFA.

If you are already a stockholder and have enrolled in the Plan and want to make optional cash purchases, you can authorize specific deductions from your designated bank account online through www.computershare.com/investor or send a check to the Plan Administrator for each purchase. If you choose to submit a check, please make sure to include the tear off coupon from your Plan statement and mail it in the envelope provided. If you wish to make regular monthly optional cash purchases, you may authorize monthly automatic deductions from your bank account at www.computershare.com/investor or by completing a Direct Debit Authorization Form and mailing it to the Plan Administrator. This feature enables you to make ongoing investments in an amount that is comfortable for you. Ongoing optional cash purchases are subject to a minimum investment of \$50 per month and a maximum of \$10,000 per month per month. Funds will be deducted from your bank account on the 25th day of each month or, if the 25th is not a business day, the next business day.

In order for your funds to be invested on a particular Cash Purchase Investment Date, they must be received by the Plan Administrator no later than one business day before the Cash Purchase Investment Date. No interest will be paid on funds held by the Plan Administrator pending investment.

You may cancel an optional cash purchase by advising the Plan Administrator at least two business day before the applicable Cash Purchase Investment Date. The Plan Administrator will return the funds from a cancelled purchase to you without interest as soon as practical. No refund of a check will be made until the funds have been actually received by the Plan Administrator.

In the event that any check or other deposit is returned unpaid for any reason or your pre-designated bank account does not have sufficient funds for an automatic withdrawal, the Plan Administrator will consider the request for investment of that purchase

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null and void. The Plan Administrator will immediately remove from your plan account any common shares already purchased in anticipation of receiving those funds and will sell such shares. If the net proceeds from the sale of those common shares are insufficient to satisfy the balance of the uncollected amounts, the Plan Administrator may sell additional shares from your plan account as necessary to satisfy the uncollected balance. There is a \$35.00 charge for any check, electronic fund transfer or other deposit that is returned unpaid by your bank. This fee will be collected by the Plan Administrator through the sale of the number of common shares from your plan account necessary to satisfy the fee. You will be responsible for customary fees incurred in connection with any such sale.

16. What limitations apply to optional cash purchases?

Minimum Investments. If you are already a stockholder, the minimum cash purchase is \$50 for any given month. If you are using this feature to make your initial investment in our common stock, the minimum cash purchase is \$1,000. Cash purchases for less than these minimums will be returned to you without interest, unless we choose to waive these minimum amounts.

Large Cash Purchases. Cash purchases in excess of \$10,000 per month (or Large Cash Purchases) will not be allowed by the Plan Administrator without our prior written approval. Unless you have complied with the procedures described in Question 17, any amount you submit for investment over this limit will be returned to you without interest. For purposes of this limitation, we reserve the right to aggregate all cash purchases from any participant with more than one Plan Account using the same name, address or social security or taxpayer identification number. If you do not supply a social security or taxpayer identification number to the Plan Administrator, your participation may be limited to only one Plan Account. Also for the purpose of this limitation, all Plan Accounts that we believe to be under common control or management or to have common ultimate beneficial ownership may be aggregated. We may grant or withhold our permission to make Large Cash Purchases in our sole discretion. We may grant such request in whole or in part. We may also grant requests for some Large Cash Purchases and deny requests for others even though they are made in the same month.

17. May I invest more than the Plan maximum of \$10,000 per account per month?

Yes, if you request a waiver of this limit and we grant your waiver request. Upon receipt of a written waiver form from an investor, we will consider waiving the maximum investment limit. Grants of waiver requests will be made in our sole discretion based on a variety of factors, which may include: our current and projected capital needs, prevailing market prices of our common stock and other securities, and general economic and market conditions.

Large Cash Purchases will be priced as follows:

- Large Cash Purchases for which a waiver has been granted will be made subject to a pricing period, which will generally consist of one to fifteen separate days during which trading of our common stock is reported on the NYSE. Each of these separate days will be an “investment date,” and an equal proportion of the investment amount will be invested on each trading day during such pricing period, subject to the qualifications listed below. The purchase price for shares acquired on a particular investment date will be equal to 100% of the consolidated volume-weighted average price (less any applicable discount), rounded to four decimal places, of our common stock as reported by the NYSE only, obtained from Bloomberg, LP for the trading hours from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Eastern Time, up to and including the closing print, for that investment date. Funds for such investments must be received by the Plan Administrator not later than the business day before the first day of the pricing period.
- We may establish a minimum, or “threshold,” price for any pricing period that the volume-weighted average price, rounded to four decimal places, of our common stock must equal or exceed during each trading day of the pricing period for investments made pursuant to a waiver request.
- If we decide to establish a threshold price for a particular pricing period, the threshold price for any investments made pursuant to a request for waiver will be a stated dollar amount that the volume-weighted average price, rounded to four decimal places, of our common stock, as reported by the NYSE for each trading day in the relevant pricing period, must equal or exceed. If the threshold price is not satisfied for a trading day in the pricing period, then that trading day and the trading prices for that day will be excluded from the pricing period.
- We will only establish a threshold price if shares will be purchased directly from us in connection with the relevant pricing period (please see first bullet above). If we have established a threshold price with respect to the relevant pricing period, then we will exclude from the pricing period any trading day that the volume-weighted average price is less than the threshold price and refund that day’s proportional investment amount. For example, if the threshold price is not met for two of the trading days in a ten-day pricing period, then we will return 20% of the funds you submitted in connection with your waiver request, without interest, unless we have activated the pricing period extension feature for the pricing period, as described below.

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- Neither we nor the Plan Administrator are required to notify you that a threshold price has been established for any pricing period.
- We may elect to activate for any particular pricing period a pricing period extension feature which will provide that the initial pricing period be extended by the number of days that the threshold price is not satisfied, subject to a maximum of five trading days. If we elect to activate the pricing period extension feature and the threshold price is satisfied for any additional day that has been added to the initial pricing period, that day will be included as one of the trading days for the pricing period instead of the day on which the threshold price was not met. For example, if the determined pricing period is ten days, and the threshold price is not satisfied for three out of those ten days in the initial pricing period, and we had previously announced in the bid-waiver form that the pricing period extension feature was activated, then the pricing period will be automatically extended, and if the threshold price is satisfied on the next three trading days (or a subset thereof), then those three days (or subset thereof) will become investment dates in lieu of the three days on which the threshold price was not met. As a result, because there were ten trading days during the initial and extended pricing period on which the threshold price was satisfied, all of the funds that you include with your request for waiver will be invested.
- Newly issued shares purchased pursuant to Large Cash Purchases will be posted to participants' accounts within three business days following the end of the applicable pricing period, or, if we elect to activate the continuous settlement feature, within three business days of each separate investment date beginning on the first investment date in the relevant pricing period and ending on the final investment date in the relevant pricing period, with an equal amount being invested on each day, subject to the qualifications set forth above. During any month when we are proposing to grant requests for waiver for one or more investments, we may elect to activate the continuous settlement feature for such investments by announcing in the bid-waiver form that we will be doing so. The purchase price of shares acquired on each investment date will be equal to 100% of the consolidated volume-weighted average price obtained from Bloomberg, LP (unless such service is unavailable, in which case we will designate another service to be utilized before the beginning of the pricing period), rounded to four decimal places, for the trading hours from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Eastern Time, up to and including the closing print, for each of the investment dates during the pricing period, assuming the threshold price is met on that day, less any discount that we may decide to offer. For each pricing period (assuming the threshold price is met on each trading day of that pricing period), we would have a separate settlement of each investment date's purchases, each based on the volume-weighted average price for the trading day relating to each of the investment dates during the pricing period.
- Waiver request forms and information regarding the establishment of a threshold price, if any, may be obtained by contacting our Investor Relations department at 212-207-6488.

We may alter, amend, supplement or waive, in our sole discretion, the time periods and/or other parameters relating to the pricing periods for Large Cash Purchases made by one or more participants in the Plan or new investors, at any time and from time to time, prior to the commencement of any pricing period and/or prior to the granting of any request for waiver with respect to a particular pricing period.

18. Does the Plan Administrator credit my shares to a separate account?

Yes. The Plan Administrator will establish a separate Plan Account for you and credit it with those shares that have been purchased for you under the Plan. In addition, the Plan Administrator will credit your Plan Account with those shares that you have delivered to the Plan Administrator for safekeeping (see Question 21). All shares in your Plan Account will be registered in book-entry form in the name of the Plan Administrator or its nominee, but your beneficial ownership will be maintained in your Plan Account. The total number of shares credited to your Plan Account will be shown on each account statement.

In the event that you wish to have any whole shares of our common stock that have been credited to your Plan Account issued in certificated form to you, you may do so by contacting the Plan Administrator and making such request (see Question 20).

Although the Plan Administrator will maintain a separate Plan Account for you, it is authorized to commingle funds in your Plan Account with those of other Plan participants for purposes of making purchases of our common stock.

19. Are funds held in my Plan Account insured?

No. Funds held in your Plan Account pending investment or return are not treated as a bank deposit or account and are not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other governmental agency or instrumentality.

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20. Will I receive certificates for the shares purchased for me under the Plan?

No. You will not receive certificates for shares purchased for you under the Plan. For your convenience, the Plan Administrator will maintain the shares purchased for your Plan Account in non-certificated, “book entry” form. You may, however, request that a stock certificate be issued to you for any or all whole shares of our common stock credited to your Plan Account. No certificates for fractional shares will be issued. Certificates will be issued free of charge. Cash dividends with respect to participating shares represented by certificates issued to you will continue to be automatically reinvested, unless you instruct the Plan Administrator otherwise. Any remaining shares will continue to be credited to your Plan Account. You may request certificates by contacting the Plan Administrator at 1-866-249-2610. You may also submit your request online via www.computershare.com/investor.

21. What is share safekeeping?

If you hold the certificates for shares of our common stock (whether or not you elect to have dividends on these shares reinvested), you may deposit the certificates with the Plan Administrator for safekeeping in your Plan Account. Share safekeeping protects your shares against loss, theft or accidental destruction and is a convenient way for you to keep track of your shares. There is no fee or other charge for this service. Shares held for safekeeping will be credited to your Plan Account and the certificates for such shares will be cancelled. If at a later time you want to withdraw those shares from share safekeeping in your Plan Account, a new certificate for such shares shall be issued to you (see Question 20). Only shares held in safekeeping may be sold through the Plan. The Plan Administrator may maintain shares held for safekeeping in its name or in the name of its nominee. Contact the Plan Administrator at 1-866-249-2610 for information on how to submit your share certificates for safekeeping.

22. May the shares in my Plan Account be sold or transferred?

Yes. You may request that the Plan Administrator sell your shares in the manners described below. Please be aware that if you send in a request to sell shares, the market price of our shares could go down or up before your shares are sold.

Market Order: A market order is a request to sell securities promptly at the current market price. Market order sales are only available at www.computershare.com/investor, through Investor Center, or by calling the Plan Administrator directly at 1-866-2492610. Market order sale requests received at www.computershare.com/investor, through Investor Center, or by telephone will be placed promptly upon receipt during market hours (normally 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Eastern Time). Any orders received outside of market hours will be submitted to the Plan Administrator’s broker on the next day the market is open. Sales proceeds will equal the market price of the sale obtained by the Plan Administrator’s broker, net of taxes and fees. The Plan Administrator will use commercially reasonable efforts to honor requests by participants to cancel market orders placed outside of market hours.

Depending on the number of shares being sold and current trading volume in the shares, a market order may only be partially filled or not filled at all on the trading day in which it is placed, in which case the order, or remainder of the order, as applicable, will be cancelled at the end of such day. To determine if your shares were sold, you should check your account online at www.computershare.com/investor or call the Plan Administrator directly at 1-866-249-2610. If your market order sale was not filled and you still want the shares sold, you will need to re-enter the sale request. The price shall be the market price of the sale obtained by the Plan Administrator’s broker, less a service fee of \$25.00 and a processing fee of \$0.12 per share sold.

Day Limit Order: A day limit order is an order to sell securities when and if they reach a specific trading price on a specific day. The order is automatically cancelled if the price is not met by the end of that day (or, for orders placed after market hours, the next day the market is open). Depending on the number of securities being sold and the current trading volume in the securities, such an order may only be partially filled, in which case the remainder of the order will be cancelled. The order may be cancelled by the applicable stock exchange, by the Plan Administrator at its sole discretion or, if the Plan Administrator’s broker has not filled the order, at your request made online at www.computershare.com/investor or by calling the Plan Administrator directly at 1-866-249-2610. A service fee of \$25.00 and a processing fee of \$0.12 per share sold will be deducted from the sale proceeds.

Good-Til-Cancelled (GTC) Limit Order: A GTC limit order is an order to sell securities when and if the securities reach a specific trading price at any time while the order remains open (generally up to 30 days). Depending on the number of securities being sold and current trading volume in the securities, sales may be executed in multiple transactions and over more than one day. If shares are traded on more than one day during which the market is open, a separate fee will be charged for each such day. The order (or any unexecuted portion thereof) is automatically cancelled if the trading price is not met by the end of the order period. The order may be cancelled by the applicable stock exchange, by the Plan Administrator at its sole discretion or, if the Plan Administrator’s broker has not filled the order, at your request made online at www.computershare.com/investor or by calling the Administrator directly at 1-866-249-2610. A service fee of \$25.00 and a processing fee of \$0.12 per share sold will be deducted from the sale proceeds.

Batch Order: A batch order is an accumulation of all sale requests for a security submitted together as a collective request. Batch orders are submitted on each market day, assuming there are sale requests to be processed. Sale instructions for batch orders received by the Plan Administrator will be processed no later than five business days after the date on which the order is received

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(except where deferral is required under applicable federal or state laws or regulations), assuming the applicable market is open for trading and sufficient market liquidity exists. All sale requests received in writing will be submitted as batch order sales, unless such requests specify otherwise. Batch order sales may only be requested in writing. In every case of a batch order sale, the price shall be the weighted average sale price obtained by the Plan Administrator's broker, less a service fee of \$25.00 and a processing fee of \$0.12 per share sold.

All sales requests processed over the telephone by a customer service representative entail an additional fee of \$15.00. Fees are deducted from the proceeds derived from the sale. All per share processing fees include any brokerage commissions the Plan Administrator is required to pay. Any fractional share will be rounded up to a whole share for purposes of calculating the per share processing fee. The Plan Administrator may, under certain circumstances, require a transaction request to be submitted in writing. Please contact the Plan Administrator to determine if there are any limitations applicable to your particular sale request.

Alternatively, you may choose to sell common shares in your plan account through a stockbroker of your choice, in which case you should contact your broker about transferring shares from your plan account to your brokerage account.

If you elect to sell shares online at www.computershare.com/investor through Investor Center, you may utilize Computershare's international currency exchange service to convert your sale proceeds to your local currency prior to being sent to you. Receiving your sales proceeds in a local currency and having your check drawn on a local bank avoids the time consuming and costly "collection" process required for cashing U.S. dollar checks. This service is subject to additional terms and conditions and fees, which you must agree to online.

All sales are subject to market conditions, system availability and other factors. The actual sale date or price received for any shares sold through the Plan may not be guaranteed.

The fees charged in connection with the sale of shares are listed below (see Question 27).

Plan participants must perform their own research and must make their own investment decisions. Neither the Plan Administrator nor any of its affiliates will provide any investment recommendations or investment advice with respect to transactions made through the Plan.

In addition, you may transfer the ownership of all or part of the shares in your Plan Account to the Plan Account of another person without requiring the issuance of stock certificates. This could include a gift or private sale. Please visit the Plan Administrator's Transfer Wizard at www.computershare.com/transferwizard. The Transfer Wizard will guide you through the transfer process, assist you in completing the transfer form, and identify other necessary documentation you may need to provide. Transfers of less than all of the shares credited to your Plan Account must be made in whole share amounts. No fractional shares may be transferred, unless your entire Plan Account balance is transferred. Requests for these transfers must meet the same requirements as are applicable to the transfer of stock certificates, including the requirement of a medallion stamp guarantee. Shares that are transferred will be credited in book-entry form to the transferee's Plan Account. If the transferee does not have a Plan Account, one will be opened for the transferee using the same investment options as your Plan Account, unless you specify differently. The transferee may change the investment options after the transfer has been made. After the transfer, the transferee will receive an account statement showing the number of shares transferred to and held in the transferee's Plan Account.

23. May shares in my Plan Account be pledged?

No. You must first request that certificates for shares credited to your Plan Account be issued to you before you can pledge such shares.

24. Can I vote shares in my Plan Account?

Yes. You will have the right to vote all whole shares held in your Plan Account. Fractional shares may not be voted. Proxies for whole shares held in your Plan Account will be forwarded to you by the Plan Administrator. The Plan Administrator may vote your shares in certain cases if you fail to return a proxy to the Plan Administrator.

25. May I transfer my right to participate in the Plan?

No. Your right to participate in the Plan is not transferable to any other person apart from a transfer of your shares.

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26. What happens if we issue a stock dividend, declare a stock split or have a rights offering?

Any stock dividends or stock splits distributed by us on shares of our common stock held in your Plan Account will be credited to your Plan Account. In the event we make available to our stockholders rights to purchase additional shares of our common stock or other securities, you will receive appropriate instructions in connection with all such rights directly from the Plan Administrator in order to permit you to determine what action you desire to take. Transaction processing under the Plan may be curtailed or suspended until the completion of any stock dividend, stock split or stockholder rights offering.

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27. Is there a cost to participate in the Plan?

The following fees will be paid to the Plan Administrator by Plan participants:

Reinvestment of quarterly dividend		
Stockholders owning one share or more may elect to reinvest all or part of their cash dividends and, have access to their account electronically over the internet and will receive quarterly statements	5% of the dividend amount, up to \$3.00 per quarter	Per participant per quarter
Purchase of shares with additional investment		
By check	\$ 5.00	Per transaction
By electronic debit	\$ 2.00	Per transaction
Purchase of shares with Initial investment	\$ 15.00	Per transaction
Trading fee (open market purchase of shares)	\$ 0.03	Per share*
Sale of Shares		
Batch order	\$ 25.00	Per transaction
Trading fee	\$ 0.12	Per share*
Market order	\$ 25.00	Per transaction
Day limit order	\$ 25.00	Per transaction
GTC limit order	\$ 25.00	Per transaction
Trading fee	\$ 0.12	Per share*
CSR assisted sale	\$ 15.00	Per transaction
Returned check or debit	\$ 35.00	Per transaction

* All per share processing fees include any brokerage commissions the Plan Administrator is required to pay. Any fractional share will be rounded up to a whole share for purposes of calculating the per share processing fee.

We will pay the Plan Administrator's fees in connection with dividend reinvestments. There are no fees for the share safekeeping service.

In general, trading fees and service charges incurred in connection with Plan purchases of shares of our common stock in the open market will be added to and considered part of the purchase price of such shares. Service fees will be charged to participants making initial and optional cash purchases through electronic fund transfers. Further, the financial institution designated by a participant on its plan enrollment may charge a fee for participating in the electronic fund transfer. When shares of our common stock are sold by the Plan Administrator for a participant, the participant will be responsible for any trading fees, expenses, service charges or other expenses incurred pursuant to the sale of such shares of common stock.

28. How and when may I terminate my participation in the Plan?

You may discontinue the reinvestment of your dividends at any time by giving notice to the Plan Administrator. If the Plan Administrator receives your notice to discontinue reinvestment near a dividend record date, the Plan Administrator, in its sole discretion may either distribute such dividends in cash or reinvest them. You may provide notice online via www.computershare.com/investor, by calling the Plan Administrator at 1-866-249-2610 or by mailing your request to the Plan Administrator in care of Computershare, P.O. Box 505000, Louisville, KY 40233-5000. The Plan Administrator will continue to hold your Plan shares after any discontinuation, unless you request a certificate for any whole shares and a cash payment for any fractional share. You may also request the sale of all or part of such shares or have the Plan Administrator transfer your shares to your brokerage account or another Plan Account. In the case of a request submitted on behalf of a Plan participant who has died or is an adjudicated incompetent, the request must be accompanied by certified evidence of the representative's authority to make such a request on behalf of the participant. Shares and cash will be retained in the participant's Plan Account until the participant's legal representative has been appointed and has furnished proof satisfactory to the Plan Administrator of the legal representative's right to receive a distribution of these assets.

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29. May the Plan be changed or discontinued?

Yes. We reserve the right to suspend or terminate the Plan in whole or in part at any time or from time to time. Notice will be sent to participants of any suspension or termination as soon as practicable after such action by us. Upon termination of the Plan, the Plan Administrator will issue a stock certificate for the total number of whole shares credited to your Plan Account and a cash payment for any portion of a fractional share credited to your Plan Account. However, if we terminate the Plan for the purpose of establishing a new plan, you will be automatically enrolled in the new plan and shares credited to your Plan Account will be credited automatically to the new plan, unless, prior to the effective date thereof, the Plan Administrator receives notice of termination of your Plan Account.

The Plan may also be altered, amended or supplemented by us in whole or in part at any time, including the period between the dividend record date and the related Dividend Payment Date. Any such amendment may include an appointment by the Plan Administrator of a successor Plan Administrator. Plan participants will be notified of any amendments as soon as practicable. In addition, the Plan Administrator reserves the right to change its administrative procedures for the Plan.

30. Who interprets and regulates the Plan?

We reserve the right, without notice to Plan participants, to interpret and regulate the Plan as we deem necessary or desirable in connection with our operations. Any such interpretation and regulation shall be conclusive.

31. What law governs the Plan?

The terms and conditions of the Plan and its operation are governed by the laws of the State of New York.

32. What are the responsibilities of the company and the Plan Administrator under the Plan?

The Plan Administrator has had no responsibility with respect to the preparation or contents of this prospectus. Neither we nor the Plan Administrator, in administering the Plan, shall be liable for any act done in good faith, or for any good faith omission to act, including, without limitation, any claims of liability (i) arising out of failure to terminate any participant's Plan Account upon such participant's death or adjudication of incompetence, prior to receipt of notice in writing of such death or adjudication of incompetence, (ii) with respect to the prices at which shares of our common stock are purchased or sold for the participant's Plan Account and the times such purchases or sales are made or (iii) with respect to any loss or fluctuation in the market value after the purchase of shares.

YOU SHOULD RECOGNIZE THAT NEITHER WE NOR THE PLAN ADMINISTRATOR CAN ASSURE A PROFIT OR PROTECT AGAINST A LOSS IN VALUE OF THE SHARES OF OUR COMMON STOCK THAT YOU PURCHASE UNDER THE PLAN.

33. What are some of the tax consequences of my participation in the Plan?

The U.S. federal tax treatment of dividend reinvestment and share purchase programs is not entirely clear. You are encouraged to consult your tax advisor with specific reference to your own tax situation and potential changes in the applicable law as to all federal, state, local, foreign and other tax matters in connection with the reinvestment of dividends and purchase of shares of common stock under the Plan, your tax basis and holding period for shares of common stock acquired under the Plan and the character, amount and tax treatment of any gain or loss realized on the disposition of shares of common stock. The following is a brief summary of the material U.S. federal income tax considerations applicable to the Plan, is for general information only, and does not constitute tax advice.

The information in this section is based on the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (or the Code) existing, temporary and proposed regulations under the Code, the legislative history of the Code, current administrative rulings and practices of the Internal Revenue Service (or the IRS), and court decisions, all as of the date hereof. We cannot assure you that new laws, interpretations of law, or court decisions, any of which may take effect retroactively, will not cause any statement in this section to be inaccurate. No assurance can be given that the IRS would not assert, or that a court would not sustain, a position contrary to any of the tax consequences described below. We have not sought and will not seek an advance ruling from the IRS regarding any matter in this prospectus.

If you participate in the dividend reinvestment feature under the Plan, you will be treated for U.S. federal income tax purposes as having received a distribution in an amount equal to the sum of (a) the fair market value of the shares of common stock credited to your account on the Dividend Payment Date, (b) your *pro rata* share of any brokerage commissions paid by us in connection with the purchase of common stock by the Plan Administrator from parties other than us, either on the open market or in privately negotiated transactions and (c) any cash distributions actually received by you with respect to common stock not included in the Plan. The tax basis of common stock purchased under the Plan will be equal to the fair market value of the common stock on the date the shares were acquired plus your *pro rata* share of any brokerage fees paid by us.

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The treatment of any discount associated with direct share purchase programs is not entirely clear, with most of the guidance being private letter rulings (or PLRs) issued by the IRS on which other taxpayers are not entitled to rely. The treatment may vary between persons who participate only in the direct stock purchase plan and persons who participate in both the dividend reinvestment plan and the direct stock purchase plan. A participant in both plans may be treated as receiving a distribution with respect to the optional cash payment, which is taxed as described below, in an amount equal to (i) any excess of the fair market value of the shares of common stock on the Cash Purchase Investment Date over the amount of the optional cash payment, plus (ii) the amount of any brokerage commissions, mark-ups, and other fees or expenses incurred by the REIT on the participant's behalf in connection with purchases on the open market. You should consult your tax advisors regarding the treatment of any optional cash purchases made at a discount. Shares of common stock acquired through the optional cash purchase feature under the Plan should have a tax basis equal to the amount of the payment plus the total amount of distributions, if any, you are treated as receiving as described above.

Distributions that you receive as a result of dividend reinvestment and/or optional cash purchases will be taxable as dividends and/or as a distribution that reduces the basis in your common stock or is treated as gain from the sale of common stock as discussed in "Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations—Taxation of U.S. Holders of Our Common Stock" and "—Taxation of Non-U.S. Holders of Our Common Stock" in this prospectus.

Your holding period for common stock acquired pursuant to either program under the Plan will begin on the day following the date the shares are credited to your Plan Account. Dividends received by corporate shareholders will not be eligible for the dividends received deduction.

You will not realize any taxable income upon receipt of certificates for whole shares of common stock credited to your account, either upon your request for certain of those shares or upon termination of participation in the Plan. You will realize gain or loss upon the sale or exchange of common stock acquired under the Plan. You will also realize gain or loss upon receipt, following termination of participation in the Plan, of a cash payment for any fractional share equivalent of common stock credited to your account. The amount of any such gain or loss will be the difference between the amount that you received for the shares or fractional share equivalent and the tax basis thereof. See "Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations—Taxation of U.S. Holders of Our Common Stock" and "—Taxation of Non-U.S. Holders of Our Common Stock" in this prospectus.

Withholding taxes or backup withholding will apply to dividends that are subject to the dividend reinvestment feature of the Plan in the same manner as withholding taxes and backup withholding apply to cash dividends. See "Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations—Backup Withholding Tax and Information Reporting" and "—Taxation of Non-U.S. Holders of Our Common Stock" in this prospectus. In the case of participants that are subject to withholding tax or backup withholding in respect of amounts deemed to be received under the Plan, we or the Plan Administrator will reinvest dividends less the amount of tax required to be withheld.

Foreign stockholders who elect to make optional cash purchases only will continue to receive regular cash dividends on common stock registered in their names in the same manner as if they were not participating in the Plan. Funds for optional cash purchases must be in U.S. dollars and will be invested in the same way as payments from other participants.

All costs of administering the Plan, except for costs related to your voluntary selling of common stock, will be paid by us. Consistent with the conclusion reached by the IRS in a PLR issued to another REIT, we intend to take the position that these costs, other than brokerage commissions, do not constitute a distribution which is either taxable to you or which would reduce your basis in your stock. However, since the PLR was not issued to us, we have no legal right to rely on its conclusions. Thus, it is possible that the IRS might view your share of the costs as constituting a taxable dividend to you and/or a distribution which reduces the basis in your common stock or is treated as gain from the sale of common stock. For this or other reasons, we may in the future take a different position with respect to the costs of administering the Plan.

For a more detailed discussion of the tax consequences of owning our common stock, see "Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations" in this prospectus

34. How do I get more information?

Questions regarding the Plan should be directed to Computershare, P.O. Box 505000, Louisville, KY 40233-5000, or by calling 1-866-249-2610, between 9:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., Eastern Time, Monday through Friday. For questions regarding Large Cash Purchases, please call our Investor Relations department at 212-207-6488. You may also go to the website address set up for the Plan at www.computershare.com/investor. If your shares are not held in your name, contact your brokerage firm, bank, or other nominee for more information regarding your participation in the Plan. They can contact the Plan Administrator directly for instructions on how to participate on your behalf. You can also get more information from our website at www.mfafinancial.com.

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MATERIAL U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSIDERATIONS

The following summary describes material U.S. federal income tax considerations relating to the ownership of our common stock as of the date hereof by U.S. holders and non-U.S. holders, each as defined below. Except where noted, this summary deals only with shares of our common stock held as capital assets for U.S. federal income tax purposes and does not deal with special situations, such as those of dealers in securities or currencies, financial institutions, regulated investment companies, tax-exempt entities (except as described in “—Taxation of Tax-Exempt Holders of Our Common Stock” below), insurance companies, persons holding our common stock as a part of a hedging, integrated, conversion or constructive sale transaction or a straddle, traders in securities that elect to use a mark-to-market method of accounting for their securities holdings, persons liable for alternative minimum tax, investors in pass-through entities or U.S. holders of our common stock whose “functional currency” is not the U.S. dollar. Furthermore, the discussion below is based upon the provisions of the Code and regulations, rulings and judicial decisions thereunder as of the date hereof, and such authorities may be repealed, revoked or modified, possibly with retroactive effect, so as to result in U.S. federal income tax consequences different from those discussed below.

WE URGE YOU TO CONSULT YOUR TAX ADVISOR REGARDING THE SPECIFIC TAX CONSEQUENCES TO YOU OF THE REINVESTMENT OF DIVIDENDS OR OPTIONAL SHARE PURCHASES UNDER THE PLAN, YOUR TAX BASIS AND HOLDING PERIOD FOR SHARES OF COMMON STOCK ACQUIRED UNDER THE PLAN AND THE CHARACTER, AMOUNT AND TAX TREATMENT OF ANY GAIN OR LOSS REALIZED ON THE DISPOSITION OF SHARES OF COMMON STOCK AND OF OUR ELECTION TO BE TAXED AS A REIT. SPECIFICALLY, YOU SHOULD CONSULT YOUR TAX ADVISOR REGARDING THE FEDERAL, STATE, LOCAL, FOREIGN, AND OTHER TAX CONSEQUENCES OF SUCH PURCHASE, OWNERSHIP, SALE AND ELECTION, AND REGARDING POTENTIAL CHANGES IN APPLICABLE TAX LAWS.

Federal Income Tax Considerations Relating to the Plan

Taxation of Participants in the Dividend Reinvestment Plan. If you participate in the dividend reinvestment plan, you will be treated for U.S. federal income tax purposes as having received a distribution in an amount equal to the sum of (a) the fair market value of the shares of common stock on the date the shares were credited to your Plan Account, (b) your pro rata share of any brokerage commissions paid by us in connection with the purchase of common stock by the Plan Administrator from parties other than us, either on the open market or in privately negotiated transactions and (c) any cash distributions actually received by you with respect to common stock not included in the Plan. The tax basis of common stock purchased under the Plan will be equal to the fair market value of the common stock on the date the shares were acquired plus your pro rata share of any brokerage fees paid by us.

Distributions that you receive as a result of distribution reinvestment will be taxable as dividends and/or as a distribution that reduces the basis in your common stock or is treated as gain from the sale of common stock as discussed in “—Taxation of U.S. Holders of Our Common Stock” and “—Taxation of Non-U.S. Holders of Our Common Stock” below.

Your holding period for common stock acquired pursuant to the distribution reinvestment plan will begin on the day following the date on which the shares are credited to your Plan Account

You will realize gain or loss upon the sale or exchange of common stock acquired under the dividend reinvestment plan. You will also realize gain or loss upon receipt, following termination of participation in the dividend reinvestment plan, of a cash payment for any fractional share equivalent of common stock credited to your account. The amount of any such gain or loss will be the difference between the amount that you received for the shares or fractional share equivalent and the tax basis thereof. See “—Taxation of U.S. Holders of Our Common Stock” and “—Taxation of Non-U.S. Holders of Our Common Stock” below.

Withholding and backup withholding will apply to dividends that are subject to the dividend reinvestment plan in the same manner as backup withholding apply to cash dividends. See “—Backup Withholding Tax and Information Reporting” and “—Taxation of Non-U.S. Holders of Our Common Stock” below. In the case of participants that are subject to withholding or backup withholding in respect of amounts deemed to be received under the dividend reinvestment plan, we will reinvest dividends less the amount of tax required to be withheld.

All costs of administering the distribution reinvestment plan, except for costs related to your voluntary selling of common stock, will be paid by us. Consistent with the conclusion reached by the IRS in a PLR issued to another REIT, we intend to take the position that these costs do not constitute a distribution which is either taxable to you or which would reduce your basis in your stock. However, since the PLR was not issued to us, we have no legal right to rely on its conclusions. Thus, it is possible that the IRS might view your share of the costs as constituting a taxable dividend to you and/or a distribution which reduces the basis in your common stock or is treated as gain from the sale of common stock. For this or other reasons, we may in the future take a different position with respect to the costs of administering the distribution reinvestment plan.

Taxation of Participants in Direct Stock Purchase Plan. The treatment of any discount associated with direct share purchase programs is not entirely clear, with most of the guidance being PLRs issued by the IRS on which other taxpayers are not entitled to

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rely. The treatment may vary between persons who participate only in the direct stock purchase plan and persons who participate in both the dividend reinvestment plan and the direct stock purchase plan. A participant in both plans may be treated as receiving a distribution with respect to the optional cash payment, which is taxed as described below, in an amount equal to (i) any excess of the fair market value of the shares of common stock on the Cash Purchase Investment Date over the amount of the optional cash payment, plus (ii) the amount of any brokerage commissions, mark-ups, and other fees or expenses incurred by the REIT on the participant's behalf in connection with purchases on the open market. You should consult your tax advisors regarding the treatment of any optional cash purchases made at a discount.

Shares of common stock acquired through the optional cash purchase feature under the Plan should have a tax basis equal to the amount of the payment plus the total amount of distributions, if any, you are treated as receiving as described above. The holding period for common stock acquired through the direct stock purchase plan will begin on the day following the date such shares are credited to your Plan Account.

Our Taxation as a REIT

We elected to be taxed as a REIT under the U.S. federal income tax laws beginning with our taxable year ended December 31, 1998. We believe that we have operated in a manner qualifying us as a REIT since our election and intend to continue to so operate. In the opinion of Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP, we qualified to be taxed as a REIT under the U.S. federal income tax laws for our taxable years ended December 31, 2015 through December 31, 2018, and our organization and current and proposed method of operation will enable us to continue to qualify as a REIT for our taxable year ending December 31, 2019 and in the future. You should be aware that Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP's opinion is based on existing U.S. federal income tax law governing qualification as a REIT, which is subject to change, possibly on a retroactive basis, is not binding on the IRS or any court, and speaks as of the date issued. In addition, Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP's opinion is based on customary assumptions and is conditioned upon certain representations made by us as to factual matters, including representations regarding the nature of our assets and the future conduct of our business, all of which are described in the opinion. Moreover, our continued qualification and taxation as a REIT depends on our ability to meet, on a continuing basis, through actual operating results, certain qualification tests in the U.S. federal income tax laws. Those qualification tests involve the percentage of our income that we earn from specified sources, the percentages of our assets that fall within specified categories, the diversity of our share ownership and the percentage of our earnings that we distribute. While Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP has reviewed those matters in connection with the foregoing opinion, Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP will not review our compliance with those tests on a continuing basis. Accordingly, no assurance can be given that the actual results of our operations for any particular taxable year will satisfy such requirements. Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP's opinion does not foreclose the possibility that we may have to use one or more of the REIT savings provisions described below, which would require us to pay an excise or penalty tax (which could be material) in order to maintain our REIT qualification. For a discussion of the tax consequences of our failure to qualify as a REIT, see "—Failure to Qualify," below.

The sections of the Code and the corresponding regulations that govern the U.S. federal income tax treatment of a REIT and its stockholders are highly technical and complex. The following discussion is qualified in its entirety by the applicable Code provisions, rules and regulations promulgated thereunder, and administrative interpretations thereof. In any year in which we qualify for taxation as a REIT, we generally will not be subject to U.S. federal income tax on that portion of our net taxable income that we distribute currently to our stockholders, although taxable income generated by domestic taxable REIT subsidiaries, if any, will be subject to regular corporate income tax. Our stockholders generally will be taxed on dividends that they receive at ordinary income rates unless such dividends are designated by us as capital gain dividends. Distributions we make are not eligible for the dividends received deduction for corporations. We expect that ordinary dividends paid by us generally will not be eligible for the reduced rates that generally apply to distributions by non-REIT C corporations to certain U.S. individuals, trusts and estates, but may be eligible for the up to 20% pass-through deduction for such stockholders.

We are generally not subject to U.S. corporate income tax on income that we distribute currently to stockholders, but we will be subject to U.S. federal tax as follows:

- We will pay U.S. federal corporate income tax on our taxable income, including net capital gain, that we do not distribute to stockholders during, or within a specified time after, the calendar year in which the income is earned.
- For taxable years prior to 2018, under some circumstances, we may be subject to the "alternative minimum tax" due to our undistributed items of tax preference and alternative minimum tax adjustments.
- If we have net income from "prohibited transactions," which are, in general, sales or other dispositions of property held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business, other than foreclosure property, such income will be subject to a 100% tax.

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- If we elect to treat property that we acquire in connection with a foreclosure of a mortgage loan or from certain leasehold terminations as “foreclosure property,” we may thereby avoid (a) the 100% tax on gain from a resale of that property (if the sale would otherwise constitute a prohibited transaction) and (b) the inclusion of any income from such property not qualifying for purposes of the REIT gross income tests discussed below, but the income from the sale or operation of the property may be subject to U.S. corporate income tax at the highest applicable rate.
- If due to reasonable cause and not willful neglect we fail to satisfy either the 75% gross income test or the 95% gross income test discussed below, but nonetheless maintain our qualification as a REIT because other requirements are met, we will be subject to a 100% tax on the greater of the amount by which we fail the 75% gross income test or the 95% gross income test, multiplied in either case by a fraction intended to reflect our profitability.
- If we fail to satisfy the asset tests (other than a de minimis failure of the 5% asset test or the 10% vote or value test, as described below under “—Asset Tests”) as long as the failure was due to reasonable cause and not willful neglect, we dispose of the assets or otherwise comply with such asset tests within six months after the last day of the quarter in which we identify such failure and we file a schedule with the IRS describing the assets that caused such failure, we will pay a tax equal to the greater of \$50,000 or the highest federal income tax rate then applicable to U.S. corporations on the net income from the nonqualifying assets during the period in which we failed to satisfy such asset tests.
- If we fail to satisfy one or more requirements for REIT qualification, other than the gross income tests and the asset tests, and the failure was due to reasonable cause and not willful neglect, we will be required to pay a penalty of \$50,000 for each such failure.
- We may be required to pay monetary penalties to the IRS in certain circumstances, including if we fail to meet recordkeeping requirements intended to monitor our compliance with rules relating to the composition of a REIT’s stockholders, as described below in “—Requirements for Qualification as a REIT.”
- If we fail to distribute during each calendar year at least the sum of:
 - 85% of our ordinary income for such calendar year;
 - 95% of our capital gain net income for such calendar year; and
 - any undistributed taxable income from prior taxable years,

we will pay a 4% nondeductible excise tax on the excess of the required distribution over the amount we actually distributed, plus any retained amounts on which income tax has been paid at the corporate level.

- We may elect to retain rather than distribute all or a portion of our net capital gains and pay income tax on the gains. In that case, a U.S. holder would include its proportionate share of our undistributed net long-term capital gains (to the extent we make a timely designation of such gain to the holder) in income and receive a credit for its proportionate share of the tax paid by us.
- We will be subject to a 100% excise tax on transactions between us and a taxable REIT subsidiary that are not conducted on an arm’s length basis.
- With respect to an interest in a taxable mortgage pool or a residual interest in a real estate mortgage investment conduit (or a REMIC) the ownership of which is attributed to us or to a REIT in which we own an interest, although the law on the matter is unclear as to the ownership of an interest in a taxable mortgage pool, we may be taxable at the highest corporate rate on the amount of any excess inclusion income for the taxable year allocable to the percentage of our stock that is held in record name by “disqualified organizations.” To the extent that we own a REMIC residual interest or a taxable mortgage pool through a taxable REIT subsidiary, we will not be subject to this tax. A “disqualified organization” includes:
 - the U.S.;

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- any state or political subdivision of the U.S.;
- any foreign government;
- any international organization;
- any agency or instrumentality of any of the foregoing;
- any other tax-exempt organization, other than a farmer's cooperative described in section 521 of the Code, that is exempt both from income taxation and from taxation under the unrelated business taxable income provisions of the Code; and
- any rural electrical or telephone cooperative.

We do not currently intend to hold REMIC residual interests or engage in financing or other activities that would result in the allocation of excess inclusion to our shareholders. See “—Taxable Mortgage Pools and Excess Inclusion Income.”

If we acquire any appreciated assets from a non-REIT C corporation in a carry-over basis transaction, we could be liable for tax with respect to “built-in gain” in those assets if we recognize gain on the sale or disposition of any such assets during the 5-year period after we acquire the assets. Built-in gain is the amount by which an asset's fair market value exceeds its adjusted tax basis at the time we acquire the asset.

In addition, notwithstanding our status as a REIT, we may also have to pay certain state, local, payroll, and foreign income taxes, because not all states and localities treat REITs in the same manner that they are treated for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Moreover, as further described below, any domestic taxable REIT subsidiary in which we own an interest will be subject to U.S. federal (and applicable state and local) corporate income tax on its taxable income.

Requirements for Qualification as a REIT. The Code defines a REIT as a corporation, trust or association:

- (1) that is managed by one or more trustees or directors;
- (2) the beneficial ownership of which is evidenced by transferable shares, or by transferable certificates of beneficial interest;
- (3) that would be taxable as a domestic corporation, but for sections 856 through 859 of the Code;
- (4) that is neither a financial institution nor an insurance company subject to certain provisions of the Code;
- (5) the beneficial ownership of which is held by 100 or more persons;
- (6) of which not more than 50% in value of the outstanding shares are owned, directly or indirectly, by five or fewer individuals (as defined in the Code to include certain entities) after applying certain attribution rules;
- (7) that makes an election to be a REIT for the current taxable year or has made such an election for a previous taxable year, which has not been terminated or revoked; and
- (8) that meets other tests, described below, regarding the nature of its income and assets.

Conditions (1) through (4), inclusive, must be met during the entire taxable year. Condition (5) must be met during at least 335 days of a taxable year of 12 months, or during a proportionate part of a taxable year of less than 12 months. Condition (6) must be met during the last half of each taxable year. Neither conditions (5) nor (6) apply to the first taxable year for which an election to become a REIT is made. For purposes of determining the stock ownership requirement described in condition (6) above, an “individual” generally includes a supplemental unemployment compensation benefits plan, a private foundation, or a portion of a trust permanently set aside or used exclusively for charitable purposes. An “individual,” however, generally does not include a trust that is a qualified employee pension or profit sharing trust under the U.S. federal income tax laws, and beneficiaries of such a trust will be treated as holding our shares in proportion to their actuarial interests in the trust for purposes of the requirement described in condition (6) above. We believe that we have maintained and will maintain sufficient diversity of ownership to allow us to continue to satisfy conditions (5) and (6) above. In addition, our charter contains restrictions regarding the ownership and transfer of our stock that are

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intended to assist us in continuing to satisfy the share ownership requirements described in conditions (5) and (6) above. These restrictions, however, may not ensure that we will be able to satisfy these share ownership requirements. If we fail to satisfy these share ownership requirements, we will fail to qualify as a REIT.

If we comply with regulatory rules pursuant to which we are required to send annual letters to holders of our stock requesting information regarding the actual ownership of our stock (as discussed below), and we do not know, or exercising reasonable diligence would not have known, whether we failed to meet condition (6) above, we will be treated as having met the requirement.

To monitor compliance with the share ownership requirements described in conditions (5) and (6) above, we generally are required to maintain records regarding the actual ownership of our stock. To do so, we must demand written statements each year from the record holders of significant percentages of our stock pursuant to which the record holders must disclose the actual owners of the shares (i.e., the persons required to include our dividends in their gross income). We must maintain a list of those persons failing or refusing to comply with this demand as part of our records. We could be subject to monetary penalties if we fail to comply with these record-keeping requirements. If you fail or refuse to comply with the demands, you will be required by U.S. Treasury regulations to submit a statement with your tax return disclosing your actual ownership of our stock and other information. In addition, we must satisfy all relevant filing and other administrative requirements established by the IRS to elect and maintain REIT status, use a calendar year for U.S. federal income tax purposes, and comply with the record keeping requirements of the Code and regulations promulgated thereunder.

Disregarded Entities and Partnerships. An unincorporated domestic entity, such as a partnership or limited liability company, that has a single owner for U.S. federal income tax purposes generally is not treated as an entity separate from its parent for U.S. federal income tax purposes. An unincorporated domestic entity with two or more owners for U.S. federal income tax purposes generally is treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes. In the case of a REIT that is a partner in an entity that is treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes, U.S. Treasury regulations provide that the REIT is deemed to own its proportionate share of the partnership's assets and to earn its proportionate share of the partnership's gross income based on its pro rata share of capital interests in the partnership for purposes of the asset and gross income tests applicable to REITs, as described below. However, solely for purposes of the 10% value test, described below (see "—Asset Tests"), the determination of a REIT's interest in partnership assets will be based on the REIT's proportionate interest in any securities issued by the partnership, excluding for these purposes, certain excluded securities as described in the Code. In addition, the assets and gross income of the partnership generally are deemed to retain the same character in the hands of the REIT. Thus, our proportionate share of the assets and items of income of partnerships in which we own an equity interest is treated as assets and items of income of our company for purposes of applying the REIT requirements described below. Consequently, to the extent that we directly or indirectly hold a preferred or other equity interest in a partnership or limited liability company, the partnership's or limited liability company's assets and operations may affect our ability to qualify as a REIT, even though we may have no control or only limited influence over the partnership. In such case, we may be forced to dispose of our interests in such entity.

Qualified REIT Subsidiaries. If a REIT owns a corporate subsidiary that is a "qualified REIT subsidiary," the separate existence of that subsidiary is disregarded for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Generally, a qualified REIT subsidiary is a corporation, other than a taxable REIT subsidiary, all of the stock of which is owned directly or indirectly by the REIT. All assets, liabilities and items of income, deduction and credit of the qualified REIT subsidiary will be treated as assets, liabilities and items of income, deduction and credit of the REIT itself. A qualified REIT subsidiary is not subject to U.S. federal corporate income taxation, although it may be subject to state and local taxation in some states.

In the event that a qualified REIT subsidiary or disregarded subsidiary ceases to be wholly owned by us (for example, if any equity interest in the subsidiary is acquired by a person other than us or another disregarded subsidiary of us), the subsidiary's separate existence would no longer be disregarded for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Instead, it would have multiple owners and would be treated as either a partnership or a taxable corporation. Such an event could, depending on the circumstances, adversely affect our ability to satisfy the various asset and gross income tests applicable to REITs, including the requirement that REITs generally may not own, directly or indirectly, more than 10% of the value or voting power of the outstanding securities of another corporation. See "—Asset Tests" and "—Income Tests."

Taxable REIT Subsidiaries. A taxable REIT subsidiary is an entity that is taxable as a corporation in which we directly or indirectly own stock and that elects with us to be treated as a taxable REIT subsidiary. In addition, if a taxable REIT subsidiary owns, directly or indirectly, securities representing 35% or more of the vote or value of a subsidiary corporation, that subsidiary will also be treated as a taxable REIT subsidiary. However, an entity will not qualify as a taxable REIT subsidiary if it directly or indirectly operates or manages a lodging or health care facility or, generally, provides to another person, under a franchise, license or otherwise, rights to any brand name under which any lodging facility or health care facility is operated. We generally may not own more than 10%, as measured by voting power or value, of the securities of a corporation that is not a qualified REIT subsidiary unless we and such corporation elect to treat such corporation as a taxable REIT subsidiary. Overall, no more than 20% of the value of a REIT's assets (25% for taxable years beginning before January 1, 2018) may consist of stock or securities of one or more taxable REIT subsidiaries.

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Income earned by a taxable REIT subsidiary is not attributable to the REIT. As a result, income that might not be qualifying income for purposes of the income tests applicable to REITs could be earned by a taxable REIT subsidiary without affecting our status as a REIT. Our domestic taxable REIT subsidiaries will be fully subject to corporate income tax on their taxable income.

Several provisions of the Code regarding the arrangements between a REIT and its taxable REIT subsidiaries ensure that a taxable REIT subsidiary will be subject to an appropriate level of U.S. federal income taxation. For example, a taxable REIT subsidiary is limited in its ability to deduct interest payments made to affiliated REITs. In addition, we would be obligated to pay a 100% penalty tax on some payments that we receive from, or on certain expenses deducted by, a taxable REIT subsidiary if the IRS were to assert successfully that the economic arrangements between us and a taxable REIT subsidiary are not comparable to similar arrangements among unrelated parties. Any income earned by a taxable REIT subsidiary that is attributable to services provided to us, or on our behalf to any of our tenants, that is less than the amounts that would have been charged based upon arm's length negotiations, will also be subject to a 100% penalty tax. We intend to scrutinize all of our transactions with any of our subsidiaries that are treated as a taxable REIT subsidiary in an effort to ensure that we do not become subject to this penalty tax; however, we cannot assure you that we will be successful in avoiding this penalty tax.

Taxable Mortgage Pools and Excess Inclusion Income. An entity, or a portion of an entity, that does not elect to be treated as a REMIC may be classified as a taxable mortgage pool (or a TMP), under the Code if:

- substantially all of its assets consist of debt obligations or interests in debt obligations;
- more than 50% of those debt obligations are real estate mortgages or interests in real estate mortgages as of specified testing dates;
- the entity has issued debt obligations (liabilities) that have two or more maturities; and
- the payments required to be made by the entity on its debt obligations “bear a relationship” to the payments to be received by the entity on the debt obligations that it holds as assets.

Under the U.S. Treasury regulations, if less than 80% of the assets of an entity (or a portion of an entity) consists of debt obligations, these debt obligations are considered not to comprise “substantially all” of its assets, and therefore the entity would not be treated as a taxable mortgage pool.

A TMP generally is treated as a taxable corporation and it cannot file a consolidated U.S. federal income tax return with any other corporation. If, however, a REIT owns 100% of the equity interests in a TMP, then the TMP is a qualified REIT subsidiary and, as such, ignored as an entity separate from the REIT, but a portion of the REIT's income will be treated as excess inclusion income and a portion of the dividends the REIT pays to U.S. shareholders will be treated as excess inclusion income.

Section 860E(c) of the Code defines the term “excess inclusion” with respect to a residual interest in a REMIC. The IRS has yet to issue guidance on the computation of excess inclusion income on equity interests in a TMP held by a REIT. Generally, however, excess inclusion income with respect to our investment in any TMP and any taxable year will equal the excess of (i) the amount of income we accrue on our investment in the TMP over (ii) the amount of income we would have accrued if our investment were a debt instrument having an issue price equal to the fair market value of our investment on the day we acquired it and a yield to maturity equal to 120% of the long-term applicable federal rate in effect on the date we acquired our interest. The term “applicable federal rate” refers to rates that are based on weighted average yields for U.S. Treasury securities and are published monthly by the IRS for use in various tax calculations. If we undertake securitization transactions that are TMPs, the amount of excess inclusion income we recognize in any taxable year could represent a significant portion of our total taxable income for that year.

Although we intend to structure our securitization and financing transactions so that we will not recognize any excess inclusion income, we cannot assure you that we will always be successful in this regard. If, notwithstanding our intent, we recognized excess inclusion income, then under guidance issued by the IRS we would be required to allocate the excess inclusion income proportionately among the dividends we pay to our stockholders and we must notify our stockholders of the portion of our dividends that represents excess inclusion income. The portion of any dividend you receive that is treated as excess inclusion income is subject to special rules. First, your taxable income can never be less than the sum of your excess inclusion income for the year; excess inclusion income cannot be offset with net operating losses or other allowable deductions. Second, if you are a tax-exempt organization and your excess inclusion income is subject to the unrelated business income tax, then the excess inclusion portion of any dividend you receive will be treated as unrelated business taxable income. Third, dividends paid to non-U.S. holders who hold stock for investment and not in connection with a trade or business conducted in the U.S. will be subject to U.S. federal withholding tax without regard to any reduction in rate otherwise allowed by any applicable income tax treaty.

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If we recognize excess inclusion income, and one or more disqualified organizations are record holders of shares of common stock, we will be taxable at the highest federal corporate income tax rate on the portion of any excess inclusion income equal to the percentage of our stock that is held by disqualified organizations. In such circumstances, we may reduce the amount of our distributions to a disqualified organization whose stock ownership gave rise to the tax. To the extent that our common stock owned by disqualified organizations is held by a broker/dealer or other nominee, the broker/dealer or other nominee would be liable for a tax at the highest corporate tax rate on the portion of our excess inclusion income allocable to our common stock held by the broker/dealer or other nominee on behalf of the disqualified organizations.

We do not currently intend to hold REMIC residual interests or engage in financing or other activities that would result in the allocation of excess inclusion to our shareholders.

Tax-exempt investors, non-U.S. investors and taxpayers with net operating losses should carefully consider the tax consequences described above and are urged to consult their tax advisors in connection with their decision to invest in our common stock.

Income Tests

To qualify as a REIT, we must satisfy two gross income requirements, each of which is applied on an annual basis. First, at least 75% of our gross income for each taxable year generally must be derived directly or indirectly from:

- rents from real property;
- interest on debt secured by mortgages on real property or on interests in real property;
- dividends or other distributions on, and gain from the sale of, stock in other REITs;
- gain from the sale of real property or mortgage loans;
- abatements and refunds of taxes on real property;
- income and gain derived from foreclosure property (as described below);
- amounts (other than amounts the determination of which depends in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person) received or accrued as consideration for entering into agreements (i) to make loans secured by mortgages on real property or on interests in real property or (ii) to purchase or lease real property (including interests in real property and interests in mortgages on real property);
- income derived from a REMIC in proportion to the real estate assets held by the REMIC, unless at least 95% of the REMIC's assets are real estate assets, in which case all of the income derived from the REMIC; and
- interest or dividend income from investments in stock or debt instruments attributable to the temporary investment of new capital during the one-year period following our receipt of new capital that we raise through equity offerings or public offerings of debt obligations with at least a five-year term.

Second, at least 95% of our gross income for each taxable year must be derived from sources that qualify for purposes of the 75% gross income test, and from (i) dividends, (ii) interest and (iii) gain from the sale or disposition of stock or securities.

Gross income from the following sources is excluded from both the numerator and the denominator in both gross income tests:

- gain from a sale of property that we hold primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business;
- income and gain from hedging transactions to the extent described below under "Hedging Transactions";
- certain foreign currency gains; and
- cancellation of indebtedness income.

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We will monitor the amount of our non-qualifying income and we will seek to manage our portfolio to comply at all times with the gross income tests, but we cannot assure you that we will be successful in this effort. The following paragraphs discuss some of the specific applications of the gross income tests to us.

Interest. The term “interest,” as defined for purposes of both gross income tests, generally excludes any amount that is based in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person, however, it generally includes the following: (i) an amount that is received or accrued based on a fixed percentage or percentages of receipts or sales, and (ii) an amount that is based on the income or profits of a debtor, as long as the debtor derives substantially all of its income from the real property securing the debt by leasing substantially all of its interest in the property, and only to the extent that the amounts received by the debtor would be qualifying “rents from real property” if received directly by a REIT. We do not expect that any of our loans will be based in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person.

Interest on debt secured by mortgages on real property or on interests in real property, including, for this purpose, prepayment penalties, loan assumption fees and late payment charges that are not compensation for services, generally is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test. If a loan is secured by real property and other property and the highest principal amount of a loan outstanding during a taxable year exceeds the fair market value of the real property (including, for loans secured by real property and personal property where the fair market value of the personal property is less than 15% of the total fair market value of all such property, such personal property) securing the loan as of the date (i) we agreed to originate or acquire the loan or (ii) as discussed below, in the event of a “significant modification,” the date we modified the loan, a portion of the interest income from such loan will not be qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test but will be qualifying income for purposes of the 95% gross income test. However, in the case of a loan that is secured by both real property and personal property, if the fair market value of such personal property does not exceed 15% of the total fair market value of all property securing the loan, then the personal property securing the loan will be treated as real property for purposes of determining whether the interest on such loan is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test.

We expect that the MBS in which we invest generally will be treated either as interests in a grantor trust or as interests in a REMIC for U.S. federal income tax purposes and that all interest income from such MBS will be qualifying income for the 95% gross income test. In the case of MBS treated as interests in grantor trusts, we would be treated as owning an undivided beneficial ownership interest in the mortgage loans held by the grantor trust. The interest on such mortgage loans would be qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test to the extent that the obligation is secured by real property, as discussed above. In the case of MBS treated as interests in a REMIC, income derived from REMIC interests generally will be treated as qualifying income for purposes of the 75% and 95% gross income tests. If less than 95% of the assets of the REMIC are real estate assets, however, then only a proportionate part of our interest in the REMIC and income derived from the interest will qualify for purposes of the 75% gross income test. In addition, some REMIC securitizations include imbedded interest swap or cap contracts or other derivative instruments that potentially could produce non-qualifying income for the holder of the related REMIC securities.

To the extent that we hold mortgage-related assets that do not represent REMIC interests or grantor trusts representing ownership of mortgage loans, such assets may not qualify as real estate assets, and, consequently, the income generated from them might not qualify for purposes of either or both of the REIT income tests, depending on the circumstances and the specific structure of the investment. Our ability to invest in those assets may be limited.

We may modify the terms of our mortgage loans. Under the Code, if the terms of a loan are modified in a manner constituting a “significant modification,” such modification triggers a deemed exchange of the original loan for the modified loan. IRS Revenue Procedure 2014-51 provides a safe harbor pursuant to which we will not be required to redetermine the fair market value of the real property securing a loan for purposes of the gross income and asset tests in connection with a loan modification that is (i) occasioned by a borrower default or (ii) made at a time when we reasonably believe that the modification to the loan will substantially reduce a significant risk of default on the original loan. To the extent we significantly modify loans in a manner that does not qualify for that safe harbor, we will be required to redetermine the value of the real property securing the loan at the time it was significantly modified, which could result in a portion of the interest income on the loan being treated as nonqualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test. In determining the value of the real property securing such a loan, we generally will not obtain third-party appraisals but rather will rely on internal valuations.

The interest, original issue discount, and market discount income that we will receive from our mortgage-related assets generally will be qualifying income for purposes of both gross income tests. Some of our investments will not be secured by mortgages on real property or interests in real property. Our interest income from those investments will be qualifying income for purposes of the 95% gross income test, but not the 75% gross income test.

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We have entered, and intend to enter, into financing arrangements that are structured as sale and repurchase agreements pursuant to which we would nominally sell certain of our assets to a counterparty and simultaneously enter into an agreement to repurchase these assets at a later date in exchange for a purchase price. Economically, these agreements are financings that are secured by the assets sold pursuant thereto. We believe that we would be treated for REIT asset and income test purposes as the owner of the assets that are the subject of any such sale and repurchase agreement notwithstanding that such agreements may transfer record ownership of the assets to the counterparty during the term of the agreement. It is possible, however, that the IRS could assert that we did not own the assets during the term of the sale and repurchase agreement, in which case we could fail to qualify as a REIT.

Hedging Transactions. We may enter into hedging transactions with respect to one or more of our assets or liabilities. Hedging transactions could take a variety of forms, including interest rate swap agreements, interest rate cap agreements, options, futures contracts, forward rate agreements or similar financial instruments. Except to the extent provided by U.S. Treasury regulations, any income from a hedging transaction we enter into (i) in the normal course of our business primarily to manage risk of interest rate or price changes or currency fluctuations with respect to borrowings made or to be made, or ordinary obligations incurred or to be incurred, to acquire or carry real estate assets, which is clearly identified as specified in U.S. Treasury regulations before the close of the day on which it was acquired, originated or entered into, including gain from the sale or disposition of such a transaction, (ii) primarily to manage risk of currency fluctuations with respect to any item of income or gain that would be qualifying income under the 75% or 95% gross income tests that is clearly identified as such before the close of the day on which it was acquired, originated or entered into and satisfies other identification requirements, or (iii) in connection with the effective termination of certain hedging transactions described above, will not constitute gross income for purposes of the 75% or 95% gross income tests. To the extent that we enter into other types of hedging transactions, the income from those transactions is likely to be treated as non-qualifying income for purposes of both of the 75% and 95% gross income tests. We intend to structure any hedging transactions in a manner that does not jeopardize our qualification as a REIT.

We may conduct some or all of our hedging activities through a taxable REIT subsidiary or other corporate entity, the income of which may be subject to U.S. federal income tax, rather than by participating in the arrangements directly or through pass-through subsidiaries.

Fee Income. Fee income generally will be qualifying income for purposes of both the 75% and 95% gross income tests if it is received in consideration for entering into an agreement to make a loan secured by real property and the fees are not determined by income and profits. Other fees generally are not qualifying income for purposes of either gross income test. Any fees earned by a taxable REIT subsidiary will not be included for purposes of the gross income tests.

Rents from Real Property. To the extent that we own or acquire real property or an interest therein, rents we receive will qualify as “rents from real property” in satisfying the gross income requirements for a REIT described above only if several conditions are met. These conditions relate to the identity of the tenant, the computation of the rent payable, and the nature of the property leased. First, the amount of rent must not be based in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person. However, an amount received or accrued generally will not be excluded from rents from real property solely by reason of being based on a fixed percentage or percentages of receipts or sales. Second, rents we receive from a “related party tenant” will not qualify as rents from real property in satisfying the gross income tests unless the tenant is a taxable REIT subsidiary, at least 90% of the property is leased to unrelated tenants, the rent paid by the taxable REIT subsidiary is substantially comparable to the rent paid by the unrelated tenants for comparable space and the rent is not attributable to an increase in rent due to a modification of a lease with a “controlled taxable REIT subsidiary” (i.e., a taxable REIT subsidiary in which we own directly or indirectly more than 50% of the voting power or value of the stock). A tenant is a related party tenant if the REIT, or an actual or constructive owner of 10% or more of the REIT, actually or constructively owns 10% or more of the tenant. Third, if rent attributable to personal property leased in connection with a lease of real property is greater than 15% of the total rent received under the lease, then the portion of rent attributable to the personal property will not qualify as rents from real property. Finally, for rents to qualify as “rents from real property” for purposes of the gross income tests, we are only allowed to provide services that are both usually or “customarily rendered” in connection with the rental of real property and not otherwise considered “rendered to the occupant.” We may, however, render services to our tenants through an “independent contractor” who is adequately compensated and from whom we do not derive revenue. We may also own a taxable REIT subsidiary that provides non-customary services to tenants without tainting our rental income from the related properties.

Even if a REIT furnishes or renders services that are non-customary with respect to a property, if the greater of (i) the amounts received or accrued, directly or indirectly, or deemed received by the REIT with respect to such services, or (ii) 150% of our direct cost in furnishing or rendering the services during a taxable year is not more than 1% of all amounts received or accrued, directly or indirectly by the REIT with respect to the property during the same taxable year, then only the amounts with respect to such non-customary services are not treated as rent for purposes of the REIT gross income tests.

Prohibited Transactions Tax. A REIT will incur a 100% tax on the net income derived from any sale or other disposition of property, other than foreclosure property, that the REIT holds primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business. Whether a REIT holds an asset primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business depends, however, on the facts and circumstances in effect from time to time, including those related to a particular asset. Nevertheless, we

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generally intend to conduct our operations so that no asset that we own will be treated as, or as having been, held for sale to customers, and that a sale of any such asset will not be treated as having been in the ordinary course of our business. We cannot assure you that we will comply with certain safe harbor provisions or that we will avoid owning property that may be characterized as property that we hold primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business. The 100% tax will not apply to gains from the sale of property that is held through a taxable REIT subsidiary or other taxable corporation, although such income will be subject to tax in the hands of the corporation at regular corporate income tax rates.

Foreclosure Property. Foreclosure property is any real property, including interests in real property, and any personal property incident to such real property:

- that is acquired by a REIT as the result of the REIT having bid in such property at foreclosure, or having otherwise reduced such property to ownership or possession by agreement or process of law, after there was a default or default was imminent on a lease of such property or on indebtedness that such property secured;
- for which the related loan was acquired by the REIT at a time when the default was not imminent or anticipated; and
- for which the REIT makes a proper election to treat the property as foreclosure property.

However, a REIT will not be considered to have foreclosed on a property where the REIT takes control of the property as a mortgagee-in-possession and cannot receive any profit or sustain any loss except as a creditor of the mortgagor.

Property generally ceases to be foreclosure property at the end of the third taxable year following the taxable year in which the REIT acquired the property, or longer if an extension is granted by the Secretary of the U.S. Treasury. This grace period terminates and foreclosure property ceases to be foreclosure property on the first day:

- on which a lease is entered into for the property that, by its terms, will give rise to income that does not qualify for purposes of the 75% gross income test, or any amount is received or accrued, directly or indirectly, pursuant to a lease entered into on or after such day that will give rise to income that does not qualify for purposes of the 75% gross income test;
- on which any construction takes place on the property (other than completion of a building, or any other improvement, where more than 10% of the construction was completed before default became imminent); or
- which is more than 90 days after the day on which the REIT acquired the property and the property is used in a trade or business that is conducted by the REIT, other than through an independent contractor from whom the REIT itself does not derive or receive any income or a taxable REIT subsidiary.

We will be subject to tax at the maximum corporate rate on any income from foreclosure property, other than income that otherwise would be qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test, less expenses directly connected with the production of that income. However, income from foreclosure property, including gain from the sale of foreclosure property held for sale in the ordinary course of a trade or business, will qualify for purposes of the 75% and 95% gross income tests.

We may have the option to foreclose on mortgage loans when a borrower is in default. The foregoing rules could affect a decision by us to foreclose on a particular mortgage loan and could affect whether we choose to foreclose with regard to a particular mortgage loan.

Foreign Currency Gain. Certain foreign currency gains will be excluded from gross income for purposes of one or both of the gross income tests. “Real estate foreign exchange gain” will be excluded from gross income for purposes of the 75% and 95% gross income tests. Real estate foreign exchange gain generally includes foreign currency gain attributable to any item of income or gain that is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test, foreign currency gain attributable to the acquisition or ownership of (or becoming or being the obligor under) obligations secured by mortgages on real property or an interest in real property and certain foreign currency gain attributable to certain “qualified business units” of a REIT that satisfies the 75% gross income test and 75% asset test on a stand-alone basis. “Passive foreign exchange gain” will be excluded from gross income for purposes of the 95% gross income test. Passive foreign exchange gain generally includes real estate foreign exchange gain as described above, and also includes foreign currency gain attributable to any item of income or gain that is qualifying income for purposes of the 95% gross income test and foreign currency gain attributable to the acquisition or ownership of (or becoming or being the obligor under) obligations. These exclusions for real estate foreign exchange gain and passive foreign exchange gain do not apply to any foreign currency gain derived from dealing, or engaging in substantial and regular trading, in securities. Such gain is treated as nonqualifying income for purposes of both the 75% and 95% gross income tests.

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Dividends. Our dividend income from stock in any corporation (other than any REIT) and from any taxable REIT subsidiary will be qualifying income for purposes of the 95% gross income test, but not the 75% gross income test. If we own stock in other REITs, the dividends that we receive from those REITs and our gain on the sale of the stock in those REITs will be qualifying income for purposes of both gross income tests. However, if a REIT in which we own stock fails to qualify as a REIT in any year, our income from such REIT would be qualifying income for purposes of the 95% gross income test, but not the 75% gross income test.

Phantom income. Due to the nature of the assets in which we will invest, we may be required to recognize taxable income from certain assets in advance of our receipt of cash flow from or proceeds from disposition of such assets, and may be required to report taxable income that exceeds the economic income ultimately realized on such assets.

We may acquire debt instruments or MBS in the secondary market for less than their face amount. The amount of such discount generally will be treated as “market discount” for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Accrued market discount is reported as income when, and to the extent that, any payment of principal of the debt instrument is made, unless we elect to include accrued market discount in income as it accrues. Principal payments on certain loans are made monthly, and consequently accrued market discount may have to be included in income each month as if the debt instrument were assured of ultimately being collected in full. If we collect less on the debt instrument than our purchase price plus the market discount we had previously reported as income, we may not be able to benefit from any offsetting loss deductions.

Some of the loans and debt securities that we acquire may have been issued with original issue discount. In general, we will be required to accrue original issue discount based on the constant yield to maturity of the debt securities, and to treat it as taxable income in accordance with applicable U.S. federal income tax rules even though such yield may exceed cash payments, if any, received on such debt instrument.

We generally will be required to take certain amounts in income no later than the time such amounts are reflected on certain financial statements. The application of this rule may require the accrual of income with respect to our debt instruments or MBS, such as original issue discount, earlier than would be the case under the general tax rules, although the precise application of this rule is unclear at this time. To the extent that this rule requires the accrual of income earlier than under the general tax rules, it could increase our phantom income, which may make it more likely that we could be required to borrow funds or take other action to satisfy the REIT distribution requirements for the taxable year in which this phantom income is recognized. We currently do not expect that this rule will have a material impact on the timing of accrual of our income or on the amount of our distribution requirement. We will consider the potential effects of phantom income on our taxable stockholders in managing our investments.

We may agree to modify the terms of distressed or other loans we hold. These modifications may be considered “significant modifications” for U.S. federal income tax purposes that give rise to a deemed debt-for-debt exchange upon which we may recognize taxable income or gain without a corresponding receipt of cash.

In addition, in the event that any debt instruments or debt securities acquired by us are delinquent as to mandatory principal and interest payments, or in the event payments with respect to a particular debt instrument are not made when due, we may nonetheless be required to continue to recognize the unpaid interest as taxable income. Similarly, we may be required to accrue interest income with respect to subordinated MBS at the stated rate regardless of whether corresponding cash payments are received.

Finally, we may be required under the terms of indebtedness that we incur to use cash received from interest payments to make principal payments on that indebtedness, with the effect of recognizing income but not having a corresponding amount of cash available for distribution to our stockholders.

As a result of each of these potential timing differences between income recognition or expense deduction and cash receipts or disbursements, there is a significant risk that we may have substantial taxable income in excess of cash available for distribution. In that event, we may need to borrow funds or take other action to satisfy the REIT distribution requirements for the taxable year in which this “phantom income” is recognized. See “—Annual Distribution Requirements Applicable to REITs.”

Failure to Satisfy Gross Income Tests. If we fail to satisfy one or both of the 75% and 95% gross income tests for any taxable year, we may nevertheless qualify as a REIT for that year if we are entitled to relief under the Code. That relief provision will be available if our failure to meet the tests is due to reasonable cause and not due to willful neglect, and we attach a schedule of the sources of our income to our U.S. federal income tax return. It is not possible, however, to state whether in all circumstances we would be entitled to the benefit of these relief provisions. For example, if we fail to satisfy the gross income tests because nonqualifying income that we intentionally recognize exceeds the limits on nonqualifying income, the IRS could conclude that the failure to satisfy the tests was not due to reasonable cause. If these relief provisions are inapplicable to a particular set of circumstances, we will fail to qualify as a REIT. Even if these relief provisions apply, a penalty tax would be imposed based on the amount of nonqualifying income. See “—Our Taxation as a REIT” and “—Failure to Qualify.”

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Asset Tests

At the close of each quarter of our taxable year, we must satisfy the following tests relating to the nature of our assets.

- At least 75% of the value of our total assets must be represented by the following (or, the 75% asset class):
 - interests in real property, including leaseholds and options to acquire real property and leaseholds, and, for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2015, personal property to the extent such personal property is leased in connection with real property and rents attributable to such personal property are treated as “rents from real property” as a result of such rents not exceeding 15% of the total rent attributable to personal property and real property under such lease;
 - interests in mortgages on real property;
 - stock in other REITs and debt instruments issued by “publicly offered” REITs (i.e., a REIT that is required to file annual and periodic reports with the SEC under the Exchange Act);
 - cash and cash items;
 - U.S. government securities;
 - investments in stock or debt instruments attributable to the temporary investment of new capital during the one-year period following our receipt of new capital that we raise through equity offerings or public offerings of debt obligations with at least a five-year term; and
 - regular or residual interests in a REMIC. However, if less than 95% of the assets of a REMIC consist of assets that are qualifying real estate-related assets under the U.S. federal income tax laws, determined as if we held such assets directly, we will be treated as holding directly our proportionate share of the assets of such REMIC.
- Not more than 25% of our total assets may be represented by securities, other than those in the 75% asset class.
- Except for securities in taxable REIT subsidiaries and the securities in the 75% asset class, the value of any one issuer’s securities owned by us may not exceed 5% of the value of our total assets (or, the 5% asset test).
- Except for securities in taxable REIT subsidiaries and the securities in the 75% asset class, we may not own more than 10% of any one issuer’s outstanding voting securities (or, the 10% vote test).
- Except for securities of taxable REIT subsidiaries and the securities in the 75% asset class, we may not own more than 10% of the total value of the outstanding securities of any one issuer, other than securities that qualify for the “straight debt” exception discussed below (or, 10% value test).
- Not more than 20% (25% for taxable years beginning before January 1, 2018) of the value of our total assets may be represented by the securities of one or more taxable REIT subsidiaries.
- Not more than 25% of the value of our total assets may be represented by debt instruments of “publicly offered” REITs that are not secured by real property or interests in real property.

Securities, for the purposes of the asset tests, may include debt we hold from other issuers. However, debt we hold in an issuer that does not qualify for purposes of the 75% asset test will not be taken into account for purposes of the 10% value test if the debt securities meet the straight debt safe harbor. Debt will meet the “straight debt” safe harbor if the debt is a written unconditional promise to pay on demand or on a specified date a sum certain in money, the debt is not convertible, directly or indirectly, into stock, and the interest rate and the interest payment dates of the debt are not contingent on the profits, the borrower’s discretion or similar factors. In the case of an issuer that is a corporation or a partnership, securities that otherwise would be considered straight debt will not be so considered if we, and any of our “controlled taxable REIT subsidiaries” as defined in the Code, hold any securities of the

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corporate or partnership issuer that (a) are not straight debt or other excluded securities (prior to the application of this rule), and (b) have an aggregate value greater than 1% of the issuer's outstanding securities (including, for the purposes of a partnership issuer, our interest as a partner in the partnership).

In addition, the following instruments will not be considered securities for purposes of the 10% value test: (i) a REIT's interest as a partner in a partnership; (ii) any debt instrument issued by a partnership (other than straight debt or any other excluded security) if at least 75% of the partnership's gross income is derived from sources that would qualify for the 75% REIT gross income test; (iii) any debt instrument issued by a partnership (other than straight debt or any other excluded security) to the extent of the REIT's interest as a partner in the partnership; (iv) any loan to an individual or an estate; (v) any "section 467 rental agreement," other than an agreement with a related party tenant; (vi) any obligation to pay "rents from real property"; (vii) certain securities issued by governmental entities that are not dependent in whole or in part on the profits of (or payments made by) a non-governmental entity; and (viii) any security (including debt securities) issued by another REIT. For purposes of the 10% value test, our proportionate share of the assets of a partnership is our proportionate interest in any securities issued by the partnership, without regard to the securities described clause (i) and (ii) in the preceding sentence.

For purposes of the 75% asset test, mortgage loans generally will qualify as real estate assets to the extent that they are secured by real property. Where a mortgage covers both real property and other property, an apportionment may be required in the same manner as described under "—Income Tests—Interest." IRS Revenue Procedure 2014-51 provides a safe harbor under which the IRS has stated that it will not challenge a REIT's treatment of a loan as being, in part, a qualifying real estate asset in an amount equal to the lesser of (i) the fair market value of the loan on the relevant quarterly REIT asset testing date or (ii) the greater of (a) the fair market value of the real property securing the loan on the relevant quarterly REIT asset testing date or (b) the fair market value of the real property securing the loan on the date the REIT committed to originate or acquire the loan. We believe that all of the mortgage loans that we acquire at a discount under the circumstances contemplated by Revenue Procedure 2014-51 are secured only by real property, and no other property value is taken into account in our underwriting and pricing. Accordingly, we believe that apportionment does not apply to our portfolio.

We expect that our investments in MBS generally will be treated as interests in a grantor trust or as interests in a REMIC for U.S. federal income tax purposes. In the case of MBS treated as interests in grantor trusts, we would be treated as owning an undivided beneficial ownership interest in the mortgage loans held by the grantor trust. In the case of MBS treated as an interest in a REMIC, such interests generally will qualify as real estate assets, and income derived from REMIC interests generally will be treated as qualifying income for purposes of the REIT income tests described above. If less than 95% of the assets of a REMIC are real estate assets, however, then only a proportionate part of our interest in the REMIC and income derived from the interest qualifies for purposes of the REIT asset and income tests.

We believe that most of the assets that we hold and those we expect to hold will be qualifying assets for purposes of the 75% asset test. However, our investment in other asset-backed securities, bank loans and other instruments that are not secured by mortgages on real property will not be qualifying assets for purposes of the 75% asset test.

We will monitor the status of our assets for purposes of the various asset tests and will seek to manage our portfolio to comply at all times with such tests. There can be no assurances, however, that we will be successful in this effort. In this regard, to determine our compliance with these requirements, we will need to estimate the value of the real estate securing our mortgage loans at various times. In addition, we will be required to value our investment in our other assets to ensure compliance with the asset tests. Although we will seek to be prudent in making these estimates, no independent appraisals will be obtained to support our conclusions as to the value of our assets and securities, or in many cases, the real estate collateral for the mortgage loans that we hold. Moreover, values of some assets may not be susceptible to a precise determination. As a result, there can be no assurances that the IRS may not disagree with these determinations and assert that a different value is applicable, in which case we may not satisfy the 75% and the other asset tests.

We will not lose our REIT status for a de minimis failure to meet the 5% or 10% asset requirements if the failure is due to ownership of assets the total value of which does not exceed the lesser of 1% of the total value of our assets or \$10 million. If we fail to satisfy any of the asset requirements for a particular tax quarter, we may still qualify as a REIT if we (1) identify the failure on a separate schedule, (2) the failure is due to reasonable cause and not willful neglect, (3) the assets causing the failure are disposed of (or the requirements are otherwise met) within six months of the last day of the quarter in which the failure was identified and (4) we pay a tax computed as the greater of either \$50,000 or the net income generated by the assets causing the failure multiplied by the highest corporate income tax rate.

After initially meeting the asset tests after the close of any quarter, we will not lose our status as a REIT if we fail to satisfy the asset tests at the end of a later quarter solely by reason of changes in the relative values of our assets. However, an acquisition of property by a REIT requires the REIT to revalue all of its assets. If the failure to satisfy the asset tests results from an increase in the value of our assets after the acquisition of securities or other property during a quarter, the failure can be cured by eliminating the discrepancy within 30 days after the close of that quarter. We intend to maintain adequate records of the value of our assets to ensure

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compliance with the asset tests and to take any available action within 30 days after the close of any quarter as may be required to cure any noncompliance with the asset tests. We cannot ensure that these steps always will be successful. If we fail to cure the noncompliance with the asset tests within this 30-day period, we could fail to qualify as a REIT.

Annual Distribution Requirements Applicable to REITs

To qualify as a REIT, we generally must distribute dividends (other than capital gain dividends) to our stockholders in an amount at least equal to:

- the sum of (i) 90% of our REIT taxable income, computed without regard to the dividends paid deduction and our net capital gain and (ii) 90% of our net income after tax, if any, from foreclosure property; minus
- the excess of the sum of specified items of non-cash income (including original issue discount on our mortgage loans) over 5% of our REIT taxable income, computed without regard to the dividends paid deduction and our net capital gain.

Distributions generally must be made during the taxable year to which they relate. Distributions may be made in the following year in two circumstances. First, if we declare a dividend in October, November or December of any year with a record date in one of these months and pay the dividend on or before January 31 of the following year, we will be treated as having paid the dividend on December 31 of the year in which the dividend was declared. Second, distributions may be made in the following year if the dividends are declared before we timely file our tax return for the year and if made before the first regular dividend payment made after such declaration. These distributions are taxable to our stockholders in the year in which paid, even though the distributions relate to our prior taxable year for purposes of the 90% distribution requirement. To the extent that we do not distribute all of our net capital gain or we distribute at least 90%, but less than 100% of our REIT taxable income, as adjusted, we will be subject to tax on the undistributed amount at regular corporate tax rates.

If we cease to be a “publicly offered REIT,” then in order for distributions to be counted as satisfying the annual distribution requirements for REITs, and to provide us with a REIT-level tax deduction, the distributions must not be “preferential dividends.” A dividend is not a preferential dividend if the distribution is (i) pro-rata among all outstanding shares of stock within a particular class, and (ii) in accordance with the preferences among different classes of stock as set forth in our organizational documents.

As described above, if we fail to distribute during a calendar year (or, in the case of distributions with declaration and record dates falling in the last three months of the calendar year, by the end of January following such calendar year) at least the sum of (i) 85% of our ordinary income for such year, (ii) 95% of our capital gain net income for such year and (iii) any undistributed taxable income from prior years, we will be subject to a 4% excise tax on the excess of such required distribution over the sum of (x) the amounts actually distributed (taking into account excess distributions from prior years) and (y) the amounts of income retained on which we have paid corporate income tax.

We may elect to retain rather than distribute all or a portion of our net capital gains and pay income tax on the gains. In that case, our stockholders would include their proportionate share of the undistributed net long-term capital gains in income and receive a credit for their proportionate share of the tax paid by us. For purposes of the 4% excise tax described above, any retained amounts for which we elect this treatment would be treated as having been distributed.

We intend to make timely distributions sufficient to satisfy the distribution requirements. However, due to the nature of the assets in which we will invest, we may be required to recognize taxable income from those assets in advance of our receipt of cash flow on or proceeds from disposition of such assets. For instance, we may be required to accrue interest and discount income on mortgage loans, MBS, and other types of debt securities or interests in debt securities before we receive any payments of interest or principal on such assets. See “—Income Tests—Phantom Income.” Moreover, in certain instances we may be required to accrue taxable income that we may not actually recognize as economic income. For example, if we own a residual equity position in a mortgage loan securitization, we may recognize taxable income that we will never actually receive due to losses sustained on the underlying mortgage loans. Although those losses would be deductible for tax purposes, they would likely occur in a year subsequent to the year in which we recognized the taxable income.

Although several types of non-cash income are excluded in determining the annual distribution requirement, we will incur corporate income tax and the 4% nondeductible excise tax with respect to those non-cash income items if we do not distribute those items on a current basis. As a result of the foregoing, we may not have sufficient cash to distribute all of our taxable income and thereby avoid corporate income tax and the excise tax imposed on certain undistributed income. In such a situation, we may need to borrow funds or issue additional common stock or preferred stock.

We may satisfy the 90% distribution test with taxable distributions of our stock or debt securities. The IRS has issued a revenue procedure authorizing publicly offered REITs to treat certain distributions that are paid partly in cash and partly in stock as dividends that would satisfy the REIT annual distribution requirement and qualify for the dividends paid deduction for U.S. federal income tax purposes. We have no current intention to make a taxable dividend payable in cash and stock.

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Under some circumstances, we may be able to rectify a failure to meet the distribution requirement for a year by paying deficiency dividends to stockholders in a later year, which may be included in our deduction for dividends paid for the earlier year. Thus, we may be able to avoid being taxed on amounts distributed as deficiency dividends. However, we will be required to pay interest based upon the amount of any deduction taken for deficiency dividends.

Failure to Qualify

If we fail to satisfy one or more requirements of REIT qualification, other than the income tests or asset requirements, then we may still retain REIT qualification if the failure is due to reasonable cause and not willful neglect, and we pay a penalty of \$50,000 for each failure.

If we fail to qualify for taxation as a REIT in any taxable year and the relief provisions do not apply, we will be subject to tax, including, for taxable years prior to 2018, any applicable alternative minimum tax, on our taxable income at regular corporate rates. This would significantly reduce both our cash available for distribution to our stockholders and our earnings. If we fail to qualify as a REIT, we will not be required to make any distributions to stockholders and any distributions that are made will not be deductible by us. Moreover, all distributions to stockholders would be taxable as dividends to the extent of our current and accumulated earnings and profits, whether or not attributable to capital gains of ours. Subject to certain limitations of the Code, corporate distributees may be eligible for the dividends received deduction with respect to those distributions, and individual, trust and estate distributees may be eligible for reduced income tax rates on such dividends. Unless we are entitled to relief under specific statutory provisions, we also will be disqualified from taxation as a REIT for the four taxable years following the year during which qualification was lost.

Taxation of U.S. Holders of Our Common Stock

U.S. Holder. As used in the remainder of this discussion, the term “U.S. holder” means a beneficial owner of our common stock that is for U.S. federal income tax purposes:

- a citizen or resident of the U.S.;
- a corporation (or an entity treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes) created or organized in or under the laws of the U.S., any of its States or the District of Columbia;
- an estate the income of which is subject to U.S. federal income taxation regardless of its source; or
- a trust if it (a) is subject to the primary supervision of a court within the U.S. and one or more U.S. persons have the authority to control all substantial decisions of the trust or (b) has a valid election in effect under applicable U.S. Treasury regulations to be treated as a U.S. person.

If a partnership (or an entity treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes) holds our common stock, the tax treatment of a partner generally will depend upon the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. If you are a partner of a partnership holding our common stock, you should consult your advisors. A “non-U.S. holder” is a beneficial owner of our common stock that is neither a U.S. holder nor a partnership (or an entity treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes).

Distributions Generally. As long as we qualify as a REIT, distributions made to taxable U.S. holders of our common stock out of current or accumulated earnings and profits that are not designated as capital gain dividends will be taken into account by them as ordinary income taxable at ordinary income tax rates and will not qualify for the reduced capital gains rates that currently generally apply to distributions by non-REIT C corporations to certain non-corporate U.S. holders. In determining the extent to which a distribution constitutes a dividend for tax purposes, our earnings and profits will be allocated first to distributions with respect to our preferred stock and then to our common stock. Corporate stockholders will not be eligible for the dividends received deduction with respect to these distributions.

For taxable years beginning before January 1, 2026, individuals, trusts and estates may deduct up to 20% of certain pass-through income, including ordinary REIT dividends that are not “capital gain dividends” or “qualified dividend income,” subject to certain limitations (the “pass-through deduction”). For taxable years beginning before January 1, 2026, the maximum tax rate for U.S. holders taxed at individual rates is 37%. For taxpayers qualifying for the full pass-through deduction, the effective maximum tax rate on ordinary REIT dividends for taxable years beginning before January 1, 2026 would be 29.6%. To qualify for this deduction with respect to a dividend on shares of our common stock, a shareholder must hold such shares for more than 45 days during the 91-day

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period beginning on the date which is 45 days before the date on which such shares become ex-dividend with respect to such dividend (taking into account certain special holding period rules that may, among other consequences, reduce a shareholder's holding period during any period in which the shareholder has diminished its risk of loss with respect to the shares). Shareholders are urged to consult their tax advisors as to their ability to claim this deduction.

Distributions in excess of both current and accumulated earnings and profits will not be taxable to a U.S. holder to the extent that the distributions do not exceed the adjusted basis of the holder's stock. Rather, such distributions will reduce the adjusted basis of the stock. To the extent that distributions exceed the adjusted basis of a U.S. holder's stock, the distributions will be taxable as capital gains. A U.S. holder's initial tax basis in a share of our common stock is, in general, equal to the amount paid per share.

Distributions generally will be taxable, if at all, in the year of the distribution. However, if we declare a dividend in October, November or December of any year with a record date in one of these months and pay the dividend on or before January 31 of the following year, we will be treated as having paid the dividend, and the stockholder will be treated as having received the dividend, on December 31 of the year in which the dividend was declared.

Capital Gain Dividends. We may elect to designate distributions of our net capital gain as "capital gain dividends." Capital gain dividends are taxed to U.S. holders of our stock as gain from the sale or exchange of a capital asset held for more than one year. This tax treatment applies regardless of the period during which the U.S. holders have held their stock. If we designate any portion of a dividend as a capital gain dividend, the amount that will be taxable to the stockholder as capital gain will be indicated to U.S. holders on IRS Form 1099-DIV. Corporate U.S. holders, however, may be required to treat up to 20% of capital gain dividends as ordinary income. Capital gain dividends are not eligible for the dividends-received deduction for corporations.

Instead of paying capital gain dividends, we may elect to require U.S. holders to include our undistributed net capital gains in their income. If we make such an election, U.S. holders (i) will include in their income as long-term capital gains their proportionate share of such undistributed capital gains and (ii) will be deemed to have paid their proportionate share of the tax paid by us on such undistributed capital gains and thereby receive a credit or refund for such amount. A U.S. holder of our common stock will increase the basis in its shares of our common stock by the difference between the amount of capital gain included in its income and the amount of tax it is deemed to have paid. Our earnings and profits will be adjusted appropriately.

We must classify portions of our designated capital gain dividend into the following categories:

- a 20% gain distribution, which would be taxable to non-corporate U.S. holders of our stock at a rate of up to 20%; or
- an unrecaptured section 1250 gain distribution, which would be taxable to non-corporate U.S. holders of our stock at a maximum rate of 25%.

The IRS currently requires that distributions made to different classes of stock be composed proportionately of dividends of a particular type.

Passive Activity Loss and Investment Interest Limitation. Distributions and gain from the disposition of our common stock will not be treated as passive activity income, and therefore U.S. holders will not be able to apply any "passive activity losses" against such income. Dividends paid by us, to the extent they do not constitute a return of capital, generally will be treated as investment income for purposes of the investment income limitation on the deduction of the investment interest.

Other Tax Considerations. U.S. holders of our common stock may not include in their individual income tax returns any of our net operating losses or capital losses. Our operating or capital losses would be carried over by us for potential offset against future income, subject to applicable limitations.

Sales of Our Common Stock. Upon any taxable sale or other disposition of our common stock, a U.S. holder of our common stock will recognize gain or loss for U.S. federal income tax purposes on the disposition of our common stock in an amount equal to the difference between:

- the amount of cash and the fair market value of any property received on such disposition; and
- the U.S. holder's adjusted basis in such REIT stock for tax purposes.

Gain or loss will be capital gain or loss. The applicable tax rate will depend on the holder's holding period in the asset (generally, if an asset has been held for more than one year it will produce long-term capital gain) and the holder's tax bracket.

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Medicare Tax. Certain U.S. holders, including individuals and estates and trusts, are subject to an additional 3.8% Medicare tax on all or a portion of their “net investment income,” which includes net gain from a sale or exchange of our common stock and income from dividends paid on our common stock. U.S. holders are urged to consult their tax advisors regarding the Medicare tax.

Taxation of Non-U.S. Holders of Our Common Stock

The rules governing U.S. federal income taxation of non-U.S. holders are complex. This section is only a summary of such rules. We urge non-U.S. holders to consult their tax advisors to determine the impact of federal, state and local income tax laws on ownership of our common stock, including any reporting requirements.

Distributions. Distributions by us to a non-U.S. holder of our common stock that are neither attributable to gain from sales or exchanges by us of “U.S. real property interests” nor designated by us as capital gains dividends will be treated as dividends of ordinary income to the extent that they are made out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits. These distributions ordinarily will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on a gross basis at a rate of 30%, or a lower rate as permitted under an applicable income tax treaty, unless the dividends are treated as effectively connected with the conduct by the non-U.S. holder of a U.S. trade or business. Under some treaties, however, lower rates generally applicable to dividends do not apply to dividends from REITs. Further, reduced treaty rates are not available to the extent the income allocated to the non-U.S. holder is excess inclusion income. Although we do not expect to recognize any excess inclusion income, if we did recognize excess inclusion income that exceeds our undistributed REIT taxable income in a particular year, it would be allocated to our stockholders. See “—Our Taxation as a REIT—Taxable Mortgage Pools.” Dividends that are effectively connected with a trade or business will be subject to tax on a net basis, that is, after allowance for deductions, at graduated rates, in the same manner as U.S. holders are taxed with respect to these dividends, and are generally not subject to withholding. Applicable certification and disclosure requirements must be satisfied to be exempt from withholding under the effectively connected income exception. Any dividends received by a corporate non-U.S. holder that is engaged in a U.S. trade or business also may be subject to an additional branch profits tax at a 30% rate, or lower applicable treaty rate. We expect to withhold U.S. income tax at the rate of 30% on any dividend distributions, not designated as (or deemed to be) capital gain dividends, made to a non-U.S. holder unless:

- a lower treaty rate applies and the non-U.S. holder files an IRS Form W-8BEN or IRS Form W-8BEN-E, as applicable, with us evidencing eligibility for that reduced rate is filed with us; or
- the non-U.S. holder files an IRS Form W-8ECI with us claiming that the distribution is income effectively connected with the non-U.S. holder’s trade or business.

Distributions in excess of our current or accumulated earnings and profits that do not exceed the adjusted basis of the non-U.S. holder in our common stock will reduce the non-U.S. holder’s adjusted basis in our common stock and will not be subject to U.S. federal income tax. Distributions in excess of current and accumulated earnings and profits that do exceed the adjusted basis of the non-U.S. holder in our common stock will be treated as gain from the sale of its stock, the tax treatment of which is described below. See “—Taxation of Non-U.S. Holders of Our Common Stock—Sales of Our Common Stock.” Because we generally cannot determine at the time we make a distribution whether or not the distribution will exceed our current and accumulated earnings and profits, we normally will withhold tax on the entire amount of any distribution at the same rate as we would withhold on a dividend.

We would be required to withhold at least 15% of any distribution to a non-U.S. holder in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits if our common stock constitutes a U.S. real property interest with respect to such non-U.S. holder, as described below under “—Sales of Our Common Stock.” This withholding would apply even if a lower treaty rate applies or the non-U.S. holder is not liable for tax on the receipt of that distribution. However, a non-U.S. holder may seek a refund of these amounts from the IRS if the non-U.S. holder’s U.S. tax liability with respect to the distribution is less than the amount withheld.

Distributions to a non-U.S. holder that are designated by us at the time of the distribution as capital gain dividends, other than those arising from the disposition of a U.S. real property interest, generally should not be subject to U.S. federal income taxation unless:

- the investment in our common stock is effectively connected with the non-U.S. holder’s trade or business, in which case the non-U.S. holder will be subject to the same treatment as U.S. holders with respect to any gain, except that a holder that is a foreign corporation also may be subject to the 30% branch profits tax, as discussed above; or
- the non-U.S. holder is a nonresident alien individual who is present in the U.S. for 183 days or more during the taxable year and has a “tax home” in the U.S., in which case the nonresident alien individual will be subject to a 30% tax on the individual’s capital gains.

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Under the Foreign Investment in Real Property Tax Act of 1980, which is referred to as “FIRPTA,” distributions to certain non-U.S. holders that are attributable to gain from sales or exchanges by us of U.S. real property interests, whether or not designated as a capital gain dividend, will cause such non-U.S. holders to be treated as recognizing gain that is income effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business. Such non-U.S. holders will be taxed on this gain at the same rates applicable to U.S. holders, subject to a special alternative minimum tax in the case of nonresident alien individuals. Also, this gain may be subject to a 30% (or lower applicable treaty rate) branch profits tax in the hands of a non-U.S. holder that is a corporation. Unless the non-U.S. holder is a “qualified shareholder” or a “qualified foreign pension fund” (each as defined below), we will be required to withhold and remit to the IRS 21% of any distributions to non-U.S. holders that are designated as capital gain dividends, or, if greater, 21% of a distribution that could have been designated as a capital gain dividend, whether or not attributable to sales of U.S. real property interests. Distributions can be designated as capital gains to the extent of our net capital gain for the taxable year of the distribution. The amount withheld, which for individual non-U.S. holders may exceed the actual tax liability, is creditable against the non-U.S. holder’s U.S. federal income tax liability.

However, the 21% withholding tax will not apply to any capital gain dividend with respect to any class of our stock which is regularly traded on an established securities market located in the U.S. if the non-U.S. stockholder did not own more than 10% of such class of stock at any time during the one-year period ending on the date of such dividend. Instead, any capital gain dividend to such holder will be treated as a distribution of ordinary income subject to the rules discussed above under “—Distributions.” Also, the branch profits tax will not apply to such a distribution.

Sales of Our Common Stock. Gain recognized by a non-U.S. holder upon the sale or exchange of our common stock generally would not be subject to U.S. taxation unless:

- the investment in our common stock is effectively connected with the non-U.S. holder’s U.S. trade or business, in which case the non-U.S. holder will be subject to the same treatment as domestic holders with respect to any gain;
- the non-U.S. holder is a nonresident alien individual who is present in the U.S. for 183 days or more during the taxable year and has a tax home in the U.S., in which case the nonresident alien individual will be subject to a 30% tax on the individual’s net capital gains for the taxable year; or
- the non-U.S. holder is not a “qualified shareholder” or a “qualified foreign pension fund” and our common stock constitutes a U.S. real property interest within the meaning of FIRPTA, as described below.

Our common stock will not constitute a U.S. real property interest if we either are not a U.S. real property holding corporation or we are a domestically-controlled REIT. Whether we are a U.S. real property holding corporation will depend upon whether the fair market value of U.S. real property interests owned by us equals or exceeds 50% of the fair market value of these interests, any interests in real estate outside of the U.S., and our other trade and business assets. The term “U.S. real property interests” generally does not include mortgage loans or MBS. Even if we are a U.S. real property holding corporation, the disposition of our common stock will not be subject to FIRPTA if we are a domestically-controlled REIT. Generally, a REIT is domestically controlled if, at all times during a specified testing period, less than 50% of the value of its shares is held directly or indirectly by non-U.S. persons.

Because our common stock will be publicly traded, no assurance can be given that we are or will be a domestically-controlled REIT. Even if we were a U.S. real property holding corporation and were not a domestically-controlled REIT, a sale of common stock by a non-U.S. holder would nevertheless not be subject to taxation under FIRPTA as a sale of a U.S. real property interest if:

- our common stock were “regularly traded” on an established securities market within the meaning of applicable U.S. Treasury regulations; and
- the non-U.S. holder did not actually, or constructively under specified attribution rules under the Code, own more than 10% of our common stock at any time during the shorter of the five-year period preceding the disposition or the holder’s holding period.

We believe that our common stock is currently treated as being regularly traded on an established securities market. If gain on the sale or exchange of our common stock were subject to taxation under FIRPTA, the non-U.S. holder would be subject to regular U.S. income tax with respect to any gain in the same manner as a taxable U.S. holder, subject to any applicable alternative minimum tax and special alternative minimum tax in the case of nonresident alien individuals. In such case, under FIRPTA, the purchaser of common stock may be required to withhold 15% of the purchase price and remit this amount to the IRS.

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Qualified Shareholders. Subject to the exception discussed below, any distribution to a “qualified shareholder” who holds REIT stock directly or indirectly (through one or more partnerships) will not be subject to U.S. federal income taxation under FIRPTA and thus will not be subject to special withholding rules under FIRPTA. While a “qualified shareholder” will not be subject to FIRPTA withholding on REIT distributions, the portion of REIT distributions attributable to certain investors in a “qualified shareholder” (i.e., non-U.S. persons who hold interests in the “qualified shareholder” (other than interests solely as a creditor), and directly or indirectly hold more than 10% of our common stock (whether or not by reason of the investor’s ownership in the “qualified shareholder”)) may be subject to FIRPTA withholding. REIT distributions received by a “qualified shareholder” that are exempt from FIRPTA withholding may still be subject to regular U.S. withholding tax.

In addition, a sale of our stock by a “qualified shareholder” who holds such stock directly or indirectly (through one or more partnerships) generally will not be subject to U.S. federal income taxation under FIRPTA. As with distributions, the portion of amounts realized attributable to certain investors in a “qualified shareholder” (i.e., non-U.S. persons who hold interests in the “qualified shareholder” (other than interests solely as a creditor), and directly or indirectly hold more than 10% of our common stock (whether or not by reason of the investor’s ownership in the “qualified shareholder”)) may be subject to U.S. federal income taxation and FIRPTA withholding on a sale of our stock.

A “qualified shareholder” is a foreign person that (i) either is eligible for the benefits of a comprehensive income tax treaty which includes an exchange of information program and whose principal class of interests is listed and regularly traded on one or more recognized stock exchanges (as defined in such comprehensive income tax treaty), or is a foreign partnership that is created or organized under foreign law as a limited partnership in a jurisdiction that has an agreement for the exchange of information with respect to taxes with the U.S. and has a class of limited partnership units representing greater than 50% of the value of all the partnership units that is regularly traded on the NYSE or Nasdaq markets, (ii) is a “qualified collective investment vehicle” (defined below), and (iii) maintains records on the identity of each person who, at any time during the foreign person’s taxable year, is the direct owner of 5% or more of the class of interests or units (as applicable) described in (i), above.

A qualified collective investment vehicle is a foreign person that (i) would be eligible for a reduced rate of withholding under the comprehensive income tax treaty described above, even if such entity holds more than 10% of the stock of such REIT, (ii) is publicly traded, is treated as a partnership under the Code, is a withholding foreign partnership, and would be treated as a “United States real property holding corporation” if it were a domestic corporation, or (iii) is designated as such by the Secretary of the U.S. Treasury and is either (a) fiscally transparent within the meaning of section 894 of the Code, or (b) required to include dividends in its gross income, but is entitled to a deduction for distributions to its investors.

Qualified Foreign Pension Funds. Any distribution to a “qualified foreign pension fund” (or an entity all of the interests of which are held by a “qualified foreign pension fund”) who holds REIT stock directly or indirectly (through one or more partnerships) will not be subject to U.S. federal income taxation under FIRPTA and thus will not be subject to special withholding rules under FIRPTA. REIT distributions received by a “qualified foreign pension fund” that are exempt from FIRPTA withholding may still be subject to regular U.S. withholding tax. In addition, a sale of our stock by a “qualified foreign pension fund” that holds such stock directly or indirectly (through one or more partnerships) will not be subject to U.S. federal income taxation under FIRPTA.

A qualified foreign pension fund is any trust, corporation, or other organization or arrangement (i) which is created or organized under the law of a country other than the U.S., (ii) which is established by such country or an employer to provide retirement or pension benefits to participants or beneficiaries that are current or former employees (or persons designated by such employees) of one or more employers in consideration for services rendered, (iii) which does not have a single participant or beneficiary with a right to more than 5% of its assets or income, (iv) which is subject to government regulation and with respect to which annual information reporting about its beneficiaries is provided or otherwise available to the relevant tax authorities in the country in which it is established or operates, and (v) with respect to which, under the laws of the country in which it is established or operates, (a) contributions to such organization or arrangement that would otherwise be subject to tax under such laws are deductible or excluded from the gross income of such entity or taxed at a reduced rate, or (b) taxation of any investment income of such organization or arrangement is deferred or such income is taxed at a reduced rate.

Taxation of Tax-Exempt Holders of Our Common Stock

Provided that a tax-exempt holder has not held its common stock as “debt-financed property” within the meaning of the Code, the dividend and interest income from us generally will not be unrelated business taxable income, referred to as UBTI, to a tax-exempt holder. Similarly, income from the sale of our common stock will not constitute UBTI unless the tax-exempt holder has held its common stock as debt-financed property within the meaning of the Code. Although we do not expect to recognize any excess inclusion income, to the extent that we, or a part of us, or a disregarded subsidiary of ours, is a taxable mortgage pool, a portion of the dividends paid to a tax-exempt stockholders that is allocable to excess inclusion income may be subject to tax as UBTI. See “—Our Taxation as a REIT—Taxable Mortgage Pools.”

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Notwithstanding the above, however, social clubs, voluntary employee benefit associations, supplemental unemployment benefit trusts and qualified group legal services plans that are exempt from taxation under special provisions of the U.S. federal income tax laws are subject to different UBTI rules, which generally will require them to characterize distributions that they receive from us as UBTI. Moreover, a portion of the dividends paid by a “pension-held REIT” are treated as UBTI as to any trust which is described in section 401(a) of the Code, is tax-exempt under section 501(a) of the Code, and holds more than 10%, by value, of the interests in the REIT. Tax-exempt pension funds that are described in section 401(a) of the Code are referred to below as “pension trusts.”

A REIT is a “pension-held REIT” if it meets the following two tests:

- it would not have qualified as a REIT but for section 856(h)(3) of the Code, which provides that stock owned by pension trusts will be treated, for purposes of determining whether the REIT is closely held, as owned by the beneficiaries of the trust rather than by the trust itself; and
- either (i) at least one pension trust holds more than 25% of the value of the interests in the REIT, or (ii) a group of pension trusts each individually holding more than 10% of the value of the REIT’s stock, collectively owns more than 50% of the value of the REIT’s stock.

The percentage of any REIT dividend from a “pension-held REIT” that is treated as UBTI is equal to the ratio of the UBTI earned by the REIT, treating the REIT as if it were a pension trust and therefore subject to tax on UBTI, to the total gross income of the REIT. An exception applies where the percentage is less than 5% for any year, in which case none of the dividends would be treated as UBTI. The provisions requiring pension trusts to treat a portion of REIT distributions as UBTI will not apply if the REIT is not a “pension-held REIT” (for example, if the REIT is able to satisfy the “not closely held requirement” without relying on the “look through” exception with respect to pension trusts). Our 9.8% ownership limit may make it less likely that a pension trust would hold more than 25% of the value of our common stock or that a group of pension trusts each holding more than 10% of the value of our common stock would hold more than 50% of the value of our common stock. No assurance can be given, however, that we will not be a “pension-held REIT” because of ownership waivers or otherwise.

Backup Withholding Tax and Information Reporting

U.S. Holders of Our Common Stock. In general, information-reporting requirements will apply to payments of dividends and interest on and payments of the proceeds of the sale of our common stock held by U.S. holders, unless an exception applies. The payor is required to withhold tax on such payments if (i) the payee fails to furnish a taxpayer identification number, or TIN, to the payor or to establish an exemption from backup withholding, or (ii) the IRS notifies the payor that the TIN furnished by the payee is incorrect. In addition, a payor of the dividends or interest on our common stock is required to withhold tax if (i) there has been a notified payee under-reporting with respect to interest, dividends or original issue discount described in section 3406(c) of the Code, or (ii) there has been a failure of the payee to certify under the penalty of perjury that the payee is not subject to backup withholding under the Code. A U.S. holder that does not provide us with a correct TIN may also be subject to penalties imposed by the IRS. In addition, we may be required to withhold a portion of capital gain distributions to any U.S. holders who fail to certify their U.S. status to us. Some U.S. holders of our common stock, including corporations, may be exempt from backup withholding. Any amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules from a payment to a stockholder will be allowed as a credit against the stockholder’s U.S. federal income tax and may entitle the stockholder to a refund, provided that the required information is furnished to the IRS. The payor will be required to furnish annually to the IRS and to holders of our common stock information relating to the amount of dividends paid on our common stock, and that information reporting may also apply to payments of proceeds from the sale of our common stock. Some holders, including corporations, financial institutions and certain tax-exempt organizations, are generally not subject to information reporting.

Non-U.S. Holders of Our Common Stock. Generally, information reporting will apply to payments of interest and dividends on our common stock, and backup withholding described above for a U.S. holder will apply, unless the payee certifies that it is not a U.S. person or otherwise establishes an exemption.

The payment of the proceeds from the disposition of our common stock to or through the U.S. office of a U.S. or foreign broker will be subject to information reporting and backup withholding as described above for U.S. holders unless the non-U.S. holder satisfies the requirements necessary to be an exempt non-U.S. holder or otherwise qualifies for an exemption. The proceeds of a disposition by a non-U.S. holder of our common stock to or through a foreign office of a broker generally will not be subject to information reporting or backup withholding. However, if the broker is a U.S. person, a controlled foreign corporation for U.S. tax purposes, a foreign person 50% or more of whose gross income from all sources for specified periods is from activities that are effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business, a foreign partnership if partners who hold more than 50% of the interest in the partnership are U.S. persons, or a foreign partnership that is engaged in the conduct of a trade or business in the U.S., then information reporting generally will apply as though the payment was made through a U.S. office of a U.S. or foreign broker.

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Applicable U.S. Treasury regulations provide presumptions regarding the status of a holder of our common stock when payments to such holder cannot be reliably associated with appropriate documentation provided to the payer. Because the application of these U.S. Treasury regulations varies depending on the stockholder's particular circumstances, you are advised to consult your tax advisor regarding the information reporting requirements applicable to you.

Additional Withholding Requirement. Under sections 1471 through 1474 of the Code (such sections commonly referred to as "Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act," or "FATCA"), a 30% U.S. federal withholding tax will apply to dividends that we pay to certain foreign entities if such entities do not satisfy disclosure requirements related to U.S. accounts or ownership. Foreign entities must provide documentation evidencing compliance with or an exemption from FATCA, typically provided on IRS Form W-8BEN-E, to avoid this withholding tax. We will not pay any additional amounts to stockholders in respect of any amounts withheld. If a payment is both subject to withholding under FATCA and subject to withholding tax discussed above, the withholding under FATCA may be credited against, and therefore reduce, such other withholding tax. Non-U.S. holders and U.S. holders holding through foreign accounts or intermediaries should consult their tax advisors to determine the applicability of FATCA in light of their individual circumstances.

Legislative or Other Actions Affecting REITs

The present U.S. federal income tax treatment of REITs may be modified, possibly with retroactive effect, by legislative, judicial, or administrative action at any time. The REIT rules are constantly under review by persons involved in the legislative process and by the IRS and the U.S. Treasury Department which may result in statutory changes as well as revisions to regulations and interpretations. We cannot predict the long-term effect of any future law changes on REITs and their stockholders. Prospective investors are urged to consult with their tax advisors regarding the effect of potential changes to the federal tax laws on an investment in our common stock.

State, Local and Foreign Taxes

We and our stockholders may be subject to state, local or foreign taxation in various state, local or foreign jurisdictions, including those in which we or they transact business or reside. Our state, local or foreign tax treatment and that of our stockholders may not conform to the U.S. federal income tax treatment discussed above. Consequently, prospective stockholders should consult their tax advisors regarding the effect of state, local and foreign tax laws on an investment in our common stock.

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PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

Our common stock offered pursuant to the Plan will be purchased by the Plan Administrator, at our option, directly from us or in the open market. The purchase price for shares of our common stock acquired directly from us will be equal to the volume-weighted average price (less any applicable discount) of our common stock as reported by the NYSE on the applicable Dividend Payment Date or the applicable Cash Purchase Investment Date. The purchase price deemed to be paid for shares of our common stock acquired in the open market on any given day will be the weighted average of the actual prices paid for all shares acquired on that date, including any trading fees and service charges (less any applicable discount). Shares of our common stock purchased under the Plan may be acquired at discounts of up to 5% from the prevailing market price as determined and set by us from time to time.

In connection with the administration of the Plan, we may be requested to approve investments made pursuant to requests for waiver by or on behalf of participants or other investors who may be engaged in the securities business.

Persons who acquire shares of our common stock through the Plan and resell them shortly after acquiring them, including coverage of short positions, under certain circumstances, may be participating in a distribution of securities that would require compliance with Regulation M under the Exchange Act and may be considered to be underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act. We will not extend to any such person any rights or privileges other than those to which they would be entitled as a participant, nor will we enter into any agreement with any such person regarding the resale or distribution by any such person of the shares of our common stock so purchased. We may, however, accept investments made pursuant to requests for waiver in connection with Large Cash Purchases by such persons.

From time to time, financial intermediaries, including brokers and dealers, and other persons may engage in positioning transactions in order to benefit from any waiver discounts applicable to investments made pursuant to requests for waiver for Large Cash Purchases under the Plan. Those transactions may cause fluctuations in the trading volume of our common stock. Financial intermediaries and such other persons who engage in positioning transactions may be deemed to be underwriters. We have no arrangements or understandings, formal or informal, with any person relating to the sale of shares of our common stock to be received under the Plan. We reserve the right to modify, suspend or terminate participation in the Plan by otherwise eligible persons to eliminate practices that are inconsistent with the purpose of the Plan.

See Questions 27 under “Description of the Plan” above for a description of fees that will be charged to Plan participants, including broker fees.

Our common stock may not be available under the Plan in all states or jurisdictions. We are not making an offer to sell our common stock in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the common stock offered by this prospectus is being passed upon for us by Venable LLP. The opinion of counsel described under “Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations” is being rendered by Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP, which opinion is subject to various assumptions and is based on current tax law.

EXPERTS

Our consolidated financial statements as of December 31, 2018 and 2017 and for each of the three years in the period ended December 31, 2018, and management’s assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2018, have been incorporated by reference herein in reliance upon the reports of KPMG LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, incorporated by reference herein, and upon the authority of said firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference the information we file with them, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to these documents. The information incorporated by reference is an important part of this prospectus, and information that we file later with the SEC will automatically update and supersede the information already incorporated by reference. We are incorporating by reference the documents listed below, which we have already filed with the SEC under the File Number 1-13991:

- (i) our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2018, filed with the SEC on [February 21, 2019](#);
- (ii) our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarterly period ended March 31, 2019, filed with the SEC on [May 7, 2019](#);

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- (iii) our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarterly period ended June 30, 2019, filed with the SEC on [August 7, 2019](#);
- (iv) our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on [May 23, 2019](#), [June 3, 2019](#) and [August 16, 2019](#);
- (v) portions of our Definitive Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A, filed with the SEC on [April 9, 2019](#) and incorporated by reference into our Annual Report on [Form 10-K](#) for the year ended December 31, 2018;
- (vi) the description of our common stock included in our Registration Statement on Form 8-A filed with the SEC on [March 26, 1998](#), including all amendments and reports filed for the purpose of updating such description;

In addition, we incorporate by reference into this prospectus any reports or documents that we file with the SEC (other than any portion of such filings that are furnished under applicable SEC rules rather than filed) under Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act prior to the termination of the applicable offering under this prospectus. If anything in a report or document we file after the date of this prospectus changes anything in (or incorporated by reference into) it, this prospectus will be deemed to be changed by that subsequently filed report or document beginning on the date the report or document is filed.

Upon request, we will provide, without charge, to each person, including any beneficial owner, to whom a copy of this prospectus is delivered a copy of the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus. You may request a copy of these filings, and any exhibits we have specifically incorporated by reference as an exhibit in this prospectus, by writing or telephoning us at: MFA Financial, Inc., 350 Park Avenue, 20th Floor, New York, New York 10022, Attention: Investor Relations Department; telephone: 212-207-6488.

INFORMATION WE FILE

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other materials with the SEC. The SEC maintains a website that contains reports, proxy and information statements and other information regarding issuers (including us) that file electronically with the SEC. The address of that website is www.sec.gov.

Reports, proxy statements and other information we file also can be inspected at the offices of the New York Stock Exchange, 20 Broad Street, New York, New York 10005.

We maintain a website at www.mfafinancial.com. Information contained on our website is not, and should not be interpreted to be, part of this prospectus.

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PART II

INFORMATION NOT REQUIRED IN PROSPECTUS

Item 14. Other Expenses of Issuance and Distribution.

The following table sets forth the expenses to be borne by the registrant in connection with the offerings described in this registration statement. All such expenses other than the SEC registration fee are estimates.

SEC registration fee	\$ 9,000
Legal fees and expenses ⁽¹⁾	20,000
Accounting fees and expenses ⁽¹⁾	10,000
Printing ⁽¹⁾	10,000
Miscellaneous ⁽¹⁾	20,000
Total	\$69,000

(1) Estimated

Item 15. Indemnification of Officers and Directors.

Maryland law permits a Maryland corporation to include in its charter a provision limiting the liability of its directors and officers to the corporation and its stockholders for money damages except for liability resulting from (i) actual receipt of an improper benefit or profit in money, property or services or (ii) active and deliberate dishonesty established by a final judgment and which is material to the cause of action. Our charter contains such a provision which eliminates directors' and officers' liability to the maximum extent permitted by Maryland law.

Our charter obligates us, to the maximum extent permitted by Maryland law, to indemnify any director or officer or any individual who, while a director or officer of our company, serves our company or, at the request of our company, serves or has served another entity, from and against any claim or liability to which that individual may become subject or which that individual may incur by reason of his or her status as a director or officer of our company and to pay or reimburse his or her reasonable expenses in advance of final disposition of a proceeding. The charter also permits our company to indemnify and advance expenses to any employee or agent of our company.

Maryland law requires a corporation (unless its charter provides otherwise, which our charter does not) to indemnify a director or officer who has been successful in the defense of any proceeding to which he or she is made, or threatened to be made, a party by reason of his or her service in that capacity. Maryland law permits a corporation to indemnify its present and former directors and officers, among others, against judgments, penalties, fines, settlements and reasonable expenses actually incurred by them in connection with any proceeding to which they may be made, or threatened to be made, a party by reason of their service in those or other capacities unless it is established that (i) the act or omission of the director or officer was material to the matter giving rise to the proceeding and (a) was committed in bad faith or (b) was the result of active and deliberate dishonesty, (ii) the director or officer actually received an improper personal benefit in money, property or services or (iii) in the case of any criminal proceeding, the director or officer had reasonable cause to believe that the act or omission was unlawful. However, under Maryland law, a Maryland corporation may not indemnify for an adverse judgment in a suit by or in the right of the corporation or for a judgment of liability on the basis that personal benefit was improperly received, unless in either case a court orders indemnification and then only for expenses. In addition, Maryland law permits a corporation to advance reasonable expenses to a director or officer upon the corporation's receipt of (i) a written affirmation by the director or officer of his or her good faith belief that he or she has met the standard of conduct necessary for indemnification by the corporation and (ii) a written undertaking by him or her or on his or her behalf to repay the amount paid or reimbursed by the corporation if it is ultimately determined that the standard of conduct was not met.

We maintain directors and officers insurance policies designed to reimburse us for any payments made by us pursuant to the foregoing indemnifications. Pursuant to employment agreements with our executive officers, we are required to maintain such policies during the officers' employment and for six years thereafter.

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Item 16. Exhibits.

The following documents are filed with or incorporated by reference into this registration statement:

Exhibit	Description
4.1	Specimen of Common Stock Certificate of the Registrant (incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 4.1 of the Registration Statement on Form S-4, dated February 12, 1998 , filed by the Registrant pursuant to the Securities Act (Commission File No. 333-46179)).
5.1	Opinion of Venable LLP as to legality.
8.1	Opinion of Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP as to tax matters.
23.1	Consent of Venable LLP (included in Exhibit 5.1).
23.2	Consent of Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP (included in Exhibit 8.1).
23.3	Consent of KPMG LLP.
24.1	Powers of Attorney (included on the signature page of the registration statement).
99.1	Initial Enrollment Form for MFA Financial, Inc. Direct Stock Purchase Plan.
99.2	Enrollment Form for MFA Financial, Inc. Direct Stock Purchase Plan.
99.3	Direct Debit Authorization Form for MFA Financial, Inc. Direct Stock Purchase Plan.

Item 17. Undertakings.

(a) The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes:

- (1) To file, during any period in which offers or sales are being made, a post-effective amendment to this registration statement;
 - (i) To include any prospectus required by Section 10(a)(3) of the Securities Act;
 - (ii) To reflect in the prospectus any facts or events arising after the effective date of this registration statement (or the most recent post-effective amendment thereof) which, individually or in the aggregate, represent a fundamental change in the information set forth in this registration statement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any increase or decrease in the volume of securities offered (if the total dollar value of securities offered would not exceed that which was registered) and any deviation from the low or high end of the estimated maximum offering range may be reflected in the form of prospectus filed with the SEC pursuant to Rule 424(b) if, in the aggregate, the changes in volume and price represent no more than a 20 percent change in the maximum aggregate offering price set forth in the "Calculation of Registration Fee" table in the effective registration statement; and
 - (iii) To include any material information with respect to the plan of distribution not previously disclosed in this registration statement or any material change to such information in this registration statement;

provided, however, that paragraphs (i), (ii) and (iii) above do not apply if the information required to be included in a post-effective amendment by those paragraphs is contained in reports filed with or furnished to the SEC by the registrant pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act that are incorporated by reference into this registration statement, or is contained in a form of prospectus filed pursuant to Rule 424(b) that is part of the registration statement.

- (2) That, for the purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act, each such post-effective amendment shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.
- (3) To remove from registration by means of a post-effective amendment any of the securities being offered which remain unsold at the termination of the offering.

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- (4) That, for the purpose of determining liability under the Securities Act to any purchaser:
- (i) Each prospectus filed by the registrant pursuant to Rule 424(b)(3) shall be deemed to be part of the registration statement as of the date the filed prospectus was deemed part of and included in the registration statement; and
 - (ii) Each prospectus required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2), (b)(5), or (b)(7) as part of a registration statement in reliance on Rule 430B relating to an offering made pursuant to Rule 415(a)(1)(i), (vii), or (x) for the purpose of providing the information required by Section 10(a) of the Securities Act shall be deemed to be part of and included in the registration statement as of the earlier of the date such form of prospectus is first used after effectiveness or the date of the first contract of sale of securities in the offering described in the prospectus. As provided in Rule 430B, for liability purposes of the issuer and any person that is at that date an underwriter, such date shall be deemed to be a new effective date of the registration statement relating to the securities in the registration statement to which that prospectus relates, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof. Provided, however, that no statement made in a registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement or made in a document incorporated or deemed incorporated by reference into the registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement will, as to a purchaser with a time of contract of sale prior to such effective date, supersede or modify any statement that was made in the registration statement or prospectus that was part of the registration statement or made in any such document immediately prior to such effective date;
- (5) That, for the purpose of determining liability of the registrant under the Securities Act to any purchaser in the initial distribution of the securities, the undersigned registrant undertakes that in a primary offering of securities of the undersigned registrant pursuant to this registration statement, regardless of the underwriting method used to sell the securities to the purchaser, if the securities are offered or sold to such purchaser by means of any of the following communications, the undersigned registrant will be a seller to the purchaser and will be considered to offer or sell such securities to such purchaser:
- (i) Any preliminary prospectus or prospectus of the undersigned registrant relating to the offering required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424;
 - (ii) Any free writing prospectus relating to the offering prepared by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant or used or referred to by the undersigned registrant;
 - (iii) The portion of any other free writing prospectus relating to the offering containing material information about the undersigned registrant or its securities provided by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant; and
 - (iv) Any other communication that is an offer in the offering made by the undersigned registrant to the purchaser.
- (b) That, for purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act, each filing of the registrant's annual report pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Exchange Act (and, where applicable, each filing of an employee benefit plan's annual report pursuant to Section 15(d) of the Exchange Act) that is incorporated by reference into the registration statement shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of the securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.
- (c) Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act may be permitted to directors, officers and controlling persons of the registrant pursuant to the foregoing provisions, or otherwise, the registrant has been advised that in the opinion of the SEC such indemnification is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act and is, therefore, unenforceable. In the event that a claim for indemnification against such liabilities (other than the payment by the registrant of expenses incurred or paid by a director, officer or controlling person of the registrant in the successful defense of any action, suit or proceeding) is asserted by such director, officer or controlling person in connection with the securities being registered, the registrant will, unless in the opinion of its counsel the matter has been settled by the controlling precedent, submit to a court of appropriate jurisdiction the question whether such indemnification by it is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act and will be governed by the final adjudication of such issue.

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SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, the registrant certifies that it has reasonable grounds to believe that it meets all of the requirements for filing on Form S-3 and has duly caused this registration statement to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized, in the City of New York, State of New York, on October 15, 2019.

MFA FINANCIAL, INC.

By: /s/ Craig L. Knutson

Name: Craig L. Knutson

Title: Chief Executive Officer and Director

POWER OF ATTORNEY

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, that each person whose signature appears below constitutes and appoints Craig L. Knutson, Stephen D. Yarad and Harold E. Schwartz, and each of them, with full power to act without the other, such person's true and lawful attorneys-in-fact and agents, with full power of substitution and resubstitution, for him and in his name, place and stead, in any and all capacities, to sign this Registration Statement, and any and all amendments thereto (including post-effective amendments), and to file the same, with exhibits and schedules thereto, and other documents in connection therewith, with the SEC, granting unto said attorneys-in-fact and agents, and each of them, full power and authority to do and perform each and every act and thing necessary or desirable to be done in and about the premises, as fully to all intents and purposes as he or she might or could do in person, hereby ratifying and confirming all that said attorneys-in-fact and agents, or any of them, or their or his substitute or substitutes, may lawfully do or cause to be done by virtue hereof.

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, this Registration Statement has been signed by the following persons in the capacities and on the dates indicated.

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<u>Name and Signature</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
<u>/s/ Craig L. Knutson</u> Craig L. Knutson	President, Chief Executive Officer and Director (Principal Executive Officer)	October 15, 2019
<u>/s/ Stephen D. Yarad</u> Stephen D. Yarad	Chief Financial Officer (Principal Financial Officer)	October 15, 2019
<u>/s/ Kathleen A. Hanrahan</u> Kathleen A. Hanrahan	Senior Vice President and Chief Accounting Officer (Principal Accounting Officer)	October 15, 2019
<u>/s/ George H. Krauss</u> George H. Krauss	Chairman and Director	October 15, 2019
<u>/s/ Stephen R. Blank</u> Stephen R. Blank	Director	October 15, 2019
<u>/s/ James A. Brodsky</u> James A. Brodsky	Director	October 15, 2019
<u>/s/ Richard J. Byrne</u> Richard J. Byrne	Director	October 15, 2019
<u>/s/ Laurie Goodman</u> Laurie Goodman	Director	October 15, 2019
<u>/s/ Robin Josephs</u> Robin Josephs	Director	October 15, 2019
<u>/s/ Francis J. Oelerich III</u> Francis J. Oelerich III	Director	October 15, 2019

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Section 2: EX-5.1 (EX-5.1)

Exhibit 5.1

[LETTERHEAD OF VENABLE LLP]

October 15, 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 relating to the registration by the Company of up to 15,000,000 shares (the “Shares”) of common stock, \$.01 par value per share, of the Company (the “Common Stock”), covered by the above-referenced Registration Statement, and all amendments thereto (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 may be issued from time to time pursuant to the Company’s Discount Waiver, Direct Stock Purchase and Dividend Reinvestment Plan (the “Plan”), as described under the heading “Description Of The Plan” in the Registration Statement.

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 and the related form of prospectus included therein;

2. The charter of the Company (the "Charter"), certified by the State Department of Assessments and Taxation of Maryland (the "SDAT");
3. The Amended and Restated Bylaws of the Company, certified as of the date hereof by an officer of the Company;
4. The Plan;
5. Resolutions adopted by the Board of Directors of the Company (the "Resolutions"), relating to the authorization of the Plan and the issuance of the Shares, certified as of the date hereof by an officer of the Company;
6. A certificate of the SDAT as to the good standing of the Company, dated as of a recent date;

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 any other 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 the obligations of each party set forth in the Documents are legal, valid, binding and 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 such 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. Upon any issuance 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.

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

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 if issued and delivered against payment therefor in accordance with the Registration Statement, the Resolutions and the Plan, 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 United States federal law or the laws of any other jurisdiction. We express no opinion as to the applicability or effect of any federal or state securities laws, including the securities laws of the State of Maryland. 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 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 Registration Statement. We hereby consent to the filing of this opinion as an exhibit to the Registration Statement 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 1933 Act.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Venable LLP

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Section 3: EX-8.1 (EX-8.1)

Exhibit 8.1



HUNTON ANDREWS KURTH LLP
FILE NO: 87566.30

October 15, 2019

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

MFA Financial, Inc.
Qualification as
Real Estate Investment Trust

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We have acted as counsel to MFA Financial, Inc., a Maryland corporation (the "Company"), in connection with the offer and sale, from time to time, of up to 9,000,000 shares of common stock, \$0.01 par value per share, of the Company pursuant to a prospectus dated October 15, 2019 (the "Prospectus"), as part of a Registration Statement on Form S-3 filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on October 15, 2019 (the "Registration Statement"), in connection with the Company's Dividend Reinvestment and Share Purchase Plan. You have requested our opinion regarding certain U.S. federal income tax matters.

In giving this opinion letter, we have examined the following:

1. the Registration Statement and the Prospectus filed as part of the Registration Statement;
2. the Company's Amended Articles of Incorporation filed on April 8, 1998, with the Department of Assessments and Taxation of the State of Maryland, as amended and supplemented;
3. the Company's Bylaws;
4. the taxable REIT subsidiary elections for Crimson Residential Assets Corp (f.k.a. MFA Loan Acquisition Corp), Diplomat Property Holdings Corp, MFA Navigator LLC, MFA Kittiwake Investments Ltd., Sahara Property Management LLC, Alps Property Management, LLC, Redan Property Management, LLC, and Deepwood Residential Assets LLC; and

ATLANTA AUSTIN BANGKOK BEIJING BOSTON BRUSSELS CHARLOTTE DALLAS DUBAI HOUSTON LONDON
LOS ANGELES MIAMI NEW YORK NORFOLK RICHMOND SAN FRANCISCO THE WOODLANDS TYSONS WASHINGTON, DC
www.HuntonAK.com

5. such other documents as we have deemed necessary or appropriate for purposes of this opinion.

In connection with the opinions rendered below, we have assumed, with your consent, that:

1. each of the documents referred to above has been duly authorized, executed, and delivered; is authentic, if an original, or is accurate, if a copy; and has not been amended;
2. during its taxable year ending December 31, 2019, and future taxable years, the Company has operated and will operate in a manner that will make the factual representations contained in a certificate, dated the date hereof and executed by a duly appointed officer of the Company (the "Officer's Certificate"), true for such years;
3. the Company will not make any amendments to its organizational documents after the date of this opinion that would affect its qualification as a real estate investment trust (a "REIT") for any taxable year; and
4. no action will be taken by the Company after the date hereof that would have the effect of altering the facts upon which the opinions set forth below are based.

In connection with the opinions rendered below, we also have relied upon the correctness, without regard to any qualification as to knowledge or belief, of the factual representations and covenants contained in the Officer's Certificate. No facts have come to our attention that would cause us to question the accuracy and completeness of such factual representations. Furthermore, where such factual representations involve terms defined in the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code"), the Treasury regulations thereunder (the "Regulations"), published rulings of the Internal Revenue Service (the "Service"), or other relevant authority, we have reviewed with the individuals making such representations the relevant provisions of the Code, the applicable Regulations and published administrative interpretations thereof.

Based solely on the documents and assumptions set forth above, the representations set forth in the Officer's Certificate, and the discussions in the Prospectus under the captions "Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations" and "33. What are some of the tax consequences of my participation in the Plan?" (which are incorporated herein by reference), we are of the opinion that:

- (a) the Company qualified to be taxed as a REIT pursuant to sections 856 through 860 of the Code for its taxable years ended December 31, 2015 through December 31, 2018, and the Company's organization and current and proposed method of operation will enable it to continue to qualify for taxation as a REIT under the Code for its taxable year ending December 31, 2019 and thereafter; and

(b) the descriptions of the law and the legal conclusions in the Prospectus under the captions "Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations" and "33. What are some of the tax consequences of my participation in the Plan?" are correct in all material respects.

We will not review on a continuing basis the Company's compliance with the documents or assumptions set forth above, or the representations set forth in the Officer's Certificate. Accordingly, no assurance can be given that the actual results of the Company's operations for any given taxable year will satisfy the requirements for qualification and taxation as a REIT. Although we have made such inquiries and performed such investigations as we have deemed necessary to fulfill our professional responsibilities as counsel, we have not undertaken an independent investigation of all the facts referred to in this letter or the Officer's Certificate. In particular, we note that the Company has engaged in transactions in connection with which we have not provided legal advice and may not have reviewed. Moreover, we note that we did not represent the Company as tax counsel prior to June 1, 2016.

The foregoing opinions are based on current provisions of the Code, the Regulations, published administrative interpretations thereof, and published court decisions. The Service has not issued Regulations or administrative interpretations with respect to various provisions of the Code relating to REIT qualification. No assurance can be given that the law will not change in a way that will prevent the Company from qualifying as a REIT.

The foregoing opinions are limited to the U.S. federal income tax matters addressed herein, and no other opinions are rendered with respect to other U.S. federal tax matters or to any issues arising under the tax laws of any other country, or any state or locality. We undertake no obligation to update the opinions expressed herein after the date of this letter. This opinion letter is solely for the information and use of the addressees, and it speaks only as of the date hereof. Except as provided in the next paragraph, this opinion letter may not be distributed, relied upon for any purpose by any other person, quoted in whole or in part or otherwise reproduced in any document, or filed with any governmental agency without our express written consent.

We hereby consent to the filing of this opinion as an exhibit to the Prospectus. We also consent to the references to Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP under the captions "Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations" and "Legal Matters" in the Prospectus. In giving this consent, we do not admit that we are in the category of persons whose consent is required by Section 7 of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder by the SEC.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP

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Section 4: EX-23.3 (EX-23.3)

Exhibit 23.3

Consent of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm

The Board of Directors
MFA Financial, Inc.:

We consent to the use of our reports with respect to the consolidated financial statements and the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting incorporated by reference herein and to the reference to our firm under the heading "Experts" in the prospectus.

/s/ KPMG LLP

New York, New York
October 15, 2019

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Section 5: EX-99.1 (EX-99.1)

Exhibit 99.1



Computershare Trust Company, N.A.
PO Box 505000
Louisville, KY 40233-5000

Within USA, US territories & Canada 800 522 6645
Outside USA, US territories & Canada 201 680 6578
www.computershare.com/investor

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

- Joint -** Will be presumed to be joint tenants with rights of survivorship unless restricted by applicable state law or otherwise indicated.
- Custodial -** A minor is the beneficial owner of the account with an adult custodian managing the account until the minor comes of age, as specified in the Uniform Gift/Transfer to Minors Act in the minor's state of residence. Please note that both the minor's and custodian social security number must be provided.
- Trust -** Account is established in accordance with the provisions of a trust agreement.

Use a black pen. Print in CAPITAL letters inside the grey areas as shown in this example.





Home Telephone Number

Business Telephone Number

Please refer to the plan prospectus or brochure before enrolling.

Check one box only. If you do not check any box, then FULL DIVIDEND REINVESTMENT will be assumed. If the plan permits, you may make optional cash investments at any time under each of the participation options below.

Full Dividend Reinvestment

Please mark this box if you wish to reinvest all dividends that become payable on this account, on all stock now held or any future holdings, including shares purchased with optional cash investments.

All Dividends Paid in Cash (No Dividend Reinvestment)

Please mark this box if you wish to receive dividend payments in cash on all stock now held or any future holdings, including shares purchased with optional cash investments.

Partial Dividends Paid in Cash

Please mark this box and specify the number of whole shares on which you wish to receive dividend payments in cash. The dividends on all remaining shares or any future holdings, including shares purchased with optional cash investments, will be reinvested.

Partial Share Amount

Under penalties of perjury, I certify that: **1.** The number shown on this form is my correct taxpayer identification number, and **2.** I am not subject to backup withholding because (a) I am exempt from backup withholding, or (b) I have not been notified by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) that I am subject to backup withholding, or (c) the IRS has notified me that I am no longer subject to backup withholding, and **3.** I am a U.S. person (including a U.S. resident alien).

Certification Instructions. You must cross out item 2 above if you have been notified by the IRS that you are currently subject to backup withholding because you have failed to report all interest and dividends on your tax return.

By participating in the plan, I agree to be bound by the terms and conditions of the prospectus or brochure that governs the plan. I have read and fully understand the terms and conditions of the prospectus or brochure. I further agree that my participation in the plan will continue until I notify Computershare in writing that I desire to terminate my participation in the plan. Upon providing such notification, I acknowledge that my withdrawal from the plan will be subject to the terms and conditions of the prospectus or brochure that governs the plan. By signing this form, I am certifying that I am of legal age in the state or country of my residence.

Enrollment forms will be processed within 5 business days of receipt. Confirmation of enrollment will not be mailed; however, a transaction statement will be mailed once there is activity in your account. If you would like to confirm your enrollment in the plan, please call us at the number referenced on the front page.

To be valid, this form must be signed by all account holders.

The Internal Revenue Service does not require your consent to any provision of this document other than the certifications required to avoid backup withholding.

Please return completed form to:

Computershare
PO Box 505000 Louisville, KY 40233-5000

Signature 1 - Please keep signature within the box.

Signature 2 - Please keep signature within the box.

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

Please enclose a check for your initial investment, plus a \$15.00 enrollment fee.

Make checks payable to Computershare. Please refer to the plan prospectus or brochure for the minimum/maximum amount of the initial investment. No interest will be paid on the funds held pending investment.

Privacy Notice

At Computershare, we take privacy seriously. In the course of providing services to you in connection with employee stock purchase plans, dividend reinvestment plans, direct stock purchase plans, direct registration services and/or custody services, we receive nonpublic, personal information about you. We receive this information through transactions we perform for you, from enrollment forms, automatic debit forms, and through other communications with you in writing, electronically, and by telephone. We may also receive information about you by virtue of your transaction with affiliates of Computershare or other parties. This information may include your name, address

By participating in the plan, I agree to be bound by the terms and conditions of the prospectus or brochure that governs the plan. I have read and fully understand the terms and conditions of the prospectus or brochure. I further agree that my participation in the plan will continue until I notify Computershare in writing that I desire to terminate my participation in the plan. Upon providing such notification, I acknowledge that my withdrawal from the plan will be subject to the terms and conditions of the prospectus or brochure that governs the plan.

Enrollment forms will be processed within 5 business days of receipt. Confirmation of enrollment will not be mailed; however, a transaction statement will be mailed once there is activity in your account. If you would like to confirm your enrollment in the plan, please call us at the above referenced telephone number.

To be valid, this form must be signed by all registered shareholders. If you do not sign and return this form, you will continue to receive dividend payments in cash.

Signature 1 - Please keep signature within the box.

Signature 2 - Please keep signature within the box.

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

Daytime Telephone Number

Please return completed form to:

Computershare
PO Box 505000
Louisville, KY 40233-5000



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Privacy Notice

At Computershare, we take privacy seriously. In the course of providing services to you in connection with employee stock purchase plans, dividend reinvestment plans, direct stock purchase plans, direct registration services and/or custody services, we receive nonpublic, personal information about you. We receive this information through transactions we perform for you, from enrollment forms, automatic debit forms, and through other communications with you in writing, electronically, and by telephone. We may also receive information about you by virtue of your transaction with affiliates of Computershare or other parties. This information may include your name, address (residential and mailing), social security number, bank account information, stock ownership information, date of birth, government-issued identification number, and other financial information.

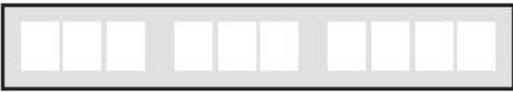
With respect both to current and former customers, Computershare does not share nonpublic personal information with any non-affiliated third-party except as necessary to process a transaction, service your account or as required or permitted by law. Our affiliates and outside service providers with whom we share information are legally bound not to disclose the information in any manner, unless required or permitted by law or other governmental process. We strive to restrict access to your personal information to those employees who need to know the information to provide our services to you. Computershare maintains physical, electronic and procedural safeguards to protect your personal information.

Computershare realizes that you entrust us with confidential personal and financial information and we take that trust very seriously.

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Section 7: EX-99.3 (EX-99.3)



Please return completed form to:

Computershare
PO Box 505000
Louisville, KY 40233-5000



E 5 U E M D

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00H3PC -WEB

How to complete this form

1. Amount of automatic deduction: Indicate the amount authorized to transfer from your account to purchase additional shares.
2. Indicate the type of account held with the financial institution.
3. Indicate checking or savings.
4. Print the complete financial institution account number.
5. Print the financial institution routing number from your check or savings deposit slip. **If you are using a savings account, contact your financial institution for the routing number.**
6. Print the name(s) in which the financial institution account is held.
7. All authorized owners of the financial institution account must sign this form.

SAMPLE CHECK

Name(s) in which account is held

Financial institution and branch information

John A. Doe Mary B. Doe 123 Your Street Anywhere, U.S.A. 12345	63-858 870	
_____ 20 _____		
PAY TO THE ORDER OF _____	\$ _____	
Bank of Anywhere 123 Main Street Anywhere, USA 12345		
FOR _____	SAMPLE (NON-NEGOTIABLE)	
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4
Bank Routing Number	Bank Account Number	Check Number

This number typically begins with a 0, 1, 2 or 3.