

Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the public in accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be available for inspection and copying at the Commission's Public Reference Room. Copies of such filing will also be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of Nasdaq. All submissions should refer to File No. SR-NASD-2002-150 and should be submitted by November 27, 2002.

For the Commission, by the Division of Market Regulation, pursuant to delegated authority.<sup>14</sup>

**Margaret H. McFarland,**

*Deputy Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 02-28133 Filed 11-5-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010-01-P

## SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-46747; File No. SR-NYSE-2002-57]

### Self-Regulatory Organizations; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change by the New York Stock Exchange, Inc. Extending the Pilot Regarding Shareholder Approval of Stock Option Plans Through December 30, 2002, or Such Earlier Date as the NYSE's Pending Rule Proposal Requiring Shareholder Approval of Equity-Compensation Plans Is Approved by the Commission

October 30, 2002.

Pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 ("Act"),<sup>1</sup> and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,<sup>2</sup> notice is hereby given that on October 29, 2002, the New York Stock Exchange, Inc. ("NYSE" or "Exchange") filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC" or "Commission") the proposed rule change as described in Items I and II below, which Items have been prepared by the Exchange. The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comments on the proposed rule change from interested persons.

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

The Exchange proposes to extend until December 30, 2002, or such earlier date as the NYSE's pending rule proposal requiring shareholder approval of equity-compensation plans<sup>3</sup> is

approved by the Commission, the effectiveness of the amendments to Sections 312.01, 312.03 and 312.04 of the Exchange's Listed Company Manual with respect to the definition of a "broadly-based" stock option plan, which were approved by the Commission on a pilot basis (the "Pilot") on June 4, 1999.<sup>4</sup> The Pilot was subsequently amended and extended on March 30, 2001 until September 30, 2001.<sup>5</sup> The Pilot has since been extended until January 11, 2002,<sup>6</sup> March 11, 2002,<sup>7</sup> May 13, 2002,<sup>8</sup> June 30, 2002,<sup>9</sup> August 31, 2002,<sup>10</sup> and October 30, 2002.<sup>11</sup>

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

In its filing with the Commission, the Exchange included statements concerning the purpose of and basis for the proposed rule change and discussed any comments it received on the proposed rule change. The text of these statements may be examined at the places specified in Item IV below. The Exchange has prepared summaries, set forth in Sections A, B, and C below, of the most significant aspects of such statements.

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

###### 1. Purpose

The Exchange has had the Pilot with respect to the definition of a "broadly-based" stock option plan since June 4, 1999.<sup>12</sup> On July 13, 2000, the Exchange filed a proposed rule change seeking to

<sup>4</sup> See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 41479, 64 FR 31667 (June 11, 1999) (notice of filing and order granting accelerated approval, on a pilot basis, to File No. SR-NYSE-98-32) ("Original Pilot Approval Order").

<sup>5</sup> See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 44141, 66 FR 18334 (April 6, 2001) (order granting approval, on a pilot basis, to the File No. SR-NYSE-00-32).

<sup>6</sup> See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 44886 (September 28, 2001), 66 FR 51083 (October 5, 2001) (notice of filing and immediate effectiveness of File No. SR-NYSE-2001-37) ("2001 Extension Request").

<sup>7</sup> See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 45275 (January 14, 2002), 67 FR 2718 (January 18, 2002) (File No. SR-NYSE-2002-03).

<sup>8</sup> See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 45546 (March 12, 2002), 67 FR 10272 (March 18, 2002) (File No. SR-NYSE-2002-14).

<sup>9</sup> See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 45918 (May 13, 2002), 67 FR 35174 (May 17, 2002) (File No. SR-NYSE-2002-18).

<sup>10</sup> See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 46143 (June 28, 2002), 67 FR 35174 (July 5, 2002) (File No. SR-NYSE-2002-22).

<sup>11</sup> See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 46437 (August 29, 2002), 67 FR 57262 (September 9, 2002) (File No. SR-NYSE-2002-42).

<sup>12</sup> See Original Pilot Approval Order note 4 *supra*.

extend the effectiveness of the Pilot until September 30, 2003.<sup>13</sup> Following receipt of comments from interested parties and the SEC staff, on January 19, 2001, the Exchange amended the 2000 Extension Request to shorten the three-year extension request to one year and to amend the definition of "broadly based" under the Exchange's rule. While the 2000 Extension Request was under consideration, the Commission extended the Pilot to provide the Commission and the Exchange with additional time to review and evaluate comment letters.<sup>14</sup> On March 30, 2001, the Commission approved the 2000 Extension Request, which amended and extended the Pilot, on a pilot basis until September 30, 2001.<sup>15</sup> The Exchange's 2001 Extension Request extended the Pilot until January 11, 2002 to provide additional time to evaluate the issues presented by the Pilot.<sup>16</sup> The Pilot was again extended several times, most recently until October 30, 2002, for the same reasons.<sup>17</sup>

On October 7, 2002, in connection with the Exchange's corporate governance proposals, the Exchange filed a proposal with the Commission that would require shareholder approval for equity-compensation plans, making it unnecessary to continue the Pilot. That proposal was published in the **Federal Register** on October 11, 2002.<sup>18</sup> As directed by the Commission staff, the Exchange is requesting an extension of the effectiveness of the Pilot until December 30, 2002, or until such earlier date as the Exchange's proposal relating to shareholder approval of equity-compensation plans is approved by the Commission.

###### 2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change is consistent with Section 6(b)(5) of the Act,<sup>19</sup> which

<sup>13</sup> See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 43111 (August 2, 2000), 65 FR 49046 (August 10, 2000) (notice of filing of File No. SR-NYSE-00-32) ("2000 Extension Request").

<sup>14</sup> See Securities Exchange Act Release Nos. 43329 (September 22, 2000), 65 FR 58833 (October 2, 2000) (notice of filing and immediate effectiveness of File No. SR-NYSE-00-38); 43647 (November 30, 2000), 65 FR 77407 (December 11, 2000) (notice of filing and immediate effectiveness of File No. SR-NYSE-00-52); and 44018 (February 28, 2001), 66 FR 13821 (March 7, 2001) (notice of filing and immediate effectiveness of File No. SR-NYSE-2001-04).

<sup>15</sup> See note 5 *supra*.

<sup>16</sup> See note 6 *supra*.

<sup>17</sup> See notes 7 through 11 *supra*.

<sup>18</sup> See note 3 *supra*.

<sup>19</sup> 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

<sup>14</sup> 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).

<sup>15</sup> 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

<sup>16</sup> 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

<sup>3</sup> See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 46620 (October 8, 2002), 67 FR 63486 (October 11, 2002) (File No. SR-NYSE-2002-46).

requires, among other things, that an Exchange have rules designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices, to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to foster cooperation and coordination with persons engaged in facilitating transactions in securities, to remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system and, in general, to protect investors and the public interest.

#### *B. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Burden on Competition*

The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any burden on competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act.

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

The Exchange has neither solicited nor received written comments on the proposed rule change.

### **III. Date of Effectiveness of the Proposed Rule Change and Timing for Commission Action**

Because the proposed rule change: (1) Does not significantly affect the protection of investors or the public interest; (2) does not impose any significant burden on competition; and (3) does not become operative for 30 days from the date of filing, or such shorter time as the Commission may designate if consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest, the proposed rule change has become effective pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A) of the Act<sup>20</sup> and Rule 19b-4(f)(6)<sup>21</sup> thereunder.

A proposed rule change filed under Rule 19b-4(f)(6)<sup>22</sup> normally does not become operative prior to 30 days after the date of filing. However, pursuant to Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii),<sup>23</sup> the Commission may designate a shorter time if such action is consistent with the protection of investors and public interest. The Exchange seeks to have the proposed rule change become operative on or before October 30, 2002, in order to allow the Pilot to continue in effect on an uninterrupted basis. In addition, under Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii), the Exchange is required to provide the Commission with written notice of its intent to file the proposed rule change

at least five business days prior to the filing date or such shorter time as designated by the Commission. The Commission has waived the five-day pre-notice requirement for this proposed rule change. In addition, for the reasons discussed below, the Commission has also waived the thirty-day operative date requirement for this proposed rule change.

The Commission, consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest, has determined to make the proposed rule change, which will extend the Pilot through December 30, 2002, or such earlier date as the NYSE's pending rule proposal requiring shareholder approval of equity-compensation plans<sup>24</sup> is approved by the Commission, become operative on October 30, 2002. The Commission notes that unless the Pilot is extended, the Pilot will expire and the provisions of Sections 312.01, 312.03, and 312.04 of the Exchange's Listed Company Manual that were amended in the Pilot will revert to those in effect prior to June 4, 1999. The Commission believes that such a result could lead to confusion.

The Commission recognizes that the Pilot has generated many comment letters from commenters that do not support the NYSE's definition of "broadly-based" stock option plans under the Pilot.<sup>25</sup> The Commission also notes that many commenters were critical of the NYSE's existing rules on broadly-based plans prior to the adoption of the original Pilot. As noted above, if the Pilot is not extended, the rules prior to the Pilot will go into effect. The proposed rule change merely extends the duration of the Pilot for only a short period of time and does not deal with the substantive issues presented by the Pilot itself.

The Commission notes that once the Exchange's proposed rule change relating to shareholder approval of equity compensation plans has been approved by the Commission, those approved rules will supersede this Pilot because the concept of "broadly-based" stock option plans will no longer be retained in the Exchange's shareholder approval rules.

Based on these reasons, the Commission has determined that it is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest that the proposed rule change, which will extend the Pilot through December 30, 2002, or such earlier date as the NYSE's pending rule proposal requiring

shareholder approval of equity-compensation plans is approved by the Commission, become operative on October 30, 2002.<sup>26</sup> At any time within 60 days of the filing of the proposed rule change, the Commission may summarily abrogate such rule change if it appears to the Commission that such action is necessary or appropriate in the public interest, for the protection of investors, or otherwise in furtherance of the purposes of the Act.

### **IV. Solicitation of Comments**

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views and arguments concerning the foregoing, including whether the proposed rule change is consistent with the Act. Persons making written submissions should file six copies thereof with the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 Fifth Street, NW., Washington, DC 20549-0609. Copies of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the proposed rule change that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the proposed rule change between the Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the public in accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be available for inspection and copying in the Commission's Public Reference Room. Copies of such filing will also be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the above-mentioned self-regulatory organization. All submissions should refer to the File No. SR-NYSE-2002-57 and should be submitted by November 27, 2002.

For the Commission, by the Division of Market Regulation, pursuant to delegated authority.<sup>27</sup>

**Margaret H. McFarland,**  
*Deputy Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 02-28131 Filed 11-5-02; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 8010-01-P**

<sup>20</sup> 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

<sup>21</sup> 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6).

<sup>22</sup> *Id.*

<sup>23</sup> 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6)(iii).

<sup>24</sup> See note 3 *supra*.

<sup>25</sup> See Original Pilot Approval Order, note 4 *supra*.

<sup>26</sup> For purposes only of accelerating the operative date of this proposal, the Commission notes that it has considered the proposed rule's impact on efficiency, competition, and capital formation. 15 U.S.C. 78c(f).

<sup>27</sup> 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).