

to File No. 4–845 and should be submitted on or before December 24, 2024.

II. Date of Effectiveness of Proposed Minor Rule Violation Plan and Timing for Commission Action

Pursuant to Section 19(d)(1) of the Act and Rule 19d–1(c)(2) thereunder,⁸ after December 24, 2024, the Commission may, by order, declare the Exchange's proposed MRVP effective if the plan is consistent with the public interest, the protection of investors, or otherwise in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. The Commission in its order may restrict the categories of violations to be designated as minor rule violations and may impose any other terms or conditions to the proposed MRVP, File No. 4–845, and to the period of its effectiveness, which the Commission deems necessary or appropriate in the public interest, for the protection of investors or otherwise in furtherance of the purposes of the Act.

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.⁹

Sherry R. Haywood,
Assistant Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2024–28255 Filed 12–2–24; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8011–01–P

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34–101773; File No. SR–BOX–2024–29]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; BOX Exchange LLC; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of a Proposed Rule Change To Amend Rules 3120 (Position Limits) and 5020 (Criteria for Underlying Securities) To Permit Options Trading on Bitcoin Funds

November 27, 2024.

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 November 25, 2024, BOX Exchange LLC (“Exchange”) filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (“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 proposes to amend Rules 3120 (Position Limits), 5020 (Criteria for Underlying Securities), and 5055 (FLEX Equity Options). The text of the proposed rule change is available from the principal office of the Exchange, at the Commission's Public Reference Room and also on the Exchange's internet website at <https://rules.boxexchange.com/rulefilings>.

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

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

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

1. Purpose

The Exchange proposes to amend Rules 3120 (Position Limits) and 5020 (Criteria for Underlying Securities) to permit options trading on the Fidelity Wise Origin Bitcoin Fund (the “Fidelity Fund”) and the ARK 21Shares Bitcoin ETF (the “ARK 21 Fund” and, with the Fidelity Fund, the “Bitcoin Funds”).³ Additionally, the Exchange proposes to amend Rule 5055 (FLEX Equity Options). Specifically, the Exchange proposes to amend Rule 5020(h) to allow the Exchange to list and trade options on the Bitcoin Funds.⁴ This is a competitive filing that is based on a proposal recently submitted by Cboe

Exchange, Inc. (“CBOE”) and approved by the Commission.⁵

As discussed herein and as provided in the CBOE Approval Order, the Exchange believes options on the Bitcoin Funds would permit hedging, and allow for more liquidity, better price efficiency, and less volatility with respect to the underlying Funds. Further, permitting the listing of such options would enhance the transparency and efficiency of markets in these and correlated products. Rule 5020(h) provides that, subject to certain other criteria set forth in the Rule, securities deemed appropriate for options trading include Exchange-Traded Fund Shares (or ETFs), that represent certain types of interests⁶ and exchange-traded products (“ETPs”)

⁵ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 101387 (October 18, 2024), 89 FR 84948 (October 24, 2024) (Notice of Filing of Amendment Nos. 2 and 3 and Order Granting Accelerated Approval of a Proposed Rule Change, as Modified by Amendment Nos. 2 and 3, to Permit the Listing and Trading of Options on Bitcoin Exchange-Traded Funds) (SR–CBOE–2024–035, as amended) (“CBOE Approval Order”).

⁶ See Rule 5020(h), which permits options trading on ETFs that are traded on a national securities exchange and are defined as an “NMS stock” in Rule 600 of Regulation NMS and that (i) represent interests in registered investment companies (or series thereof) organized as open-end management investment companies, unit investment trusts or similar entities that hold portfolios of securities and/or financial instruments, including, but not limited to, stock index futures contracts, options on futures, options on securities and indices, equity caps, collars and floors, swap agreements, forward contracts, repurchase agreements and reverse repurchase agreements (the “Financial Instruments”) and money market instruments, including, but not limited to, U.S. government securities and repurchase agreements (the “Money Market Instruments”) comprising or otherwise based on or representing investments in broad-based indexes or portfolios of securities and/or Financial Instruments and Money Market Instruments (or that hold securities in one or more other registered investment companies that themselves hold such portfolios of securities and/or Financial Instruments and Money Market Instruments); or (ii) represent interests in a trust that holds a specified non-U.S. currency deposited with the trust or similar entity when aggregated in some specified minimum number may be surrendered to the trust by the beneficial owner to receive the specified non-U.S. currency or currencies and pays the beneficial owner interest and other distributions on the deposited non-U.S. currency or currencies, if any, declared and paid by the trust (“Currency Trust Shares”); or (iii) represent commodity pool interests principally engaged, directly or indirectly, in holding and/or managing portfolios or baskets of securities, commodity futures contracts, options on commodity futures contracts, swaps, forward contracts and/or options on physical commodities and/or non-U.S. currency (“Commodity Pool ETFs”) or (iv) represent interests in the SPDR® Gold Trust, the iShares COMEX Gold Trust, the iShares Silver Trust, the abrdn Gold ETF Trust, the abrdn Silver ETF Trust, the abrdn Palladium ETF Trust, the abrdn Platinum ETF Trust, the Sprott Physical Gold Trust, the iShares Bitcoin Trust, the Grayscale Bitcoin Trust, the Grayscale Bitcoin Mini Trust or the Bitwise Bitcoin ETF; provided that all of the conditions in Rules 5020(h)(1) and (2) are met.

³ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 99306 (January 10, 2024), 89 FR 3008, 3009 (January 17, 2024) (SR–NYSEArca–2021–90; SR–NYSEArca–2023–44; SR–NYSEArca–2023–58; SR–NASDAQ–2023–016; SR–NASDAQ–2023–019; SR–CboeBZX–2023–028; SR–CboeBZX–2023–038; SR–CboeBZX–2023–040; SR–CboeBZX–2023–042; SR–CboeBZX–2023–044; and SR–CboeBZX–2023–072) (Order Granting Accelerated Approval of Proposed Rule Changes, as Modified by Amendments Thereto, to List and Trade Bitcoin-Based Commodity-Based Trust Shares and Trust Units) (“Bitcoin ETP Approval Order”).

⁴ See proposed Rule 5020(h).

⁸ 15 U.S.C. 78s(d)(1); 17 CFR 240.19d–1(c)(2).

⁹ 17 CFR 200.30–3(a)(44).

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b–4.

structured as trusts that hold precious metals (which are deemed commodities).⁷ Like ETPs backed by precious metals (*i.e.*, commodities), the Exchange proposes to allow options trading on the Bitcoin Funds that hold Bitcoin—which is also deemed a commodity.⁸ The Bitcoin Funds are structured as trusts that hold Bitcoin. Like ETFs and ETPs currently deemed appropriate for options trading, the investment objective of each Bitcoin Fund trust is for its shares to reflect the performance of Bitcoin (less the expenses of the trust's operations), offering investors an opportunity to gain exposure to Bitcoin without the complexities of Bitcoin delivery. Each Bitcoin Fund's shares represent units of fractional undivided beneficial interest in the trust, the assets of which consist principally of Bitcoin and are designed to track Bitcoin or the performance of the price of Bitcoin and offer access to the Bitcoin market.⁹ The Bitcoin Funds provide investors with cost-efficient alternatives that allow a level of participation in the Bitcoin market through the securities market. The Exchange believes each Bitcoin Fund satisfies the Exchange's initial listing standards set forth in Rule 5020(a).¹⁰ The Exchange notes that the Bitcoin Funds also satisfy the listing standard applied to ETFs traded on the Exchange that they be available for creation and redemption each business day as set forth in Rule 5020(h).¹¹ First, each of the Bitcoin Funds satisfy the criteria and guidelines set forth in Rule 5020(a). Pursuant to Rule 5020(a), a security on which options may be listed and traded on the Exchange must be duly registered (with the Commission) and be an NMS stock (as defined in Rule 600 of Regulation NMS under the Act) and be characterized by a substantial number of outstanding shares that are widely held

and actively traded.¹² Each of the Bitcoin Funds is an NMS Stock as defined in Rule 600 of Regulation NMS under the Act.¹³

As provided in the CBOE Approval Order, each Bitcoin Fund is characterized by a substantial number of outstanding shares that are widely held and actively traded. Specifically, as shown in the CBOE Approval Order, each of the Bitcoin Funds had significantly more than 7,000,000 shares outstanding (approximately 29 and 6.5 times that amount, respectively), which is the minimum number of shares of a corporate stock that the Exchange generally requires to list options on that stock pursuant to Rule 5020(b). The Exchange believes this demonstrates that each Bitcoin Fund is characterized by a substantial number of outstanding shares.

Further, as provided in the CBOE Approval Order, each Bitcoin Fund has significantly more than 2,000 beneficial holders (approximately 140 and 35 times more, respectively), which is the minimum number of holders the Exchange generally requires for corporate stock in order to list options on that stock pursuant to Rule 5020(b)(2). Therefore, the Exchange believes the shares of each Bitcoin Fund are widely held.

The Exchange also believes the shares of each Bitcoin Fund are actively traded. As provided in the CBOE Approval Order, even though these Bitcoin Funds have been trading for less than one year, the trading volume for each is substantially higher than 2,400,000 shares (between roughly 464 and 124 times that amount), which is the minimum 12-month volume the Exchange generally requires for a security in order to list options on that security as set forth in Rule 5020(b).

In addition to satisfying the Exchange's initial listing standards, options on Bitcoin Funds will be subject to the Exchange's continued listing standards as set forth in Rule 5030(h). Pursuant to Rule 5030(b), the Exchange will not open for trading any additional series of option contracts covering a fund traded on the Exchange if such fund ceases to be an "NMS stock" as

provided for in Rule 5030(a) or the fund is halted from trading on its primary market.¹⁴ Additionally, options on funds traded on the Exchange may be subject to the suspension of opening transactions as follows: (1) the fund no longer meets the terms of Rule 5030(b); (2) following the initial twelve-month period beginning upon the commencement of trading of the fund, there are fewer than 50 record and/or beneficial holders of the fund for 30 or more consecutive trading days; (3) the value of the underlying commodity is no longer calculated or available; or (4) such other event occurs or condition exists that in the opinion of the Exchange makes further dealing on BOX inadvisable.

Options on each Bitcoin Fund will be physically settled contracts with American-style exercise.¹⁵ Consistent with Rule 5050, which governs the opening of options series on a specific underlying security (including ETFs and ETPs), BOX will open at least one expiration month for options on each Bitcoin Fund¹⁶ at the commencement of trading on the Exchange and may also list series of options on Bitcoin Funds for trading on a weekly,¹⁷ monthly,¹⁸ or

¹⁴ See Rule 5030(h).

¹⁵ See Rule 5010 (Rights and Obligations of Holders and Writers), which provides that the rights and obligations of holders and writers of option contracts of any class of options dealt in on the Exchange shall be as set forth in the Rules of the Clearing Corporation. See also OCC Rules, Chapter VIII, which governs exercise and assignment, and Chapter IX, which governs the discharge of delivery and payment obligations arising out of the exercise of physically settled stock option contracts. OCC Rules can be located at: <https://www.theocc.com/getmedia/9d3854cd-b782-450f-bcf7-33169b0576ce/occrules.pdf>.

¹⁶ See Rule 5050(b). The standard expirations are subject to certain listing criteria for underlying securities described within Rule 5020. Standard listings expire the third Friday of the month. The term "expiration date" (unless separately defined elsewhere in the OCC By-Laws), when used in respect of an option contract (subject to certain exceptions), means the third Friday of the expiration month of such option contract, or if such Friday is a day on which the exchange on which such option is listed is not open for business, the preceding day on which such exchange is open for business. See OCC By-Laws Article I, Section 1. Pursuant to Rule 5050(c), additional series of options of the same class may be opened for trading on the Exchange when the Exchange deems it necessary to maintain an orderly market, to meet customer demand or when the market price of the underlying stock moves more than five strike prices from the initial exercise price or prices. New series of options on an individual stock may be added until the beginning of the month in which the options contract will expire. Due to unusual market conditions, the Exchange, in its discretion, may add a new series of options on an individual stock until the close of trading on the business day prior to expiration.

¹⁷ See IM-5050-6.

¹⁸ See IM-5050-13.

⁷ See Rule 5020(h) (permitting the listing and trading of options on certain ETPs backed by precious metals).

⁸ See proposed Rule 5020(h).

⁹ The trust may include minimal cash.

¹⁰ Rule 5020(a) provides for guidelines to be used by the Exchange when evaluating potential underlying securities for Exchange option transactions.

¹¹ Rule 5020(h)(1) requires that ETFs must be available for creation or redemption each business day from or through the issuer in cash or in kind at a price related to net asset value, and the issuer must be obligated to issue ETFs in a specified aggregate number even if some or all of the investment assets required to be deposited have not been received by the issuer, subject to the condition that the person obligated to deposit the investments has undertaken to deliver the investment assets as soon as possible and such undertaking is secured by the delivery and maintenance of collateral consisting of cash or cash equivalents satisfactory to the issuer, as provided in the respective prospectus.

¹² The criteria and guidelines for a security to be considered widely held and actively traded are set forth in Rule 5020(b), subject to exceptions.

¹³ An "NMS stock" means any NMS security other than an option, and an "NMS security" means any security or class of securities for which transaction reports are collected, processed, and made available pursuant to an effective transaction reporting plan (or an effective national market system plan for reporting transaction in listed options). See 17 CFR 242.600(b)(64) (definition of "NMS security") and (65) (definition of "NMS stock").

quarterly¹⁹ basis. BOX may also list long-term equity option series ("LEAPS") that expire from twelve to one-hundred eighty months from the time they are listed.²⁰ Pursuant to IM-5050-1(b), which governs strike prices of series of options on ETFs, the interval between strike prices of series of options on Bitcoin Funds will be \$1 or greater when the strike price is \$200 or less and \$5 or greater where the strike price is over \$200.²¹ Additionally, BOX may list series of options pursuant to the \$1 Strike Price Interval Program,²² the \$0.50 Strike Program,²³ and the \$2.50 Strike Price Program.²⁴ Pursuant to Rule 7050, where the price of a series of a Bitcoin Fund option is less than \$3.00, the minimum increment will be \$0.05, and where the price is \$3.00 or higher, the minimum increment will be \$0.10.²⁵ Any and all new series of Bitcoin Fund options that BOX lists will be consistent and comply with the expirations, strike prices, and minimum increments set forth in Rules 5050 and 7050, as applicable. Further, the Exchange notes that Rule Series 10100, which governs margin requirements applicable to the trading of all options on BOX, including options on ETFs and ETPs, will also apply to the trading of Bitcoin Fund options. Other examples of the Exchange Rules that currently apply to all options traded on BOX, include Rules that govern listing criteria, customer accounts, and trading halt procedures.

Rule 5055(e)(2)(i) permits the Exchange to authorize for trading a FLEX Equity Option class on any equity security if it may authorize for trading a Non-FLEX Equity Option class on that equity security pursuant to Rule 5020.²⁶ At this time, the Exchange is not proposing to permit Bitcoin Fund options to trade as FLEX Equity Options.²⁷ The Exchange therefore

proposes to modify Rule 5055(e)(2)(i) to specify this exception, which will add clarity and transparency to Exchange Rules.²⁸

Position and Exercise Limits

CBOE's Approval Order stated that the position and exercise limits for Bitcoin Funds shall be 25,000 contracts. At this time, the Exchange proposes to amend IM-3120-2 to similarly note that Bitcoin Fund options position limits shall be 25,000 contracts to mirror CBOE's Approval Order. Rule 3140 provides that the exercise limits shall be determined in the manner described in Rule 3120, therefore the exercise limits would also be 25,000 contracts.

As provided in the CBOE Approval Order, these proposed position and exercise limits were determined considering, among other things, the approximate six-month average daily volume ("ADV") and outstanding shares of each underlying Bitcoin Fund (which as discussed above demonstrate that each Bitcoin Fund is widely held and actively traded and thus justify these conservatively proposed position limits).

As provided in the CBOE Approval Order, comparing current position and exercise limits of options on ETFs with outstanding shares comparable to those of each Bitcoin Fund, demonstrates the proposed limit to be significantly lower (between two and ten times lower) than the average limits of the options on the other ETFs. As discussed above, the Bitcoin Funds are actively held and widely traded: (1) each Bitcoin Fund (as of August 7, 2024) had significantly more than 7,000,000 shares outstanding, which is the minimum number of shares of a corporate stock that the Exchange generally requires to list options on that stock pursuant to Rule 5020(b)(1); (2) each Bitcoin Fund (as of the dates listed above) had significantly more than 2,000 beneficial holders, which is the minimum number of holders the Exchange generally requires for corporate stock in order to list options on that stock pursuant to Rule 5020(b)(2); and (3) each Bitcoin Fund had a six-month trading volume substantially higher than 2,400,000 shares, which is the minimum 12-month volume the Exchange generally requires for a security in order to list options on that security as set forth in Rule 5020(b)(4).

As provided in the CBOE Approval Order, if a market participant held the

maximum permissible options positions in one of the Bitcoin Fund options and exercised all of them at the same time, that market participant would control a small percentage of the outstanding shares of the underlying Bitcoin Fund.

Rule 3120(d) provides two methods of qualifying for a position limit tier above 25,000 option contracts. The first method is based on six-month trading volume in the underlying security, and the second method is based on slightly lower six-month trading volume *and* number of shares outstanding in the underlying security. As provided in the CBOE Approval Order, the equivalent shares represented by the proposed position and exercise limits for each Bitcoin Fund as a percentage of outstanding shares of the underlying Bitcoin Fund is significantly lower than the percentage for the lowest possible position limit for equity options of 25,000 (under 6% compared to 40%) and is lower than that percentage for each current position limit bucket.²⁹

Further, the proposed position and exercise limits for each Bitcoin Fund option are significantly below the limits that would otherwise apply pursuant to current Rule 3120. These position and exercise limits are the lowest position and exercise limits available in the options industry, are extremely conservative and more than appropriate given the market capitalization, average daily volume, and high number of outstanding shares of the Bitcoin Funds.

All of the above information demonstrates that the proposed position and exercise limits for the Bitcoin Fund options are more than reasonable and appropriate. The trading volume, ADV, and outstanding shares of each Bitcoin Fund demonstrate that these funds are actively traded and widely held, and proposed position and exercise limits are well below those of other ETFs with similar market characteristics. The proposed position and exercise limits are the lowest position and exercise limits available for equity options in the industry, are extremely conservative, and are more than appropriate given each Bitcoin Fund's market capitalization, ADV, and high number of outstanding shares.

Today, the Exchange has an adequate surveillance program in place for options. The Exchange intends to apply those same program procedures to options on the Bitcoin Funds that it applies to the Exchange's other options

²⁹ As these percentages are based on the minimum number of outstanding shares an underlying security must have to qualify for the applicable position limit, these are the highest possible percentages that would apply to any option subject to that position and exercise limit.

¹⁹ See IM-5050-4.

²⁰ See Rule 5070.

²¹ The Exchange notes that for options listed pursuant to the Short Term Option Series Program, the Monthly Options Series Program, and the Quarterly Options Series Program, IM-5050-6, IM-5050-13, and IM-5050-4, specifically set forth intervals between strike prices on Quarterly Options Series, Short Term Option Series, and Monthly Options Series, respectively.

²² See IM-5050-2.

²³ See IM-5050-5.

²⁴ See IM-5050-3.

²⁵ If options on a Bitcoin Fund are eligible to participate in the Penny Interval Program, the minimum increment of \$0.01 below \$3.00 and \$0.05 above \$3.00 would apply. See Rule 7050(a)(3). See also Rule 7260 (which describes the requirements for the Penny Interval Program).

²⁶ See Rule 5055(e)(2)(i).

²⁷ The Exchange would be required to submit a separate rule filing to permit the Exchange to authorize for trading FLEX Equity Options on the

Bitcoin Funds (which filing may propose changes to existing FLEX Equity Option position limits for such options if appropriate).

²⁸ See proposed Rule 5055(e)(2)(i).

products.³⁰ Additionally, the Exchange is a member of the Intermarket Surveillance Group (“ISG”) under the Intermarket Surveillance Group Agreement. The Exchange would be able to obtain information regarding trading in shares of the Bitcoin Funds from Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc. (“BZX”) and other markets that trade shares of the Bitcoin Funds through ISG. ISG members work together to coordinate surveillance and investigative information sharing in the stock, options, and futures markets. In addition, the Exchange has a Regulatory Services Agreement with the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (“FINRA”) for certain market surveillance, investigation and examinations functions. Pursuant to a multi-party 17d–2 joint plan, all options exchanges allocate amongst themselves and FINRA responsibilities to conduct certain options-related market surveillance that are common to rules of all options exchanges.³¹

The underlying shares of spot bitcoin exchange-traded products (“ETPs”), including the Bitcoin Funds, are also subject to safeguards related to addressing market abuse and manipulation. As the Commission stated in its order approving proposals of several exchanges to list and trade shares of spot bitcoin-based ETPs, “[e]ach Exchange has a comprehensive surveillance-sharing agreement with the CME via their common membership in the Intermarket Surveillance Group. This facilitates the sharing of information that is available to the CME through its surveillance of its markets, including its surveillance of the CME bitcoin futures market.³² Given the consistently high correlation between the CME Bitcoin futures market and the spot bitcoin market, as confirmed by the

Commission through robust correlation analysis, the Commission was able to conclude that such surveillance sharing agreements could reasonably be “expected to assist in surveilling for fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices in the specific context of the [Bitcoin ETPs].”³³ In light of surveillance measures related to both options and futures as well as the underlying Bitcoin Funds,³⁴ the Exchange believes that existing surveillance procedures are designed to deter and detect possible manipulative behavior which might potentially arise from listing and trading the proposed options on the Bitcoin Funds. Further, the Exchange will implement any new surveillance procedures it deems necessary to effectively monitor the trading of options on Bitcoin ETPs.

The Exchange has also analyzed its capacity and represents that it believes the Exchange and OPRA have the necessary systems capacity to handle the additional traffic associated with the listing of new series that may result from the introduction of options on Bitcoin Funds up to the number of expirations currently permissible under the Rules. Because the proposal is limited to two classes, the Exchange believes any additional traffic that may be generated from the introduction of Bitcoin Fund options will be manageable.

The Exchange believes that offering options on Bitcoin Funds will benefit investors by providing them with an additional, relatively lower cost investing tool to gain exposure to the price of Bitcoin and hedging vehicle to meet their investment needs in connection with Bitcoin-related products and positions. The Exchange

expects investors will transact in options on Bitcoin Funds in the unregulated over-the-counter (“OTC”) options market,³⁵ but may prefer to trade such options in a listed environment to receive the benefits of trading listing options, including (1) enhanced efficiency in initiating and closing out positions; (2) increased market transparency; and (3) heightened contra-party creditworthiness due to the role of OCC as issuer and guarantor of all listed options. The Exchange believes that listing Bitcoin Fund options may cause investors to bring this liquidity to the Exchange, would increase market transparency and enhance the process of price discovery conducted on BOX through increased order flow. The ETFs that hold financial instruments, money market instruments, or precious metal commodities on which the Exchange may already list and trade options are trusts structured in substantially the same manner as Bitcoin Funds and essentially offer the same objectives and benefits to investors, just with respect to different assets. The Exchange notes that it has not identified any issues with the continued listing and trading of any ETF options, including ETFs that hold commodities (*i.e.*, precious metals) that it currently lists and trades on the Exchange.

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that the proposal is consistent with the requirements of Section 6(b) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the “Act”),³⁶ in general, and Section 6(b)(5) of the Act,³⁷ 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, 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 Exchange believes that the proposal to list and trade options on the Bitcoin Funds will remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system and, in general, protect investors because offering options on the Bitcoin Funds

³⁰ The surveillance program includes surveillance patterns for price and volume movements as well as patterns for potential manipulation (*e.g.*, spoofing and marking the close).

³¹ Section 19(g)(1) of the Act, among other things, requires every self-regulatory organization (“SRO”) registered as a national securities exchange or national securities association to comply with the Act, the rules and regulations thereunder, and the SRO’s own rules, and, absent reasonable justification or excuse, enforce compliance by its members and persons associated with its members. See 15 U.S.C. 78q(d)(1) and 17 CFR 240.17d–2. Section 17(d)(1) of the Act allows the Commission to relieve an SRO of certain responsibilities with respect to members of the SRO who are also members of another SRO (“common members”). Specifically, Section 17(d)(1) allows the Commission to relieve an SRO of its responsibilities to: (i) receive regulatory reports from such members; (ii) examine such members for compliance with the Act and the rules and regulations thereunder, and the rules of the SRO; or (iii) carry out other specified regulatory responsibilities with respect to such members.

³² See Bitcoin ETP Approval Order.

³³ See Bitcoin ETP Approval Order, 89 FR 3010–11.

³⁴ See Securities Exchange Act Release Nos. 99290 (January 8, 2024), 89 FR 2338, 2343, 2347–2348 (January 12, 2024) (SR–CboeBZX–2023–044) (Notice of Filing of Amendment No. 3 to a Proposed Rule Change to List and Trade Shares of the Fidelity Wise Origin Bitcoin Fund Under BZX Rule 14.11(e)(4), Commodity-Based Trust Shares); and 99288 (January 8, 2024), 89 FR 2387, 2392, 2399–2400 (January 12, 2024) (SR–CboeBZX–2023–028) (Notice of Filing of Amendment No. 5 to a Proposed Rule Change To List and Trade Shares of the ARK 21Shares Bitcoin ETF Under BZX Rule 14.11(e)(4), Commodity-Based Trust Shares). See also Securities Exchange Act Release No. 99306 (January 10, 2024), 89 FR 3008, 3009 (January 17, 2024) (SR–NYSEArca–2021–90; SR–NYSEArca–2023–44; SR–NYSEArca–2023–58; SR–NASDAQ–2023–016; SR–NASDAQ–2023–019; SR–CboeBZX–2023–028; SR–CboeBZX–2023–038; SR–CboeBZX–2023–040; SR–CboeBZX–2023–042; SR–CboeBZX–2023–044; and SR–CboeBZX–2023–072) (Order Granting Accelerated Approval of Proposed Rule Changes, as Modified by Amendments Thereto, to List and Trade Bitcoin-Based Commodity-Based Trust Shares and Trust Units) (“Bitcoin ETP Approval Order”).

³⁵ The Exchange understands from customers that investors have historically transacted in options on ETFs in the OTC options market if such options were not available for trading in a listed environment.

³⁶ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

³⁷ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

will provide investors with an opportunity to realize the benefits of utilizing options on a Bitcoin Fund, including cost efficiencies and increased hedging strategies. The Exchange believes that offering Bitcoin Fund options will benefit investors by providing them with a relatively lower-cost risk management tool, which will allow them to manage their positions and associated risk in their portfolios more easily in connection with exposure to the price of Bitcoin and with Bitcoin-related products and positions. Additionally, the Exchange's offering of Bitcoin Fund options will provide investors with the ability to transact in such options in a listed market environment as opposed to in the unregulated OTC options market, which would increase market transparency and enhance the process of price discovery conducted on BOX through increased order flow to the benefit of all investors. The Exchange also notes that BOX already lists options on other commodity-based ETPs,³⁸ which, as described above, are trusts structured in substantially the same manner as Bitcoin Funds and essentially offer the same objectives and benefits to investors, just with respect to a different commodity (*i.e.*, Bitcoin rather than precious metals) and for which the Exchange has not identified any issues with the continued listing and trading of commodity-backed ETP options it currently lists for trading. The Exchange also believes the proposed rule change will remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system, because it is consistent with current Exchange Rules previously filed with the Commission. Options on Bitcoin Funds satisfy the initial listing standards and continued listing standards currently in the Exchange Rules applicable to options on all ETFs and ETPs, including ETPs that hold other commodities already deemed appropriate for options trading on BOX. Additionally, as demonstrated above, each Bitcoin Fund is characterized by a substantial number of shares that are widely held and actively traded. Bitcoin Fund options will trade in the same manner as any other ETF or ETP options—the same Exchange Rules that currently govern the listing and trading of options, including permissible expirations, strike prices, minimum increments, customer accounts, trading halt procedures, and margin requirements, will govern the listing and trading of options on Bitcoin Funds in the same manner. The proposed

position and exercise limit for options on the Bitcoin Funds is 25,000 contracts. These position and exercise limits are the lowest position and exercise limits available in the options industry, are extremely conservative and more than appropriate given the Bitcoin Funds' market capitalization, average daily volume, number of beneficial holders, and high number of outstanding shares. The proposed position and exercise limits are consistent with the Act as they address concerns related to manipulation and protection of investors because the position and exercise limits are extremely conservative and more than appropriate given the Bitcoin Funds are actively traded. The CBOE Approval Order demonstrates that the average position and exercise limits of options on ETFs with comparable outstanding shares and trading volume to those of the Bitcoin Funds are significantly higher than the proposed position and exercise limits for Bitcoin Fund options. Therefore, the proposed position and exercise limits for the Bitcoin Fund options are conservative relative to options on ETFs with comparable market characteristics.

Further, given that the issuer of each Bitcoin Fund may create and redeem shares that represent an interest in Bitcoin, the Exchange believes it is relevant to compare the size of a position limit to the market capitalization of the Bitcoin market. As of August 27, 2024, the global supply of Bitcoin was 19,745,940, and the price of one Bitcoin was approximately \$59,466.82,³⁹ which equates to a market capitalization of approximately \$1.165 trillion. Consider the proposed position and exercise limit of 25,000 option contracts for each Bitcoin Fund option. A position and exercise limit of 25,000 same side contracts effectively restricts a market participant from holding positions that could result in the receipt of no more than 2,500,000 of Fidelity Fund shares or ARK 21 Fund shares, as applicable (if that market participant exercised all its options. As provided in the CBOE Approval Order, if a market participant with the maximum 25,000 same side contracts in either Fidelity Fund options or ARK 21 Fund options exercised all positions at one time, such an event would have no practical impact on the Bitcoin market.

The Exchange also believes the proposed limits are appropriate given position limits for Bitcoin futures. For example, the Chicago Mercantile Exchange ("CME") imposes a position

limit of 2,000 futures (for the initial spot month) on its Bitcoin futures contract.⁴⁰ On August 28, 2024, CME Aug 24 Bitcoin Futures settled at \$58,950. A position of 2,000 CME Bitcoin futures, therefore, would have a notional value of \$589,500,000. As provided in the CBOE Approval Order, the approximate number of option contracts for each Bitcoin Fund that equate to the notional value of CME Bitcoin futures is significantly higher than the proposed limit of 25,000 options contract for each Bitcoin Fund option. The fact that many options ultimately expire out-of-the-money and thus are not exercised for shares of the underlying, while the delta of a Bitcoin Future is 1, further demonstrates how conservative the proposed limits of 25,000 options contracts are for the Bitcoin Fund options.

The Exchange notes, unlike options contracts, CME position limits are calculated on a net futures-equivalent basis by contract and include contracts that aggregate into one or more base contracts according to an aggregation ratio(s).⁴¹ Therefore, if a portfolio includes positions in options on futures, CME would aggregate those positions into the underlying futures contracts in accordance with a table published by CME on a delta equivalent value for the relevant spot month, subsequent spot month, single month and all month position limits.⁴² If a position exceeds position limits because of an option assignment, CME permits market participants to liquidate the excess position within one business day without being considered in violation of its rules. Additionally, if at the close of trading, a position that includes options exceeds position limits for futures contracts, when evaluated using the delta factors as of that day's close of trading but does not exceed the limits when evaluated using the previous day's delta factors, then the position shall not constitute a position limit violation. Considering CME's position limits on futures for Bitcoin, the Exchange believes that the proposed same side position limits are more than appropriate for the Bitcoin Fund options.

As provided in the CBOE Approval Order, the proposed position and

⁴⁰ See CME Rulebook Chapter 350 (description of CME Bitcoin Futures) and Chapter 5, Position Limit, Position Accountability and Reportable Level Table in the Interpretations & Special Notices. Each CME Bitcoin futures contract is valued at five Bitcoins as defined by the CME CF Bitcoin Reference Rate ("BRR"). See CME Rule 35001.

⁴¹ See CME Rulebook Chapter 5, Position Limit, Position Accountability and Reportable Level Table in the Interpretations & Special Notices.

⁴² *Id.*

³⁸ See Rule 5020(h).

³⁹ See Blockchain.com | Charts—Total Circulating Bitcoin.

exercise limits in this proposal will have no material impact to the supply of Bitcoin. For example, consider again the proposed position limit of 25,000 option contracts for each Bitcoin Fund option. As noted above, a position limit of 25,000 same side contracts effectively restricts a market participant from holding positions that could result in the receipt of no more than 2,500,000 shares of the applicable Bitcoin Fund (if that market participant exercised all of its options).

As provided in the CBOE Approval Order, if 80 market participants had 25,000 same side positions in Fidelity Fund options, each of them would have to simultaneously exercise all of those options to create a scenario that may put the underlying security under stress. Similarly, if 18 market participants had 25,000 same side positions in ARK 21 Fund options, each of them would have to simultaneously exercise all of those options to create a scenario that may put the underlying security under stress. The Exchange believes it is highly unlikely for either such event to occur; however, even if either such event did occur, the Exchange would not expect either Bitcoin Fund to be under stress because such an event would merely induce the creation of more shares through the trust's creation and redemption process.

As of August 7, 2024, the global supply of Bitcoin was approximately 19,736,528.⁴³ Based on the \$47.88 price of a Fidelity Fund share on August 7, 2024, a market participant could have redeemed one Bitcoin for approximately 1,149 Fidelity Fund shares. Another 22,677,270,672 Fidelity Fund shares could be created before the supply of Bitcoin was exhausted. As a result, 9,070 market participants would have to simultaneously exercise 25,000 same side positions in Fidelity Fund options to receive shares of the Fidelity Fund holding the entire global supply of Bitcoin. Similarly, based on the \$54.68 price of an ARK 21 Fund share on August 7, 2024, a market participant could have redeemed one Bitcoin for approximately 1,006 ARK 21 Fund Shares. Another 19,854,947,168 ARK 21 Fund shares could be created before the supply of Bitcoin were exhausted. As a result, 7,941 market participants would have to simultaneously exercise 25,000 same side positions in ARK 21 Fund options to receive shares of the ARK 21 Fund holding the entire global supply of Bitcoin. Unlike the Bitcoin Funds, the number of shares that corporations may

issue is limited. However, like corporations, which authorize additional shares, repurchase shares, or split their shares, the Bitcoin Funds may create, redeem, or split shares in response to demand. While the supply of Bitcoin is limited to 21,000,000, it is believed that it will take more than 100 years to fully mine the remaining Bitcoin.⁴⁴ The supply of Bitcoin is larger than the available supply of most securities.⁴⁵ Given the significant unlikelihood of any of these events ever occurring, the Exchange does not believe options on the Bitcoin Funds should be subject to position and exercise limits even lower than those proposed (which are already equal to the lowest available limit for equity options in the industry) to protect the supply of Bitcoin.⁴⁶

The Exchange believes the available supply of Bitcoin is not relevant to the determination of position and exercise limits for options overlying the Bitcoin Funds.⁴⁷ Position and exercise limits are not a tool that should be used to address a potential limited supply of an underlying. Position and exercise limits do not limit the total number of options that may be held, but rather they limit the number of positions a single customer may hold or exercise at one time.⁴⁸ “Since the inception of

standardized options trading, the options exchanges have had rules imposing limits on the aggregate number of options contracts that a member or customer could hold or exercise.”⁴⁹ Position and exercise limit rules are intended “to prevent the establishment of options positions that can be used or might create incentives to manipulate or disrupt the underlying market so as to benefit the options position. In particular, position and exercise limits are designed to minimize the potential for mini-manipulations and for corners or squeezes of the underlying market. In addition, such limits serve to reduce the possibility for disruption of the options market itself, especially in illiquid options classes.”⁵⁰

The Exchange notes that a Registration Statement on Form S–1 was filed with the Commission for each Bitcoin Fund, each of which described the supply of Bitcoin as being limited to 21,000,000 (of which approximately 90% had already been mined), and that the limit would be reached around the year 2140.⁵¹ Each Registration Statement permits an unlimited number of shares of the applicable Bitcoin ETF to be created. Further, the Commission approved proposed rule changes that permitted the listing and trading of shares of each Bitcoin Fund, which approval did not comment on the sufficient supply of Bitcoin or address whether there was a risk that permitting an unlimited number of shares for a Bitcoin Fund would impact the supply of Bitcoin.⁵² Therefore, the Exchange believes the Commission had ample time and opportunity to consider whether the supply of Bitcoin was sufficient to permit the creation of unlimited Bitcoin Fund shares, and does not believe considering this supply with respect to the establishment of position and exercise limits is appropriate given its lack of relevance to the purpose of position and exercise limits. However, given the significant size of the Bitcoin supply, the proposed

⁴⁴ See Pre-Effective Amendment No. 5 to Form S–1 Registration Statement No. 333–254652, Fidelity Fund, filed January 9, 2024, at 53–54; and Amendment No. 8 to Form S–1 Registration Statement No. 333–257474, ARK 21 Fund, filed January 9, 2024, at 15.

⁴⁵ The market capitalization of Bitcoin would rank in the top 10 among securities. See <https://companiesmarketcap.com/usa/largest-companies-in-the-usa-by-market-cap/>.

⁴⁶ This would be even more unlikely with respect to the Bitcoin Funds for which the Exchange proposes lower position limits.

⁴⁷ The Exchange is unaware of any proposed rule change related to position and exercise limits for any equity option (including commodity ETF options) for which the Commission required consideration of whether the available supply of an underlying (whether it be a corporate stock or an ETF) or the contents of an ETF (commodity or otherwise) should be considered when an exchange proposed to establish those limits. See, e.g., Securities Exchange Act Release No. 57894 (May 30, 2008), 73 FR 32061 (June 5, 2008) (SR–CBOE–2005–11) (approval order in which the Commission stated that the “listing and trading of Gold Trust Options will be subject to the exchanges’ rules pertaining to position and exercise limits and margin”). For reference, the current position and exercise limits for options on SPDR Gold Shares ETF (“GLD”) and options on iShares Silver Trust (“SLV”) are 250,000 contracts, or 10 times that proposed position and exercise limit for the Bitcoin Fund options.

⁴⁸ For example, suppose an option has a position limit of 25,000 option contracts and there are a total of 10 investors trading that option. If all 10 investors max out their positions, that would result in 250,000 option contracts outstanding at that time. However, suppose 10 more investors decide to begin trading that option and also max out their

positions. This would result in 500,000 option contracts outstanding at that time. An increase in the number of investors could cause an increase in outstanding options even if position limits remain unchanged.

⁴⁹ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 39489 (December 24, 1997), 63 FR 276 (January 5, 1998) (SR–CBOE–1997–11).

⁵⁰ See *id.*

⁵¹ See Pre-Effective Amendment No. 5 to Form S–1 Registration Statement No. 333–254652, Fidelity Fund, filed January 9, 2024, at 53–54; and Amendment No. 8 to Form S–1 Registration Statement No. 333–257474, ARK 21 Fund, filed January 9, 2024, at 15.

⁵² See Bitcoin ETP Approval Order.

⁴³ See Blockchain.com | Charts—Total Circulating Bitcoin (which also shows the price of one Bitcoin equal to \$55,033.47).

position limits are more than sufficient to protect investors and the market.

Based on the above information demonstrating, among other things, that each Bitcoin Fund is characterized by a substantial number of outstanding shares that are actively traded and widely held, the Exchange believes the proposed position and exercise limits are extremely conservative compared to those of ETF options with similar market characteristics. The proposed position and exercise limits reasonably and appropriately balance the liquidity provisioning in the market against the prevention of manipulation. The Exchange believes these proposed limits are effectively designed to prevent an individual customer or entity from establishing options positions that could be used to manipulate the market of the underlying as well as the Bitcoin market.⁵³

The Exchange believes the proposed rule change to exclude the Bitcoin Funds from being eligible for trading as FLEX Equity Options is consistent with the Act, because without this prohibition, trading a FLEX Equity Option in the Bitcoin Funds would otherwise establish different position and exercise limits than those proposed herein.⁵⁴

The Exchange represents that it has the necessary systems capacity to support the new Bitcoin Fund options. The Exchange believes that its existing surveillance and reporting safeguards are designed to deter and detect possible manipulative behavior which might arise from listing and trading options, including Bitcoin Fund options. The Exchange's existing surveillance and reporting safeguards are designed to deter and detect possible manipulative behavior which might arise from listing and trading options on ETFs and ETPs, such as (existing) precious metal-commodity backed ETP options as well as the proposed options on Bitcoin Funds. The Exchange believes that its surveillance procedures are adequate to properly monitor the trading of options on Bitcoin Funds and to deter and detect violations of Exchange rules. Additionally, the Exchange is a member of the ISG under the Intermarket Surveillance Group Agreement. The Exchange would be able to obtain information regarding trading in shares

of the Bitcoin Funds from BZX and other markets that trade shares of the Bitcoin Funds through ISG. ISG members work together to coordinate surveillance and investigative information sharing in the stock, options, and futures markets. In addition, the Exchange has a Regulatory Services Agreement with FINRA and, as noted herein, pursuant to a multi-party 17d-2 joint plan, all options exchanges allocate regulatory responsibilities to FINRA to conduct certain options-related market surveillances. Further, the Exchange will implement any new surveillance procedures it deems necessary to effectively monitor the trading of options on the Bitcoin Funds. The underlying shares of spot bitcoin ETPs, including the Bitcoin Funds, are also subject to safeguards related to addressing market abuse and manipulation. As the Commission stated in its order approving proposals of several exchanges to list and trade shares of spot bitcoin-based ETPs, "[e]ach Exchange has a comprehensive surveillance-sharing agreement with the CME via their common membership in the Intermarket Surveillance Group. This facilitates the sharing of information that is available to the CME through its surveillance of its markets, including its surveillance of the CME bitcoin futures market."⁵⁵ Given the consistently high correlation between the CME bitcoin futures market and the spot Bitcoin market, as confirmed by the Commission through robust correlation analysis, the Commission was able to conclude that such surveillance sharing agreements could reasonably be "expected to assist in surveilling for fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices in the specific context of the [Bitcoin ETPs]."⁵⁶ The Exchange believes that existing surveillance procedures are designed to deter and detect possible manipulative behavior which might potentially arise from listing and trading the proposed options on the Bitcoin Funds. Further, the Exchange will implement any new surveillance procedures it deems necessary to effectively monitor the trading of options on Bitcoin ETPs.

⁵⁵ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 99306 (January 10, 2024), 89 FR 3008, 3009 (January 17, 2024) (File Nos. SR-NYSEArca-2021-90; SR-NYSEArca-2023-44; SR-NYSEArca-2023-58; SR-NASDAQ-2023-016; SR-NASDAQ-2023-019; SR-CboeBZX-2023-028; SR-CboeBZX-2023-038; SR-CboeBZX-2023-040; SR-CboeBZX-2023-042; SR-CboeBZX-2023-044; and SR-CboeBZX-2023-072) (Order Granting Accelerated Approval of Proposed Rule Changes, as Modified by Amendments Thereto, to List and Trade Bitcoin-Based Commodity-Based Trust Shares and Trust Units).

⁵⁶ See Bitcoin ETP Order, 89 FR at 3010-11.

Finally, the Exchange notes that this proposal will remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system and, in general, protect investors because applicable Exchange rules will require that customers receive appropriate disclosure before trading options in Bitcoin Funds⁵⁷ and will require that brokers opening accounts and recommending options transactions comply with relevant customer suitability standards.⁵⁸ The Exchange notes the proposed rule change is substantively the same as a rule change proposed by CBOE which the Commission recently approved.⁵⁹

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. In this regard and as indicated above, the Exchange notes that the rule change is being proposed as a competitive response to a filing submitted by CBOE that was recently approved by the Commission.⁶⁰

Intramarket Competition: The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any burden on intramarket competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act as Bitcoin Funds would need to satisfy the initial listing standards set forth in the Exchange Rules in the same manner as any other ETF before the Exchange could list options on them. Additionally, Bitcoin Fund options will be equally available to all market participants who wish to trade such options. The Exchange Rules currently applicable to the listing and trading of options on ETFs on BOX will apply in the same manner to the listing and trading of all options on Bitcoin Funds, including, for example, Rules that govern expirations, exercise prices, minimum increments, margin requirements, customer accounts, and trading halt procedures. Also, and as stated above, the Exchange already lists options on other commodity-based ETPs.⁶¹ Further, the Bitcoin Funds would need to satisfy the maintenance listing standards set forth in the Exchange Rules in the same manner as any other ETF for the Exchange to continue listing options on them.

⁵⁷ See Rules 4020(b), (e) and 4100.

⁵⁸ See Rule 4040.

⁵⁹ See *supra* note 5.

⁶⁰ *Id.*

⁶¹ See Rule 5020(h).

⁵³ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 39489 (December 24, 1997), 63 FR 276 (January 5, 1998) (SR-CBOE-1997-11).

⁵⁴ The Exchange would be required to submit a separate rule filing to permit the Exchange to authorize for trading FLEX Equity Options on the Bitcoin Funds (which filing may propose changes to existing FLEX Equity Option position limits for such options if appropriate).

Intermarket Competition: The Exchange does not believe that the proposal to list and trade options on Bitcoin Funds will impose any burden on intermarket competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. To the extent that the advent of Bitcoin Fund options trading on BOX may make BOX a more attractive marketplace to market participants at other exchanges, such market participants are free to elect to become market participants on BOX. As noted herein, this is a competitive filing as the Commission recently approved the listing and trading of the Bitcoin Funds on another options exchange.⁶² Additionally, other options exchanges are free to amend their listing rules, as applicable, to permit them to list and trade options on Bitcoin Funds. The Exchange notes that listing and trading Bitcoin Fund options on BOX will subject such options to transparent exchange-based rules as well as price discovery and liquidity, as opposed to alternatively trading such options in the OTC market.

The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change may relieve any burden on, or otherwise promote, competition as it is designed to increase competition for order flow on BOX in a manner that is beneficial to investors by providing them with a lower-cost option to hedge their investment portfolios. The Exchange notes that BOX operates in a highly competitive market in which market participants can readily direct order flow to competing venues that offer similar products. Ultimately, the Exchange believes that offering Bitcoin Fund options for trading on BOX will promote competition by providing investors with an additional, relatively low-cost means to hedge their portfolios and meet their investment needs in connection with Bitcoin prices and Bitcoin-related products and positions on a listed options exchange.

Finally, the proposed rule change to exclude Bitcoin Fund options from being eligible for trading as FLEX Equity Options does not impose an undue burden on competition as no BOX Participant will be able to transact a FLEX Equity Option on the Bitcoin Funds.

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

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

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

Because the foregoing 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 for 30 days from the date on which it was filed, or such shorter time as the Commission may designate, it has become effective pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A) of the Act⁶³ and Rule 19b-4(f)(6) thereunder.⁶⁴

A proposed rule change filed pursuant to Rule 19b-4(f)(6) under the Act normally does not become operative for 30 days after the date of its filing. However, Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii)⁶⁵ permits the Commission to 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 previously approved the listing of options on the shares of the Bitcoin Funds.⁶⁶ The Exchange has provided information regarding the underlying Bitcoin Funds, including, among other things, information regarding trading volume, the number of beneficial holders, and the market capitalization of the Bitcoin Funds. The proposal also establishes position and exercise limits for options on the Bitcoin Funds and provides information regarding the surveillance procedures that will apply to options on the Bitcoin Funds. The Commission believes that waiver of the operative delay could benefit investors by providing an additional venue for trading Bitcoin Fund options. Therefore, the Commission believes that waiver of the 30-day operative delay is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest. Accordingly, the Commission hereby waives the 30-day operative delay and designates the proposed rule change operative upon filing.⁶⁷

⁶³ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

⁶⁴ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6). In addition, Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii) requires a self-regulatory organization to give the Commission written notice of its intent to file the proposed rule change, along with a brief description and text of 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 Commission waives this requirement.

⁶⁵ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6)(iii).

⁶⁶ See *supra* note 5.

⁶⁷ For purposes only of waiving the 30-day operative delay, the Commission has also considered the proposed rule's impact on efficiency, competition, and capital formation. See 15 U.S.C. 78c(f).

At any time within 60 days of the filing of such 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.

IV. Solicitation of Comments

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

Electronic Comments

- Use the Commission's internet comment form (<https://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>); or
- Send an email to rule-comments@sec.gov. Please include file number SR-BOX-2024-29 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-BOX-2024-29. This file number should be included on the subject line if email is used. To help the Commission process and review your comments more efficiently, please use only one method. The Commission will post all comments on the Commission's internet website (<https://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>). Copies of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the proposed rule change that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the proposed rule change between the Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the public in accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be available for website viewing and printing in the Commission's Public Reference Room, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549, on official business days between the hours of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Copies of the filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. Do not include personal identifiable information in submissions; you should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. We may redact in part or withhold entirely from publication submitted material that is obscene or subject to copyright protection. All

⁶² See *supra* note 5.

submissions should refer to file number SR–BOX–2024–29 and should be submitted on or before December 24, 2024.

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.⁶⁸

Stephanie J. Fouse,
Assistant Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2024–28341 Filed 12–2–24; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8011–01–P

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[SEC File No. 270–136, OMB Control No. 3235–0157]

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request; Extension: Form N–8F

Upon Written Request, Copies Available From: Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of FOIA Services, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549–2736.

Notice is hereby given that, pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “Commission”) has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget a request for extension of the previously approved collection of information discussed below.

Form N–8F (17 CFR 274.218) is the form prescribed for use by registered investment companies in certain circumstances to request orders of the Commission declaring that the registration of that investment company cease to be in effect. The form requests information about: (i) the investment company’s identity, (ii) the investment company’s distributions, (iii) the investment company’s assets and liabilities, (iv) the events leading to the request to deregister, and (v) the conclusion of the investment company’s business. The information is needed by the Commission to determine whether an order of deregistration is appropriate.

The Form takes approximately 5.2 hours on average to complete. It is estimated that approximately 101 investment companies file Form N–8F annually, so the total annual burden for the form is estimated to be approximately 525 hours. The estimate of average burden hours is made solely for the purposes of the Paperwork Reduction Act and is not derived from a comprehensive or even a representative survey or study. Commission staff continues to believe

that there is no cost burden for completing and filing Form N–8F.

The collection of information on Form N–8F is not mandatory. The information provided on Form N–8F is not 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 OMB control number.

The 30-day public comment period for this information collection request opens on December 4, 2024 and closes on January 3, 2025. The public may view the full information request and submit comments at https://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAViewICR?ref_nbr=202408-3235-028 or email comments to MBX.OMB.OIRA.SEC_desk_officer@omb.eop.gov.

Dated: November 26, 2024.

Sherry R. Haywood,
Assistant Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2024–28260 Filed 12–2–24; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8011–01–P

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[SEC File No. 270–261, OMB Control No. 3235–0274]

Proposed Collection; Comment Request; Extension: Rule 17Ad–11

Upon Written Request, Copies Available From: Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of FOIA Services, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549–2736

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (“PRA”) (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), the Securities and Exchange Commission (“Commission”) is soliciting comments on the existing collection of information provided for in Rule 17Ad–11 (17 CFR 240.17Ad–11), under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78a *et seq.*). The Commission plans to submit this existing collection of information to the Office of Management and Budget (“OMB”) for extension and approval.

Rule 17Ad–11 requires every registered recordkeeping transfer agent to report certain information to issuers and its appropriate regulatory agency in the event that the aggregate market value of an “aged record difference” exceeds certain thresholds. A “record difference” occurs when the number of shares or principal dollar amount of securities in an issuer’s records do not equal those in the master securityholder file as indicated, for instance, on certificates presented to the transfer agent for purchase, redemption, or

transfer. An “aged record difference” is a record difference that has existed for more than 30 calendar days. In addition, the rule requires every registered recordkeeping transfer agent to report certain information to issuers and its appropriate regulatory agency concerning buy-ins of all issues for which it acts as recordkeeping transfer agent. Further, the rule requires every registered recordkeeping transfer agent to report to its appropriate regulatory agency when it has failed to post certificate detail to the master securityholder file within five business days of the time required by Rule 17Ad–10 (17 CFR 240.17Ad–10). Transfer agents must also maintain a copy of any report required under Rule 17Ad–11 for a period of not less than three years following the date of the report, the first year in an easily accessible place.

Because the information required by Rule 17Ad–11 is already available to transfer agents, any collection burden for small transfer agents is minimal. Based on a review of the number of Rule 17Ad–11 reports the Commission, the Comptroller of the Currency, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (collectively, the “appropriate regulatory agencies”) received since 2019, the Commission staff estimates that 8 respondents will file a total of approximately 1 report annually. The Commission staff estimates that, on average, each report can be completed in 30 minutes. Therefore, the total annual time burden for the entire transfer agent industry is approximately .5 hours (0.5 hours × 1 report). Assuming an average hourly rate of \$78 for a compliance staff employee at a transfer agent, the average total internal cost of compliance for each report is \$39. The total annual internal cost of compliance for the estimated 8 respondents is thus approximately \$39 (\$39 per report × 1 report).

The retention period for the recordkeeping requirement under Rule 17Ad–11 is not less than three years following the date of a report prepared pursuant to the rule. The recordkeeping requirement under Rule 17Ad–11 is mandatory to assist the Commission and other regulatory agencies in monitoring transfer agents who are not performing their functions promptly and accurately. This rule does not involve the collection of confidential information.

Written comments are invited on: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information shall have practical utility;

⁶⁸ 17 CFR 200.30–3(a)(12), (59).