

1934 Act (15 U.S.C. 78n(c)) and the information statement requirements set forth in the rules thereunder.

The types of proposals voted upon by Fund shareholders include not only the typical matters considered in proxy solicitations made by operating companies, such as the election of directors, but also include issues that are unique to Funds, such as the approval of an investment advisory contract and the approval of changes in fundamental investment policies of the Fund. Through rule 20a–1, any person making a solicitation with respect to a security issued by a Fund must, similar to operating company solicitations, comply with the rules and regulations adopted pursuant to Section 14(a) of the 1934 Act. Some of those Section 14(a) rules and regulations, however, include provisions specifically related to Funds, including certain particularized disclosure requirements set forth in Item 22 of Schedule 14A under the 1934 Act.

Rule 20a–1 is intended to ensure that investors in Fund securities are provided with appropriate information upon which to base informed decisions regarding the actions for which Funds solicit proxies. Without rule 20a–1, Fund issuers would not be required to comply with the rules and regulations adopted under Section 14(a) of the 1934 Act, which are applicable to non-Fund issuers, including the provisions relating to the form of proxy and disclosure in proxy statements.

The staff currently estimates that approximately 1,333 proxy statements are filed by Funds annually. Based on staff estimates and information from the industry, the staff estimates that the average annual burden associated with the preparation and submission of proxy statements is 85 hours per response, for a total annual burden of 113,305 hours (1,333 responses × 85 hours per response = 101,660). In addition, the staff estimates the costs for purchased services, such as outside legal counsel, proxy statement mailing, and proxy tabulation services, to be approximately \$30,000 per proxy solicitation.

Rule 20a–1 does not involve any recordkeeping requirements. Providing the information required by the rule is mandatory and information provided under the rule will not be kept confidential.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid control number.

The public may view the background documentation for this information collection at the following website, www.reginfo.gov. Comments should be

directed to: (i) Desk Officer for the Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Room 10102, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503, or by sending an email to:

Lindsay.M.Abate@omb.eop.gov; and (ii) Charles Riddle, Acting Director/Chief Information Officer, Securities and Exchange Commission, c/o Candace Kenner, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549 or send an email to: PRA.Mailbox@sec.gov. Comments must be submitted to OMB within 30 days of this notice.

Dated: June 18, 2019.

Vanessa A. Countryman,
Acting Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2019–13299 Filed 6–21–19; 8:45 am]

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34–86140; File No. SR–Phlx–2019–24]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Nasdaq PHLX LLC; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change To Amend Phlx Rule 1034 To Extend Through December 31, 2019 or the Date of Permanent Approval, if Earlier, the Penny Pilot Program in Options Classes in Certain Issues

June 18, 2019.

Pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (“Act”),¹ and Rule 19b–4 thereunder,² notice is hereby given that on June 14, 2019, Nasdaq PHLX LLC (“Phlx” 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 amend Phlx Rule 1034 (Minimum Increments)³ to extend through December 31, 2019 or the date of permanent approval, if earlier, the Penny Pilot Program in options classes in certain issues (“Penny Pilot” or “Pilot”).

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b–4.

³ References herein to rules refer to rules of Phlx, unless otherwise noted.

The text of the proposed rule change is available on the Exchange’s website at <http://nasdaqphlx.cchwallstreet.com/>, at the principal office of the Exchange, and at the Commission’s Public Reference Room.

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

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

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

1. Purpose

The purpose of this filing is to amend Phlx Rule 1034 to extend the Penny Pilot through December 31, 2019 or the date of permanent approval, if earlier.⁴ The Exchange believes that extending the Penny Pilot will allow for further analysis of the Penny Pilot and a determination of how the program should be structured in the future.

Under the Penny Pilot, the minimum price variation for all participating options classes, except for the Nasdaq-100 Index Tracking Stock (“QQQQ”), the SPDR S&P 500 Exchange Traded Fund (“SPY”) and the iShares Russell 2000 Index Fund (“IWM”), is \$0.01 for all quotations in options series that are quoted at less than \$3 per contract and \$0.05 for all quotations in options series that are quoted at \$3 per contract or greater. QQQQ, SPY and IWM are quoted in \$0.01 increments for all options series. The Penny Pilot is currently scheduled to expire on June 30, 2019.⁵ The Exchange now proposes to extend the time period of the Penny Pilot through December 31, 2019 or the date of permanent approval, if earlier.

This filing does not propose any substantive changes to the Penny Pilot Program; all classes currently participating in the Penny Pilot will

⁴ The options exchanges in the U.S. that have pilot programs similar to the Penny Pilot (together “pilot programs”) are currently working on a proposal for permanent approval of the respective pilot programs.

⁵ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 84961 (December 26, 2018), 84 FR 838 (January 31, 2019) (SR–Phlx–2018–84).

remain the same and all minimum increments will remain unchanged. The Exchange believes the benefits to public customers and other market participants who will be able to express their true prices to buy and sell options have been demonstrated to outweigh the potential increase in quote traffic.

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that its proposal is consistent with Section 6(b) of the Act,⁶ in general, and furthers the objectives of Section 6(b)(5) of the Act,⁷ in particular, in that it is 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, and 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.

In particular, the proposed rule change, which extends the Penny Pilot for an additional six months through December 31, 2019 or the date of permanent approval, if earlier, will enable public customers and other market participants to express their true prices to buy and sell options for the benefit of all market participants. This is consistent with the Act.

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

The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any burden on competition not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. To the contrary, this proposal is pro-competitive because it allows Penny Pilot issues to continue trading on the Exchange.

Moreover, the Exchange believes that the proposed rule change will allow for further analysis of the Pilot and a determination of how the Pilot should be structured in the future; and will serve to promote regulatory clarity and consistency, thereby reducing burdens on the marketplace and facilitating investor protection.

The Pilot is an industry-wide initiative supported by all other option exchanges. The Exchange believes that extending the Pilot will allow for continued competition between market participants on the Exchange trading similar products as their counterparts on other exchanges, while at the same time allowing the Exchange to continue

to compete for order flow with other exchanges in option issues trading as part of the Pilot.

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

No written comments were either solicited or received.

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

The Exchange has filed the proposed rule change pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A)(iii) of the Act⁸ and Rule 19b-4(f)(6) thereunder.⁹ Because the proposed rule change does not: (i) Significantly affect the protection of investors or the public interest; (ii) impose any significant burden on competition; and (iii) become operative prior to 30 days from the date on which it was filed, 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 Act¹⁰ and Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii) thereunder.¹¹

A proposed rule change filed under Rule 19b-4(f)(6)¹² normally does not become operative prior to 30 days after the date of the filing. However, pursuant to Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii),¹³ the Commission may designate a shorter time if such action is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest. The Exchange has asked the Commission to waive the 30-day operative delay so that the proposal may become operative immediately upon filing. The Commission believes that waiving the 30-day operative delay is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest because doing so will allow the Pilot Program to continue without interruption in a manner that is consistent with the Commission's prior approval of the extension and expansion of the Pilot Program.¹⁴ Accordingly, the

⁸ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A)(iii).

⁹ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6). In addition, Rule 19b-4(f)(6) requires a self-regulatory organization to give the Commission written notice of its intent to file the proposed rule change at least five business days prior to the date of filing of the proposed rule change, or such shorter time as designated by the Commission. The Exchange has satisfied this requirement.

¹⁰ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

¹¹ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6)(iii).

¹² 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6).

¹³ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6)(iii).

¹⁴ See Securities Exchange Release No. 61061 (November 24, 2009), 74 FR 62857 (December 1, 2009) (SR-NYSEARCA-2009-44).

Commission designates the proposed rule change as operative upon filing with the Commission.¹⁵

At any time within 60 days of the filing of the proposed rule change, the Commission summarily may temporarily suspend such rule change if it appears to the Commission that such action is necessary or appropriate in the public interest, for the protection of investors, or otherwise in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. If the Commission takes such action, the Commission shall institute proceedings to determine whether the proposed rule should be approved or disapproved.

IV. Solicitation of Comments

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views, and arguments concerning the foregoing, including whether the proposed rule change is consistent with the Act. Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

Electronic Comments

- Use the Commission's internet comment form (<http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>); or
- Send an email to rule-comments@sec.gov. Please include File Number SR-Phlx-2019-24 on the subject line.

Paper Comments

- Send paper comments in triplicate to Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549-1090. All submissions should refer to File Number SR-Phlx-2019-24. This file number should be included on the subject line if email is used. To help the Commission process and review your comments more efficiently, please use only one method. The Commission will post all comments on the Commission's internet website (<http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>).

Copies of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the proposed rule change that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the proposed rule change between the Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the public in accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be available for website viewing and printing in the Commission's Public Reference Room, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549, on official

¹⁵ For purposes only of waiving the operative delay for this proposal, the Commission has considered the proposed rule's impact on efficiency, competition, and capital formation. See 15 U.S.C. 78c(f).

⁶ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

⁷ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

business days between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Copies of the filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. All comments received will be posted without change. Persons submitting comments are cautioned that we do not redact or edit personal identifying information from submissions. You should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly.

All submissions should refer to File Number SR-Phlx-2019-24 and should be submitted on or before July 15, 2019.

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.¹⁶

Vanessa A. Countryman,

Acting Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2019-13304 Filed 6-21-19; 8:45 am]

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OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

[Docket Number USTR-2019-0005]

Procedures for Requests To Exclude Particular Products From the September 2018 Action Pursuant to Section 301: China's Acts, Policies, and Practices Related to Technology Transfer, Intellectual Property, and Innovation

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In a notice published on May 9, 2019, the United States Trade Representative (Trade Representative) announced that the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) would establish a process by which U.S. stakeholders may request exclusion of particular products classified within a tariff subheading covered by the September 2018 action in this investigation from the additional duties. This notice announces that USTR will open an electronic portal for submission of exclusion requests on June 30, 2019, and sets out the specific procedures for submitting requests.

DATES:

June 30, 2019 at noon EDT: The web portal for submitting exclusion requests—<http://exclusions.USTR.gov>—will open.

September 30, 2019: Deadline for submitting exclusion requests.

Responses to individual exclusion requests are due 14 days after the

request is posted on USTR's online portal. Any replies to responses to an exclusion request are due the later of 7 days after the close of the 14-day response period, or 7 days after the posting of a response.

ADDRESSES: You must submit all requests, responses to requests, and replies to responses through the online portal: <http://exclusions.USTR.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For questions about the product exclusion process, contact USTR Assistant General Counsels Philip Butler or Megan Grimball at (202) 395-5725. For questions on customs classification or implementation of additional duties, contact traderemedy@cbp.dhs.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

A. September 2018 Action

For background on the proceedings in this investigation, please see the prior notices issued in the investigation, including 82 FR 40213 (August 24, 2017), 83 FR 14906 (April 6, 2018), 83 FR 28710 (June 20, 2018), 83 FR 33608 (July 17, 2018), 83 FR 38760 (August 7, 2018), 83 FR 40823 (August 16, 2018), 83 FR 47974 (September 21, 2018), as modified by 83 FR 49153 (September 28, 2018), and 84 FR 20549 (May 9, 2019), as modified by 84 FR 21892 (May 15, 2019) and 84 FR 26930 (June 10, 2019).

In a notice published on September 21, 2018 (83 FR 47974), the Trade Representative, at the direction of the President, announced a determination to modify the action being taken in the Section 301 investigation by imposing 10 percent additional duties on products of China with an annual trade value of approximately \$200 billion. On September 28, 2018 (83 FR 65198), the Trade Representative issued a conforming amendment and modification of the September 21 action. The current notice refers to the September 21 action, as modified by September 28 notice, as the "September 2018 action." In a notice published on May 9, 2019 (84 FR 20459), the Trade Representative, at the direction of the President, increased the rate of additional duty for the September 2018 action to 25 percent.

B. Procedures To Request the Exclusion of Particular Products

USTR invites interested persons, including trade associations, to submit requests for exclusion from the additional duties under the September 2018 action. The September 2018 action covers the products classified within the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTSUS) subheadings set

out in Annex A of the notice published at 83 FR 47974 (September 21, 2018) as amended and modified by 83 FR 49153 (September 28, 2018). As explained in more detail below, each request must specifically identify a particular product, and provide supporting data and the rationale for the requested exclusion. USTR will evaluate each request on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the asserted rationale for the exclusion, whether the exclusion would undermine the objective of the Section 301 investigation, and whether the request defines the product with sufficient precision. Any exclusion will be effective starting from the September 24, 2018 effective date of the September 2018 action, and extending for one year after the publication of the exclusion determination in the **Federal Register**. USTR will periodically announce decisions on pending requests.

To submit an exclusion request, requesters must first register on the portal at <http://exclusions.USTR.gov>. As noted above, the portal will open at noon EDT on June 30, 2019. After registration, the requester can fill out and submit one or more exclusion request forms.

Fields on the exclusion request form marked with an asterisk (*) are required fields. Fields with a gray (BCI) notation are for Business Confidential Information and the information entered will not be publicly available. Fields with a green (Public) notation will be publicly available. Additionally, parties will be able to upload documents and indicate whether the documents are BCI or public. Requesters will be able to review the public version of their submission before the submission is posted.

In order to facilitate preparation of requests prior to the June 30 opening of the web portal, a facsimile of the exclusion request form to be used on the portal is attached as an annex to this notice. Please note that the color-coding of public fields and BCI fields is not visible on the attached facsimile, but will be apparent on the actual form used on the portal.

Set out below is a summary of the information to be entered on the exclusion request form.

Each requester has to provide contact information, including the full legal name of the organization making the request, whether the requester is a third party (law firm, trade association, or customs broker) submitting on behalf of an organization or industry, and the primary point of contact (requester and/or third party submitter). The requester may report whether the requester's business satisfies the Small Business

¹⁶ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).