

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT
(To prospectus dated December 23, 2025)

Ellington Financial

8,775,000
Shares of Common Stock

We are offering 8,775,000 shares of our common stock, par value \$0.001 per share, which we refer to as our “common stock.” Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange, or NYSE, under the symbol “EFC.” The last reported sale price of our common stock on the NYSE on January 23, 2026 was \$13.90 per share.

Investing in our common stock involves significant risk. You should carefully read and consider the information referred to under “Risk Factors” on page S-5 of this prospectus supplement, as well as those described in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, as updated and supplemented from time to time, and in our subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q and other information that we file from time to time with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

	Per Share	Total
Public offering price	\$13.50	\$118,462,500
Underwriting discount ⁽¹⁾	\$0.10	\$877,500
Proceeds, before expenses, to us	\$13.40	\$117,585,000

(1) See “Underwriting” for a description of the compensation payable to the underwriters.

The underwriters have the option to purchase up to an additional 1,316,250 shares of our common stock from us at the public offering price less the underwriting discount, exercisable at any time or from time to time within 30 days after the date of this prospectus supplement.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus to which it relates is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The underwriters expect to deliver the shares on or about January 28, 2026.

Joint Book-Running Managers

Morgan Stanley

Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC

The date of this prospectus supplement is January 26, 2026.

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You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus or any applicable free writing prospectus. We have not, and the underwriters have not, authorized anyone to provide you with different information. No dealer, salesperson or other person is authorized to give any information or to represent anything not contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus or any applicable free writing prospectus. If anyone provides you with different, inconsistent or unauthorized information or representations, you must not rely on them. This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are an offer to sell only the securities offered by these documents and only under circumstances and in jurisdictions where it is lawful to do so. The information contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus or incorporated by reference in these documents is current only as of the respective dates of those documents or the dates that are specified therein. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since such dates.

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

This document consists of two parts. The first part is this prospectus supplement, which describes the specific terms of the offering and also adds to and updates information contained in the accompanying prospectus and information incorporated by reference from filings we make with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, or “SEC,” under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or “Exchange Act,” prior to the date hereof. The second part is the accompanying prospectus, which gives more general information.

This prospectus supplement does not contain all of the information that may be important to you. You should read the accompanying prospectus as well as the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. See “Where You Can Find More Information” in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. To the extent that there is a conflict between the information contained in this prospectus supplement, on the one hand, and the information contained in the accompanying prospectus or in the information incorporated by reference from any of our filings with the SEC under the Exchange Act prior to the date hereof, on the other hand, the information in this prospectus supplement shall control. In addition, any statement in a filing we make with the SEC under the Exchange Act after the date of this prospectus supplement that adds to, updates or changes information contained in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus or an earlier filing we made with the SEC under the Exchange Act shall be deemed to modify and supersede such information in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus or the earlier filing.

Except where the context suggests otherwise, “Company,” “we,” “us” and “our” refer to Ellington Financial Inc. and its consolidated subsidiaries, including Ellington Financial Operating Partnership LLC, our operating partnership subsidiary, which we refer to as our “Operating Partnership.”

We conduct all of our operations and business activities through our Operating Partnership. Our “Manager” refers to Ellington Financial Management LLC, our external manager, and “Ellington” refers to Ellington Management Group, L.L.C. and its affiliated investment advisory firms, including our Manager. In certain instances, references to our Manager and services to be provided to us by our Manager may also include services provided by Ellington and its other affiliates from time to time.

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

We make forward-looking statements in this prospectus supplement and accompanying prospectus and the documents that are incorporated by reference into those documents that are subject to risks and uncertainties. These forward-looking statements include information about possible or assumed future results of our business, financial condition, liquidity, results of operations, cash flow and plans and objectives. When we use the words “believe,” “expect,” “anticipate,” “estimate,” “project,” “plan,” “continue,” “intend,” “should,” “would,” “could,” “goal,” “objective,” “will,” “may,” “seek,” or similar expressions or their negative forms, or refer to strategies, plans, or intentions, we intend to identify forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the “Securities Act”), and Section 21E of the Exchange Act and as such, these statements may involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties, and assumptions.

Forward-looking statements are based on our beliefs, assumptions and expectations of our future operations, business strategies, performance, financial condition, liquidity and prospects, taking into account information currently available to us. These beliefs, assumptions and expectations are subject to risks and uncertainties and can change as a result of many possible events or factors, not all of which are known to us. If a change occurs, our business, financial condition, liquidity and results of operations may vary materially from those expressed, anticipated or contemplated in our forward-looking statements. You should carefully consider these risks before you invest in our common stock. The following factors are examples of those that could cause actual results to vary materially from our forward-looking statements: changes in interest rates and the market value of our securities or our investments; market volatility; changes in the prepayment rates on the mortgage loans owned by us, or underlying the securities owned by us; increased rates of default and/or decreased recovery rates on our assets; our ability to borrow to finance our assets and the available terms for such borrowings; changes in government regulations affecting our business; our ability to maintain our exclusion from registration under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended, or the “Investment Company Act;” our ability to maintain our qualification as a real estate investment trust, or “REIT;” risks associated with investing in real estate assets, including changes in business conditions and the general economy such as changes to fiscal or monetary policy, heightened inflation, slower growth or recession, and currency fluctuations; and actual financial results as of December 31, 2025 may differ materially from the preliminary financial results presented herein as a result of the completion of our final adjustments, audit by our independent registered public accounting firm and other developments arising between now and the time that our financial results for such period are finalized.

These and other risks, uncertainties and other important factors identified, or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, including, but not limited to, those described under the caption “Risk Factors” in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, as well as those described under the captions “Risk Factors,” “Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations” and “Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures about Market Risk” in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and in our subsequently filed Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q and in the other documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, could cause our actual results to differ materially from those projected or implied in any forward-looking statements we make. All forward-looking statements speak only as of the date on which they are made. New risks and uncertainties arise over time, and it is not possible to predict those events or how they may affect us. Except as required by law, we are not obligated to, and do not intend to, update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. See “Where You Can Find More Information” below.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

Our SEC filings, including our registration statement, are available to you on the SEC's website at www.sec.gov. In addition, copies of our SEC filings are available free of charge through our website (www.ellingtonfinancial.com) as soon as reasonably practicable after filing with the SEC. The information contained on or otherwise accessible through our website is not part of, or incorporated by reference into, this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus.

We have filed with the SEC a registration statement on Form S-3 under the Securities Act with respect to the common stock offered by this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. The registration statement was effective upon filing. This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, which form a part of the registration statement, do not contain all of the information set forth in the registration statement and its exhibits and schedules, certain parts of which are omitted in accordance with the SEC's rules and regulations. For further information about us and our common stock, we refer you to the registration statement and to such exhibits and schedules. Statements contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus concerning the provisions of any document filed as an exhibit to the registration statement or otherwise filed with the SEC are not necessarily complete, and in each instance reference is made to the copy of such document so filed. Each such statement is qualified in its entirety by such reference.

DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to “incorporate by reference” into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus information that we file with the SEC, which means that we can disclose important business, financial and other information to you by referring you to other documents separately filed with the SEC. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be part of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. Any statement contained in a document which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus after the filing of this prospectus supplement and before the date that the offering of the shares of common stock by means of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus is completed will automatically update and, where applicable, supersede any information contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus from an earlier filing.

We incorporate by reference the following documents or information filed with the SEC into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus (other than, in each case, documents or information deemed to have been furnished and not filed in accordance with SEC rules):

- [Our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2024](#);
- Our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the fiscal quarters ended [March 31, 2025](#), [June 30, 2025](#) and [September 30, 2025](#);
- Our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on [January 8, 2025](#), [February 11, 2025](#), [March 7, 2025](#), [March 11, 2025](#), [April 3, 2025](#), [May 7, 2025 \(except with respect to Item 2.02, Item 7.01 and the related exhibits\)](#), [May 29, 2025 \(except with respect to Item 7.01 and the related exhibit\)](#), [June 10, 2025](#), [July 8, 2025](#), [August 7, 2025 \(except with respect to Item 2.02, Item 7.01 and the related exhibits\)](#), [September 8, 2025](#), [September 29, 2025](#), [October 1, 2025](#), [October 6, 2025](#), [October 7, 2025](#), [November 10, 2025](#), [December 4, 2025](#), [December 29, 2025](#) and [January 9, 2026](#);
- The information specifically incorporated by reference into our [Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2024](#) from our [Definitive Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A filed with the SEC on April 18, 2025](#);
- The description of our common stock incorporated by reference in our registration statement on [Form 8-A/A filed with the SEC on March 4, 2019](#) under the Exchange Act, including any amendment or report filed for the purpose of updating such description; and
- All documents filed with the SEC by us under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act on or after the date of this prospectus supplement and before the completion of the offer and sale of common stock pursuant to this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus.

To obtain a free copy of any of the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement (other than exhibits, unless they are specifically incorporated by reference in the documents), please contact us in writing or by phone at:

Ellington Financial Inc.
53 Forest Avenue
Old Greenwich, CT 06870
(203) 409-3575

SUMMARY

The following summary is qualified in its entirety by the more detailed information and financial statements and notes thereto appearing elsewhere in, or incorporated by reference into, this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. Because this is a summary, it may not contain all of the information that is important to you. You should read the entire prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, including the section entitled "Risk Factors" and the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein, before making an investment decision.

Our Company

We are a Delaware corporation operating as a REIT and are listed on the NYSE under the symbol "EFC." We were formed in July 2007 and became a publicly traded company following our initial public offering in October 2010. We employ a credit-focused investment strategy and manage a diversified investment portfolio totaling approximately \$4.5 billion as of September 30, 2025. Our primary objective is to generate attractive risk-adjusted total returns for our stockholders by making investments that we believe appropriately compensate us for the risks we assume. Our strategic focus is on residential and commercial mortgage loan investments, sourced through a diverse array of loan origination channels, including certain affiliated loan originators. We opportunistically invest in both loans and securities. Through Longbridge Financial LLC ("Longbridge"), a wholly-owned and consolidated subsidiary of our Operating Partnership, we are also in the business of originating, servicing, and investing in reverse mortgage loans.

We are externally managed and advised by our Manager, an affiliate of Ellington, which is responsible for administering our business activities and day-to-day operations. Pursuant to a services agreement between our Manager and Ellington, our Manager relies on Ellington's personnel and infrastructure to support our operations. Most members of our executive management team also serve as officers of our Manager and Ellington.

We intend to maintain our qualification to be taxed as a REIT for U.S. federal income tax purposes under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended. Provided that we maintain our qualification as a REIT, we generally will not be subject to U.S. federal, state, and local income tax on our REIT taxable income that is currently distributed to our stockholders, so long as we distribute at least 90% of our REIT taxable income (excluding net capital gains) to our stockholders by prescribed dates and comply with various other requirements. Any taxes paid by a taxable REIT subsidiary will reduce the cash available for distribution to our stockholders.

Our Corporate Information

We commenced operations and were formed as a Delaware limited liability company in 2007 and converted to a Delaware corporation effective March 1, 2019. We have elected to be treated as a REIT for U.S. federal income tax purposes commencing with our taxable year ended December 31, 2019. Our principal executive offices are located at 53 Forest Avenue, Old Greenwich, CT 06870. Our telephone number is (203) 409-3575. Our internet address is www.ellingtonfinancial.com. Our internet website, and the information contained therein or connected thereto, is not incorporated by reference into, and does not constitute part of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus.

Recent Developments

Preliminary Estimate of Book Value per Share of Common Stock as of December 31, 2025

We estimate that our book value per share of common stock as of December 31, 2025 was between \$13.14 and \$13.18. This estimate includes the effect of the previously announced monthly dividend of \$0.13 per share of common stock, payable on January 30, 2026 to common stockholders of record as of December 31, 2025.

The above financial information is preliminary and subject to completion, including the completion of customary financial statement closing and review procedures for the quarter ended December 31, 2025. As a result, the preliminary financial information set forth above reflects our preliminary estimate with respect to such information, based on information currently available to management. Our actual book value per share of common stock as of December 31, 2025 may differ materially from this preliminary estimate, and may be outside the estimated range.

Further, this preliminary estimate is not a comprehensive statement or estimate of our financial results or financial condition as of December 31, 2025. This preliminary estimate should not be viewed as a substitute for full financial statements prepared in accordance with GAAP and it is not necessarily indicative of the results to be achieved in any future period. Accordingly, you should not place undue reliance on this preliminary estimate.

This preliminary estimate, which is the responsibility of our management, was prepared by our management and is based upon a number of assumptions. Additional items that may require adjustments to this preliminary estimate may be identified and could result in material changes to such estimate. Preliminary estimates of results are inherently uncertain and we undertake no obligation to update this information before announcement of actual results. See “Special Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements,” “Risk Factors” and “Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations” included or incorporated by reference herein for factors that could impact our actual financial results. The preliminary financial information included in this prospectus supplement has been prepared by us and is our responsibility. PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, our independent registered public accounting firm, has not audited, reviewed, examined, compiled nor applied agreed-upon procedures with respect to the preliminary financial information included in this prospectus supplement and, accordingly, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP does not express an opinion or provide any other form of assurance with respect thereto. The PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP report incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement relates to our previously issued financial statements. It does not extend to the estimated preliminary financial information presented herein and should not be read to do so.

THE OFFERING

Issuer	Ellington Financial Inc.
Common stock offered by us	8,775,000 shares of common stock (plus up to an additional 1,316,250 shares of common stock that we may issue and sell upon the exercise of the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares of common stock).
Common stock to be outstanding after this offering ¹	124,649,023 shares of common stock (or up to 125,965,273 shares of common stock if the underwriters exercise their option to purchase additional shares of common stock in full).
Use of Proceeds	<p>We estimate that the net proceeds of this offering, after deducting the estimated offering expenses of approximately \$0.3 million payable by us, will be approximately \$117.2 million (or approximately \$134.9 million if the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares is exercised in full).</p> <p>We expect to use the net proceeds of this offering to fund the redemption of all of the outstanding shares of our Series A Fixed-to-Floating Rate Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock, \$0.001 par value per share ("Series A Preferred Stock"), subject to the minimum required 30-day notice period and otherwise in accordance with its terms. The dividend rate on the Series A Preferred Stock currently accrues at a per annum floating rate equal to the sum of the 3-month Secured Overnight Financing Rate and 5.458%.</p> <p>In addition, we intend to use any remaining net proceeds from this offering for general corporate purposes, which may include, among other things, acquiring our targeted assets in accordance with our investment objectives and strategies. This prospectus supplement does not constitute a notice of redemption of the Series A Preferred Stock or any other existing series of our preferred stock.</p>
Ownership and transfer restrictions	To assist us in maintaining our qualification as a REIT, among other purposes, our certificate of incorporation generally limits beneficial and constructive ownership by any person to no more than 9.8% of the aggregate value or number (whichever is more restrictive) of our outstanding shares of common stock. In addition, our certificate of incorporation contains various other restrictions on the ownership and transfer of our common stock. See "Certain Provisions of Delaware Law and our Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws—Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer" in the accompanying prospectus.

¹ Based on 115,874,023 shares of common stock outstanding as of January 23, 2026. Excludes 1,159,672 shares of common stock which are issuable upon conversion of 1,159,672 LTIP units of our Operating Partnership, or "OP LTIP Units," and 46,360 shares of common stock which are issuable upon redemption of 46,360 common units previously issued by our Operating Partnership.

U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations

For a discussion of the material U.S. federal income tax considerations relating to purchasing, owning and disposing our common stock, please see the section entitled “Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations” in the accompanying prospectus.

NYSE symbol

“EFC”

Risk Factors

Investing in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. You should carefully read and consider the information set forth under “Risk Factors” and all other information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus before investing in our common stock.

RISK FACTORS

Investing in our common stock involves significant risk. Before deciding whether to invest in our common stock, you should carefully read and consider the information set forth under the heading “Risk Factors” in the accompanying prospectus, our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and any subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q (which information is incorporated by reference herein), as well as the other information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or in the accompanying prospectus. See “Where You Can Find More Information” above.

If any of the risks described in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus or the information incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus occur, our business, financial condition or results of operations could be materially and adversely affected. The risks and uncertainties described in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the information incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and accompanying prospectus are not the only ones we face. Additional risks and uncertainties that are not currently known to us, or that we currently deem immaterial, may also materially and adversely affect our business, financial condition or results of operations.

Risks Related to Our Common Stock and this Offering

Common stock eligible for future sale may adversely affect the prevailing market prices for our common stock.

We cannot predict the effect, if any, of future sales of our common stock, or the availability of our common stock for future sale, on the market price of our common stock. Sales of substantial amounts of our common stock (including our common stock issued to our directors and officers upon conversion of OP LTIP Units or other equity incentive awards), or the perception that these sales could occur, may adversely affect prevailing market prices for our common stock.

We, our executive officers, our directors and certain affiliates of Ellington have agreed that, for a period of 30 days after the date of this prospectus supplement and subject to certain exceptions, neither we nor they will directly or indirectly, without the prior written consent of Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC (“Morgan Stanley”) and Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC (“Goldman Sachs”), sell or otherwise dispose of any common stock. Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs at any time may release all or a portion of the common stock subject to the foregoing lock-up provisions. If the restrictions under such agreements are waived, the affected common stock may be available for sale into the market, which could reduce the market price for our common stock.

Sales of substantial amounts of our common stock or the perception that these sales could occur may adversely affect the prevailing market price for our common stock or may impair our ability to raise capital through a sale of additional equity securities.

Your interest in us may be diluted if we issue additional common stock.

Existing stockholders and potential investors in this offering do not have preemptive rights to any common stock issued by us in the future. Therefore, investors purchasing shares in this offering may experience dilution of their equity investment if we issue or sell additional common stock in the future or issue or sell securities that are convertible into or exchangeable for common stock. Further, investors purchasing shares in this offering may experience dilution of their equity investment upon (i) the issuance of 944,120 shares of common stock reserved as of January 23, 2026 for issuance under our equity incentive plans, (ii) the issuance of 1,159,672 shares of common stock which are issuable upon the conversion of previously-granted OP LTIP Units, (iii) the issuance of 46,360 shares of common stock which are issuable upon redemption of previously-issued common units or (iv) the issuance of shares of common stock to our Manager under the management agreement, pursuant to which 10% of each incentive fee payable to our Manager will be paid in shares of common stock, subject to our Manager’s right to elect to receive a greater percentage of any incentive fee in the form of shares of common stock.

There are material limitations with making preliminary estimates of our financial results for the three-month period or year ended December 31, 2025 prior to the completion of our financial procedures for such period.

The preliminary financial estimates of book value per share contained in “Prospectus Supplement Summary — Recent Developments” are not a comprehensive statement of our financial results as of and for the three-month period or year ended December 31, 2025 and have not been audited by our independent registered public accounting firm. Our actual book value per share as of December 31, 2025 will not be available until after this offering is completed and, consequently, will not be available to you prior to investing in this offering. Our actual book value per share as of December 31, 2025 may differ materially from the preliminary estimates we have provided as a result of the completion of our financial closing procedures, final adjustments and other developments arising between now and the time that our financial results as of and for the three-month period or year ended December 31, 2025 are finalized. The preliminary estimate of book value per share included herein has been prepared by, and is the responsibility of management. Our independent registered public accounting firm, has not audited, reviewed, compiled or performed any procedures with respect to such preliminary estimates. Accordingly, our independent registered public accounting firm does not express an opinion or any other form of assurance with respect thereto.

USE OF PROCEEDS

We estimate that the net proceeds we will receive from the sale of 8,775,000 shares of our common stock in this offering will be approximately \$117.2 million after deducting estimated offering expenses of approximately \$0.3 million payable by us. If the underwriters exercise their option in full to purchase 1,316,250 additional shares of common stock, our net proceeds will be approximately \$134.9 million.

We expect to use the net proceeds of this offering to fund the redemption of all of the outstanding shares of our Series A Preferred Stock, subject to the minimum required 30-day notice period and otherwise in accordance with its terms. The dividend rate on the Series A Preferred Stock currently accrues at a per annum floating rate equal to the sum of the 3-month Secured Overnight Financing Rate and 5.458%.

In addition, we intend to use any remaining net proceeds from this offering for general corporate purposes, which may include, among other things, acquiring our targeted assets in accordance with our investment objectives and strategies. This prospectus supplement does not constitute a notice of redemption of the Series A Preferred Stock or any other existing series of our preferred stock.

As of the date of this prospectus supplement, we have 4,600,000 shares of Series A Preferred Stock outstanding. We intend to redeem for cash all outstanding shares of Series A Preferred Stock at a redemption price equal to \$25.00 per share, plus any accumulated and unpaid dividends thereon (whether or not authorized or declared) to, but excluding, the redemption date, without interest.

The underwriters or their affiliates may hold Series A Preferred Stock and may receive a portion of the net proceeds of this offering to the extent used to redeem such shares. See “Underwriting.”

UNDERWRITING

Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs are acting as representatives of the underwriters named below. Subject to the terms and conditions stated in the underwriting agreement dated the date of this prospectus supplement, each underwriter named below has severally agreed to purchase, and we have agreed to sell to that underwriter, the number of shares of common stock set forth opposite that underwriter's name.

Underwriter	Number of Shares of Common Stock
Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC	4,387,500
Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC	4,387,500
Total	8,775,000

The underwriting agreement provides that the obligations of the underwriters to purchase the shares of common stock included in this offering are subject to approval of legal matters by counsel and to other conditions. The underwriters are obligated to purchase all the shares of common stock (other than those covered by the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares of common stock described below) if they purchase any of the common stock. Certain of the underwriters may offer and sell the shares through one or more of their affiliates or selling agents.

We have granted to the underwriters an option, exercisable for 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement, to purchase up to 1,316,250 additional shares of common stock at the public offering price, less the underwriting discount. To the extent the option is exercised, each underwriter must purchase a number of additional shares of common stock approximately proportionate to that underwriter's initial purchase commitment. Any common stock issued or sold under the option will be issued and sold on the same terms and conditions as the other shares of common stock that are the subject of this offering.

We have agreed to indemnify the underwriters against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, or to contribute to payments the underwriters may be required to make because of any of those liabilities.

Commissions and Discounts

The representative has advised us that the underwriters propose initially to offer our shares to the public at the public offering price set forth on the cover of this prospectus and to dealers at that price less a concession not in excess of \$0.06 per share. After the initial offering, the public offering price, concession or any other term of this offering may be changed.

The following table shows the public offering price, underwriting discount and proceeds, before expenses, to us. The information assumes either no exercise or full exercise by the underwriters of their option to purchase additional shares of our common stock.

	Per Share	Without Option	With Option
Public offering price	\$13.50	\$118,462,500	\$136,231,875
Underwriting discount	\$0.10	\$877,500	\$1,009,125
Proceeds, before expenses, to us	\$13.40	\$117,585,000	\$135,222,750

We estimate that our total expenses of this offering, not including the underwriting discount, will be approximately \$0.3 million.

No Sales of Similar Securities

We have agreed that we will not offer, sell, contract to sell, pledge or otherwise dispose of, directly or indirectly, or file with the SEC a registration statement under the Securities Act relating to, any shares of our common stock or securities convertible into or exchangeable or exercisable for any shares of our common stock, or publicly disclose the intention to make any offer, sale, pledge, disposition or filing, without the prior written consent of Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs, for a period of 30 days after the date of this prospectus supplement; provided, however, that such restrictions will not apply to the shares to be sold to the underwriters in this offering, any shares issuable in connection with an acquisition, merger, consolidation or joint venture, any shares issuable upon the exercise of an option or conversion of an LTIP unit outstanding as of the date of this prospectus supplement, any shares or options issuable under our equity-based compensation plans or the filing of a registration statement on Form S-8 to register any securities issued or issuable under our equity-based compensation plans.

Our directors and executive officers and our Manager and certain of its affiliates have agreed that they will not, subject to certain exceptions, offer, sell, contract to sell, pledge, or otherwise dispose of, directly or indirectly, any shares of our common stock or securities convertible into or exchangeable or exercisable for shares of our common stock, enter into a transaction that would have the same effect, or enter into any swap, hedge, or other arrangement that transfers, in whole or in part, any of the economic consequences of ownership of shares of our common stock, whether any of these transactions is to be settled by delivery of shares of our common stock or other securities, in cash or otherwise, or publicly disclose the intention to make any offer, sale, pledge, or disposition, or to enter into any transaction, swap, hedge or other arrangement, without, in each case, the prior written consent of Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs for a period of 30 days after the date of this prospectus supplement.

Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs, in their sole discretion, may release the common stock and other securities subject to the lock-up agreements described above in whole or in part at any time with or without notice.

Listing

Our common stock is traded on the NYSE under the symbol “EFC.”

Stabilization, Short Positions and Penalty Bids

In order to facilitate the offering of the common stock, the underwriters may engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the price of the common stock. Specifically, the underwriters may sell more common stock than they are obligated to purchase under the underwriting agreement, creating a short position. A short sale is covered if the short position is no greater than the number of shares of common stock available for purchase by the underwriters under their option to purchase additional shares of common stock. The underwriters can close out a covered short sale by exercising their option to purchase additional shares of common stock or purchasing common stock in the open market. In determining the source of common stock to close out a covered short sale, the underwriters will consider, among other things, the open market price of common stock compared to the price available under their option to purchase additional shares of common stock. The underwriters may also sell common stock in excess of their option to purchase additional shares of common stock, creating a naked short position. The underwriters must close out any naked short position by purchasing common stock in the open market. A naked short position is more likely to be created if the underwriters are concerned that there may be downward pressure on the price of the common stock in the open market after pricing that could adversely affect investors who purchase in this offering. As an additional means of facilitating this offering, the underwriters may bid for, and purchase, common stock in the open market to stabilize the price of the common stock. These activities may raise or maintain the market price of the common stock above independent market levels or prevent or retard a decline in the market price of the common stock. The underwriters are not required to engage in these activities and may end any of these activities at any time.

Other Relationships

Affiliates of the underwriters have been, may be, or are lenders under one or more of our reverse repos, and we have entered into credit default and/or interest rate swaps with affiliates of the underwriters. In addition, the underwriters and their affiliates have been, may be, or are lenders to, and counterparties in securities, derivatives and other trading activities with, certain of our affiliates and us. In conjunction with services that affiliates of the underwriters have provided, may provide or are providing to us and our affiliates, commercial disputes may arise. Some of the underwriters and their affiliates have engaged in, and may in the future engage in, investment banking and other commercial dealings in the ordinary course of business with us or our affiliates. They have received, or may in the future receive, customary fees and commissions for these transactions. The underwriters and their affiliates may also make investment recommendations and/or publish or express independent research views in respect of such securities or financial instruments and may hold, or recommend to clients that they acquire, long and/or short positions in such securities and instruments.

Electronic Distribution

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus in electronic format may be made available on websites maintained by one or more underwriters, or selling group members, if any, participating in this offering. The representatives may agree to allocate a number of shares of common stock to underwriters for sale to their online brokerage account holders. Internet distributions will be allocated by the representatives to underwriters that may make Internet distributions on the same basis as other allocations.

LEGAL MATTERS

Certain legal matters in connection with the issuance of the shares of our common stock issued under this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus will be passed upon for us by Vinson & Elkins L.L.P. Certain tax matters will be passed upon for us by Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP. Certain legal matters will be passed upon for the underwriters by Ropes & Gray LLP.

EXPERTS

The financial statements and management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting (which is included in Management's Annual Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting) incorporated in this Prospectus by reference to the Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2024 have been so incorporated in reliance on the report of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, given on the authority of said firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

The financial statements of LendSure Mortgage Corp. incorporated in this Prospectus by reference to Exhibits 99.1 and 99.2 of the Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2024 have been so incorporated in reliance on the report of Richey May & Co., an independent registered public accounting firm, given on the authority of said firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

The financial statements of Longbridge Financial, LLC incorporated in this Prospectus by reference to Exhibit 99.5 of the Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2024 have been so incorporated in reliance on the report of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, given on the authority of said firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

Ellington Financial

Ellington Financial Inc.

Common Stock

Preferred Stock

Stockholder Rights to Purchase Common or Preferred Stock

Warrants to Purchase Common or Preferred Stock

Debt Securities

Depositary Shares

Units

We and any selling security holders may offer, issue and sell, from time to time, common stock, preferred stock, stockholder rights to purchase common or preferred stock, which we refer to as “stockholder rights,” warrants to purchase common or preferred stock, which we refer to as “warrants,” debt securities, which may consist of debentures, notes, or other types of debt, depositary shares representing a fractional interest of a share of a particular class or series of our preferred stock, which we refer to as “depositary shares,” and units consisting of two or more of the foregoing, which we refer to as “units,” in one or more offerings. We refer to common stock, preferred stock, stockholder rights, warrants, debt securities, depositary shares and units as “securities.” We will provide specific terms of each issuance of these securities in supplements to this prospectus. We and/or any selling security holders may offer and sell these securities to or through one or more underwriters, dealers and agents, or directly to purchasers, on a continuous or delayed basis. You should read this prospectus and the applicable supplement carefully before you decide to invest. This prospectus may not be used to consummate sales of these securities unless it is accompanied by a prospectus supplement.

Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange, or “NYSE,” under the symbol “EFC,” our 6.750% Series A Fixed-to-Floating Rate Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock, \$0.001 par value per share (the “Series A Preferred Stock”) is listed on the NYSE under the symbol “EFC PR A,” our 6.250% Series B Fixed-Rate Reset Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock, \$0.001 par value per share (the “Series B Preferred Stock”) is listed on the NYSE under the symbol “EFC PR B,” our 8.625% Series C Fixed-Rate Reset Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock, \$0.001 par value per share (the “Series C Preferred Stock”) is listed on the NYSE under the symbol “EFC PR C,” and our 7.00% Series D Cumulative Perpetual Redeemable Preferred Stock, \$0.001 par value per share (the “Series D Preferred Stock”) is listed on the NYSE under the symbol “EFC PRD.” The last reported sale price of our common stock on the NYSE on December 22, 2025 was \$13.94 per share. Our principal executive offices are located at 53 Forest Avenue, Old Greenwich, Connecticut 06870, and our telephone number is (203) 409-3575.

Investing in these securities involves risks. You should carefully read and consider the information referred to under “Risk Factors” on page 5 of this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement before making a decision to invest in these securities.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “SEC”) nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is December 23, 2025

ELLINGTON FINANCIAL INC.

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You should rely only on the information contained in or incorporated by reference into this prospectus, any applicable prospectus supplement, any applicable free writing prospectus prepared by us or information to which we have referred you. We have not authorized any other person to provide you with information that is different. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. We are not making an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. The information contained in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement or the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein is current only as of the date on the front of those documents.

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of an automatic registration statement that we filed with the SEC as a “well-known seasoned issuer” as defined in Rule 405 under the Securities Act of 1933, using a “shelf” registration process. Under this shelf registration statement, we and/or any selling security holders may offer and sell any combination of our common stock, preferred stock, stockholder rights, warrants, debt securities, depositary shares, and units in one or more offerings. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we and/or any selling security holders may offer. Each time we and/or any selling security holders offer to sell securities under this shelf registration statement, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement may add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. Before you buy any of our securities, it is important for you to consider the information contained in this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement together with additional information described under the heading “Where You Can Find More Information.”

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference information that is contained in certain reports and other documents that we file with them, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be part of this prospectus, and information that we file later with the SEC will automatically update and supersede this information.

Except where the context suggests otherwise, “Company,” “we,” “us” and “our” refer to Ellington Financial Inc. and its consolidated subsidiaries, including Ellington Financial Operating Partnership LLC, our operating partnership subsidiary, which we refer to as our “Operating Partnership.”

We conduct all of our operations and business activities through our Operating Partnership. Our “Manager” refers to Ellington Financial Management LLC, our external manager, and “Ellington” refers to Ellington Management Group, L.L.C. and its affiliated investment advisory firms, including our Manager. In certain instances, references to our Manager and services to be provided to us by our Manager may also include services provided by Ellington and its other affiliates from time to time.

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

We make forward-looking statements in this prospectus and in the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus that are subject to risks and uncertainties. These forward-looking statements include information about possible or assumed future results of our business, financial condition, liquidity, results of operations, cash flow and plans and objectives. When we use the words “believe,” “expect,” “anticipate,” “estimate,” “project,” “plan,” “continue,” “intend,” “should,” “would,” “could,” “goal,” “objective,” “will,” “may,” “seek,” or similar expressions or their negative forms, or refer to strategies, plans, or intentions, we intend to identify forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the “Securities Act,” and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or the “Exchange Act,” and as such, these statements may involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties, and assumptions.

Forward-looking statements are based on our beliefs, assumptions and expectations of our future operations, business strategies, performance, financial condition, liquidity and prospects, taking into account information currently available to us. These beliefs, assumptions and expectations are subject to risks and uncertainties and can change as a result of many possible events or factors, not all of which are known to us. If a change occurs, our business, financial condition, liquidity and results of operations may vary materially from those expressed, anticipated or contemplated in our forward-looking statements. You should carefully consider these risks before you invest in our securities. The following factors are examples of those that could cause actual results to vary materially from our forward-looking statements: changes in interest rates and the market value of our securities or our investments; market volatility; changes in the prepayment rates on the mortgage loans owned by us, or underlying the securities owned by us; increased rates of default and/or decreased recovery rates on our assets; our ability to borrow to finance our assets and the available terms for such borrowings; changes in government regulations affecting our business; our ability to maintain our exclusion from registration under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended, or the “Investment Company Act;” our ability to maintain our qualification as a real estate investment trust, or “REIT”; and risks associated with investing in real estate assets, including changes in business conditions and the general economy such as changes to fiscal or monetary policy, heightened inflation, slower growth or recession, and currency fluctuations.

These and other risks, uncertainties and other important factors identified, or incorporated by reference in this prospectus, including, but not limited to, those described under the caption “Risk Factors” in this prospectus, as well as those described under the captions “Risk Factors,” “Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations” and “Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures about Market Risk” in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and in our subsequently filed Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q and in the other documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus, could cause our actual results to differ materially from those projected in any forward-looking statements we make. All forward-looking statements speak only as of the date on which they are made. New risks and uncertainties arise over time, and it is not possible to predict those events or how they may affect us. Except as required by law, we are not obligated to, and do not intend to, update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. See “Where You Can Find More Information” below.

Our Company

We are a Delaware corporation operating as a REIT and are listed on the NYSE under the symbol “EFC.” We were formed in July 2007 and became a publicly traded company following our initial public offering in October 2010. We employ a credit-focused investment strategy and manage a diversified investment portfolio totaling approximately \$4.8 billion as of September 30, 2025. Our primary objective is to generate attractive risk-adjusted total returns for our stockholders by making investments that we believe appropriately compensate us for the risks we assume. Our strategic focus is on residential and commercial mortgage loan investments, sourced through a diverse array of loan origination channels, including certain affiliated loan originators. We opportunistically invest in both loans and securities. Through Longbridge Financial LLC (“Longbridge”), a wholly-owned and consolidated subsidiary of our Operating Partnership, we are also in the business of originating, servicing, and investing in reverse mortgage loans.

We are externally managed and advised by our Manager, an affiliate of Ellington, which is responsible for administering our business activities and day-to-day operations. Pursuant to a services agreement between our Manager and Ellington, our Manager relies on Ellington’s personnel and infrastructure to support our operations. Most members of our executive management team also serve as officers of our Manager and Ellington.

We intend to maintain our qualification to be taxed as a REIT for U.S. federal income tax purposes under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the “Code”). Provided that we maintain our qualification as a REIT, we generally will not be subject to U.S. federal, state, and local income tax on our REIT taxable income that is currently distributed to our stockholders, so long as we distribute at least 90% of our REIT taxable income (excluding net capital gains) to our stockholders by prescribed dates and comply with various other requirements. Any taxes paid by a taxable REIT subsidiary (“TRS”) will reduce the cash available for distribution to our stockholders.

Our Corporate Information

We commenced operations and were formed as a Delaware limited liability company in 2007 and converted to a Delaware corporation effective March 1, 2019. We have elected to be treated as a REIT for U.S. federal income tax purposes commencing with our taxable year ended December 31, 2019. Our principal executive offices are located at 53 Forest Avenue, Old Greenwich, CT 06870. Our telephone number is (203) 409-3575. Our internet address is www.ellingtonfinancial.com. Our internet website, and the information contained therein or connected thereto, is not incorporated by reference into, and does not constitute part of, this prospectus.

Our Manager and Ellington

We are externally managed and advised by our Manager, an affiliate of Ellington, pursuant to a management agreement. Our Manager was formed solely to serve as our manager and does not have any other clients. In addition, our Manager currently does not have any employees and instead relies on the employees of Ellington to perform its obligations to us. Ellington is an investment management firm and registered investment advisor with an over 30-year history of investing in a broad spectrum of mortgage-backed securities, or “MBS,” and related derivatives.

The members of our management team include Michael Vranos, founder and Chief Executive Officer of Ellington, who serves as our Co-Chief Investment Officer; Laurence Penn, Vice Chairman and Chief Operating Officer of Ellington, who serves as our Chief Executive Officer and President and a member of our board of directors (“Board of Directors”); Mark Tecotzky, Vice Chairman and Head of Credit Strategies of Ellington, who serves as our Co-Chief Investment Officer; JR Herlihy, a Managing Director of Ellington, who serves as our Chief Financial Officer; Christopher Smernoff, who serves as our Chief Accounting Officer; Daniel Margolis, General Counsel of Ellington, who serves as our General Counsel; Vincent Ambrico, who serves as our Contoller; and Alaael-Deen Shilleh, Associate General Counsel of Ellington, who serves as our Associate General Counsel and Secretary. Each of these individuals is an officer of our Manager.

Our Manager is responsible for administering our business activities and day-to-day operations and, pursuant to a services agreement between our Manager and Ellington, utilizes the resources of Ellington to support our operations. Ellington has well-established portfolio management resources for each of our targeted asset classes and an established infrastructure supporting those resources. Through our relationship with our Manager, we benefit from Ellington's highly analytical investment processes, broad-based deal flow, extensive relationships in the financial community, financial and capital structuring skills, investment surveillance database, and operational expertise. For example, Ellington's analytic approach to the investment process involves the collection of substantial amounts of data regarding historical performance of MBS collateral and MBS market transactions. Ellington analyzes this data to identify possible relationships and trends and to develop financial models used to support our investment and risk management process. In addition, throughout Ellington's over 30-year investing history, it has developed strong relationships with a wide range of dealers and other market participants that provide Ellington access to a broad range of trading opportunities and market information. As a result, Ellington provides us with access to a wide variety of asset acquisition and disposition opportunities and information that assist us in making asset management decisions across our targeted asset classes, which we believe provides us with a significant competitive advantage. We also benefit from Ellington's finance, accounting, operational, legal, compliance, and administrative functions.

As of September 30, 2025, Ellington had over 170 employees and had assets under management of approximately \$18.2 billion.

RISK FACTORS

Investment in our securities involves significant risks. Before making an investment decision, you should carefully read and consider the risks set forth under the heading “Risk Factors” in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and any subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q incorporated by reference herein, as well as the other information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus or in any prospectus supplement hereto before deciding whether to invest in our securities. See “Where You Can Find More Information,” below. If any of the risks described in any prospectus supplement hereto or incorporated by reference in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement hereto were to occur, our business, financial condition or results of operations could be materially and adversely affected. Additional risks and uncertainties that are not currently known to us, or that we currently deem immaterial, may also impair our operations and performance.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless otherwise indicated in an applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus, we intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of securities offered by this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement for the purchase of our targeted assets and for general corporate purposes. We have not determined the amount of net proceeds to be used specifically for any particular purpose. As a result, management will retain broad discretion over the allocation of net proceeds of any offering.

We will not receive any of the proceeds from the sale of securities to which this prospectus relates that are offered by any selling security holders.

DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK

The following description of our common stock sets forth certain general terms and provisions of the common stock to which any prospectus supplement may relate, including a prospectus supplement which provides for common stock issuable pursuant to stockholder rights or upon conversion of securities which are offered pursuant to such prospectus supplement and convertible into common stock under the terms and conditions set forth in such prospectus supplement, and will apply to any common stock offered by this prospectus unless we provide otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement or any document incorporated by reference in the applicable prospectus supplement or this prospectus.

Our certificate of incorporation provides for the issuance of our shares of common stock, as well as certain terms of our common stock. The following is a summary of some of the terms of our common stock, our certificate of incorporation and the Delaware General Corporation Law (the “DGCL”), and is not complete and is subject to, and qualified in its entirety by reference to, all of the provisions of our certificate of incorporation and the DGCL.

Authorized Shares

We are authorized to issue, pursuant to action by our Board of Directors and subject to limitations prescribed by the DGCL, up to 300,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$0.001 per share. As of December 19, 2025, we had 111,255,479 shares of common stock outstanding.

Voting Rights

The holders of common stock are entitled to one vote per share held of record on all matters submitted to a vote of our stockholders. Generally, all matters to be voted on by our stockholders must be approved by a majority (or, in the case of election of directors, by a plurality) of the votes entitled to be cast by all holders of common stock present in person or represented by proxy, voting together as a group.

Economic Rights

Dividends. In general, holders of common stock will share ratably (based on the number of shares of common stock held) in any dividend declared by our Board of Directors out of funds legally available therefor, subject to any statutory or contractual restrictions on the payment of distributions and to any restrictions on the payment of distributions imposed by the terms of any outstanding preferred stock.

Liquidation. Upon our dissolution, liquidation or winding up, after payment in full of all amounts required to be paid to creditors and to the holders of preferred stock having liquidation preferences, if any, the holders of our common stock will be entitled to receive our remaining assets available for distribution.

Restrictions on Transfer

See “Certain Provisions of Delaware Law and Our Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws” for a description of restrictions on transfers of our shares including our common stock and for a description of other provisions of our certificate of incorporation and bylaws.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is Equiniti Trust Company, LLC. The transfer agent and registrar’s address is 48 Wall Street, New York, NY 10005, and its telephone number is (718) 921-8300.

Listing

Our common stock is listed on the NYSE under the ticker symbol “EFC.”

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK

The following description of our preferred stock sets forth certain general terms and provisions of the preferred stock to which any prospectus supplement may relate, including a prospectus supplement which provides for preferred stock issuable pursuant to stockholder rights or upon conversion of securities which are offered pursuant to such prospectus supplement and convertible into preferred stock under the terms and conditions set forth in such prospectus supplement, and will apply to any preferred stock offered by this prospectus unless we provide otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement.

We are authorized to issue, pursuant to action by our Board of Directors and subject to limitations prescribed by the DGCL, up to 100,000,000 shares of preferred stock. The following is a summary of some of the terms of our preferred stock, our certificate of incorporation and the DGCL, and is not complete and is subject to, and qualified in its entirety by reference to, all of the provisions of our certificate of incorporation and the DGCL.

As of December 19, 2025, we had 4,600,000 shares of Series A Preferred Stock outstanding, 4,820,421 shares of Series B Preferred Stock outstanding, 4,000,000 shares of Series C Preferred Stock outstanding, and 379,668 shares of Series D Preferred Stock outstanding. Unless required by law or by any stock exchange, the authorized preferred stock will be available for issuance without further action by our common stockholders.

Our Board of Directors is able to determine, with respect to any series of preferred stock, the terms and rights of that series, including:

- the designation of the series;
- the amount of shares of preferred stock of the series, which our Board of Directors may, except where otherwise provided in the preferred stock designation, increase or decrease, but not below the number of shares of preferred stock of the series then outstanding;
- whether dividends, if any, will be cumulative or non-cumulative and the dividend rate of the series;
- the dates at which dividends, if any, will be payable;
- the redemption rights and price or prices, if any, for shares of preferred stock of the series;
- the terms and amounts of any sinking fund provided for the purchase or redemption of the shares of preferred stock of the series;
- the amounts payable on shares of preferred stock of the series in the event of any voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding-up of the affairs of our company;
- whether the shares of preferred stock of the series will be convertible into or exchangeable for interests of any other class or series, or any other security, of our company or any other entity, and, if so, the specification of the other class or series or other security, the conversion or exchange price or prices or rate or rates, any rate adjustments, the date or dates on which, the period or periods during which, the shares of preferred stock will be convertible or exchangeable and all other terms and conditions upon which the conversion or exchange may be made;
- restrictions on the issuance of shares of preferred stock of the series or of any shares of any other class or series; and
- the voting rights, if any, of the holders of the shares of preferred stock of the series.

The designations, preferences, rights, powers and duties of each series of preferred stock will be set forth in a designating amendment to our certificate of incorporation that is approved by our Board of Directors and annexed to our certificate of incorporation.

Description of Series A Preferred Stock

On October 21, 2019, we filed a certificate of designations (the “Series A Certificate of Designations”) with the Secretary of State of the State of Delaware to designate 4,600,000 shares of our authorized preferred stock, par value \$0.001 per share, as shares of “6.750% Series A Fixed-to-Floating Rate Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock” with the powers, designations, preferences and other rights as set forth therein, which certificate became effective upon filing. On January 20, 2022, we filed with the Secretary of State of the State of Delaware a Certificate of Amendment (the “Series A Certificate of Amendment”) of Certificate of Designations for the Series A Preferred Stock to designate an additional 4,000,000 shares of the Company’s authorized preferred stock as additional shares of Series A Preferred Stock, which became effective upon filing. As a result, as of the date of this prospectus, we were authorized to issue an aggregate of 8,600,000 shares of Series A Preferred Stock.

The Series A Certificate of Designations and Series A Certificate of Amendment are incorporated by reference herein. The Series A Preferred Stock is listed on the NYSE under the trading symbol “EFC PR A.” Terms defined in this “Description of Series A Preferred Stock” section have the meanings ascribed to such terms herein only when used in this “Description of Series A Preferred Stock” section

Ranking. The Series A Preferred Stock ranks, with respect to rights to the payment of dividends and the distribution of assets in the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, (i) senior to our common stock and all other classes or series of stock we may issue in the future with terms specifically providing that such stock ranks junior to the Series A Preferred Stock with respect to rights to the payment of dividends and the distribution of assets upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up (“Junior Stock”); (ii) on a parity with our Series B Preferred Stock, Series C Preferred Stock and Series D Preferred Stock and all other classes or series of stock we may issue in the future with terms specifically providing that such stock ranks on a parity with the Series A Preferred Stock with respect to rights to the payment of dividends and the distribution of assets upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up (“Parity Stock”); (iii) junior to all classes or series of stock we may issue in the future with terms specifically providing that such stock ranks senior to the Series A Preferred Stock with respect to rights to the payment of dividends and the distribution of assets upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up (“Senior Stock”); and (iv) effectively junior to all of our existing and future indebtedness (including indebtedness convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock or preferred stock) and other liabilities and to all liabilities and preferred equity of our existing subsidiaries and any future subsidiaries.

Dividends. Holders of shares of the Series A Preferred Stock are entitled to receive, when, as and if declared by our Board of Directors, out of our funds legally available for the payment of dividends, cumulative cash dividends. The initial dividend rate for the Series A Preferred Stock from and including October 22, 2019 to, but excluding, October 30, 2024 (the “Fixed Rate Period”) was at the rate of 6.750% of the \$25.00 liquidation preference per share of the Series A Preferred Stock per annum. On and after October 30, 2024 (the “Floating Rate Period”), dividends on the Series A Preferred Stock accumulate at a percentage of the \$25.00 liquidation preference per share of the Series A Preferred Stock equal to an annual floating rate of the three-month LIBOR plus a spread of 5.196%. Following the discontinuation of LIBOR, we appointed a calculation agent, who determined that, during the Floating Rate Period, dividends on the Series A Preferred Stock will accrue at an annualized rate equal to the sum of: (i) the 3-month Secured Overnight Financing Rate and (ii) 5.45761%.

Dividends on the Series A Preferred Stock accumulate daily and are cumulative from, and including, October 22, 2019 and are payable quarterly in arrears on or about the 30th day of each January, April, July and October (each, a “Series A Dividend Payment Date”); provided, that if any Series A Dividend Payment Date is not a business day, then the dividend which would otherwise have been payable on that Series A Dividend Payment Date may be paid on the next succeeding business day and no interest, additional dividends or other sums accrue on the amount so payable for the period from and after such Series A Dividend Payment Date to such next succeeding business day. Dividends payable for any dividend period during the Fixed Rate Period are calculated on the basis of a 360-day year consisting of twelve 30-day months, and dividends payable for any dividend period during the Floating Rate Period are calculated on the basis of a 360-day year and the number of days actually elapsed in such dividend period. Dividends are payable to holders of record as they appear in our stock records for the Series A Preferred Stock at the close of business on the applicable record date, which will be no fewer than ten days and no more than 35 days prior to the applicable dividend payment date, as shall be fixed by the Board of Directors (each, a “dividend record date”). The dividends payable on any Series A Dividend Payment Date include dividends accumulated to, but excluding, such Series A Dividend Payment Date.

Liquidation Preference. In the event of our voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, the holders of shares of Series A Preferred Stock are entitled to be paid out of the assets we have legally available for distribution to our stockholders, subject to the preferential rights of the holders of Senior Stock, a liquidation preference of \$25.00 per share, plus an amount equal to any accumulated and unpaid dividends thereon (whether or not authorized or declared) to, but excluding, the date of payment, before any distribution of assets is made to holders of our common stock or any other Junior Stock. In the event that, upon any such voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, our available assets are insufficient to pay the amount of the liquidating distributions on all outstanding shares of the Series A Preferred Stock and the corresponding amounts payable on all shares of Parity Stock, the holders of the Series A Preferred Stock and all such Parity Stock shall share ratably in any such distribution of assets in proportion to the full liquidating distributions to which they would otherwise be respectively entitled.

Redemption. We may, at our option, redeem the Series A Preferred Stock, in whole or in part, at any time or from time to time, for cash at a redemption price equal to \$25.00 per share, plus any accumulated and unpaid dividends thereon (whether or not authorized or declared) to, but excluding, the redemption date, without interest.

In addition, upon the occurrence of a Change of Control, we may, at our option, redeem the Series A Preferred Stock, in whole or in part, within 120 days after the first date on which such Change of Control occurred, for cash at a redemption price of \$25.00 per share, plus any accumulated and unpaid dividends thereon (whether or not authorized or declared) to, but excluding, the redemption date, without interest.

Maturity. The Series A Preferred Stock has no stated maturity and is not subject to any sinking fund or mandatory redemption, and will remain outstanding indefinitely unless (i) we decide to redeem or otherwise repurchase the Series A Preferred Stock or (ii) the Series A Preferred Stock becomes convertible and is actually converted in connection with a Change of Control by the holders of Series A Preferred Stock.

Voting Rights. Holders of the Series A Preferred Stock do not have any voting rights. However, if we do not pay dividends on the Series A Preferred Stock for six or more quarterly dividend periods (whether or not consecutive), the holders of the Series A Preferred Stock (voting together as a class with the holders of Series B Preferred Stock, Series C Preferred Stock and Series D Preferred Stock and the holders of all other classes or series of preferred stock that we may issue and upon which like voting rights have been conferred and are exercisable and which are entitled to vote as a class with the Series A Preferred Stock in the election referred to below) will be entitled to vote for the election of two additional directors to serve on our Board of Directors until we pay all dividends that we owe on the Series A Preferred Stock, subject to certain limitations. In addition, the affirmative vote of the holders of at least two-thirds of the outstanding shares of Series A Preferred Stock is required for us to authorize or issue any class or series of Senior Stock, to amend any provision of our certificate of incorporation so as to materially and adversely affect any rights of the Series A Preferred Stock or to take certain other actions.

Conversion. Upon the occurrence of a Change of Control, each holder of Series A Preferred Stock will have the right (subject to our election to redeem the Series A Preferred Stock in whole or in part, as described above, prior to the Change of Control Conversion Date (as defined in the Series A Certificate of Designations)) to convert some or all of the Series A Preferred Stock held by such holder on the Change of Control Conversion Date into a number of shares of our common stock per share of Series A Preferred Stock determined by a formula, in each case, on the terms and subject to the conditions described in the Series A Certificate of Designations, including provisions for the receipt, under specified circumstances, of alternative consideration.

Description of Series B Preferred Stock

On December 10, 2021, we filed a certificate of designations (the “Series B Certificate of Designations”) with the Secretary of State of the State of Delaware to designate 5,060,000 shares of our authorized preferred stock, par value \$0.001 per share, as shares of “6.250% Series B Fixed-Rate Reset Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock” with the powers, designations, preferences and other rights as set forth therein, which certificate became effective upon filing. On January 20, 2022, we filed with the Secretary of State of the State of Delaware a Certificate of Amendment (the “Series B Certificate of Amendment”) of Certificate of Designations for the Series B Preferred Stock to designate an additional 3,740,000 shares of the Company’s authorized preferred stock as additional shares of Series B Preferred Stock, which became effective upon filing. As a result, as of the date of this prospectus, we were authorized to issue an aggregate of 8,800,000 shares of Series B Preferred Stock. The Series B Certificate of Designations and Series B Certificate of Amendment are incorporated by reference herein. The Series B Preferred Stock is listed on the NYSE under the trading symbol “EFC PR B.” Terms defined in this “Description of Series B Preferred Stock” section have the meanings ascribed to such terms herein only when used in this “Description of Series B Preferred Stock” section.

Ranking. The Series B Preferred Stock ranks, with respect to rights to the payment of dividends and the distribution of assets in the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, (i) senior to our common stock and all other classes or series of stock we may issue in the future with terms specifically providing that such stock ranks junior to the Series B Preferred Stock with respect to rights to the payment of dividends and the distribution of assets upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up (“Junior Stock”); (ii) on a parity with our Series A Preferred Stock, Series C Preferred Stock and Series D Preferred Stock and all other classes or series of stock we may issue in the future with terms specifically providing that such stock ranks on a parity with the Series B Preferred Stock with respect to rights to the payment of dividends and the distribution of assets upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up (“Parity Stock”); (iii) junior to all classes or series of stock we may issue in the future with terms specifically providing that such stock ranks senior to the Series B Preferred Stock with respect to rights to the payment of dividends and the distribution of assets upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up (“Senior Stock”); and (iv) effectively junior to all of our existing and future indebtedness (including indebtedness convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock or preferred stock) and other liabilities and to all liabilities and preferred equity of our existing subsidiaries and any future subsidiaries.

Dividends. Holders of shares of the Series B Preferred Stock are entitled to receive, when, as and if declared by our Board of Directors, out of funds legally available for the payment of dividends, cumulative cash dividends based on the stated liquidation preference of \$25.00 per share at a rate equal to (i) from and including December 13, 2021 to, but excluding, January 30, 2027 (the “First Reset Date”), 6.250% per annum (equivalent to \$1.5625 per annum per share of the Series B Preferred Stock) and (ii) from and including the First Reset Date, during each Reset Period (as defined below), the five-year treasury rate (as defined in the Series B Certificate of Designations) as of the most recent Reset Dividend Determination Date (as defined below) plus 4.99% per annum.

A “Reset Date” means the First Reset Date and each date falling on the fifth anniversary of the preceding Reset Date, whether or not a business day. A “Reset Period” means the period from, and including, the First Reset Date to, but excluding, the next following Reset Date and thereafter each period from, and including, each Reset Date to, but excluding, the next following Reset Date. A “Reset Dividend Determination Date” means, in respect of any Reset Period, the day falling three business days prior to the beginning of such Reset Period.

Dividends on the Series B Preferred Stock accumulate daily and are cumulative from, and including, December 13, 2021 and are payable quarterly in arrears on or about the 30th day of January, April, July and October of each year (each, a “Series B Dividend Payment Date”), when and as declared, provided, however, that if any Series B Dividend Payment Date is not a business day, then the dividend which would otherwise have been payable on that Series B Dividend Payment Date may be paid, at our option, on either the immediately preceding business day or the next succeeding business day, except that, if such business day is in the next succeeding calendar year, such payment must be made on the immediately preceding business day, in each case with the same force and effect as if paid on such dividend payment date, and no interest, additional dividends or other sums accrue on the amount so payable for the period from such Series B Dividend Payment Date to such next succeeding business day. Dividends payable for any dividend period are calculated on the basis of a 360-day year consisting of twelve 30-day months. Dividends are payable to holders of record as they appear in our stock transfer records for the Series B Preferred Stock at the close of business on the applicable dividend record date, which will be no fewer than ten days and no more than 35 days prior to the applicable dividend payment date, as will be fixed by the Board of Directors (each, a “dividend record date”). The dividends payable on any Series B Dividend Payment Date include dividends accumulated to, but excluding, such Series B Dividend Payment Date.

Liquidation Preference. In the event of our voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, the holders of shares of Series B Preferred Stock are entitled to be paid out of the assets we have legally available for distribution to our stockholders, subject to the preferential rights of the holders of Senior Stock, a liquidation preference of \$25.00 per share, plus an amount equal to any accumulated and unpaid dividends thereon (whether or not authorized or declared) to, but excluding, the date of payment, before any distribution of assets is made to holders of our common stock or any other Junior Stock. In the event that, upon any such voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, our available assets are insufficient to pay the amount of the liquidating distributions on all outstanding shares of the Series B Preferred Stock and the corresponding amounts payable on all shares of Parity Stock, the holders of the Series B Preferred Stock and all such Parity Stock shall share ratably in any such distribution of assets in proportion to the full liquidating distributions to which they would otherwise be respectively entitled.

Redemption. The Series B Preferred Stock is not redeemable by us prior to January 30, 2027, except under circumstances intended to preserve our qualification as a REIT for federal income tax purposes and except upon the occurrence of a Change of Control (as defined in the Series B Certificate of Designations). On and after January 30, 2027, we may, at our option, redeem the Series B Preferred Stock, in whole or in part, at any time or from time to time, for cash at a redemption price equal to \$25.00 per share, plus any accumulated and unpaid dividends thereon (whether or not authorized or declared) to, but excluding, the redemption date, without interest.

In addition, upon the occurrence of a Change of Control, we may, at our option, redeem the Series B Preferred Stock, in whole or in part, within 120 days after the first date on which such Change of Control occurred, for cash at a redemption price of \$25.00 per share, plus any accumulated and unpaid dividends thereon (whether or not authorized or declared) to, but excluding, the redemption date, without interest.

Maturity. The Series B Preferred Stock has no stated maturity and is not subject to any sinking fund or mandatory redemption. Shares of the Series B Preferred Stock will remain outstanding indefinitely unless (i) we decide to redeem or otherwise repurchase the Series B Preferred Stock or (ii) the Series B Preferred Stock becomes convertible and is actually converted in connection with a Change of Control by the holders of Series B Preferred Stock.

Voting Rights. Holders of the Series B Preferred Stock do not have any voting rights. However, if we do not pay dividends on the Series B Preferred Stock for six or more quarterly dividend periods (whether or not consecutive), the holders of the Series B Preferred Stock (voting together as a class with the holders of Series A Preferred Stock, Series C Preferred Stock and Series D Preferred Stock and the holders of all other classes or series of preferred stock that we may issue and upon which like voting rights have been conferred and are exercisable and which are entitled to vote as a class with the Series B Preferred Stock in the election referred to below) will be entitled to vote for the election of two additional directors to serve on our Board of Directors until we pay all dividends that we owe on the Series B Preferred Stock, subject to certain limitations. In addition, the affirmative vote of the holders of at least two-thirds of the outstanding shares of Series B Preferred Stock is required for us to authorize or issue any class or series of Senior Stock, to amend any provision of our certificate of incorporation so as to materially and adversely affect any rights of the Series B Preferred Stock or to take certain other actions.

Conversion. Upon the occurrence of a Change of Control, each holder of Series B Preferred Stock will have the right (subject to our election to redeem the Series B Preferred Stock in whole or in part, as described above, prior to the Change of Control Conversion Date (as defined in the Series B Certificate of Designations)) to convert some or all of the Series B Preferred Stock held by such holder on the Change of Control Conversion Date into a number of shares of our common stock per share of Series B Preferred Stock determined by a formula, in each case, on the terms and subject to the conditions described in the Series B Certificate of Designations, including provisions for the receipt, under specified circumstances, of alternative consideration.

Description of Series C Preferred Stock

On February 3, 2023, we filed a certificate of designations (the “Series C Certificate of Designations”) with the Secretary of State of the State of Delaware to designate 4,600,000 shares of our authorized preferred stock, par value \$0.001 per share, as shares of “8.625% Series C Fixed-Rate Reset Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock” with the powers, designations, preferences and other rights as set forth therein, which certificate became effective upon filing. As of the date of this prospectus, we are authorized to issue up to 4,600,000 shares of Series C Preferred Stock. The Series C Certificate of Designations is incorporated by reference herein. The Series C Preferred Stock is listed on the NYSE under the trading symbol “EFC PR C.” Terms defined in this “Description of Series C Preferred Stock” section have the meanings ascribed to such terms herein only when used in this “Description of Series C Preferred Stock” section.

Ranking. The Series C Preferred Stock ranks, with respect to rights to the payment of dividends and the distribution of assets in the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, (i) senior to our common stock and all other classes or series of stock we may issue in the future with terms specifically providing that such stock ranks junior to the Series C Preferred Stock (“Junior Stock”); (ii) on a parity with our Series A Preferred Stock, our Series B Preferred Stock, our Series D Preferred Stock and all other classes or series of stock we may issue in the future with terms specifically providing that such stock ranks on a parity with the Series C Preferred Stock (“Parity Stock”); (iii) junior to all classes or series of stock we may issue in the future with terms specifically providing that such stock ranks senior to the Series C Preferred Stock (“Senior Stock”); and (iv) effectively junior to all of our existing and future indebtedness (including indebtedness convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock or preferred stock) and other liabilities and to all liabilities and preferred equity of our existing subsidiaries and any future subsidiaries.

Dividends. Holders of shares of the Series C Preferred Stock are entitled to receive, when, as and if declared by our Board of Directors, out of funds legally available for the payment of dividends, cumulative cash dividends based on the stated liquidation preference of \$25.00 per share at a rate equal to (i) from and including February 6, 2023 (the “Original Issue Date”) to, but excluding, April 30, 2028 (the “First Reset Date”), 8.625% per annum and (ii) from and including the First Reset Date, during each Reset Period, the five-year treasury rate (as defined in the Series C Certificate of Designations) as of the most recent Reset Dividend Determination Date plus 5.13% per annum.

A “Reset Date” means the First Reset Date and each date falling on the fifth anniversary of the preceding Reset Date, whether or not a business day. A “Reset Period” means the period from, and including, the First Reset Date to, but excluding, the next following Reset Date and thereafter each period from, and including, each Reset Date to, but excluding, the next following Reset Date. A “Reset Dividend Determination Date” means, in respect of any Reset Period, the day falling three business days prior to the beginning of such Reset Period.

Dividends on the Series C Preferred Stock accumulate daily and are cumulative from, and including, February 6, 2023 and are payable quarterly in arrears on or about the 30th day of January, April, July and October of each year (each, a “Series C Dividend Payment Date”), when and as declared; provided, however, that if any Series C Dividend Payment Date is not a business day, then the dividend which would otherwise have been payable on that Series C Dividend Payment Date may be paid, at our option, on either the immediately preceding business day or the next succeeding business day, except that, if such business day is in the next succeeding calendar year, such payment must be made on the immediately preceding business day, in each case with the same force and effect as if paid on such dividend payment date, and no interest, additional dividends or other sums accrue on the amount so payable for the period from such Series C Dividend Payment Date to such next succeeding business day. Dividends payable for any dividend period are calculated on the basis of a 360-day year consisting of twelve 30-day months. Dividends are payable to holders of record as they appear in our stock transfer records for the Series C Preferred Stock at the close of business on the applicable dividend record date, which will be no fewer than ten days and no more than 35 days prior to the applicable dividend payment date, as will be fixed by the Board of Directors (each, a “dividend record date”). The dividends payable on any Series C Dividend Payment Date include dividends accumulated to, but excluding, such Series C Dividend Payment Date.

Liquidation Preference. In the event of our voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, the holders of shares of Series C Preferred Stock are entitled to be paid out of the assets we have legally available for distribution to our stockholders, subject to the preferential rights of the holders of Senior Stock, a liquidation preference of \$25.00 per share, plus an amount equal to any accumulated and unpaid dividends thereon (whether or not authorized or declared) to, but excluding, the date of payment, before any distribution of assets is made to holders of our common stock or any other Junior Stock. In the event that, upon any such voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, our available assets are insufficient to pay the amount of the liquidating distributions on all outstanding shares of the Series C Preferred Stock and the corresponding amounts payable on all shares of Parity Stock, the holders of the Series C Preferred Stock and all such Parity Stock shall share ratably in any such distribution of assets in proportion to the full liquidating distributions to which they would otherwise be respectively entitled.

Redemption. The Series C Preferred Stock is not redeemable by us prior to April 30, 2028, except under circumstances intended to preserve our qualification as a REIT for federal income tax purposes and except upon the occurrence of a Change of Control (as defined in the Series C Certificate of Designations). On and after April 30, 2028, we may, at our option, redeem the Series C Preferred Stock, in whole or in part, at any time or from time to time, for cash at a redemption price equal to \$25.00 per share, plus any accumulated and unpaid dividends thereon (whether or not authorized or declared) to, but excluding, the redemption date, without interest.

In addition, upon the occurrence of a Change of Control, we may, at our option, redeem the Series C Preferred Stock, in whole or in part, within 120 days after the first date on which such Change of Control occurred, for cash at a redemption price of \$25.00 per share, plus any accumulated and unpaid dividends thereon (whether or not authorized or declared) to, but excluding, the redemption date, without interest. If, prior to the Change of Control Conversion Date (as defined in the Series C Certificate of Designations), we have provided notice of our election to redeem some or all of the shares of Series C Preferred Stock, holders of the Series C Preferred Stock will not have the Change of Control Conversion Right (as defined in the Series C Certificate of Designations) with respect to the shares of Series C Preferred Stock called for redemption.

Maturity. The Series C Preferred Stock has no stated maturity and is not subject to any sinking fund or mandatory redemption. Shares of the Series C Preferred Stock will remain outstanding indefinitely unless (i) we decide to redeem or otherwise repurchase the Series C Preferred Stock or (ii) the Series C Preferred Stock becomes convertible and is actually converted in connection with a Change of Control by the holders of Series C Preferred Stock

Voting Rights. Holders of the Series C Preferred Stock do not have any voting rights. However, if we do not pay dividends on the Series C Preferred Stock for six or more quarterly dividend periods (whether or not consecutive), the holders of the Series C Preferred Stock (voting together as a class with the holders of the Series A Preferred Stock, the Series B Preferred Stock, the Series D Preferred Stock and the holders of all other classes or series of preferred stock that we may issue and upon which like voting rights have been conferred and are exercisable and which are entitled to vote as a class with the Series C Preferred Stock in the election referred to below) will be entitled to vote for the election of two additional directors to serve on our Board of Directors until we pay all dividends that we owe on the Series C Preferred Stock, subject to certain limitations. In addition, the affirmative vote of the holders of at least two-thirds of the outstanding shares of Series C Preferred Stock, together with the holders of all other Parity Stock having like voting rights that are exercisable at the time, voting as a single class, is required for us to authorize or issue any class or series of Senior Stock, to amend any provision of our certificate of incorporation or the Series C Certificate of Designations so as to materially and adversely affect any rights of the Series C Preferred Stock, or to take certain other actions.

Conversion. Upon the occurrence of a Change of Control, each holder of Series C Preferred Stock will have the right (subject to our election to redeem the Series C Preferred Stock in whole or in part, as described above, prior to the Change of Control Conversion Date) to convert some or all of the Series C Preferred Stock held by such holder on the Change of Control Conversion Date into a number of shares of our common stock per share of Series C Preferred Stock determined by a formula, in each case, on the terms and subject to the conditions described in the Series C Certificate of Designations, including provisions for the receipt, under specified circumstances, of alternative consideration and limitations on the maximum number of shares of common stock or other consideration issuable upon such conversion.

Description of Series D Preferred Stock

On December 14, 2023, we filed a certificate of designations (the “Series D Certificate of Designations”) with the Secretary of State of the State of Delaware to designate 379,668 shares of our authorized preferred stock, par value \$0.001 per share, as shares of “7.00% Series D Cumulative Perpetual Redeemable Preferred Stock” with the powers, designations, preferences and other rights as set forth therein, which certificate became effective on December 14, 2023. The Series D Certificate of Designations is incorporated by reference herein. The Series D Preferred Stock is listed on the NYSE under the trading symbol “EFC PRD.” Terms defined in this “Description of Series D Preferred Stock” section have the meanings ascribed to such terms herein only when used in this “Description of Series D Preferred Stock” section.

Ranking. The Series D Preferred Stock ranks, with respect to rights to the payment of dividends and the distribution of assets in the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, (i) senior to our common stock and to all other classes or series of stock of ours other than those referred to in clauses (ii) and (iii) of this paragraph (the “Junior Stock”); (ii) on a parity with our Series A Preferred Stock, our Series B Preferred Stock, our Series C Preferred Stock and all other classes or series of stock we may issue in the future with terms specifically providing that such stock ranks on a parity with the Series D Preferred Stock (“Parity Stock”); and (iii) junior to all classes or series of stock we may issue in the future with terms specifically providing that such stock ranks senior to the Series D Preferred Stock (“Senior Stock”).

Dividends. Holders of shares of the Series D Preferred Stock are entitled to receive, when, as and if declared by our Board of Directors, out of funds legally available for the payment of dividends, cumulative cash dividends based on the stated liquidation preference of \$25.00 per share at a rate equal to 7.00% per annum.

Dividends on the Series D Preferred Stock accumulate daily and are cumulative from, and including, September 30, 2023 and are payable quarterly in arrears on or about the 30th day of March, June, September, and December of each year (each, a “Series D Dividend Payment Date”), when and as declared, provided, however, that if any Series D Dividend Payment Date is not a business day, then the dividend which would otherwise have been payable on that Series D Dividend Payment Date may be paid on the next succeeding business day with the same force and effect as if paid on such dividend payment date, and no interest, additional dividends or other sums accrue on the amount so payable for the period from such Series D Dividend Payment Date to such next succeeding business day. Dividends payable for any dividend period are calculated on the basis of a 360-day year consisting of twelve 30-day months. Dividends are payable to holders of record as they appear in our stock transfer records for the Series D Preferred Stock at the close of business on the applicable dividend record date, which will be no fewer than ten days and no more than 35 days prior to the applicable dividend payment date, as will be fixed by the Board of Directors (each, a “dividend record date”). The dividends payable on any Series D Dividend Payment Date include dividends accumulated to, but excluding, such Series D Dividend Payment Date.

Liquidation Preference. In the event of our voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, the holders of shares of Series D Preferred Stock are entitled to be paid out of the assets we have legally available for distribution to our stockholders, subject to the preferential rights of the holders of Senior Stock, a liquidation preference of \$25.00 per share, plus an amount equal to any accumulated and unpaid dividends thereon (whether or not authorized or declared) to, but excluding, the date of payment, before any distribution of assets is made to holders of our common stock or any other Junior Stock. In the event that, upon any such voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, our available assets are insufficient to pay the amount of the liquidating distributions on all outstanding shares of the Series D Preferred Stock and the corresponding amounts payable on all shares of Parity Stock, the holders of the Series D Preferred Stock and all such Parity Stock shall share ratably in any such distribution of assets in proportion to the full liquidating distributions to which they would otherwise be respectively entitled.

Redemption. We may, at our option, upon not less than 30 nor more than 60 days’ notice, redeem the Series D Preferred Stock, in whole or in part, at any time or from time to time, for cash at a redemption price of \$25.00 per share, plus any accumulated and unpaid dividends thereon (whether or not authorized or declared) to, but not including, the date fixed for redemption, without interest. If we elect to redeem any shares of the Series D Preferred Stock as described in this paragraph, we may use any available cash to pay the redemption price, and we will not be required to pay the redemption price only out of the proceeds from the issuance of other equity securities or any other specific source.

In addition, upon the occurrence of a Change of Control (as defined in the Series D Certificate of Designations), we will, upon not less than 30 nor more than 60 days’ notice, as provided below, redeem the Series D Preferred Stock, in whole but not in part, immediately upon the effectiveness of such Change of Control, for cash at a redemption price of \$25.00 per share, plus any accumulated and unpaid dividends thereon (whether or not authorized or declared) to, but not including, the date fixed for redemption. If we are required to redeem any shares of Series D Preferred Stock as described in this paragraph, we may use any available cash to pay the redemption price, and we will not be required to pay the redemption price only out of the proceeds from the issuance of other equity securities or any other specific source.

Maturity. The Series D Preferred Stock has no stated maturity and is not subject to any sinking fund or mandatory redemption. Shares of the Series D Preferred Stock will remain outstanding indefinitely unless we redeem or otherwise repurchase the Series D Preferred Stock.

Voting Rights. Holders of the Series D Preferred Stock do not have any voting rights. However, if we do not pay dividends on the Series D Preferred Stock for six or more quarterly dividend periods (whether or not consecutive), the holders of the Series D Preferred Stock (voting together as a class with the holders of Series A Preferred Stock, the Series B Preferred Stock, the Series C Preferred Stock and the holders of all other classes or series of preferred stock that we may issue and upon which like voting rights have been conferred and are exercisable and which are entitled to vote as a class with the Series D Preferred Stock in the election referred to below) will be entitled to vote for the election of two additional directors to serve on our Board of Directors until we pay all dividends that we owe on the Series D Preferred Stock, subject to certain limitations. In addition, the affirmative vote of the holders of at least two-thirds of the outstanding shares of Series D Preferred Stock is required for us to authorize or issue any class or series of Senior Stock, to amend any provision of our certificate of incorporation so as to materially and adversely affect any rights of the Series D Preferred Stock or to take certain other actions.

Conversion. The Series D Preferred Stock is not convertible into or exchangeable for any other property or securities of ours.

Restrictions on Transfer

See “Certain Provisions of Delaware Law and Our Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws” for a description of restrictions on transfers of our shares including our preferred stock and for a description of other provisions of our certificate of incorporation and bylaws.

Transfer Agent

The transfer agent and registrar for each series of our preferred stock will be Equiniti Trust Company, LLC unless a different transfer agent is named in the applicable prospectus supplement. The transfer agent and registrar for our Series A Preferred Stock, Series B Preferred Stock, Series C Preferred Stock, and Series D Preferred Stock is Equiniti Trust Company, LLC.

DESCRIPTION OF STOCKHOLDER RIGHTS

This section describes the general terms and provisions of the rights to purchase certain of our securities that we may issue to holders of our securities pursuant to this prospectus. The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the specific terms of the rights then issued, and the terms and provisions described in this section will apply only to the extent not superseded by the terms of the applicable prospectus supplement.

We may issue, as a dividend at no cost, to holders of record of our securities or any class or series thereof on the applicable record date, rights to purchase common stock or preferred stock. In this prospectus, we refer to such rights as “stockholder rights.” If stockholder rights are so issued to existing holders of securities, each stockholder right will entitle the registered holder thereof to purchase the securities issuable upon exercise of the rights pursuant to the terms set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

If stockholder rights are issued, the applicable prospectus supplement will describe the terms of such stockholder rights including the following where applicable:

- record date;
- subscription price;
- subscription agent;
- aggregate number of common stock or preferred stock purchasable upon exercise of such stockholder rights and in the case of stockholder rights for preferred stock, the designation, aggregate number, and terms of the class or series of preferred stock purchasable upon exercise of such stockholder rights;
- the date on which the right to exercise such stockholder rights shall commence and the expiration date on which such right shall expire;
- material U.S. federal income tax considerations; and
- other material terms of such stockholder rights.

In addition to the terms of the stockholder rights and the securities issuable upon exercise thereof, the prospectus supplement may describe, for a holder of such stockholder rights who validly exercises all stockholder rights issued to such holder, how to subscribe for unsubscribed securities, issuable pursuant to unexercised stockholder rights issued to other holders, to the extent such stockholder rights have not been exercised.

Holders of stockholder rights will not be entitled, by virtue of being such holders, to vote, to consent, to receive dividends, to receive notice with respect to any meeting of stockholders for the election of our directors or any other matter, or to exercise any rights whatsoever as stockholders of our company, except to the extent described in the related prospectus supplement.

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

This section describes the general terms and provisions of the warrants that we may offer by this prospectus. The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the specific terms of the warrants then offered, and the terms and provisions described in this section will apply only to the extent not superseded by the terms of the applicable prospectus supplement.

We may issue warrants for the purchase of shares of common stock or preferred stock, respectively referred to as common stock warrants and preferred stock warrants. Warrants may be issued independently or together with any other securities offered by this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement and may be attached to or separate from such other securities. Each issuance of the warrants will be issued under a separate warrant agreement to be entered into by us and a bank or trust company, as warrant agent, all as set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the particular issue of offered warrants. Each issue of warrants will be evidenced by warrant certificates. The warrant agent will act solely as an agent of ours in connection with the warrant certificates and will not assume any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for or with any holder of warrant certificates or beneficial owners of warrants.

If we offer warrants pursuant to this prospectus in the future, the applicable prospectus supplement will describe the terms of such warrants, including the following, where applicable:

- the offering price;
- the aggregate number of shares purchasable upon exercise of such warrants, and in the case of warrants for preferred stock, the designation, aggregate number, and terms of the class or series of preferred stock purchasable upon exercise of such warrants;
- the designation and terms of the securities with which such warrants are being offered, if any, and the number of such warrants being offered with each such security;
- the date on and after which such warrants and any related securities will be transferable separately;
- the number of shares of preferred stock or common stock purchasable upon exercise of each of such warrants and the price at which such number of shares of preferred stock or common stock may be purchased upon such exercise;
- the date on which the right to exercise such warrants shall commence and the expiration date on which such right shall expire;
- material U.S. federal income tax considerations applicable to the warrants; and
- any other material terms of such warrants.

Holders of future warrants, if any, will not be entitled by virtue of being such holders, to vote, to consent, to receive dividends, to receive notice with respect to any meeting of stockholders for the election of our directors or any other matter, or to exercise any rights whatsoever as stockholders of the Company.

If warrants for the purchase of shares of preferred stock are offered, the applicable prospectus supplement will also describe the terms of the preferred stock into which the warrants are exercisable as described under “Description of Preferred Stock.”

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

General

The debt securities offered by this prospectus will be our direct unsecured general obligations. This prospectus describes certain general terms of the debt securities offered through this prospectus. In the following discussion, we refer to any of our direct unsecured general obligations as the “Debt Securities.” When we offer to sell a particular series of Debt Securities, we will describe the specific terms of that series in a prospectus supplement or any free writing prospectus. The Debt Securities will be issued under an open-ended Indenture (for Debt Securities) between us and a trustee to be selected by us at or about the time we offer our Debt Securities. The form of open-ended Indenture (for Debt Securities) is incorporated by reference into the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part and is filed as an exhibit to the registration statement. In this prospectus we refer to the Indenture (for Debt Securities) as the “Debt Securities Indenture.” We refer to the trustee under any Debt Securities Indenture as the “Debt Securities Trustee.”

The prospectus supplement or any free writing prospectus applicable to a particular series of Debt Securities may state that a particular series of Debt Securities will be our subordinated obligations. The form of Debt Securities Indenture referred to above includes optional provisions (designated by brackets (“[]”)) that we would expect to appear in a separate indenture for subordinated debt securities in the event we issue subordinated debt securities. In the following discussion, we refer to any of our subordinated obligations as the “Subordinated Debt Securities.” Unless the applicable prospectus supplement or any free writing prospectus provides otherwise, we will use a separate Debt Securities Indenture for any Subordinated Debt Securities that we may issue. Our Debt Securities Indenture will be qualified under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended, or the “Trust Indenture Act,” and you should refer to the Trust Indenture Act for the provisions that apply to the Debt Securities.

We have summarized selected provisions of the Debt Securities Indenture below. Each Debt Securities Indenture will be independent of any other Debt Securities Indenture unless otherwise stated in a prospectus supplement or any free writing prospectus. The summary that follows is not complete and the summary is qualified in its entirety by reference to the provisions of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture. You should consult the applicable Debt Securities, Debt Securities Indenture, any supplemental indentures, form of note, officers’ certificates and other related documents for more complete information on the Debt Securities. These documents appear as exhibits to, or are incorporated by reference into, the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part, or will appear as exhibits to other documents that we will file with the SEC, which will be incorporated by reference into this prospectus. In the summary below, we have included references to applicable section numbers of the Debt Securities Indenture so that you can easily locate these provisions.

Ranking

Our Debt Securities that are not designated Subordinated Debt Securities will be effectively subordinated to all secured indebtedness that we have outstanding from time to time to the extent of the value of the collateral securing such secured indebtedness. Our Debt Securities that are designated Subordinated Debt Securities will be subordinate to all outstanding secured indebtedness as well as Debt Securities that are not designated Subordinated Debt Securities. We have in the past and intend to continue to incur indebtedness from time to time to finance many of our assets pursuant to repurchase agreements. This indebtedness is deemed to be secured indebtedness. As a result, we may have a significant amount of secured indebtedness at any given time in relation to our total assets. The Debt Securities Indenture does not limit the amount of secured indebtedness that we may issue or incur.

For a more detailed description regarding our risk exposure on our repurchase agreements, see “Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operation-Liquidity and Capital Resources” in our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the fiscal quarter ended September 30, 2025 which is incorporated herein by reference, as may be updated by our subsequent annual reports, quarterly reports and other filings we make with the SEC.

Our ability to meet our financial obligations with respect to any future Debt Securities, and cash needs generally, is dependent on our operating cash flow, our ability to access various sources of short- and long-term liquidity, including our repurchase agreements, and the capital markets. Holders of our Debt Securities will effectively have a junior position to claims of our creditors, including trade creditors, debt holders, secured creditors, taxing authorities and guarantee holders.

Provisions of a Particular Series

The Debt Securities may from time to time be issued in one or more series. You should consult the prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus relating to any particular series of Debt Securities for the following information:

- the title of the Debt Securities;
- any limit on the aggregate principal amount of the Debt Securities of the series of which they are a part;
- the date(s), or method for determining the date(s), on which the principal of the Debt Securities will be payable;
- the rate, including the method of determination, if applicable, at which the Debt Securities will bear interest, if any, and:
 - the date from which the interest will accrue;
 - the dates on which we will pay interest;
 - our ability to defer interest payments and any related restrictions during any interest deferral period; and
 - the record date for any interest payable on any interest payment date;
- the place where:
 - the principal of, premium, if any, and interest on the Debt Securities will be payable;
 - you may register transfer of the Debt Securities;
 - you may exchange the Debt Securities; and
 - you may serve notices and demands upon us regarding the Debt Securities;
- the security registrar for the Debt Securities and whether the principal of the Debt Securities is payable without presentment or surrender of them;
- the terms and conditions upon which we may elect to redeem any Debt Securities, including any replacement capital or similar covenants limiting our ability to redeem any Subordinated Debt Securities;
- the denominations in which we may issue Debt Securities, if other than \$1,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000;
- the terms and conditions upon which the Debt Securities must be redeemed or purchased due to our obligations pursuant to any sinking fund or other mandatory redemption or tender provisions, or at the holder's option, including any applicable exceptions to notice requirements;
- the currency, if other than United States currency, in which payments on the Debt Securities will be payable;
- the terms according to which elections can be made by us or the holder regarding payments on the Debt Securities in currency other than the currency in which the Debt Securities are stated to be payable;
- if payments are to be made on the Debt Securities in securities or other property, the type and amount of the securities and other property or the method by which the amount shall be determined;
- the manner in which we will determine any amounts payable on the Debt Securities that are to be determined with reference to an index or other fact or event ascertainable outside of the applicable indenture;
- if other than the entire principal amount, the portion of the principal amount of the Debt Securities payable upon declaration of acceleration of their maturity;

- any addition to the events of default applicable to any Debt Securities and any addition to our covenants for the benefit of the holders of the Debt Securities;
- the terms applicable to any rights to convert Debt Securities into or exchange them for other of our securities or those of any other entity;
- whether we are issuing Debt Securities as global securities, and if so:
 - any limitations on transfer or exchange rights or the right to obtain the registration of transfer;
 - any limitations on the right to obtain definitive certificates of the Debt Securities; and
 - any other matters incidental to the Debt Securities;
- whether we are issuing the Debt Securities as bearer certificates;
- any limitations on transfer or exchange of Debt Securities or the right to obtain registration of their transfer, and the terms and amount of any service charge required for registration of transfer or exchange;
- any exceptions to the provisions governing payments due on legal holidays, or any variations in the definition of business day with respect to the Debt Securities;
- any collateral security, assurance, guarantee or other credit enhancement applicable to the Debt Securities;
- any other terms of the Debt Securities not in conflict with the provisions of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture; and
- the material U.S. federal income tax consequences applicable to the Debt Securities.

For more information, see Section 3.01 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

Debt Securities may be sold at a substantial discount below their principal amount. You should consult the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus for a description of certain material federal income tax considerations that may apply to Debt Securities sold at an original issue discount or denominated in a currency other than U.S. dollars.

Unless the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus states otherwise, the covenants contained in the applicable indenture will not afford holders of Debt Securities protection in the event we have a change in control or are involved in a highly-leveraged transaction.

Subordination

The applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus may provide that a series of Debt Securities will be Subordinated Debt Securities, subordinate and junior in right of payment to all of our Senior Indebtedness, as defined below. If so, we will issue these securities under a separate Debt Securities Indenture for Subordinated Debt Securities. For more information, see Article XV of the form of Debt Securities Indenture.

Unless the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus states otherwise, no payment of principal of, including redemption and sinking fund payments, or any premium or interest on, the Subordinated Debt Securities may be made if:

- there occur certain acts of bankruptcy, insolvency, liquidation, dissolution or other winding up of our company;
- any Senior Indebtedness is not paid when due;
- any applicable grace period with respect to other defaults with respect to any Senior Indebtedness has ended, the default has not been cured or waived and the maturity of such Senior Indebtedness has been accelerated because of the default; or

- the maturity of the Subordinated Debt Securities of any series has been accelerated because of a default and Senior Indebtedness is then outstanding.

Upon any distribution of our assets to creditors upon any dissolution, winding-up, liquidation or reorganization, whether voluntary or involuntary or in bankruptcy, insolvency, receivership or other proceedings, all principal of, and any premium and interest due or to become due on, all outstanding Senior Indebtedness must be paid in full before the holders of the Subordinated Debt Securities are entitled to payment. For more information, see Section 15.02 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture. The rights of the holders of the Subordinated Debt Securities will be subrogated to the rights of the holders of Senior Indebtedness to receive payments or distributions applicable to Senior Indebtedness until all amounts owing on the Subordinated Debt Securities are paid in full. For more information, see Section 15.04 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

Unless the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus states otherwise, the term “Senior Indebtedness” means all obligations (other than non-recourse obligations and the indebtedness issued under the Subordinated Debt Securities Indenture) of, or guaranteed or assumed by, us:

- for borrowed money (including both senior and subordinated indebtedness for borrowed money, but excluding the Subordinated Debt Securities);
- for the payment of money relating to any lease that is capitalized on our consolidated balance sheet in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles; or
- indebtedness evidenced by bonds, debentures, notes or other similar instruments.

In the case of any such indebtedness or obligations, Senior Indebtedness includes amendments, renewals, extensions, modifications and refundings, whether existing as of the date of the Subordinated Debt Securities Indenture or subsequently incurred by us.

The Subordinated Debt Securities Indenture does not limit the aggregate amount of Senior Indebtedness we may issue.

Form, Exchange, and Transfer

Unless the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus states otherwise, we will issue Debt Securities only in fully registered form without coupons and in denominations of \$1,000 and integral multiples of that amount. For more information, see Sections 2.01 and 3.02 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

Holders may present Debt Securities for exchange or for registration of transfer, duly endorsed or accompanied by a duly executed instrument of transfer, at the office of the security registrar or at the office of any transfer agent we may designate.

Exchanges and transfers are subject to the terms of the applicable indenture and applicable limitations for global securities. We may designate ourselves the security registrar.

No charge will be made for any registration of transfer or exchange of Debt Securities, but we may require payment of a sum sufficient to cover any tax or other governmental charge that the holder must pay in connection with the transaction. Any transfer or exchange will become effective upon the security registrar or transfer agent, as the case may be, being satisfied with the documents of title and identity of the person making the request. For more information, see Section 3.05 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

The applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus will state the name of any transfer agent, in addition to the security registrar initially designated by us, for any Debt Securities. We may at any time designate additional transfer agents or withdraw the designation of any transfer agent or make a change in the office through which any transfer agent acts. We must, however, maintain a transfer agent in each place of payment for the Debt Securities of each series. For more information, see Section 6.02 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

We will not be required to:

- issue, register the transfer of, or exchange any Debt Securities or any tranche of any Debt Securities during a period beginning at the opening of business 15 days before the day of mailing of a notice of redemption of any Debt Securities called for redemption and ending at the close of business on the day of mailing; or
- register the transfer of, or exchange any, Debt Securities selected for redemption except the unredeemed portion of any Debt Securities being partially redeemed.

For more information, see Section 3.05 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

Payment and Paying Agents

Unless the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus states otherwise, we will pay interest on a Debt Security on any interest payment date to the person in whose name the Debt Security is registered at the close of business on the regular record date for the interest payment. For more information, see Section 3.07 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

Unless the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus provides otherwise, we will pay principal and any premium and interest on Debt Securities at the office of the paying agent whom we will designate for this purpose. Unless the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus states otherwise, the corporate trust office of the Debt Securities Trustee in New York City will be designated as our sole paying agent for payments with respect to Debt Securities of each series. Any other paying agents initially designated by us for the Debt Securities of a particular series will be named in the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus. We may at any time add or delete paying agents or change the office through which any paying agent acts. We must, however, maintain a paying agent in each place of payment for the Debt Securities of a particular series. For more information, see Section 6.02 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

All money we pay to a paying agent for the payment of the principal and any premium or interest on any Debt Security that remains unclaimed at the end of two years after payment is due will be repaid to us. After that date, the holder of that Debt Security shall be deemed an unsecured general creditor and may look only to us for these payments. For more information, see Section 6.03 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

Redemption

You should consult the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus for any terms regarding optional or mandatory redemption of Debt Securities. Except for any provisions in the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus regarding Debt Securities redeemable at the holder's option, Debt Securities may be redeemed only upon notice by mail not less than 30 nor more than 60 days prior to the redemption date. Further, if less than all of the Debt Securities of a series, or any tranche of a series, are to be redeemed, the Debt Securities to be redeemed will be selected by the method provided for the particular series. In the absence of a selection provision, the Debt Securities Trustee will select a fair and appropriate method of selection. For more information, see Sections 4.03 and 4.04 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

A notice of redemption we provide may state:

- that redemption is conditioned upon receipt by the paying agent on or before the redemption date of money sufficient to pay the principal of and any premium and interest on the Debt Securities; and
- that if the money has not been received, the notice will be ineffective and we will not be required to redeem the Debt Securities.

For more information, see Section 4.04 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

Consolidation, Merger, and Sale of Assets

We may not consolidate with or merge into any other person, nor may we transfer or lease substantially all of our assets and property to any other person, unless:

- the corporation formed by the consolidation or into which we are merged, or the person that acquires by conveyance or transfer, or that leases, substantially all of our property and assets:
 - is organized and validly existing under the laws of any domestic jurisdiction; and
 - expressly assumes by supplemental indenture our obligations on the Debt Securities and under the applicable indentures;
- immediately after giving effect to the transaction, no event of default, and no event that would become an event of default, has occurred and is continuing; and
- we have delivered to the Debt Securities Trustee an officer's certificate and opinion of counsel as provided in the applicable indentures.

For more information, see Section 11.01 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

Events of Default

Unless the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus states otherwise, "event of default" under the applicable indenture with respect to Debt Securities of any series means any of the following:

- failure to pay any interest due on any Debt Security of that series within 30 days after it becomes due;
- failure to pay principal or premium, if any, when due on any Debt Security of that series;
- failure to make any required sinking fund payment on any Debt Securities of that series;
- breach of or failure to perform any other covenant or warranty in the applicable indenture with respect to Debt Securities of that series for 60 days (subject to extension under certain circumstances for another 120 days) after we receive notice from the Debt Securities Trustee, or we and the Debt Securities Trustee receive notice from the holders of at least 33% in principal amount of the Debt Securities of that series outstanding under the applicable indenture according to the provisions of the applicable indenture;
- certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization; and
- any other event of default set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus.

For more information, see Section 8.01 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

An event of default with respect to a particular series of Debt Securities does not necessarily constitute an event of default with respect to the Debt Securities of any other series issued under the applicable indenture.

If an event of default with respect to a particular series of Debt Securities occurs and is continuing, either the Debt Securities Trustee or the holders of at least 33% in principal amount of the outstanding Debt Securities of that series may declare the principal amount of all of the Debt Securities of that series to be due and payable immediately. If the Debt Securities of that series are discount securities or similar Debt Securities, only the portion of the principal amount as specified in the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus may be immediately due and payable. If an event of default occurs and is continuing with respect to all series of Debt Securities issued under a Debt Securities Indenture, including all events of default relating to bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization, the Debt Securities Trustee or the holders of at least 33% in principal amount of the outstanding Debt Securities of all series issued under that Debt Securities Indenture, considered together, may declare an acceleration of the principal amount of all series of Debt Securities issued under that Debt Securities Indenture. There is no automatic acceleration, even in the event of our bankruptcy or insolvency.

The applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus may provide, with respect to a series of Debt Securities to which a credit enhancement is applicable, that the provider of the credit enhancement may, if a default has occurred and is continuing with respect to the series, have all or any part of the rights with respect to remedies that would otherwise have been exercisable by the holder of that series.

At any time after a declaration of acceleration with respect to the Debt Securities of a particular series, and before a judgment or decree for payment of the money due has been obtained, the event of default giving rise to the declaration of acceleration will, without further action, be deemed to have been waived, and the declaration and its consequences will be deemed to have been rescinded and annulled, if:

- we have paid or deposited with the Debt Securities Trustee a sum sufficient to pay;
- all overdue interest on all Debt Securities of the particular series;
- the principal of and any premium on any Debt Securities of that series that have become due otherwise than by the declaration of acceleration and any interest at the rate prescribed in the Debt Securities;
- interest upon overdue interest at the rate prescribed in the Debt Securities, to the extent payment is lawful;
- all amounts due to the Debt Securities Trustee under the applicable indenture; and
- any other event of default with respect to the Debt Securities of the particular series, other than the failure to pay the principal of the Debt Securities of that series that has become due solely by the declaration of acceleration, has been cured or waived as provided in the applicable indenture.

For more information, see Section 8.02 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

The applicable Debt Securities Indenture includes provisions as to the duties of the Debt Securities Trustee in case an event of default occurs and is continuing. Consistent with these provisions, the Debt Securities Trustee will be under no obligation to exercise any of its rights or powers at the request or direction of any of the holders unless those holders have offered to the Debt Securities Trustee reasonable indemnity against the costs, expenses and liabilities that may be incurred by it in compliance with such request or direction. For more information, see Section 9.03 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture. Subject to these provisions for indemnification, the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding Debt Securities of any series may direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the Debt Securities Trustee, or exercising any trust or power conferred on the Debt Securities Trustee, with respect to the Debt Securities of that series. For more information, see Section 8.12 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

No holder of Debt Securities may institute any proceeding regarding the applicable indenture, or for the appointment of a receiver or a trustee, or for any other remedy under the applicable indenture unless:

- the holder has previously given to the Debt Securities Trustee written notice of a continuing event of default of that particular series;
- the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding Debt Securities of all series with respect to which an event of default is continuing have made a written request to the Debt Securities Trustee, and have offered reasonable indemnity to the Debt Securities Trustee, to institute the proceeding as trustee; and
- the Debt Securities Trustee has failed to institute the proceeding, and has not received from the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding Debt Securities of that series a direction inconsistent with the request, within 60 days after notice, request and offer of reasonable indemnity.

For more information, see Section 8.07 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

The preceding limitations do not apply, however, to a suit instituted by a holder of a Debt Security for the enforcement of payment of the principal of or any premium or interest on the Debt Securities on or after the applicable due date stated in the Debt Securities. For more information, see Section 8.08 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

We must furnish annually to the Debt Securities Trustee a statement by an appropriate officer as to that officer's knowledge of our compliance with all conditions and covenants under each of the indentures for Debt Securities. Our compliance is to be determined without regard to any grace period or notice requirement under the respective indenture. For more information, see Section 6.06 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

Modification and Waiver

We and the Debt Securities Trustee, without the consent of the holders of the Debt Securities, may enter into one or more supplemental indentures for any of the following purposes:

- to evidence the assumption by any permitted successor of our covenants in the applicable indenture and the Debt Securities;
- to add one or more covenants or other provisions for the benefit of the holders of our outstanding Debt Securities or to surrender any right or power conferred upon us by the applicable indenture;
- to add any additional events of default;
- to change or eliminate any provision of the applicable indenture or add any new provisions to it, but if this action would adversely affect the interests of the holders of any particular series of Debt Securities in any material respect, the action will not become effective with respect to that series while any Debt Securities of that series remain outstanding under the applicable indenture;
- to provide collateral security for the Debt Securities;
- to establish the form or terms of Debt Securities according to the provisions of the applicable indenture;
- to evidence the acceptance of appointment of a successor Debt Securities Trustee under the applicable indenture with respect to one or more series of the Debt Securities and to add to or change any of the provisions of the applicable indenture as necessary to provide for trust administration under the applicable indenture by more than one trustee;
- to provide for the procedures required to permit the use of a non-certificated system of registration for any series of Debt Securities;
- to change any place where:
 - the principal of and any premium and interest on any Debt Securities are payable;
 - any Debt Securities may be surrendered for registration of transfer or exchange; or
 - notices and demands to or upon us regarding Debt Securities and the applicable indentures may be served; or
- to cure any ambiguity or inconsistency, but only by means of changes or additions that will not adversely affect the interests of the holders of Debt Securities of any series in any material respect.

For more information, see Section 12.01 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

The holders of at least a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding Debt Securities of any series may waive:

- compliance by us with certain provisions of the applicable indenture (see Section 6.07 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture); and

- any past default under the applicable indenture, except a default in the payment of principal, premium or interest and certain covenants and provisions of the applicable indenture that cannot be modified or amended without consent of the holder of each outstanding Debt Security of the series affected (see Section 8.13 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture).

The Trust Indenture Act of 1939 may be amended after the date of the applicable indenture to require changes to the indenture. In this event, the indenture will be deemed to have been amended so as to effect the changes, and we and the Debt Securities Trustee may, without the consent of any holders, enter into one or more supplemental indentures to evidence or effect the amendment. For more information, see Section 12.01 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

Except as provided in this section, the consent of the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding Debt Securities issued pursuant to a Debt Securities Indenture, considered as one class, is required to change in any manner the applicable indenture pursuant to one or more supplemental indentures. If less than all of the series of Debt Securities outstanding under a Debt Securities Indenture are directly affected by a proposed supplemental indenture, however, only the consent of the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding Debt Securities of all series directly affected, considered as one class, will be required. Furthermore, if the Debt Securities of any series have been issued in more than one tranche and if the proposed supplemental indenture directly affects the rights of the holders of one or more, but not all, tranches, only the consent of the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding Debt Securities of all tranches directly affected, considered as one class, will be required. In addition, an amendment or modification:

- may not, without the consent of the holder of each outstanding Debt Security affected:
 - change the maturity of the principal of, or any installment of principal of or interest on, any Debt Securities;
 - reduce the principal amount or the rate of interest, or the amount of any installment of interest, or change the method of calculating the rate of interest;
 - reduce any premium payable upon the redemption of Debt Securities;
 - reduce the amount of the principal of any Debt Security originally issued at a discount from the stated principal amount that would be due and payable upon a declaration of acceleration of maturity;
 - change the currency or other property in which a Debt Security or premium or interest on a Debt Security is payable; or
 - impair the right to institute suit for the enforcement of any payment on or after the stated maturity, or in the case of redemption, on or after the redemption date, of any Debt Securities;
- may not reduce the percentage of principal amount requirement for consent of the holders for any supplemental indenture, or for any waiver of compliance with any provision of or any default under the applicable indenture, or reduce the requirements for quorum or voting, without the consent of the holder of each outstanding Debt Security of each series or tranche affected; and
- may not modify provisions of the applicable indenture relating to supplemental indentures, waivers of certain covenants and waivers of past defaults with respect to the Debt Securities of any series, or any tranche of a series, without the consent of the holder of each outstanding Debt Security affected.

A supplemental indenture will be deemed not to affect the rights under the applicable indenture of the holders of any series or tranche of the Debt Securities if the supplemental indenture:

- changes or eliminates any covenant or other provision of the applicable indenture expressly included solely for the benefit of one or more other particular series of Debt Securities or tranches thereof; or
- modifies the rights of the holders of Debt Securities of any other series or tranches with respect to any covenant or other provision. For more information, see Section 12.02 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

If we solicit from holders of the Debt Securities any type of action, we may at our option by board resolution fix in advance a record date for the determination of the holders entitled to vote on the action. We shall have no obligation, however, to do so. If we fix a record date, the action may be taken before or after the record date, but only the holders of record at the close of business on the record date shall be deemed to be holders for the purposes of determining whether holder of the requisite proportion of the outstanding Debt Securities have authorized the action. For that purpose, the outstanding Debt Securities shall be computed as of the record date. Any holder action shall bind every future holder of the same security and the holder of every security issued upon the registration of transfer of or in exchange for or in lieu of the security in respect of anything done or permitted by the Debt Securities Trustee or us in reliance on that action, whether or not notation of the action is made upon the security. For more information, see Section 1.04 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

Defeasance

Unless the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus provides otherwise, any Debt Security, or portion of the principal amount of a Debt Security, will be deemed to have been paid for purposes of the applicable indenture, and, at our election, our entire indebtedness in respect of the Debt Security, or portion thereof, will be deemed to have been satisfied and discharged, if we have irrevocably deposited with the Debt Securities Trustee or any paying agent other than us, in trust money, certain eligible obligations, as defined in the applicable indenture, or a combination of the two, sufficient to pay principal of and any premium and interest due and to become due on the Debt Security or portion thereof and we deliver to the Debt Securities Trustee an opinion of counsel to the effect that, as a result of a change in law occurring after the date of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture, the holders of the Debt Securities, or portions thereof, will not recognize income, gain or loss for U.S. federal income tax purposes as a result of the satisfaction and discharge of the Company's indebtedness in respect thereof and will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on the same amounts, at the same times and in the same manner as if such satisfaction and discharge had not been effected. For more information, see Section 7.01 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture. For this purpose, unless the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus provides otherwise, eligible obligations include direct obligations of, or obligations unconditionally guaranteed by, the United States, entitled to the benefit of full faith and credit of the United States, and certificates, depositary receipts or other instruments that evidence a direct ownership interest in those obligations or in any specific interest or principal payments due in respect of those obligations.

Resignation, Removal of Debt Securities Trustee; Appointment of Successor

The Debt Securities Trustee may resign at any time by giving written notice to us or may be removed at any time by an action of the holders of a majority in principal amount of outstanding Debt Securities delivered to the Debt Securities Trustee and us. No resignation or removal of the Debt Securities Trustee and no appointment of a successor trustee will become effective until a successor trustee accepts appointment in accordance with the requirements of the applicable indenture. So long as no event of default or event that would become an event of default has occurred and is continuing, and except with respect to a Debt Securities Trustee appointed by an action of the holders, if we have delivered to the Debt Securities Trustee a resolution of our Board of Directors appointing a successor trustee and the successor trustee has accepted the appointment in accordance with the terms of the applicable indenture, the Debt Securities Trustee will be deemed to have resigned and the successor trustee will be deemed to have been appointed as trustee in accordance with the applicable indenture. For more information, see Section 9.10 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

Notices

We will give notices to holders of Debt Securities by mail to their addresses as they appear in the Debt Security Register. For more information, see Section 1.06 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

Title

The Debt Securities Trustee and its agents, and we and our agents, may treat the person in whose name a Debt Security is registered as the absolute owner of that Debt Security, whether or not that Debt Security may be overdue, for the purpose of making payment and for all other purposes. For more information, see Section 3.08 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

Governing law

The Debt Securities Indenture and the Debt Securities, including any Subordinated Debt Securities Indentures and Subordinated Debt Securities, will be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the law of the State of New York. For more information, see Section 1.12 of the applicable Debt Securities Indenture.

DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES

General

We may issue receipts for depositary shares, each of which will represent a fractional interest of a preferred share of a particular class or series, as specified in the applicable prospectus supplement. Preferred shares of each class or series represented by depositary shares will be deposited under a separate deposit agreement among us, the depositary named therein and the holders from time to time of the depositary receipts. Subject to the terms of the applicable deposit agreement, each owner of a depositary receipt will be entitled, in proportion to the fractional interest of a preferred share of a particular class or series represented by the depositary shares evidenced by such depositary receipt, to all the rights and preferences of the preferred shares represented by such depositary shares (including dividend, voting, conversion, redemption and liquidation rights).

The depositary shares will be evidenced by depositary receipts issued pursuant to the applicable deposit agreement. Immediately following the issuance and delivery of the preferred shares by us to a preferred share depositary, we will cause such preferred shares depositary to issue, on our behalf, the depositary receipts. Copies of the applicable form of deposit agreement and depositary receipt may be obtained from us upon request, and the statements made hereunder relating to the deposit agreement and the depositary receipts to be issued thereunder are summaries of certain provisions thereof and do not purport to be complete and are subject to, and qualified in their entirety by reference to, all of the provisions of the applicable deposit agreement and related depositary receipts.

Dividends and Other Distributions

The preferred share depositary will distribute all cash dividends or other cash distributions received in respect of the preferred shares to the record holders of depositary receipts evidencing the related depositary shares in proportion to the number of such depositary receipts owned by such holders, subject to certain obligations of holders to file proofs, certificates and other information and to pay certain charges and expenses to the preferred shares depositary.

In the event of a distribution other than in cash, the preferred shares depositary will distribute property received by it to the record holders of depositary receipts entitled thereto, subject to certain obligations of holders to file proofs, certificates and other information and to pay certain charges and expenses to the preferred shares depositary, unless the preferred shares depositary determines that it is not feasible to make such distribution, in which case the preferred shares depositary may, with our approval, sell such property and distribute the net proceeds from such sale to such holders.

No distribution will be made in respect of any depositary share to the extent that it represents any preferred shares converted into other securities.

Withdrawal of Shares

Upon surrender of the depositary receipts at the corporate trust office of the applicable preferred shares depositary (unless the related depositary shares have previously been called for redemption or converted into other securities), the holders thereof will be entitled to delivery at such office, to or upon such holder's order, of the number of whole or fractional preferred shares and any money or other property represented by the depositary shares evidenced by such depositary receipts. Holders of depositary receipts will be entitled to receive whole or fractional preferred shares on the basis of the proportion of preferred shares represented by each depositary share as specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, but holders of such preferred shares will not thereafter be entitled to receive depositary shares therefor. If the depositary receipts delivered by the holder evidence a number of depositary shares in excess of the number of depositary shares representing the number of preferred shares to be withdrawn, the preferred shares depositary will deliver to such holder at the same time a new depositary receipt evidencing such excess number of depositary shares.

Redemption of Depositary Shares

Whenever we redeem preferred shares held by the preferred shares depositary, the preferred shares depositary will redeem as of the same redemption date the number of depositary shares representing preferred shares so redeemed, provided we shall have paid in full to the preferred shares depositary the redemption price of the preferred shares to be redeemed plus an amount equal to any accrued and unpaid dividends thereon to the date fixed for redemption. The redemption price per depositary share will be equal to the corresponding proportion of the redemption price and any other amounts per share payable with respect to the preferred shares. If fewer than all the depositary shares are to be redeemed, the depositary shares to be redeemed will be selected pro rata (as nearly as may be practicable without creating fractional depositary shares) or by any other equitable method determined by us that will not result in a violation of the restrictions on ownership and transfer of our shares set forth in our certificate of incorporation. See “—Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer.”

From and after the date fixed for redemption, all dividends in respect of the preferred shares so called for redemption will cease to accrue, the depositary shares so called for redemption will no longer be deemed to be outstanding and all rights of the holders of the depositary receipts evidencing the depositary shares so called for redemption will cease, except the right to receive any moneys payable upon such redemption and any money or other property to which the holders of such depositary receipts were entitled upon such redemption and surrender thereof to the preferred shares depositary.

Voting of the Depositary Shares

Upon receipt of notice of any meeting at which the holders of the applicable preferred shares are entitled to vote, the preferred shares depositary will mail the information contained in such notice of meeting to the record holders of the depositary receipts evidencing the depositary shares which represent such preferred shares. Each record holder of depositary receipts evidencing depositary shares on the record date (which will be the same date as the record date for the preferred shares) will be entitled to instruct the preferred shares depositary as to the exercise of the voting rights pertaining to the amount of preferred shares represented by such holder's depositary shares. The preferred shares depositary will vote the amount of preferred shares represented by such depositary shares in accordance with such instructions, and we will agree to take all reasonable action which may be deemed necessary by the preferred shares depositary in order to enable the preferred shares depositary to do so. The preferred shares depositary will abstain from voting the amount of preferred shares represented by such depositary shares to the extent it does not receive specific instructions from the holders of depositary receipts evidencing such depositary shares. The preferred shares depositary shall not be responsible for any failure to carry out any instruction to vote, or for the manner or effect of any such vote made, as long as any such action or non-action is in good faith and does not result from negligence or willful misconduct of the preferred shares depositary.

Liquidation Preference

In the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, whether voluntary or involuntary, the holders of each depositary receipt will be entitled to the fraction of the liquidation preference accorded each preferred share represented by the depositary shares evidenced by such depositary receipt, as set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Conversion of the Depositary Shares

The depositary shares, as such, are not convertible into common stock, preferred stock or any of our other securities or property. Nevertheless, if so specified in the applicable prospectus supplement relating to an offering of depositary shares, the depositary receipts may be surrendered by holders thereof to the preferred shares depositary with written instructions to the preferred shares depositary to instruct us to cause conversion of the preferred shares represented by the depositary shares evidenced by such depositary receipts into whole shares of common stock or other preferred stock or other securities or property, and we will agree that, upon receipt of such instructions and any amounts payable in respect thereof, we will cause the conversion thereof utilizing the same procedures as those provided for delivery of preferred shares to effect such conversion. If the preferred shares represented by depositary shares evidenced by a depositary receipt are to be converted in part only, a new depositary receipt or receipts will be issued for any depositary shares representing preferred shares not to be converted. No fractional shares will be issued upon conversion, and if such conversion would result in a fractional share being issued, an amount will be paid in cash by us equal to the value of the fractional interest based upon the closing price of the shares of such class or series on the last business day prior to the conversion.

Amendment and Termination of Deposit Agreement

The form of depositary receipt evidencing the depositary shares which represent the preferred shares and any provision of the deposit agreement may at any time be amended by agreement between us and the preferred shares depositary. However, any amendment that materially and adversely alters the rights of the holders of depositary receipts or that would be materially and adversely inconsistent with the rights granted to the holders of the related preferred shares will not be effective unless such amendment has been approved by the existing holders of at least two-thirds of the applicable depositary shares evidenced by the applicable depositary receipts then outstanding. No amendment shall impair the right, subject to certain exceptions in the deposit agreement, of any holder of depositary receipts to surrender any depositary receipt with instructions to deliver to the holder the related preferred shares and all money and other property, if any, represented thereby, except in order to comply with law. Every holder of an outstanding depositary receipt at the time any such amendment becomes effective shall be deemed, by continuing to hold such receipt, to consent and agree to such amendment and to be bound by the deposit agreement as amended thereby.

The deposit agreement may be terminated by us upon not less than 30 days' prior written notice to the preferred shares depositary if (i) such termination is reasonably necessary to preserve our status as a REIT or (ii) a majority of each series of preferred shares affected by such termination consents to such termination, whereupon the preferred shares depositary shall deliver or make available to each holder of depositary receipts, upon surrender of the depositary receipts held by such holder, such number of whole or fractional preferred shares as are represented by the depositary shares evidenced by such depositary receipts together with any other property held by the preferred shares depositary with respect to such depositary receipts. We will agree that if the deposit agreement is terminated to preserve our status as a REIT, then we will use our best efforts to list the preferred shares issued upon surrender of the related depositary shares on a national securities exchange. In addition, the deposit agreement will automatically terminate if (i) all outstanding depositary shares shall have been redeemed, (ii) there shall have been a final distribution in respect of the related preferred shares in connection with our liquidation, dissolution or winding up and such distribution shall have been distributed to the holders of depositary receipts evidencing the depositary shares representing such preferred shares or (iii) each related preferred share shall have been converted into our securities not so represented by depositary shares.

Charges of Preferred Shares Depositary

We will pay all transfer and other taxes and governmental charges arising solely from the existence of the deposit agreement. In addition, we will pay the fees and expenses of the preferred shares depositary in connection with the performance of its duties under the deposit agreement. However, holders of depositary receipts will pay the fees and expenses of the preferred shares depositary for any duties requested by such holders to be performed which are outside of those expressly provided for in the deposit agreement.

Resignation and Removal of Depositary

The preferred shares depositary may resign at any time by delivering to us notice of its election to do so, and we may at any time remove the preferred shares depositary, any such resignation or removal to take effect upon the appointment of a successor preferred shares depositary. A successor preferred shares depositary must be appointed within 60 days after delivery of the notice of resignation or removal and must be a bank or trust company having its principal office in the United States and having a combined capital and surplus of at least \$10,000,000.

Miscellaneous

The preferred shares depositary will forward to holders of depositary receipts any reports and communications from the Company which are received by the preferred shares depositary with respect to the related preferred shares.

Neither the preferred shares depositary nor the Company will be liable if it is prevented from or delayed in, by law or any circumstances beyond its control, performing its obligations under the deposit agreement. The obligations of us and the preferred shares depositary under the deposit agreement will be limited to performing their duties thereunder in good faith and without negligence (in the case of any action or inaction in the voting of preferred shares represented by the depositary shares), gross negligence or willful misconduct, and we and the preferred shares depositary will not be obligated to prosecute or defend any legal proceeding in respect of any depositary receipts, depositary shares or preferred shares represented thereby unless satisfactory indemnity is furnished. We and the preferred shares depositary may rely on written advice of counsel or accountants, or information provided by persons presenting preferred shares represented thereby for deposit, holders of depositary receipts or other persons believed in good faith to be competent to give such information, and on documents believed in good faith to be genuine and signed by a proper party.

In the event the preferred shares depositary shall receive conflicting claims, requests or instructions from any holders of depositary receipts, on the one hand, and us, on the other hand, the preferred shares depositary shall be entitled to act on such claims, requests or instructions received from us.

Restrictions on Ownership

Holders of depositary receipts will be subject to the ownership restrictions set forth in the certificate of incorporation. See “Certain Provisions of Delaware Law and Our Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws.”

DESCRIPTION OF UNITS

This section describes some of the general terms and provisions applicable to units we may issue from time to time. We will describe the specific terms of a series of units and the applicable unit agreement in the applicable prospectus supplement. The following description and any description of the units in the applicable prospectus supplement may not be complete and is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to the terms and provisions of the applicable unit agreement. A form of the unit agreement reflecting the particular terms and provisions of a series of offered units will be filed with the SEC in connection with the offering and incorporated by reference in the registration statement and this prospectus.

We may issue units from time to time in such amounts and in as many distinct series as we determine. We will issue each series of units under a unit agreement to be entered into between us and a unit agent to be designated in the applicable prospectus supplement. When we refer to a series of units, we mean all units issued as part of the same series under the applicable unit agreement.

We may issue units consisting of any combination of two or more securities described in this prospectus. Each unit will be issued so that the holder of the unit is also the holder of each security included in the unit. Thus, the holder of a unit will have the rights and obligations of a holder of each included security. The unit agreement under which a unit is issued may provide that the securities included in the unit may not be held or transferred separately, at any time or at any time before a specified date.

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the terms of the units offered pursuant to it, including one or more of the following:

- the designation and terms of the units and of the securities comprising the units, including whether and under what circumstances those securities may be held or transferred separately;
- the aggregate number of, and the price at which we will issue, the units;
- any provisions for the issuance, payment, settlement, transfer or exchange of the units or of the securities comprising the units;
- whether the units will be issued in fully registered or global form;
- the name of the unit agent;
- a description of the terms of any unit agreement to be entered into between us and a bank or trust company, as unit agent, governing the units;
- if appropriate, a discussion of the material U.S. federal income tax consequences applicable to the units; and
- whether the units will be listed on any securities exchange.

Additionally, in order to enable us to preserve our status as a REIT, we may take certain actions to restrict ownership and transfer of our outstanding securities, including any units. The prospectus supplement related to the offering of any units will specify any additional ownership limitation relating to the units being offered thereby.

GLOBAL SECURITIES

We may issue some or all of our securities of any series as global securities. We will register each global security in the name of a depository identified in the applicable prospectus supplement. The global securities will be deposited with a depository or nominee of the custodian for the depository and will bear a legend regarding restrictions on exchanges and registration of transfer as discussed below and any other matters to be provided pursuant to the indenture.

As long as the depository or its nominee is the registered holder of a global security, that person will be considered the sole owner and holder of the global security and the securities represented by it for all purposes under the securities and the indenture. Except in limited circumstances, owners of a beneficial interest in a global security:

- will not be entitled to have the global security or any securities represented by it registered in their names;
- will not receive or be entitled to receive physical delivery of certificated securities in exchange for the global security; and
- will not be considered to be the owners or holders of the global security or any securities represented by it for any purposes under the securities or the indenture.

We will make all payments of principal and any premium and interest on a global security to the depository or its nominee as the holder of the global security. The laws of some jurisdictions require that certain purchasers of securities take physical delivery of securities in definitive form. These laws may impair the ability to transfer beneficial interests in a global security.

Ownership of beneficial interests in a global security will be limited to institutions having accounts with the depository or its nominee, called “participants” for purposes of this discussion, and to persons that hold beneficial interests through participants. When a global security is issued, the depository will credit on its book-entry, registration and transfer system the principal amounts of securities represented by the global security to the accounts of its participants. Ownership of beneficial interests in a global security will be shown only on, and the transfer of those ownership interests will be effected only through, records maintained by:

- the depository, with respect to participants’ interests; or
- any participant, with respect to interests of persons held by the participants on their behalf.

Payments by participants to owners of beneficial interests held through the participants will be the responsibility of the participants. The depository may from time to time adopt various policies and procedures governing payments, transfers, exchanges and other matters relating to beneficial interests in a global security. None of the following will have any responsibility or liability for any aspect of the depository’s or any participant’s records relating to, or for payments made on account of, beneficial interests in a global security, or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any records relating to those beneficial interests:

- us or our affiliates;
- any selling security holder;
- the trustee under any indenture; or
- any agent of any of the above.

**CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF DELAWARE LAW AND OUR
CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION AND BYLAWS**

Conversion and Incorporation

Our predecessor, Ellington Financial LLC, was formed as a limited liability company in Delaware in 2007 and was converted to a corporation effective as of 11:59 P.M. Eastern Time on March 1, 2019.

Purpose

Under our certificate of incorporation, we are permitted to engage in any lawful act or activity (including, without limitation or obligation, engaging in business as a REIT under the Code) for which corporations may be organized under the DGCL as now or hereafter in force.

Election of Members of Our Board of Directors

Members of our Board of Directors are elected by stockholders based on a plurality of the votes cast.

Removal of Members of Our Board of Directors

Any director or the entire Board of Directors may be removed with or without cause by a vote of at least 66 2/3% of the votes entitled to be cast in the election of directors. The vacancy in the Board of Directors caused by any such removal will be filled by a vote of the majority of directors then in office even if the remaining directors do not constitute a quorum.

Stockholder Meetings

Under our bylaws, we are required to hold an annual meeting of stockholders for the election of directors and other business on a date and time to be set by the Board of Directors. In addition, our bylaws provide that a special meeting of stockholders may be called by our Board of Directors and certain of our officers. Our bylaws further provide that, subject to the satisfaction of certain procedural and information requirements, a special meeting of stockholders shall be called by the Secretary of the company upon written request of stockholders entitled to cast not less than a majority of all of the votes entitled to be cast at such meeting.

Advance Notice of Nominations and Stockholder Business

Our bylaws establish advance notice procedures with respect to stockholder proposals and the nomination of persons for election as directors at the annual meeting of our stockholders.

Stockholder Action by Written Consent

Unless our certificate of incorporation provides otherwise or it conflicts with the rules of the NYSE, pursuant to Section 228 of the DGCL, any action required to be taken at any annual or special meeting of the stockholders may be taken without a meeting, without prior notice and without a vote if a consent or consents in writing, setting forth the action so taken, is signed by the holders of outstanding stock having not less than the minimum number of votes that would be necessary to authorize or take such action at a meeting at which all shares of our stock entitled to vote thereon were present and voted, unless the certificate of incorporation provides otherwise or it conflicts with the rules of the NYSE. Our certificate of incorporation permits stockholder action by unanimous written consent by stockholders.

Limitations on Liability and Indemnification of Our Directors and Officers

Our certificate of incorporation provides that our directors and officers will not be liable to us, or any subsidiary of ours, or any holder of shares, for monetary damages for any acts or omissions arising from the performance of any of such person's obligations or duties in connection with us, except to the extent such exemption from liability or limitation thereof is not permitted under the DGCL as the same exists or may hereafter be amended. In addition, as permitted by Section 102(b)(7) of the DGCL, our certificate of incorporation provides that our directors will not be liable to us or any holder of shares for monetary damages for breach of a fiduciary duty as a director, except to the extent such exemption from liability or limitation thereof is not permitted under the DGCL as the same exists or may hereafter be amended.

The certificate of incorporation provides that, to the fullest extent permitted by law, we will indemnify our directors and officers or any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative (other than an action by or in the right of us) by reason of the fact that the person is or was our director, officer, employee, tax matters member or agent, or is or was serving at our request as a director, officer, employee or agent of another company, to the fullest extent permitted by law against expenses (including attorneys' fees), judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by the person in connection with such action, suit or proceeding if the person acted in good faith and in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to our best interests, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe the person's conduct was unlawful.

Each of the persons entitled to be indemnified for expenses and liabilities as contemplated above may, in the performance of his, her or its duties, consult with legal counsel and accountants, and any act or omission by such person on our behalf in furtherance of our interests in good faith in reliance upon, and in accordance with, the advice of such legal counsel or accountants will be full justification for any such act or omission, and such person will be fully protected for such acts and omissions; provided that such legal counsel or accountants were selected with reasonable care by or on our behalf.

Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act of 1933 may be permitted to directors, officers or persons controlling us pursuant to the foregoing provisions, we have been informed that, in the opinion of the Securities and Exchange Commission, such indemnification is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act and is therefore unenforceable.

Amendment of Our Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws

Under the DGCL, amendments to our certificate of incorporation, with limited exceptions, must be approved by holders of a majority of the total voting power of our outstanding common stock and, to the extent that such amendment would have a material adverse effect on the holders of any class or series of shares, by the holders of a majority of the holders of such class or series. Our Board of Directors may amend, modify or repeal our bylaws without stockholder approval.

Business Combinations

Section 203 of the DGCL, provides that an "interested stockholder" (a person other than the corporation or any direct or indirect majority-owned subsidiary who, together with affiliates and associates, owns, or, if such person is an affiliate or associate of the corporation, within three years did own, 15% or more of the outstanding voting stock of a corporation) may not engage in "business combinations" (which is broadly defined to include a number of transactions, such as mergers, consolidations, asset sales and other transactions in which an interested stockholder receives or could receive a financial benefit on other than a pro rata basis with other stockholders) with the corporation for a period of three years after the date on which the person became an interested stockholder without certain statutorily mandated approvals.

Provisions in our Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws that may have an Anti-Takeover Effect

Some of the provisions in our certificate of incorporation and bylaws described above could make it more difficult for a third party to acquire, or may discourage a third party from acquiring, control of us. These provisions include, among others:

- allowing only our Board of Directors to fill newly created directorships,
- requiring advance notice for our stockholders to nominate candidates for election to our Board of Directors or to propose business to be considered by our stockholders at a meeting of our stockholders;

- requiring that (subject to certain exceptions) no person may own, or be deemed to own by virtue of the attribution provisions of the Code, more than 9.8% of the aggregate value or number (whichever is more restrictive) of our outstanding shares (See “-Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer”); and
- limitations on the ability of our stockholders to call special meetings of our stockholders

Certain provisions of the management agreement between us and our Manager also could make it more difficult for third parties to acquire control of us by various means, including limitations on our right to terminate the management agreement and a requirement that, under certain circumstances, we make a substantial payment to our Manager in the event of a termination.

Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer

Our certificate of incorporation, subject to certain exceptions, contains restrictions on the amount of our shares that a person may own and may prohibit certain entities from owning our shares. Our certificate of incorporation provides that (subject to certain exceptions described below) no person may own, or be deemed to own by virtue of the attribution provisions of the Code, more than 9.8% of the aggregate value or number (whichever is more restrictive) of any class or series of our outstanding shares.

Any person who acquires or attempts or intends to acquire beneficial or constructive ownership of our shares that will or may violate any of the foregoing restrictions on transferability and ownership, or who is the intended transferee of our common stock which are transferred to the trust (as described below), will be required to give notice immediately to us, or in the case of proposed or attempted transactions will be required to give at least 15 days written notice to us, and provide us with such other information as we may request in order to determine the effect of such transfer, including, without limitation, the effect on our status as a REIT.

Our Board of Directors, in its sole discretion, may exempt a person from the foregoing restrictions. The person seeking an exemption must provide to our Board of Directors such representations, covenants and undertakings as our Board of Directors may deem appropriate. Our Board of Directors may also condition any such exemption on the receipt of a ruling from the IRS or an opinion of counsel as it deems appropriate.

Any attempted transfer of our securities which, if effective, would result in a violation of the foregoing restrictions (other than those described in the preceding paragraph) will cause the number of securities causing the violation (rounded to the nearest whole share) to be automatically transferred to a trust for the exclusive benefit of one or more charitable beneficiaries, and the proposed transferee will not acquire any rights in such securities. The automatic transfer will be deemed to be effective as of the close of business on the business day (as defined in our certificate of incorporation) prior to the date of the transfer. If, for any reason, the transfer to the trust does not occur, our certificate of incorporation provides that the purported transfer in violation of the restrictions will be void ab initio. Shares held in the trust will be issued and outstanding shares. The proposed transferee will not benefit economically from ownership of any securities held in the trust, will have no rights to dividends or other distributions and no rights to vote or other rights attributable to the shares held in the trust. The trustee of the trust will have all voting rights and rights to distributions with respect to common stock held in the trust. These rights will be exercised for the exclusive benefit of the charitable beneficiary. Any distribution paid prior to our discovery that shares of stock have been transferred to the trust will be paid by the recipient to the trustee upon demand. Any distribution authorized but unpaid will be paid when due to the trustee. Any distribution paid to the trustee will be held in trust for the charitable beneficiary. Subject to Delaware law and pursuant to our certificate of incorporation, the trustee will have the authority (1) to rescind as void any vote cast by the proposed transferee prior to our discovery that the shares have been transferred to the trust and (2) to recast the vote in accordance with the desires of the trustee acting for the benefit of the charitable beneficiary. However, if we have already taken irreversible corporate action, then the trustee will not have the authority to rescind and recast the vote.

Within 20 days of receiving notice from us that the shares have been transferred to the trust, the trustee will sell the shares to a person designated by the trustee, whose ownership of the shares will not violate the above ownership limitations. Upon such sale, the interest of the charitable beneficiary in the shares sold will terminate and the trustee will distribute the net proceeds of the sale to the proposed transferee and to the charitable beneficiary as follows. The proposed transferee will receive the lesser of (1) the price paid by the proposed transferee for the shares or, if the proposed transferee did not give value for the shares in connection with the event causing the shares to be held in the trust (e.g., a gift, devise or other similar transaction), the market price (as defined in our certificate of incorporation) of the shares on the day of the event causing the shares to be held in the trust and (2) the price received by the trustee from the sale or other disposition of the shares. Any net sale proceeds in excess of the amount payable to the proposed transferee will be paid immediately to the charitable beneficiary. If, prior to our discovery that the shares have been transferred to the trust, the shares are sold by the proposed transferee, then (1) the securities shall be deemed to have been sold on behalf of the trust and (2) to the extent that the proposed transferee received an amount for the shares that exceeds the amount the proposed transferee was entitled to receive, the excess shall be paid to the trustee upon demand.

In addition, the securities held in the trust will be deemed to have been offered for sale to us, or our designee, at a price per share equal to the lesser of (1) the price per share in the transaction that resulted in the transfer to the trust (or, in the case of a devise or gift, the market price at the time of the devise or gift) and (2) the market price on the date we, or our designee, accept the offer. We will have the right to accept the offer until the trustee has sold the shares. Upon a sale to us, the interest of the charitable beneficiary in the shares sold will terminate and the trustee will distribute the net proceeds of the sale to the proposed transferee.

All certificates representing the shares bear a legend referring to the restrictions described above.

These ownership limitations could delay, defer or prevent a transaction or a change in control that might involve a premium price for the shares or might otherwise be in the best interests of our stockholders.

MATERIAL U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSIDERATIONS

This section summarizes the material U.S. federal income tax considerations that you, as a stockholder, may consider relevant. Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP has acted as our tax counsel, has reviewed this summary, and is of the opinion that the discussion contained herein is accurate in all material respects. Because this section is a summary, it does not address all aspects of taxation that may be relevant to particular stockholders in light of their personal investment or tax circumstances, or to certain types of stockholders that are subject to special treatment under the U.S. federal income tax laws, such as:

- insurance companies;
- tax-exempt organizations (except to the extent discussed in “—Taxation of Tax-Exempt U.S. Holders” below);
- financial institutions or broker-dealers;
- non-U.S. individuals and non-U.S. corporations (except to the extent discussed in “—Taxation of Non-U.S. Holders” below);
- U.S. expatriates;
- persons who mark-to-market our securities;
- subchapter S corporations;
- U.S. holders (as defined below) whose functional currency is not the U.S. dollar;
- regulated investment companies and REITs, and their investors;
- trusts and estates (except to the extent discussed herein);
- persons who receive our securities through the exercise of employee stock options or otherwise as compensation;
- persons holding our securities as part of a “straddle,” “hedge,” “conversion transaction,” “synthetic security” or other integrated investment;
- persons subject to the alternative minimum tax provisions of the Code;
- persons holding our securities through a partnership or similar pass-through entity; and
- persons holding a 10% or more (by vote or value) beneficial interest in our stock.

This summary assumes that stockholders hold our securities as capital assets for U.S. federal income tax purposes, which generally means as property held for investment.

The statements in this section are not intended to be, and should not be construed as, tax advice. The statements in this section are based on the Code, current, temporary and proposed Treasury regulations, the legislative history of the Code, current administrative interpretations and practices of the Internal Revenue Service, or the “IRS,” and court decisions. The reference to IRS interpretations and practices includes the IRS practices and policies endorsed in private letter rulings, which are not binding on the IRS except with respect to the taxpayer that receives the ruling. In each case, these sources are relied upon as they exist on the date of this discussion. Future legislation, Treasury regulations, administrative interpretations and court decisions could change current law or adversely affect existing interpretations of current law on which the information in this section is based. Any such change could apply retroactively. We have not received any rulings from the IRS concerning our qualification as a REIT. Accordingly, even if there is no change in the applicable law, no assurance can be provided that the statements made in the following discussion, which do not bind the IRS or the courts, will not be challenged by the IRS or will be sustained by a court if so challenged.

WE URGE YOU TO CONSULT YOUR TAX ADVISER REGARDING THE SPECIFIC TAX CONSEQUENCES TO YOU OF THE PURCHASE, OWNERSHIP AND SALE OF OUR SECURITIES AND OF OUR ELECTION TO BE TAXED AS A REIT. SPECIFICALLY, YOU SHOULD CONSULT YOUR TAX ADVISER REGARDING THE FEDERAL, STATE, LOCAL, FOREIGN, AND OTHER TAX CONSEQUENCES OF SUCH PURCHASE, OWNERSHIP, SALE AND ELECTION, AND REGARDING POTENTIAL CHANGES IN APPLICABLE TAX LAWS.

Taxation of Our Company

We are a corporation that has elected to be taxed as a REIT under sections 856 through 860 of the Code. We believe that we have been organized and operated in a manner so as to remain qualified as a REIT under the U.S. federal income tax laws, and we intend to continue to operate in such a manner, but no assurances can be given that we will operate in a manner so as to remain qualified as a REIT.

This section discusses the laws governing the U.S. federal income tax treatment of a REIT and its stockholders. These laws are highly technical and complex. In the opinion of Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP, we qualified to be taxed as a REIT for our taxable year ended December 31, 2021 through our taxable year ended December 31, 2024, and our organization and current and proposed method of operation will enable us to satisfy the requirements for qualification and taxation as a REIT for our taxable year ending December 31, 2025 and subsequent taxable years. Investors should be aware that Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP's opinion is based upon customary assumptions, is conditioned upon certain representations made by us as to factual matters, including representations regarding the nature of our assets and the conduct of our business, is not binding upon the IRS or any court and speaks as of the date issued. In addition, Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP's opinion is based on existing U.S. federal income tax law governing qualification as a REIT, which is subject to change either prospectively or retroactively. Moreover, our qualification and taxation as a REIT depend upon our ability to meet, on a continuing basis, through actual annual operating results, certain qualification tests set forth in the U.S. federal income tax laws. Those qualification tests involve the percentage of income that we earn from specified sources, the percentages of our assets that fall within specified categories, the diversity of our stock ownership, and the percentage of our earnings that we distribute. While Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP has reviewed those matters in connection with the foregoing opinion, Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP will not review our compliance with those tests on a continuing basis. Accordingly, given the complex nature of the rules governing REITs, the ongoing importance of factual determinations, including the potential tax treatment of the investments we make, and the possibility of future changes in our circumstances, no assurance can be given that the actual results of our operations for any particular taxable year will satisfy such requirements. In addition, we will be required to make estimates of, or otherwise determine the value of, our assets and the collateral for our assets, and the values of some assets may not be susceptible to a precise determination. There can be no assurance that the IRS would not challenge our valuations or valuation estimates of our assets or collateral. Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP's opinion does not foreclose the possibility that we may have to use one or more of the REIT relief provisions discussed below, which could require us to pay an excise or penalty tax (which could be material) in order for us to maintain our REIT qualification. For a discussion of the tax consequences of our failure to qualify as a REIT, see "-Failure to Qualify."

If we qualify as a REIT, we generally will not be subject to U.S. federal income tax on our REIT taxable income that we currently distribute to our stockholders, but taxable income generated by any domestic taxable REIT subsidiaries, or "TRSs," will be subject to regular corporate income tax. However, we will be subject to U.S. federal tax in the following circumstances:

- We will pay U.S. federal corporate income tax on our net taxable income, including net capital gain, that we do not distribute to stockholders during, or within a specified time period after, the calendar year in which the income is earned.
- We will pay U.S. federal income tax at the highest corporate rate on:
 - net income from the sale or other disposition of property acquired through foreclosure, or foreclosure property, that we hold primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business, and
 - other non-qualifying income from foreclosure property.
- We will pay a 100% tax on net income earned from sales or other dispositions of property, other than foreclosure property, that we hold primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business (as described below under "-Prohibited Transactions").

- If due to reasonable cause and not willful neglect we fail to satisfy either the 75% gross income test or the 95% gross income test, as described below under “-Gross Income Tests,” but nonetheless continue to qualify as a REIT because we meet other requirements, we will be subject to a 100% tax on:
 - the greater of the amount by which we fail the 75% gross income test or the 95% gross income test, multiplied, in either case, by
 - a fraction intended to reflect our profitability.
- If we fail to satisfy the asset tests (other than a de minimis failure of the 5% asset test, the 10% vote test or the 10% value test, as described below under “-Asset Tests”), as long as the failure was due to reasonable cause and not to willful neglect, we dispose of the assets or otherwise comply with such asset tests within six months after the last day of the quarter in which we identify such failure and we file a schedule with the IRS describing the assets that caused such failure, we will pay a tax equal to the greater of \$50,000 or the product of the highest U.S. federal corporate tax rate and the net income from the non-qualifying assets during the period in which we failed to satisfy such asset tests.
- If we fail to satisfy one or more requirements for REIT qualification, other than the gross income tests and the asset tests, and the failure was due to reasonable cause and not to willful neglect, we will be required to pay a penalty of \$50,000 for each such failure, as described below under “-Failure to Qualify.”
- We may be required to pay monetary penalties to the IRS in certain circumstances, including if we fail to meet recordkeeping requirements intended to monitor our compliance with rules relating to the composition of a REIT’s stockholders, as described below in “-Requirements for Qualification.”
- If we fail to distribute during a calendar year at least the sum of: (i) 85% of our REIT ordinary income for the year, (ii) 95% of our REIT capital gain net income for the year and (iii) any undistributed taxable income from prior taxable years, we will pay a 4% nondeductible excise tax on the excess of the required distribution over the amount we actually distributed, plus any retained amounts on which income tax has been paid at the corporate level.
- We may elect to retain and pay U.S. federal income tax on our net long-term capital gain. In that case, a U.S. holder would be taxed on its proportionate share of our undistributed net long-term capital gains (to the extent that we make a timely designation of such gain to the stockholder) and would receive a credit or refund for its proportionate share of the tax we paid.
- We will be subject to a 100% excise tax on transactions between us and a TRS that are not conducted on an arm’s-length basis.
- The earnings of any domestic TRS will be subject to U.S. federal corporate income tax.
- If we acquire any asset from a C corporation, or a corporation that generally is subject to full corporate-level tax, in a merger or other transaction in which we acquire a basis in the asset that is determined by reference either to the C corporation’s basis in the asset or to another asset, we will pay tax at the highest regular corporate rate applicable if we recognize gain on the sale or disposition of the asset during the 5-year period after we acquire the asset. The amount of gain on which we will pay tax is the lesser of:
 - the amount of gain that we recognize at the time of the sale or disposition, and
 - the amount of gain that we would have recognized if we had sold the asset at the time we acquired it, assuming that the C corporation will not elect, in lieu of this treatment, to be subject to an immediate tax when the asset is acquired.
- If we own a residual interest in a real estate mortgage investment conduit, or “REMIC,” we will be taxable at the highest corporate rate on the portion of any excess inclusion income that we derive from the REMIC residual interests equal to the percentage of our stock that is held in record name by “disqualified organizations.” Although the law is unclear, IRS guidance indicates that similar rules may apply to a REIT that owns an equity interest in a taxable mortgage pool. To the extent that the excess inclusion income generated by a taxable mortgage pool or a residual interest in a REMIC is blocked by our TRS, we will not be subject to this tax. A “disqualified organization” includes (i) the United States; (ii) any state or political subdivision of the United States; (iii) any foreign government; (iv) any international organization; (v) any agency or instrumentality of any of the foregoing; (vi) any other tax-exempt organization (other than a farmer's cooperative described in Section 521 of the Code) that is exempt from income taxation and is not subject to taxation under the unrelated business taxable income provisions of the Code; and (vii) any rural electrical or telephone cooperative. We do not currently intend to hold REMIC residual interests or engage in financing activities that may result in treatment of us or a portion of our assets as a taxable mortgage pool. For a discussion of “excess inclusion income,” see “-Requirements for Qualification-Taxable Mortgage Pools and Excess Inclusion Income.”

In addition, notwithstanding our qualification as a REIT, we may also have to pay certain state, local, and foreign income taxes, because not all states, localities and foreign jurisdictions treat REITs in the same manner that they are treated for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Moreover, as further described below, any domestic TRS in which we own an interest will be subject to U.S. federal, state and local corporate income tax on its taxable income. In addition, we may be subject to a variety of taxes other than U.S. federal income tax, including state and local franchise, property and other taxes and foreign taxes. We could also be subject to tax in situations and on transactions not presently contemplated.

Requirements for Qualification

A REIT is a corporation, trust, or association that meets each of the following requirements:

1. It is managed by one or more trustees or directors.
2. Its beneficial ownership is evidenced by transferable shares or by transferable certificates of beneficial interest.
3. It would be taxable as a domestic corporation, but for the REIT provisions of the U.S. federal income tax laws.
4. It is neither a financial institution nor an insurance company subject to special provisions of the U.S. federal income tax laws.
5. At least 100 persons are beneficial owners (determined without reference to any rules of attribution) of its shares or ownership certificates.
6. Not more than 50% in value of its outstanding shares or ownership certificates is owned, directly or indirectly, by five or fewer individuals, which the U.S. federal income tax laws define to include certain entities, during the last half of any taxable year.
7. It elects to be taxed as a REIT, or has made such election for a previous taxable year, and satisfies all relevant filing and other administrative requirements that must be met to elect and maintain REIT qualification.
8. It meets certain other qualification tests, described below, regarding the nature of its income and assets and the distribution of its income.
9. It uses the calendar year as its taxable year.
10. It has no earnings and profits from any non-REIT taxable year at the close of any taxable year.

We must meet requirements 1 through 4, 8 and 9 during our entire taxable year and must meet requirement 5 during at least 335 days of a taxable year of twelve months, or during a proportionate part of a taxable year of less than twelve months. If we comply with all the requirements for ascertaining the ownership of shares of our outstanding stock in a taxable year and have no reason to know that we violated requirement 6, we will be deemed to have satisfied requirement 6 for that taxable year. For purposes of determining stock ownership under requirement 6, an “individual” generally includes a supplemental unemployment compensation benefits plan, a private foundation, or a portion of a trust permanently set aside or used exclusively for charitable purposes. An “individual” generally does not include a trust that is a qualified employee pension or profit sharing trust under the U.S. federal income tax laws, however, and beneficiaries of such a trust will be treated as holding shares of our stock in proportion to their actuarial interests in the trust for purposes of requirement 6.

We believe that we have issued shares of stock with sufficient diversity of ownership to satisfy requirements 5 and 6. In addition, our certificate of incorporation restricts the ownership and transfer of shares of our stock so that we should continue to satisfy these requirements. These restrictions, however, may not ensure that we will, in all cases, be able to satisfy these share ownership requirements. If we fail to satisfy these share ownership requirements, our qualification as a REIT may terminate.

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

Qualified REIT Subsidiaries

A corporation that is a “qualified REIT subsidiary” is disregarded as a corporation separate from its parent REIT for U.S. federal income tax purposes. All assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit of a qualified REIT subsidiary are treated as assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit of the REIT. A qualified REIT subsidiary is a corporation, other than a TRS, all of the stock of which is owned, directly or through one or more qualified REIT subsidiaries or disregarded entities, by the REIT. Thus, in applying the requirements described herein, all assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit of any qualified REIT subsidiary that we own will be treated as our assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit.

Other Disregarded Entities and Partnerships

An unincorporated domestic entity, such as a limited liability company, that has a single owner for U.S. federal income tax purposes generally is not treated as an entity separate from its parent for U.S. federal income tax purposes, including for purposes of the REIT gross income and asset tests. An unincorporated domestic entity with two or more owners for U.S. federal income tax purposes generally is treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes. In the case of a REIT that is a partner in a partnership that has other partners, the REIT is treated as owning its proportionate share of the assets of the partnership and as earning its allocable share of the gross income of the partnership for purposes of the applicable REIT qualification tests. Thus, our proportionate share of the assets, liabilities, and items of income of any partnership, joint venture, or limited liability company that is treated as a partnership for federal income tax purposes in which we own or acquire an equity interest, directly or indirectly, are treated as our assets and gross income for purposes of applying the various REIT qualification requirements. Our proportionate share of the partnership's assets for purposes of applying the 10% value test (see “-Asset Tests”) is based on our proportionate interest in the equity interests and certain debt securities issued by the partnership. For all of the other asset and income tests, our proportionate share is based on our proportionate interest in the capital interests in the partnership.

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

We have control of our operating partnership, and we intend to operate it in a manner consistent with the requirements for our qualification as a REIT. We may from time to time be a limited partner or non-managing member in some of the partnerships and limited liability companies in which we own an interest. If a partnership or limited liability company in which we own an interest takes or expects to take actions that could jeopardize our status as a REIT or require us to pay tax, we may be forced to dispose of our interest in such entity. In addition, it is possible that a partnership or limited liability company could take an action that could cause us to fail a gross income or asset test, and that we would not become aware of such action in time to dispose of our interest in the partnership or limited liability company or take other corrective action on a timely basis. In that case, we could fail to qualify as a REIT unless we were entitled to relief, as described below.

Taxable REIT Subsidiaries

A REIT is permitted to own up to 100% of the stock of one or more TRSs. A TRS is a fully taxable corporation that may earn income that would not be qualifying income if earned directly by the parent REIT. The subsidiary and the REIT must jointly elect to treat the subsidiary as a TRS. A corporation with respect to which a TRS directly or indirectly owns more than 35% of the voting power or value of the outstanding securities will automatically be treated as a TRS. However, an entity will not qualify as a TRS if it directly or indirectly operates or manages a lodging or health care facility or, generally, provides to another person, under a franchise, license or otherwise, rights to any brand name under which any lodging facility or health care facility is operated. We generally may not own more than 10%, as measured by voting power or value, of the securities of a corporation that is not a qualified REIT subsidiary or a REIT unless we and such corporation elect to treat such corporation as a TRS. Overall, no more than 20% (25% for taxable years beginning after 2025) of the gross value of a REIT's assets may consist of stock or securities of one or more TRSs.

The separate existence of a TRS or other taxable corporation, unlike a disregarded subsidiary as discussed above, is not ignored for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Accordingly, a domestic TRS would generally be subject to U.S. federal, state and local corporate income tax on its earnings, which may reduce the cash flow generated by us and our subsidiaries in the aggregate and our ability to make distributions to our stockholders.

For purposes of the asset and gross income tests, a REIT is not treated as holding the assets of a TRS or other taxable subsidiary corporation or as receiving any income that the subsidiary earns. Rather, the stock issued by the subsidiary is an asset in the hands of the REIT, and the REIT generally recognizes as income the dividends, if any, that it receives or is deemed to receive from such TRS. This treatment can affect the gross income and asset test calculations that apply to the REIT, as described below. Because a parent REIT does not include the assets and income of such subsidiary corporations in determining the parent REIT's compliance with the REIT requirements, such entities may be used by the parent REIT to undertake indirectly activities that the REIT rules might otherwise preclude it from doing directly or through pass-through subsidiaries or render commercially unfeasible (for example, activities that give rise to certain categories of income such as non-qualifying hedging or fee income, that, if conducted by us directly, would be treated as non-qualifying income for the REIT gross income tests, or income from inventory sales and securitizations, that, if conducted by us directly, would be subject to the tax on prohibited transactions (as described below under "—Prohibited Transactions"). Many of the investments that we made and activities we undertook prior to our REIT election have been contributed to or will be undertaken in one of our TRSs; thus, we hold a significant portion of our assets through, and derive a significant portion of our taxable income and gains in, TRSs.

Certain restrictions imposed on TRSs are intended to ensure that such entities will be subject to appropriate levels of U.S. federal income taxation. If amounts are paid to a REIT or deducted by a TRS due to transactions between a REIT, its tenants and/or a TRS, that exceed the amount that would be paid to or deducted by a party in an arm's-length transaction, the REIT generally will be subject to an excise tax equal to 100% of such excess. We intend that all of our transactions with any TRS will be conducted on an arm's-length basis, but there can be no assurance that we will be successful in this regard. The ability of our TRSs to deduct interest expense may be limited under rules applicable to corporations generally.

We have elected to treat certain of our domestic and foreign subsidiaries as TRSs, and we may form or invest in other domestic or foreign TRSs in the future. We may hold a significant amount of our assets in our TRSs, subject to the limitation that securities of TRSs may not represent more than 20% (25% for taxable years beginning after 2025) of our assets. We may derive a significant portion of our taxable income and gains in our TRSs, subject to the limitation that taxable dividends from our TRSs plus other non-qualifying gross income not exceed 25% of our total gross income. While the valuation of the assets held and the profits earned by our TRSs is complex, we intend to manage our affairs so as to satisfy the requirement that no more than 20% (25% for taxable years beginning after 2025) of the value of our total assets consists of stock or securities of our TRSs, as well as the requirement that taxable dividends from our TRSs plus other non-qualifying gross income not exceed 25% of our total gross income, although there can be no assurance that we will be able to do so in all market circumstances.

Our domestic TRSs are fully subject to U.S. federal, state and local corporate income tax on their taxable income. To the extent that our TRSs pay any taxes, they will have less cash available for distribution to us. If dividends (out of the TRS's earnings and profits) are paid by domestic TRSs to us, then the dividends we designate and pay to our stockholders who are taxed at individual rates, up to the amount of dividends that we receive from such entities, generally will be eligible to be taxed at the reduced 20% maximum federal rate applicable to qualified dividend income. See “-Taxation of U.S. Holders-Taxation of Taxable U.S. Holders on Distributions on Our Capital Stock.” In addition, losses in our TRSs generally will not provide any tax benefit, except for being carried forward against future TRS taxable income (subject to limitations on the use of such carryforwards) in the case of a domestic TRS.

Our foreign TRSs intend to operate in a manner that will not cause them to be subject to federal income tax. The Code and Treasury regulations promulgated thereunder provide a specific exemption from federal income tax to non-U.S. corporations that restrict their activities in the United States to trading in stocks and securities (or any other activity closely related thereto) for their own account, whether such trading (or such other activity) is conducted by the corporation or its employees through a resident broker, commission agent, custodian or other agent. Our foreign TRSs intend to rely on such exemption and do not intend to operate so as to be subject to federal income tax on their net income. Therefore, despite their status as TRSs, our foreign TRSs generally would not be subject to federal corporate income tax on their earnings. No assurance can be given, however, that the IRS will not challenge this treatment. If the IRS were to succeed in such a challenge, then it could greatly reduce the amounts that our foreign TRSs would have available to distribute to us and to pay to their creditors. Further, notwithstanding these rules, any gain recognized by a foreign corporation with respect to U.S. real property is subject to U.S. tax as if the foreign corporation were a U.S. taxpayer. It is not anticipated that our foreign TRSs will hold U.S. real property. We generally are required to include in income, on a current basis, the annual net earnings of our foreign TRSs, and such earnings are not qualifying income for the purposes of the REIT 75% gross income test, regardless of whether such earnings are distributed to us. In addition, we do not benefit from any annual net losses incurred in a foreign TRS until such TRS is liquidated or disposed.

We have formed a TRS in order to protect (“block”) certain stockholders from certain types of taxable income that could be detrimental to them, including “excess inclusion income,” a form of taxable income which can be generated by REMIC residual interests and “taxable mortgage pools,” as discussed in greater detail below. Specifically, to the extent that we form, purchase or hold any REMIC residual interest or any equity interest in a taxable mortgage pool, any excess inclusion income generated by such interest will be blocked by our existing TRS or a future TRS. As a result, we will not generate excess inclusion income for our stockholders.

Ownership of Subsidiary REITs

Our operating partnership owns interests in one or more entities that have elected to be taxed as a REIT under the Code (each, a subsidiary REIT). Our subsidiary REITs are also subject to the same various REIT qualification requirements and other limitations described herein that are applicable to us. We believe that each of our subsidiary REITs is organized and has operated and will continue to operate in a manner to permit it to qualify for taxation as a REIT for federal income tax purposes from and after the effective date of its REIT election. However, if a subsidiary REIT of ours were to fail to qualify as a REIT, then (1) the subsidiary REIT would become subject to regular U.S. corporate income tax, as described herein, see “-Failure to Qualify” below, and (2) our ownership of shares in such subsidiary REIT would cease to be a qualifying real estate asset for purposes of the 75% asset test and would become subject to the 5% asset test, the 10% vote test, and the 10% value test generally applicable to our ownership in corporations other than REITs, qualified REIT subsidiaries and TRSs. See “-Asset Tests” below. If one of our subsidiary REITs were to fail to qualify as a REIT, it is possible that we would not meet the 10% vote test and the 10% value test with respect to our indirect interest in such entity, in which event we would fail to qualify as a REIT unless we could avail ourselves of certain relief provisions. While we believe that our subsidiary REITs have qualified as a REIT under the Code, we have joined each subsidiary REIT in filing a “protective” TRS election with respect to the subsidiary REIT. We cannot assure you that such “protective” TRS election would be effective to avoid adverse consequences to us. Moreover, even if the “protective” election were to be effective, the subsidiary REIT would be subject to regular corporate income tax, and we cannot assure you that we would not fail to satisfy the requirement that not more than 20% (25% for taxable years beginning after 2025) of the value of our total assets may be represented by the securities of one or more TRSs, as well as the requirement that taxable income from our TRSs plus other non-qualifying gross income not exceed 25% of our total gross income.

Taxable Mortgage Pools and Excess Inclusion Income

An entity, or a portion of an entity, that does not elect to be treated as a REMIC may be classified as a taxable mortgage pool under the Code if:

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

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

A taxable mortgage pool generally is treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes and cannot be included in any consolidated U.S. federal corporate income tax return. However, if a REIT is a taxable mortgage pool, or if a REIT owns a qualified REIT subsidiary that is a taxable mortgage pool, then the REIT or the qualified REIT subsidiary will not be taxable as a corporation, but a portion of the REIT’s income will be treated as “excess inclusion income” and a portion of the dividends the REIT pays to its stockholders will be considered to be excess inclusion income. Similarly, a portion of the income from a REMIC residual interest may be treated as excess inclusion income.

To the extent that we form, purchase or hold any REMIC residual interest or any equity interest in a taxable mortgage pool, any excess inclusion income generated by such interest will be blocked by our existing TRS or a future TRS. As a result, we will not generate excess inclusion income for our stockholders.

Gross Income Tests

We must satisfy two gross income tests annually to maintain our qualification as a REIT.

First, at least 75% of our gross income for each taxable year must consist of defined types of income that we derive, directly or indirectly, from investments relating to real property or mortgage loans on real property or qualified temporary investment income. Qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test generally includes:

- rents from real property;
- interest on debt secured by a mortgage on real property or on interests in real property and interest on debt secured by a mortgage on real property and personal property if the fair market value of such personal property does not exceed 15% of the total fair market value of all such property, and interest on qualified mezzanine loans;
- dividends or other distributions on, and gain from the sale of, shares in other REITs;

- gain from the sale of real estate assets;
- abatements and refunds of taxes on real property;
- income and gain derived from foreclosure property (as described below);
- amounts (other than amounts the determination of which depends in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person) received or accrued as consideration for entering into agreements (i) to make loans secured by mortgages on real property or on interests in real property or (ii) to purchase or lease real property (including interests in real property and interests in mortgages on real property)
- income derived from a REMIC in proportion to the real estate assets held by the REMIC, unless at least 95% of the REMIC's assets are real estate assets, in which case all of the income derived from the REMIC; and
- income derived from the temporary investment of new capital that is attributable to the issuance of shares of our stock or a public offering of our debt with a maturity date of at least five years and that we receive during the one-year period beginning on the date on which we received such new capital.

Although a debt instrument issued by a “publicly offered REIT” (i.e., a REIT that is required to file annual and periodic reports with the SEC under the Exchange Act) is treated as a “real estate asset” for the asset tests, the interest income and gain from the sale of such debt instruments is not treated as qualifying income for the 75% gross income test unless the debt instrument is secured by real property or an interest in real property.

Second, in general, at least 95% of our gross income for each taxable year must consist of income that is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test, other types of interest and dividends, gain from the sale or disposition of stock or securities or any combination of these, and amounts included in our gross income, for federal income tax purposes, under (i) Code section 951(a) (in respect of our ownership of an interest in a controlled foreign corporation (within the meaning of Code section 957(a))) and (ii) Code section 1293(a) (in respect of our ownership of an interest in a passive foreign investment company (within the meaning of Code section 1297(a))).

Certain income items do not qualify for either gross income test. Other types of income are excluded from both the numerator and the denominator in one or both of the gross income tests. Gross income from the following sources is excluded from both the numerator and denominator in both gross income tests:

- gain from a sale of property that we hold primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business;
- income and gain from “hedging transactions,” as defined below in “-Hedging Transactions”;
- certain foreign currency gains, see “-Foreign Currency Gain”; and
- cancellation of indebtedness, or “COD,” income.

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

Interest and Income from Mortgage Loans and Mortgage-Backed Securities

The term “interest,” as defined for purposes of both gross income tests, generally excludes any amount that is based in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person. However, interest generally includes the following:

- an amount that is based on a fixed percentage or percentages of receipts or sales; and

- an amount that is based on the income or profits of a debtor, as long as the debtor derives substantially all of its income from the real property securing the debt from leasing substantially all of its interest in the property, and only to the extent that the amounts received by the debtor would be qualifying “rents from real property” if received directly by a REIT. We do not expect that any of our loans will be based in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person.

If a loan contains a provision that entitles a REIT to a percentage of the borrower’s gain upon the sale of the real property securing the loan or a percentage of the appreciation in the property’s value as of a specific date, income attributable to that loan provision will be treated as gain from the sale of the property securing the loan, which generally is qualifying income for purposes of both gross income tests, provided that the property is not inventory or dealer property in the hands of the borrower or the REIT.

Interest on debt secured by a mortgage on real property or on interests in real property, including, for this purpose, market discount, original issue discount, discount points, prepayment penalties, loan assumption fees and late payment charges that are not compensation for services, generally is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test. Treasury Regulation Section 1.856-5(c) (the “interest apportionment regulation”) provides that if a mortgage is secured by both real property and other property, a REIT is required to apportion its annual interest income to the real property security based on a fraction, the numerator of which is the value of the real property securing the loan, determined when the REIT commits to acquire the loan (or, in some circumstances, upon a “significant modification”), and the denominator of which is the highest “principal amount” of the loan during the year. The portion of the interest income that will not be qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test will be equal to the portion of the principal amount of the loan that is not secured by real property—that is, the amount by which the loan balance exceeds the applicable value of the real property that secures the loan. IRS guidance provides that we do not need to redetermine the fair market value of the real property securing a loan in connection with a loan modification that is occasioned by a borrower default or made at a time when we reasonably believe that the modification to the loan will substantially reduce a significant risk of default on the original loan. If a mortgage is secured by both real property and personal property and the value of the personal property does not exceed 15% of the aggregate value of the property securing the mortgage, the mortgage is treated as secured solely by real property for this purpose.

We invest in residential mortgage-backed securities, or “RMBS,” including both non-Agency RMBS and Agency RMBS. We also invest in commercial mortgage-backed securities, or “CMBS,” residential and commercial mortgage loans, including performing, non-performing and reperforming loans, and residential transition loans, or “RTLs.” We refer to RMBS and CMBS collectively as “MBS.” Other than income from derivative instruments, as described below, we expect that all of the income of our non-Agency RMBS, Agency RMBS, CMBS, and mortgage loans will be qualifying income for purposes of the 95% gross income test. In the case of MBS treated as interests in a grantor trust for U.S. federal income tax purposes, we would be treated as owning an undivided beneficial ownership interest in the mortgage loans held by the grantor trust. The interest on such mortgage loans (and any mortgage loans that we own directly) would be qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test to the extent that the obligation is adequately secured (or solely secured) by real property, as discussed above. In the case of MBS treated as regular interests in a REMIC for U.S. federal income tax purposes, income derived from REMIC interests will generally be treated as qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test. If less than 95% of the assets of the REMIC are real estate assets, however, then only a proportionate part of our interest in the REMIC and income derived from the interest will qualify for purposes of the 75% gross income test. We believe that all of the income that we derive from interests in Agency REMICs will be qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test. In addition, some REMIC securitizations include imbedded interest rate swap or cap contracts or other derivative instruments that potentially could produce non-qualifying income for the holders of the related REMIC securities. We expect that any interest income from an MBS that is not treated as an interest in a grantor trust or an interest in a REMIC will not be qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test. Accordingly, we may choose to purchase or hold such assets in a TRS.

We purchase and sell to-be-announced forward contracts, or “TBAs,” and recognize income or gains from the disposition of those TBAs, through dollar roll transactions or otherwise. While there is no direct authority with respect to the qualification of income or gains from dispositions of TBAs as gains from the sale of real property (including interests in real property and interests in mortgages on real property) or other qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test, we treat income and gains from our TBAs under which we contract to purchase a to-be-announced Agency MBS (“long TBAs”) as qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test, based on an opinion of Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP substantially to the effect that, for purposes of the 75% gross income test, any gain recognized by us in connection with the settlement of our long TBAs should be treated as gain from the sale or disposition of an interest in mortgages on real property. The opinion of Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP is based on various assumptions related to our long TBAs and is conditioned on fact-based representations and covenants made by our management regarding our long TBAs. No assurance can be given that the IRS would not assert that our income and gain from TBAs is not qualifying income. If the IRS were to successfully challenge the opinion of Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP, we could be subject to a penalty tax or we could fail to remain qualified as a REIT if a sufficient portion of our income consists of income or gains from the disposition of TBAs. We will treat any income from short TBAs that were not identified as hedging transactions as non-qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test.

To the extent that we receive any “exit fees” or other deferred amounts, other than principal, with respect to a mortgage loan, at maturity or otherwise, such amounts will be treated by us either (i) as interest and not as a fee for services for all tax and other purposes or (ii) as income that does not qualify for purposes of the 95% gross income test and the 75% gross income test. We will treat any origination fees received for loans as income that does not qualify for purposes of the 95% gross income test and the 75% gross income test. We may originate loans at a discount to par and treat the income attributable to such discount as interest income eligible to be qualifying income for purposes of the 95% gross income test and the 75% gross income test so long as (i) we provide no services to the borrower in connection with the origination of the loan, (ii) the related loan documents require the borrower to treat such discount in accordance with the rules for original issue discount contained in Code sections 1271 through 1275, (iii) such discount is not referred to in the related loan documents as an origination (or other similar) fee, and (iv) we treat such discount for all purposes, including for tax and financial accounting purposes, as interest income and not as an origination (or other similar) fee.

Certain of our subsidiaries (including our operating partnership) have made elections under Section 475(f) of the Code to mark their securities to market. There are limited authorities under Section 475(f) of the Code as to what constitutes a trader for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Under other sections of the Code, the status of a trader in securities depends on all of the facts and circumstances, including the nature of the income derived from the taxpayer’s activities, the frequency, extent and regularity of the taxpayer’s securities transactions, and the taxpayer’s investment intent. There can be no assurance that these subsidiaries will continue to qualify as a trader in securities eligible to make the mark-to-market election. We have not received, nor are we seeking, an opinion from counsel or a ruling from the IRS regarding these subsidiaries’ qualification as a trader. If these subsidiaries’ qualification for, or our application of, the mark-to-market election were successfully challenged by the IRS, in whole or in part, it could, depending on the circumstances, result in retroactive (or prospective) changes in the amount or timing of gross income we recognize. As a result of its election under Section 475(f) of the Code, each of these subsidiaries will be required each year to mark-to-market certain securities that it holds, and thereby recognize gain or loss as if it had sold those securities for their fair market value. The mark-to-market election also requires these subsidiaries to recognize any accrued market discount on our debt securities held at the end of each year. While there is limited analogous authority, we treat any mark-to-market gains as qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test to the extent that the gain is recognized with respect to a qualifying real estate asset, based on an opinion of Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP substantially to the effect that any such gains recognized with respect to assets that would produce qualifying income for purposes of the 75% and/or 95% gross income test, as applicable, if they were actually sold, should be treated as qualifying income to the same extent for purposes of the 75% and/or 95% gross income test, as applicable, and any such gains should not be subject to the prohibited transaction tax. The opinion of Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP is based on various assumptions and is conditioned on fact-based representations and covenants made by our management. No assurance can be given that the IRS would not assert that any mark-to-market gains were not qualifying income. Furthermore, the law is unclear as to the treatment of mark-to-market gains and losses under the various REIT tax rules, including, among others, the prohibited transaction and qualified liability hedging rules. There are limited and, in some cases, no authorities on the interaction of a REIT engaged in the trade or business of trading in securities, the election under Section 475(f), the qualified liability hedging rules and the REIT tax rules. If the IRS were to successfully treat our mark-to-market gains as subject to the prohibited transaction tax or to successfully challenge the treatment or timing of recognition of our mark-to-market gains or losses with respect to our qualified liability hedges or with respect to positions held in our subsidiaries, we could owe material federal income or penalty tax or, in some circumstances, even fail to qualify as a REIT.

We may invest in mezzanine loans, which are loans secured by equity interests in an entity that directly or indirectly owns real property, rather than by a direct mortgage of the real property. In Revenue Procedure 2003-65, the IRS established a safe harbor under which loans secured by a first priority security interest in the ownership interests in a partnership or limited liability company owning real property will be treated as real estate assets for purposes of the REIT asset tests described below, and interest derived from those loans will be treated as qualifying income for both the 75% and 95% gross income tests, provided several requirements are satisfied. Although the Revenue Procedure provides a safe harbor on which taxpayers may rely, it does not prescribe rules of substantive tax law. Moreover, our mezzanine loans may not meet all of the requirements for reliance on the safe harbor. To the extent any mezzanine loans that we acquire meet most but do not meet all the requirements for the safe harbor described above, the interest income on such loans will be qualifying income for purposes of the 95% gross income test, but there is a risk that such interest income will not be qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test. In the event that we own a mezzanine loan or similar debt that does not meet the safe harbor, and we nevertheless treat the income on such loans as qualifying income for the 75% gross income test, the IRS could challenge the treatment of the income from such loan or debt as qualifying income for the 75% gross income test and, if such a challenge were sustained, we could fail to qualify as a REIT. We intend to invest in mezzanine loans in a manner that will enable us to continue to satisfy the REIT gross income and asset tests.

We own and may acquire distressed mortgage loans. Revenue Procedure 2014-51 indicates that interest income on a distressed mortgage loan secured by real property and other property will be treated as qualifying income based on the ratio of: (i) the fair market value of the real property securing the debt determined as of the date the REIT committed to acquire the loan; and (ii) the face amount of the loan (and not the purchase price or current value of the loan). The face amount of a distressed mortgage loan will typically exceed the fair market value of the real property securing the mortgage loan on the date the REIT commits to acquire the loan. As noted above, if a mortgage is secured by both real property and personal property and the value of the personal property does not exceed 15% of the aggregate value of the property securing the mortgage, the mortgage is treated as secured solely by real property for this purpose. We believe that most of the mortgage loans that we acquire at a discount under the circumstances contemplated by Revenue Procedure 2014-51 are secured only by real property (including mortgage loans secured by both real property and personal property where the value of the personal property does not exceed 15% of the aggregate value of the property securing the mortgage). Accordingly, we believe that the interest apportionment regulation generally does not apply to our loans. Nevertheless, if the IRS were to assert successfully that our mortgage loans were secured by other property and, thus, that the interest apportionment rules and Revenue Procedure 2014-51 applied, our ability to satisfy the various asset and gross income requirements applicable to REITs could be adversely affected. To the extent we invest in distressed mortgage loans, we intend to do so in a manner consistent with qualifying as a REIT.

We invest in residential transition loans, which generally are short term loans secured by a mortgage on a residential property where the proceeds of the loan will be used, in part, to renovate the property. The interest from such loans will be qualifying income for purposes of the REIT gross income tests, provided that the loan value of the real property securing such loan is equal to or greater than the highest outstanding principal amount of the loan during any taxable year, and other requirements are met. Under the REIT provisions, where improvements will be constructed with the proceeds of the loan, the loan value of the real property is the fair market value of the land plus the reasonably estimated cost of the improvements or developments (other than personal property) that will secure the loan and that are to be constructed from the proceeds of the loan. There can be no assurance that the IRS would not challenge our estimate of the loan value of the real property.

We may invest opportunistically in other types of mortgage and real estate-related assets. To the extent we invest in such assets, we intend to do so in a manner that will enable us to satisfy the 75% and 95% gross income tests described above.

Hedging Transactions

From time to time, we will enter into “hedging transactions” with respect to one or more of our assets or liabilities. Our hedging activities may include entering into interest rate swaps, caps, and floors, options to purchase these items, short U.S. treasury positions, futures and forward contracts, short TBAs, and currency forward contracts. Except to the extent provided by Treasury Regulations, income and gain from hedging transactions will be excluded from gross income for purposes of both the 75% and 95% gross income tests provided we satisfy the identification requirements and other requirements discussed below. A hedging transaction includes (i) any transaction entered into in the normal course of our trade or business primarily to manage the risk of interest rate changes, price changes, or currency fluctuations with respect to borrowings made or to be made, or ordinary obligations incurred or to be incurred, to acquire or carry real estate assets, or a “liability hedge,” (ii) any transaction entered into primarily to manage risk of currency fluctuations with respect to any item of income or gain that is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% or 95% gross income test (or any property which generates such income or gain) or (iii) any transaction entered into to “offset” a transaction described in (i) or (ii) if a portion of the hedged indebtedness is extinguished or the related property is disposed. We are required to clearly identify any such hedging transaction before the close of the day on which it was acquired, originated, or entered into and satisfy other identification requirements. We are required to match the tax character and timing of income, deduction, gain or loss from hedging transactions as closely as possible with the tax character and timing of income, deduction, gain or loss from the item or items being hedged, but there is limited authority on the interaction of these rules with an election under Section 475(f) of the Code. To the extent that we hedge for other purposes, or to the extent that a portion of the hedged assets are not treated as “real estate assets” (as described below under “-Asset Tests”), or we fail to satisfy the identification requirements with respect to a hedging transaction, the income from the related transactions will likely be treated as non-qualifying income for purposes of both gross income tests, and thus cannot exceed 5% of our annual gross income.

We intend to structure any hedging transactions so that they are excluded from gross income for purposes of both the 75% and 95% gross income tests, including the satisfaction of the identification, tax character matching and other requirements described above, but these requirements involve the application of highly technical and complex Code provisions for which only limited judicial and administrative authorities exist, and we cannot assure you that the IRS will not successfully assert a contrary position. We may conduct some or all of our hedging activities through a TRS or other corporate entity, the income from which may be subject to U.S. federal income tax, rather than by participating in the arrangements directly or through pass-through subsidiaries. No assurance can be given, however, that our hedging activities will not give rise to income that does not qualify for purposes of either or both of the REIT gross income tests, or that our hedging activities will not adversely affect our ability to satisfy the REIT qualification requirements.

Even if the income from our hedging transactions is excluded from gross income for purposes of the 75% and 95% gross income tests, such income and any loss will be taken into account in determining our REIT taxable income and our distribution requirement. If the IRS disagrees with our calculation of the amount or timing of recognition of gain or loss with respect to our hedging transactions, including the impact of our operating partnership’s election under Section 475(f) of the Code and the treatment of hedging expense and losses under Section 163(f) of the Code, our distribution requirement could increase, which could require that we correct any shortfall in distributions by paying deficiency dividends to our stockholders in a later year.

Dividends

Our share of any dividends received from any corporation (including dividends from any TRS, but excluding any REIT) in which we own an equity interest will qualify for purposes of the 95% gross income test but not for purposes of the 75% gross income test. Our share of any dividends received from our subsidiary REITs and any other REIT in which we own an equity interest will be qualifying income for purposes of both gross income tests. Income inclusions with respect to equity investments in our foreign TRSs are qualifying income for purposes of the 95% gross income test but not the 75% gross income test.

Fee Income

We may earn income from fees in certain circumstances. Fee income generally will be qualifying income for purposes of both the 75% and 95% gross income tests if it is received in consideration for entering into an agreement to make a loan secured by real property, the fees are not determined by income and profits and the fees are not compensation for services. Other fees, including certain amounts received in connection with mortgage servicing rights, generally are not qualifying income for purposes of either gross income test, and thus cannot exceed 5% of our annual gross income. We may conduct some or all of our fee-generating activities through a TRS or other corporate entity, the income from which may be subject to U.S. federal income tax. Any fees earned by a TRS, like other income earned by a TRS, will not be included in our gross income for purposes of the gross income tests.

Foreign Currency Gain

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

Rents from Real Property

Rents we receive from our real property will qualify as “rents from real property” in satisfying the gross income requirements for a REIT described above only if the following conditions are met:

- First, the amount of rent must not be based in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person. An amount received or accrued generally will not be excluded, however, from rents from real property solely by reason of being based on fixed percentages of receipts or sales.
- Second, rents we receive from a “related party tenant” will not qualify as rents from real property in satisfying the gross income tests unless the tenant is a TRS, at least 90% of the property is leased to unrelated tenants, the rent paid by the TRS is substantially comparable to the rent paid by the unrelated tenants for comparable space and the rent is not attributable to an increase in rent due to a modification of a lease with a “controlled TRS” (i.e., a TRS in which we own directly or indirectly more than 50% of the voting power or value of the stock). A tenant is a related party tenant if the REIT, or an actual or constructive owner of 10% or more of the REIT, actually or constructively owns 10% or more of the tenant.
- Third, if rent attributable to personal property, leased in connection with a lease of real property, is greater than 15% of the total rent received under the lease, then the portion of rent attributable to the personal property will not qualify as rents from real property.
- Fourth, we generally must not operate or manage our real property or furnish or render services to our tenants, other than through an “independent contractor” who is adequately compensated and from whom we do not derive revenue. We may, however, provide services directly to tenants if the services are “usually or customarily rendered” in connection with the rental of space for occupancy only and are not considered to be provided for the tenants’ convenience. In addition, we may provide a minimal amount of “non-customary” services to the tenants of a property, other than through an independent contractor, as long as our income from the services does not exceed 1% of our income from the related property. Furthermore, we may own up to 100% of the stock of a TRS, which may provide customary and non-customary services to tenants without tainting our rental income from the related properties.

We intend that any rent we receive in respect of our REO or other real property will be treated as qualifying “rents from real property.” We may hold some or all of our REO or other real property in a TRS or other corporate entity, the income from which may be subject to U.S. federal income tax.

Prohibited Transactions

A REIT will incur a 100% tax on the net income (including foreign currency gain) derived from any sale or other disposition of property, other than foreclosure property, but including mortgage loans, that the REIT holds “primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business.” Any such income will be excluded from the application of the 75% and 95% gross income tests. Whether a REIT holds an asset primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business depends on the facts and circumstances in effect from time to time, including those related to a particular asset. We intend to conduct our operations so that no asset that we own (or are treated as if we own) will be treated as, or as having been, held for sale to customers, and that a sale of any asset will not be treated as having been in the ordinary course of our business.

Our operating partnership has made an election under Section 475(f) of the Code to mark its securities to market. While there is limited analogous authority, we do not treat mark-to-market gains that we recognize pursuant to Section 475(f) of the Code as gains from the sale of property to customers in the ordinary course of business, based on an opinion from Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP substantially to the effect that any such gains should not be subject to the prohibited transaction tax. The opinion of Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP is based on various assumptions and is conditioned on fact-based representations and covenants made by our management. No assurance, however, can be given that the IRS will not successfully assert a contrary position, in which case we would be subject to the prohibited transaction tax on the sale of those assets.

We might be subject to this tax if we dispose of or securitize mortgage loans or MBS in a manner that was treated as dealer activity for U.S. federal income tax purposes. To the extent we intend to dispose of an asset that may be treated as held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business, we may contribute the asset to a TRS prior to the disposition, the income from which may then be subject to U.S. federal, state and local corporate income tax. However, no assurance can be given that the IRS will respect the transaction by which property that may be characterized as held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business is contributed to a TRS; if such transaction is not respected, then we may be treated as having engaged in a prohibited transaction, and our net income therefrom would be subject to a 100% tax.

Foreclosure Property

We will be subject to tax at the maximum corporate rate on any income (including foreign currency gain) from foreclosure property, other than income that otherwise would be qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test, less expenses directly connected with the production of that income. Gross income from foreclosure property will qualify, however, under the 75% and 95% gross income tests. Foreclosure property is any real property, including interests in real property, and any personal property incident to such real property:

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

A REIT will not be considered, however, to have foreclosed on a property where the REIT takes control of the property as a mortgagee-in-possession and cannot receive any profit or sustain any loss except as a creditor of the mortgagor. Property generally ceases to be foreclosure property at the end of the third taxable year following the taxable year in which the REIT acquired the property, or longer if an extension is granted by the Secretary of the U.S. Treasury. This grace period terminates and foreclosure property ceases to be foreclosure property on the first day:

- on which a lease is entered into for the property that, by its terms, will give rise to income that does not qualify for purposes of the 75% gross income test (disregarding income from foreclosure property), or any amount is received or accrued, directly or indirectly, pursuant to a lease entered into on or after such day that will give rise to income that does not qualify for purposes of the 75% gross income test (disregarding income from foreclosure property);

- on which any construction takes place on the property, other than completion of a building or any other improvement, where more than 10% of the construction was completed before default became imminent; or
- which is more than 90 days after the day on which the REIT acquired the property and the property is used in a trade or business that is conducted by the REIT, other than through an independent contractor from whom the REIT itself does not derive or receive any income or a TRS.

Failure to Satisfy Gross Income Tests

If we fail to satisfy one or both of the gross income tests for any taxable year, we nevertheless may qualify as a REIT for that year if we are entitled to qualify for relief under certain provisions of the U.S. federal income tax laws. Those relief provisions generally will be available if:

- our failure to meet those tests is due to reasonable cause and not to willful neglect; and
- following such failure for any taxable year, a schedule of the sources of our income is filed with the IRS in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the U.S. Treasury.

We cannot with certainty predict whether any failure to meet these tests will qualify for the relief provisions. If these relief provisions are inapplicable to a particular set of circumstances involving us, we will not qualify as a REIT. As discussed above in “-Taxation of Our Company,” even if the relief provisions apply, we would incur a 100% tax on the gross income attributable to the greater of the amount by which we fail the 75% gross income test or the 95% gross income test, multiplied, in either case, by a fraction intended to reflect our profitability.

Asset Tests

To maintain our qualification as a REIT, we also must satisfy the following asset tests at the end of each quarter of each taxable year.

First, at least 75% of the value of our total assets must consist of:

- cash or cash items, including certain receivables and investments in money market funds;
- U.S. government securities;
- interests in real property, including leaseholds and options to acquire real property and leaseholds, and personal property to the extent such personal property is leased in connection with real property and rents attributable to such personal property are treated as “rents from real property”;
- interests in mortgage loans secured by real property and interests in mortgage loans secured by real property and personal property if the fair market value of the personal property does not exceed 15% of the total fair market value of all such property;
- stock in other REITs and debt instruments issued by “publicly offered REITs” (however, see the *Sixth* asset test below);
- investments in stock or debt instruments during the one-year period following our receipt of new capital that we raise through equity offerings or public offerings of debt with at least a five-year term; and
- regular or residual interests in a REMIC. However, if less than 95% of the assets of a REMIC consist of assets that are qualifying real estate-related assets under the U.S. federal income tax laws, determined as if we held such assets, we will be treated as holding directly our proportionate share of the assets of such REMIC.

Second, of our investments not included in the 75% asset class, the value of our interest in any one issuer’s securities (other than any TRS we may own) may not exceed 5% of the value of our total assets (the “5% asset test”).

Third, of our investments not included in the 75% asset class, we may not own more than 10% of the total voting power or 10% of the total value of any one issuer's outstanding securities (the "10% vote test" and the "10% value test," respectively).

Fourth, no more than 20% (25% for taxable years beginning after 2025) of the value of our total assets may consist of the securities of one or more TRSs.

Fifth, no more than 25% of the value of our total assets may consist of the securities of TRSs and other non-TRS taxable subsidiaries and other assets that are not qualifying assets for purposes of the 75% asset test (the "25% securities test").

Sixth, no more than 25% of the value of our total assets may consist of debt instruments issued by "publicly offered REITs" to the extent such debt instruments are not secured by real property or interests in real property.

For purposes of these asset tests, we are treated as holding our proportionate share of the assets of any partnership and disregarded entity that we own, including our operating partnership. For purposes of the 5% asset test, the 10% vote test and the 10% value test, the term "securities" does not include stock in another REIT, debt of "publicly offered REITs," equity or debt securities of a qualified REIT subsidiary or TRS, mortgage loans or mortgage-backed securities that constitute real estate assets, or equity interests in a partnership. The term securities, however, generally includes debt securities issued by a partnership or another REIT (other than a "publicly offered REIT"), except that, for purposes of the 10% value test, the term "securities" does not include:

- "straight debt" securities, which is defined as a written unconditional promise to pay on demand or on a specified date a sum certain in money if (i) the debt is not convertible, directly or indirectly, into stock, and (ii) the interest rate and interest payment dates are not contingent on profits, the borrower's discretion, or similar factors. "Straight debt" securities do not include any securities issued by a partnership or a corporation in which we or any "controlled TRS" hold non-"straight" debt securities that have an aggregate value of more than 1% of the issuer's outstanding securities. However, "straight debt" securities include debt subject to the following contingencies:
 - a contingency relating to the time of payment of interest or principal, as long as either (i) there is no change to the effective yield of the debt obligation, other than a change to the annual yield that does not exceed the greater of 0.25% or 5% of the annual yield, or (ii) neither the aggregate issue price nor the aggregate face amount of the issuer's debt obligations held by us exceeds \$1 million and no more than twelve months of unaccrued interest on the debt obligations can be required to be prepaid; and
 - a contingency relating to the time or amount of payment upon a default or prepayment of a debt obligation, as long as the contingency is consistent with customary commercial practice;
- any loan to an individual or an estate;
- any "section 467 rental agreement," other than an agreement with a related party tenant;
- any obligation to pay "rents from real property";
- certain securities issued by governmental entities that are not dependent in whole or in part on the profits of (or payments made by) a non-governmental entity;
- any security (including debt securities) issued by another REIT;
- any debt instrument of an entity treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes in which we are a partner to the extent of our proportionate interest in the equity and certain debt securities issued by that partnership; or
- any debt instrument of an entity treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes not described in the preceding bullet points if at least 75% of the partnership's gross income, excluding income from prohibited transactions, is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test described above in "-Gross Income Tests."

For purposes of the 10% value test, our proportionate share of the assets of a partnership is our proportionate interest in any securities issued by the partnership, without regard to the securities described in the last two bullet points above.

We invest in non-Agency RMBS, Agency RMBS, CMBS, residential and commercial mortgage loans, including performing, non-performing and reperforming loans, and residential transition loans, among other things. In the case of MBS treated as interests in a grantor trust for U.S. federal income tax purposes, we will be treated as owning an undivided beneficial ownership interest in the mortgage loans held by the grantor trust. Such mortgage loans (and any mortgage loans that we own directly) generally will qualify as real estate assets for purposes of the 75% asset test to the extent that they are secured by real property as described in the following paragraph. In the case of MBS treated as regular interests in a REMIC for U.S. federal income tax purposes, such interests generally will qualify as real estate assets for purposes of the 75% asset test. If less than 95% of the assets of a REMIC are real estate assets, however, then only a proportionate part of our interest in the REMIC qualifies as a real estate asset for purposes of the REIT asset tests. To the extent any of our investments in Agency RMBS are not treated as real estate assets, we expect such Agency RMBS will be treated as Government securities (and, therefore, as qualifying assets for purposes of the 75% asset test) because they are issued or guaranteed as to principal or interest by the United States or by a person controlled or supervised by and acting as an instrumentality of the government of the United States pursuant to authority granted by the Congress of the United States. Our investments in non-Agency RMBS and CMBS that are not interests in a grantor trust or REMIC or Government securities will not be treated as qualifying assets for purposes of the 75% asset test and will be subject to the 5% asset test, the 10% value test, the 10% vote test and the 25% securities test described above.

We also invest in distressed loans. As discussed above under “-Gross Income Tests,” under the applicable Treasury regulations, if a mortgage is secured by both real property and other property, a REIT is required to apportion its annual interest income to the real property security based on a fraction, the numerator of which is the value of the real property securing the loan, determined when the REIT commits to acquire the loan (or, in some circumstances, upon a “significant modification”), and the denominator of which is the highest “principal amount” of the loan during the year. If a mortgage is secured by both real property and personal property and the value of the personal property does not exceed 15% of the aggregate value of the property securing the mortgage, the mortgage is treated as secured solely by real property for this purpose. Although the law is not entirely clear, if apportionment of interest is required, a portion of the loan will also likely be a non-qualifying asset for purposes of the 75% asset test. As noted above, we believe that most of the mortgage loans that we acquire at a discount under the circumstances contemplated by Revenue Procedure 2014-51 are secured only by real property (including mortgage loans secured by both real property and personal property where the value of the personal property does not exceed 15% of the aggregate value of the property securing the mortgage). Accordingly, we believe that the interest apportionment rules and Revenue Procedure 2014-51 generally do not apply to our loans. Nevertheless, if the IRS were to assert successfully that our mortgage loans were secured by other property and, thus, that the interest apportionment rules and Revenue Procedure 2014-51 applied, our ability to satisfy the various asset and gross income requirements applicable to REITs could be adversely affected. For loans secured by real property and other property, Revenue Procedure 2014-51 provides a safe harbor under which the IRS has stated that it will not challenge a REIT’s treatment of a loan as being, in part, a qualifying real estate asset in an amount equal to the lesser of (i) the fair market value of the loan on the relevant quarterly REIT asset testing date or (ii) the greater of (a) the fair market value of the real property securing the loan on the relevant quarterly REIT asset testing date or (b) the fair market value of the real property securing the loan on the date the REIT committed to originate or acquire the loan. We intend to invest in mortgage loans, including distressed loans, in a manner consistent with qualifying and maintaining our qualification as a REIT.

We may invest in mezzanine loans. As described above, Revenue Procedure 2003-65 provides a safe harbor pursuant to which certain mezzanine loans secured by a first priority security interest in ownership interests in a partnership or limited liability company will be treated as qualifying assets for purposes of the 75% asset test (and therefore, are not subject to the 5% asset test and the 10% vote test or value test). See “-Gross Income Tests.” Although the mezzanine loans we acquire may not meet all of the requirements for that safe harbor we may treat such loans as real estate assets for the purposes of the REIT asset tests. We expect any mezzanine loans we acquire generally will be treated as qualifying assets for the 75% asset test or should be excluded from the definition of securities for purposes of the 10% value test. In the event that we own a mezzanine loan or similar debt that does not meet the safe harbor, the IRS could challenge such loan's treatment as a real estate asset for purposes of the REIT asset tests, and if such a challenge were sustained, we could fail to qualify as a REIT. We intend to invest in mezzanine loans in a manner that will enable us to continue to satisfy the REIT asset tests.

We enter into repurchase agreements under which we nominally sell certain of our assets to a counterparty and simultaneously enter into an agreement to repurchase the sold assets in exchange for a purchase price that reflects a financing charge. Based on positions the IRS has taken in analogous situations, we believe that these transactions would be treated as secured debt, and that we would be treated for REIT asset and income test purposes as the owner of the assets that would be the subject of such agreements, notwithstanding that such agreements may transfer record ownership of the assets to the counterparty during the term of the agreement. It is possible, however, that the IRS could assert that we did not own our assets subject to sale and repurchase agreements during the term of such agreements, in which case we could fail to qualify as a REIT.

We purchase Agency MBS through TBAs. While there is no direct authority with respect to the qualification of TBAs as real estate assets or U.S. government securities for purposes of the 75% asset test, we treat our long TBAs as qualifying assets for purposes of the REIT asset tests, based on an opinion of Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP substantially to the effect that for purposes of the REIT asset tests, our ownership of a long TBA should be treated as ownership of an interest in mortgages on real property. The opinion of Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP is based on various assumptions related to our long TBAs and is conditioned on fact-based representations and covenants made by our management regarding our long TBAs. No assurance can be given that the IRS would not assert that our long TBAs are not qualifying assets. If the IRS were to successfully challenge the opinion of Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP, we could be subject to a penalty tax or we could fail to remain qualified as a REIT if a sufficient portion of our assets consists of TBAs. We will treat short TBAs as non-qualifying assets for purposes of the 75% gross asset test.

Derivative instruments, other than long TBAs as discussed in the prior paragraph, generally are not qualifying assets for purposes of the 75% asset test. Thus, derivative instruments such as interest rate swaps, futures contracts, and other similar instruments, even if used in and identified as “hedging transactions” as described in “-Hedging Transactions,” are non-qualifying assets for purposes of the 75% asset test. Therefore, we will limit our investment in such derivative instruments and any other non-qualifying assets to no more than 25% of our total assets at the end of any calendar quarter, or we may make such investments through a TRS or other corporate entity, the income from which may be subject to U.S. federal, state or local corporate income tax.

Many of the investments that we made and activities we undertook prior to our REIT election have been contributed to or will be undertaken in one of our TRSs; thus, we hold a significant portion of our assets through, and derive a significant portion of our taxable income and gains in, TRSs. While we intend to manage our affairs so as to satisfy the requirement that no more than 20% (25% for taxable years beginning after 2025) of the value of our total assets consists of stock or securities of our TRSs, as well as the requirement that taxable income from our TRSs plus other non-qualifying gross income not exceed 25% of our total gross income, there can be no assurance that we will be able to do so in all market circumstances. Even if we are able to do so, compliance with these rules may reduce our flexibility in operating our business. In addition, the two rules may conflict with each other in that our ability to reduce the value of our TRSs below 20% of our assets by causing a TRS to distribute a dividend to us may be limited by our need to comply with the REIT 75% gross income test, which requires that, in general, 75% of our gross income come from certain real estate-related sources (and TRS dividends are not qualifying income for such test). There can be no assurance that we will be able to comply with either or both of these tests in all market conditions. Our inability to comply with both of these tests could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, liquidity, results of operations, qualification as a REIT and ability to make distributions to our stockholders.

As discussed above, we may invest opportunistically in other types of mortgage-related assets. To the extent we invest in such assets, we intend to do so in a manner that will enable us to satisfy each of the asset tests described above. However, we cannot assure you that we will be able to satisfy the asset tests described above. We will monitor the status of our assets for purposes of the various asset tests and seek to manage our portfolio to comply at all times with such tests. No assurance, however, can be given that we will continue to be successful in this effort. In this regard, to determine our compliance with these requirements, we will have to value our investment in our assets to ensure compliance with the asset tests. Although we seek to be prudent in making these estimates, no assurances can be given that the IRS might not disagree with these determinations and assert that a different value is applicable, in which case we might not satisfy the 75% asset test and the other asset tests and, thus, would fail to qualify as a REIT.

If we fail to satisfy the asset tests at the end of a calendar quarter, we will not lose our REIT qualification so long as:

- we satisfied the asset tests at the end of the preceding calendar quarter; and
- the discrepancy between the value of our assets and the asset test requirements arose from changes in the market values of our assets and was not wholly or partly caused by the acquisition of one or more non-qualifying assets.

If we did not satisfy the condition described in the second item, above, we still could avoid disqualification by eliminating any discrepancy within 30 days after the close of the calendar quarter in which it arose.

If we violate the 5% asset test, the 10% vote test or the 10% value test described above at the end of any calendar quarter, we will not lose our REIT qualification if (i) the failure is de minimis (up to the lesser of 1% of the total value of our assets or \$10 million) and (ii) we dispose of assets causing the failure or otherwise comply with the asset tests within six months after the last day of the quarter in which we identified such failure. In the event of a more than de minimis failure of any of the asset tests, as long as the failure was due to reasonable cause and not to willful neglect, we will not lose our REIT qualification if we (i) dispose of assets or otherwise comply with the asset tests within six months after the last day of the quarter in which we identified such failure, (ii) file a schedule with the IRS describing the assets that caused such failure in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary of the U.S. Treasury and (iii) pay a tax equal to the greater of \$50,000 or the product of the highest U.S. federal corporate tax rate and the net income from the non-qualifying assets during the period in which we failed to satisfy the asset tests. If these relief provisions are inapplicable to a particular set of circumstances involving us, we will fail to qualify as a REIT.

We intend to monitor the status of our assets and our future acquisition of assets to ensure that we comply with those requirements, but we cannot assure you that we will be successful in this effort. No independent appraisals will be obtained to support our estimates of and conclusions as to the value of our assets and securities, or in many cases, the real estate collateral for the mortgage loans that support our MBS. Moreover, the values of some assets may not be susceptible to a precise determination, and values are subject to change in the future. Furthermore, the proper classification of an instrument as debt or equity for U.S. federal income tax purposes may be uncertain in some circumstances, which could affect the application of the REIT asset requirements. As a result, no assurance can be given that the IRS will not contend that our ownership of securities and other assets violates one or more of the asset tests applicable to REITs.

Distribution Requirements

Each taxable year, we must distribute dividends, other than capital gain dividends and deemed distributions of retained capital gain, to our stockholders in an aggregate amount at least equal to:

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

We must make such distributions in the taxable year to which they relate, or in the following taxable year if either (i) we declare the distribution before we timely file our U.S. federal income tax return for the year and pay the distribution on or before the first regular dividend payment date after such declaration or (ii) we declare the distribution in October, November or December of the taxable year, payable to stockholders of record on a specified day in any such month, and we actually pay the dividend before the end of January of the following year. The distributions under clause (i) are taxable to the stockholders in the year in which paid, and the distributions in clause (ii) are treated as paid on December 31 of the prior taxable year to the extent of undistributed earnings and profits as of December 31 of the prior taxable year. In both instances, these distributions relate to our prior taxable year for purposes of the 90% distribution requirement.

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

We will pay U.S. federal income tax on taxable income, including net capital gain, that we do not distribute to stockholders. Furthermore, if we fail to distribute during a calendar year, or by the end of January following the calendar year in the case of distributions with declaration and record dates falling in the last three months of the calendar year, at least the sum of:

- 85% of our REIT ordinary income for such year,
- 95% of our REIT capital gain net income for such year, and
- any undistributed taxable income from prior periods,

we will incur a 4% nondeductible excise tax on the excess of such required distribution over the sum of (x) the amounts actually distributed (taking into account excess distributions from prior years) and (y) the amounts of income retained on which we have paid corporate income tax.

We may elect to retain and pay income tax on the net long term capital gain we recognize in a taxable year. See “-Taxation of U.S. Holders-Taxation of Taxable U.S. Holders on Distributions on Our Capital Stock.” If we so elect, we will be treated as having distributed any such retained amount for purposes of the REIT distribution requirements and the 4% nondeductible excise tax described above. We intend to make timely distributions sufficient to satisfy the annual distribution requirements and to avoid corporate income tax and the 4% nondeductible excise tax.

It is possible that, from time to time, we may experience timing differences between the actual receipt of cash, including distributions from our subsidiaries, and actual payment of deductible expenses and the inclusion of that income and deduction of such expenses in arriving at our REIT taxable income. Possible examples of those timing differences include the following:

- Because we may deduct capital losses only to the extent of our capital gains, we may have taxable income that exceeds our economic income.
- We will recognize taxable income in advance of the related cash flow with respect to our investments that are deemed to have original issue discount, such as many of our CMBS. We generally must accrue original issue discount based on a constant yield method that takes into account projected prepayments but that defers taking into account credit losses until they are actually incurred. We may be required to recognize such income when it is accrued in our financial statements, if earlier.
- Our operating partnership and certain other subsidiaries have elected to mark their securities to market under Section 475(f) of the Code. As a result, we will recognize income each year without any corresponding cash (unless the asset is actually sold during the year).
- If we acquire distressed loans at a discount and then significantly modify those loans, we would recognize gain, without the receipt of any cash, on the resulting deemed exchange equal to the difference between the adjusted issue price of the modified loan (which will generally be the face amount of the modified loan) and our adjusted tax basis in the original loan.

- We may acquire investments that are treated as having “market discount” for U.S. federal income tax purposes, because the investments are debt instruments that we acquire for an amount less than their principal amount. As a result of our subsidiaries’ elections under Section 475(f) of the Code, we will be required to include market discount in income currently, even if no cash is received. The recognition of market discount results in an acceleration of the recognition of taxable income to periods prior to the receipt of the related economic income. Further, to the extent that such an investment does not fully amortize according to its terms, we may never receive the economic income attributable to previously recognized market discount.
- In addition, because our foreign TRS will distribute income but not losses to us, we could have REIT taxable income that cannot be offset by losses at the TRS level, resulting in REIT taxable income that must be distributed to stockholders in excess of economic income.
- We may engage in foreclosures or other transactions that result in the conversion of our non-performing residential or commercial mortgage loans to real property. Such transactions could also give rise to taxable income without a corresponding receipt of cash.

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

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

Determination of our REIT taxable income involves the application of highly technical and complex Code provisions for which only limited judicial and administrative authorities exist. If the IRS disagrees with our determination, it could affect our satisfaction of the distribution requirements. Under certain circumstances, we may be able to correct a failure to meet the distribution requirement for a year by paying “deficiency dividends” to our stockholders in a later year. We may include such deficiency dividends in our deduction for dividends paid for the earlier year. Although we may be able to avoid income tax on amounts distributed as deficiency dividends, we will be required to pay interest and may be required to pay a penalty to the IRS based upon the amount of any deduction we take for deficiency dividends.

Recordkeeping Requirements

We must maintain certain records in order to maintain our qualification as a REIT. In addition, to avoid a monetary penalty, we must request on an annual basis information from our stockholders designed to disclose the actual ownership of our outstanding stock. We believe we have complied, and intend to continue to comply with these requirements.

Failure to Qualify

If we fail to satisfy one or more requirements for REIT qualification, other than the gross income tests and the asset tests, we could avoid disqualification if our failure is due to reasonable cause and not to willful neglect, and we pay a penalty of \$50,000 for each such failure. In addition, there are relief provisions for a failure of the gross income tests and asset tests, as described in “-Gross Income Tests” and “-Asset Tests.”

If we fail to qualify as a REIT in any taxable year, and no relief provision applies, we would be subject to U.S. federal income tax, including any applicable alternative minimum tax on our taxable income at regular corporate rates. Further, if we fail to qualify as a REIT, we might need to borrow money or sell assets in order to pay any resulting tax. Our payment of income tax would decrease the amount of our income available for distribution to our stockholders. In calculating our taxable income in a year in which we fail to qualify as a REIT, we would not be able to deduct amounts paid out to stockholders. In fact, we would not be required to distribute any amounts to stockholders in that year. In such event, to the extent of our current or accumulated earnings and profits, all distributions to stockholders would be taxable as ordinary income. Subject to certain limitations of the U.S. federal income tax laws, corporate stockholders might be eligible for the dividends received deduction and stockholders taxed at individual rates might be eligible for the reduced U.S. federal income tax rate applicable to such dividends. In addition, subject to the limitations of the Code, corporate distributions may be eligible for the dividends received deduction. Our failure to qualify as a REIT could impair our ability to expand our business and raise capital, and it would adversely affect the value of our capital stock. Unless we qualified for relief under specific statutory provisions, we also would be disqualified from taxation as a REIT for the four taxable years following the year during which we ceased to qualify as a REIT. We cannot predict whether in all circumstances we would qualify for such statutory relief.

Taxation of the Operating Partnership

We hold substantially all of our assets through our operating partnership. Under the Code, a partnership generally is not subject to U.S. federal income tax, but is required to file a partnership tax information return each year. In general, the character of each partner's share of each item of income, gain, loss, deduction, credit, and tax preference is determined at the partnership level. Each partner is then allocated a distributive share of such items in accordance with the partnership agreement and is required to take such items into account in determining such partner's income. Each partner includes such amount in income for any taxable year of the partnership ending within or with the taxable year of the partner, without regard to whether the partner has received or will receive any cash distributions from the partnership. Cash distributions, if any, from a partnership to a partner generally are not taxable unless and to the extent they exceed the partner's basis in its partnership interest immediately before the distribution. Any amounts in excess of such tax basis will generally be treated as a sale or exchange of such partner's interest in the partnership.

As noted above, for purposes of the REIT income and asset tests, we are treated as receiving or holding our proportionate share of our operating partnership's income and assets, respectively. We control, and intend to continue to control, our operating partnership and intend to operate it consistently with the requirements for our qualification as a REIT.

We may issue equity compensation to our directors and employees in the form of interests in our operating partnership that do not generate a tax deduction for our operating partnership.

The discussion above assumes that our operating partnership will be treated as a "partnership" for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Generally, a domestic unincorporated entity with two or more partners is treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes unless it affirmatively elects to be treated as a corporation. However, certain "publicly traded partnerships" are treated as corporations for U.S. federal income tax purposes. We intend to comply with one or more exceptions to treatment of our operating partnership as a corporation under the publicly traded partnership rules. Failure to qualify for such an exception would prevent us from qualifying as a REIT.

Taxation of U.S. Holders

The term "U.S. holder" means a beneficial owner of our capital stock that, for U.S. federal income tax purposes, is:

- a citizen or resident of the United States;
- a corporation (including an entity treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes) created or organized under the laws of the United States, any of its States or the District of Columbia;
- an estate whose income is subject to U.S. federal income taxation regardless of its source; or
- any trust if (i) a U.S. court is able to exercise primary supervision over the administration of such trust and one or more U.S. persons have the authority to control all substantial decisions of the trust or (ii) it has a valid election in place to be treated as a U.S. person.

If a partnership, entity or arrangement treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes holds our capital stock, the U.S. federal income tax treatment of a partner in the partnership will generally depend on the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership and certain determinations made at the partner level. If you are a partner in a partnership holding our capital stock, you should consult your tax advisor regarding the consequences of the purchase, ownership and disposition of shares of our capital stock by the partnership.

Taxation of Taxable U.S. Holders on Distributions on Our Capital Stock

As long as we qualify as a REIT, a taxable U.S. holder must generally take into account as ordinary income distributions made out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits that we do not designate as capital gain dividends or retained long-term capital gain. For purposes of determining whether a distribution is made out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits, our earnings and profits will be allocated first to our preferred stock dividends, and then to our common stock dividends. A U.S. holder will not qualify for the dividends received deduction generally available to corporations.

Individuals, trusts and estates currently may deduct a portion of certain pass-through income, including ordinary REIT dividends that are not “capital gain dividends” or “qualified dividend income,” subject to certain limitations (the “pass-through deduction”). To qualify for the pass-through deduction, the shareholder receiving such dividend must hold the dividend-paying REIT shares for at least 46 days (taking into account certain special holding period rules) of the 91-day period beginning 45 days before the shares become ex-dividend, and cannot be under an obligation to make related payments with respect to a position in substantially similar or related property.

In addition, dividends paid to a U.S. Holder generally will not qualify for the federal income tax rate applicable to “qualified dividend income.” Qualified dividend income generally includes dividends paid to U.S. holders taxed at individual rates by domestic taxable C corporations and certain qualified foreign corporations. Because we are not generally subject to U.S. federal income tax on the portion of our REIT taxable income distributed to our stockholders (see “-Taxation of Our Company” above), our dividends paid to a U.S. holder generally will not be eligible for the tax rate applicable to qualified dividend income. As a result, our ordinary REIT dividends will be taxed at a higher rate than those of domestic taxable C corporations. However, the tax rate for qualified dividend income will apply to our ordinary REIT dividends (i) attributable to dividends received by us from certain non-REIT corporations (e.g., dividends from any domestic TRSs), (ii) to the extent attributable to income upon which we have paid corporate income tax (e.g., to the extent that we distribute less than 100% of our taxable income) and (iii) attributable to income in the prior taxable year from the sales of “built-in gain” property acquired by us from C corporations in carryover basis transactions (less the amount of corporate tax on such income). In general, to qualify for the reduced tax rate on qualified dividend income, a U.S. holder must hold shares of our stock for more than 60 days during the 121-day period beginning on the date that is 60 days before the date on which our capital stock become ex-dividend.

Individuals, trusts and estates whose income exceeds certain thresholds are also subject to a 3.8% Medicare tax on dividends received from us.

A U.S. holder generally will take into account distributions that we properly designate as capital gain dividends as long-term capital gain, to the extent that they do not exceed our actual net capital gain for the taxable year, without regard to the period for which the U.S. holder has held shares of our capital stock. A corporate U.S. holder may, however, be required to treat a portion of certain capital gain dividends as ordinary income.

We may elect to retain and pay income tax on the net long-term capital gain that we recognize in a taxable year. In that case, to the extent we designate such amount on a timely notice to such stockholder, a U.S. holder would be taxed on its proportionate share of our undistributed long-term capital gain. The U.S. holder would receive a credit or refund for its proportionate share of the tax we paid. The U.S. holder would increase the basis in its capital stock by the amount of its proportionate share of our undistributed long-term capital gain, minus its share of the tax we paid.

A U.S. holder will not incur tax on a distribution in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits if the distribution does not exceed the adjusted basis of the U.S. holder’s capital stock. Instead, the distribution will reduce the adjusted basis of each such share of capital stock. As stated above, for purposes of determining whether a distribution is made out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits, our earnings and profits will be allocated first to our preferred stock dividends, and then to our common stock dividends. A U.S. holder will recognize a distribution in excess of both our current and accumulated earnings and profits and the U.S. holder’s adjusted basis in his or her capital stock as long-term capital gain, or short-term capital gain if the shares of capital stock have been held for one year or less, assuming the shares are a capital asset in the hands of the U.S. holder. In addition, if we declare a distribution in October, November or December of any year that is payable to a U.S. holder of record on a specified date in any such month, such distribution, to the extent of undistributed earnings and profits as of December 31 of such year, shall be treated as both paid by us and received by the U.S. holder on December 31 of such year, provided that we actually pay the distribution during January of the following calendar year, as described in “-Distribution Requirements.”

Stockholders may not include in their individual income tax returns any of our net operating losses or capital losses. Instead, these losses are generally carried over by us for potential offset against our future income or capital gains. Such carry forwards do not reduce earnings and profits in the year of offset.

Taxable distributions from us and gain from the disposition of shares of our capital stock will not be treated as passive activity income and, therefore, a U.S. holder generally will not be able to apply any "passive activity losses," such as losses from certain types of limited partnerships in which such U.S. holder is a limited partner, against such income. In addition, taxable distributions from us and gain from the disposition of our shares of capital stock generally will be treated as investment income for purposes of the investment interest limitations. We will notify stockholders after the close of our taxable year as to the portions of the distributions attributable to that year that constitute ordinary income, return of capital, qualified dividend income and capital gain.

We may recognize phantom income, which is taxable income in excess of our economic income, in various situations, including the earlier years that we hold certain investments or in the year that we modify certain loan investments, and we may only experience an offsetting excess of economic income over our taxable income in later years, if at all. As a result, U.S. holders at times may be required to pay U.S. federal income tax on distributions taxable as dividends that economically represent a return of capital rather than a dividend. Taking into account the time value of money, this acceleration or increase of U.S. federal income tax liabilities may reduce a U.S. holder's after-tax return on his or her investment to an amount less than the after-tax return on an investment with an identical before-tax rate of return that did not generate phantom income. For example, if an investor with a 30% tax rate purchases a taxable bond with an annual interest rate of 10% on its face value, the investor's before-tax return on the investment would be 10% and the investor's after-tax return would be 7%. However, if the same investor purchased shares of our common stock at a time when the before-tax rate of return was 10%, the investor's after-tax rate of return on such common stock might be somewhat less than 7% as a result of our phantom income. In general, as the ratio of our phantom income to our total income increases, the after-tax rate of return received by a taxable U.S. holder will decrease.

To the extent that we have available net operating losses and capital losses carried forward from prior tax years, such losses may, subject to limitations, reduce the amount of distributions that must be made in order to comply with the REIT distribution requirements. See "-Taxation of Our Company" and "-Distribution Requirements." Such losses, however, are not passed through to U.S. holders and do not offset income of U.S. holders from other sources, nor do they affect the character of any distributions that are actually made by us, which are generally subject to tax in the hands of U.S. holders to the extent that we have current or accumulated earnings and profits.

Taxation of Taxable U.S. Holders on the Disposition of Our Capital Stock

In general, a U.S. holder who is not a dealer in securities must treat any gain or loss realized upon a taxable disposition of shares of our capital stock as long-term capital gain or loss if the U.S. holder has held such capital stock for more than one year and otherwise as short-term capital gain or loss. In general, a U.S. holder will realize gain or loss in an amount equal to the difference between the sum of the fair market value of any property and the amount of cash received in such disposition and the U.S. holder's adjusted tax basis. A holder's adjusted tax basis generally will equal the U.S. holder's acquisition cost, increased by the excess of net capital gains deemed distributed to the U.S. holder (discussed above) less tax deemed paid by such U.S. holder on such gains, and reduced by any returns of capital. However, a U.S. holder must treat any loss upon a sale or exchange of capital stock held by such holder for six months or less as a long-term capital loss to the extent of capital gain dividends and any other actual or deemed distributions from us that such U.S. holder treats as long term capital gain. All or a portion of any loss that a U.S. holder realizes upon a taxable disposition of our capital stock may be disallowed if the U.S. holder purchases additional shares of our capital stock (or substantially similar capital stock) within 30 days before or after the disposition.

Taxation of U.S. Holders on a Redemption of Preferred Stock

A redemption of preferred stock will be treated under Section 302 of the Code as a distribution that is taxable as dividend income (to the extent of our current or accumulated earnings and profits), unless the redemption satisfies certain tests set forth in Section 302(b) of the Code enabling the redemption to be treated as a sale of the preferred stock (in which case the redemption will be treated in the same manner as a sale described above in “-Taxation of Taxable U.S. Holders on the Disposition of Our Capital Stock”). The redemption will satisfy such tests if it (i) is “substantially disproportionate” with respect to the U.S. holder’s interest in our stock, (ii) results in a “complete termination” of the U.S. holder’s interest in all of our classes of stock or (iii) is “not essentially equivalent to a dividend” with respect to the stockholder, all within the meaning of Section 302(b) of the Code. In determining whether any of these tests have been met, stock considered to be owned by the holder by reason of certain constructive ownership rules set forth in the Code, as well as stock actually owned, generally must be taken into account. Because the determination as to whether any of the three alternative tests of Section 302(b) of the Code described above will be satisfied with respect to any particular U.S. holder of preferred stock depends upon the facts and circumstances at the time that the determination must be made, prospective investors are urged to consult their tax advisors to determine such tax treatment. If a redemption of preferred stock does not meet any of the three tests described above, the redemption proceeds will be taxable as a dividend, as described above in “-Taxation of U.S. Holders.” In that case, a U.S. holder’s adjusted tax basis in the redeemed preferred stock will be transferred to such U.S. holder’s remaining stockholdings in us. If the U.S. holder does not retain any of our stock, such basis could be transferred to a related person that holds our stock or it may be lost.

Taxation of U.S. Holders on a Conversion of Preferred Stock

Except as provided below, (i) a U.S. holder generally will not recognize gain or loss upon the conversion of preferred stock into our common stock, and (ii) a U.S. holder’s basis and holding period in our common stock received upon conversion generally will be the same as those of the converted preferred stock (but the basis will be reduced by the portion of adjusted tax basis allocated to any fractional share exchanged for cash). Any shares of our common stock received in a conversion that are attributable to accumulated and unpaid dividends on the converted preferred stock will be treated as a distribution that is potentially taxable as a dividend. Cash received upon conversion in lieu of a fractional share generally will be treated as a payment in a taxable exchange for such fractional shares, and gain or loss will be recognized on the receipt of cash in an amount equal to the difference between the amount of cash received and the adjusted tax basis allocable to the fractional share deemed exchanged. The gain or loss will be long-term capital gain or loss if the U.S. holder has held the preferred stock for more than one year at the time of conversion. Stockholders are urged to consult with their tax advisors regarding the U.S. federal income tax consequences of any transaction by which such holder exchanges shares received on a conversion of preferred shares for cash or other property.

Capital Gains and Losses

A taxpayer generally must hold a capital asset for more than one year for gain or loss derived from its sale or exchange to be treated as long-term capital gain or loss. U.S. holders are taxed at the applicable individual rates for long-term capital gains for sales and exchanges of assets held for more than one year. The rate may also depend on whether the U.S. Holder recognizes on long-term capital gain from the sale or exchange of “Section 1250 property” (i.e., generally, depreciable real property), to the extent the gain would have been treated as ordinary income if the property were “Section 1245 property” (i.e., generally, depreciable personal property). We must classify portions of our designated capital gain dividend as either a distribution taxable to non-corporate U.S. holders at long-term capital gains rates or an unrecaptured section 1250 gain distribution taxable at the rate then applicable to unrecaptured depreciation. The IRS currently requires that distributions made to different classes of stock be composed proportionately of dividends of a particular type. Individuals, trusts and estates whose income exceeds certain thresholds are also subject to a 3.8% Medicare tax on gain from the sale of our capital stock.

With respect to distributions that we designate as capital gain dividends and any retained capital gain that we are deemed to distribute, we will designate whether such a distribution is taxable to U.S. holders taxed at applicable individual rates. Thus, the tax rate differential between capital gain and ordinary income for those taxpayers may be significant. In addition, the characterization of income as capital gain or ordinary income may affect the deductibility of capital losses, including capital losses recognized upon the disposition of our stock. A non-corporate taxpayer may deduct capital losses not offset by capital gains against its ordinary income only up to a maximum annual amount of \$3,000. A non-corporate taxpayer may carry forward unused capital losses indefinitely. A corporate taxpayer must pay tax on its net capital gain at ordinary corporate rates. A corporate taxpayer may deduct capital losses only to the extent of capital gains, with unused losses being carried back three years and forward five years.

Information Reporting Requirements and Withholding

We or the applicable withholding agent will report to U.S. holders and to the IRS the amount and the tax character of distributions we pay during each calendar year, and the amount of tax we withhold, if any. Under the backup withholding rules, a U.S. holder may be subject to backup withholding with respect to distributions unless such holder:

- is a corporation or comes within certain other exempt categories and, when required, demonstrates this fact; or
- provides a taxpayer identification number, certifies as to no loss of exemption from backup withholding, and otherwise complies with the applicable requirements of the backup withholding rules.

A U.S. holder who does not provide the applicable withholding agent with its correct taxpayer identification number also may be subject to penalties imposed by the IRS. Any amount paid as backup withholding will be creditable against the U.S. holder's income tax liability. Backup withholding is not an additional tax. Any amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules may be refunded or credited against the U.S. holder's U.S. federal income tax liability if certain required information is timely furnished to the IRS. U.S. holders are urged to consult their own tax advisors regarding application of backup withholding to them and the availability of, and procedure for obtaining an exemption from, backup withholding. In addition, the applicable withholding agent may be required to withhold a portion of distributions to any U.S. holders who fail to certify their U.S. status. Under the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act, or "FATCA," a U.S. withholding tax at a 30% rate will be imposed on dividends received by U.S. holders who own our capital stock through foreign accounts or foreign intermediaries if certain disclosure requirements related to U.S. accounts or ownership are not satisfied. We will not pay any additional amounts in respect of amounts withheld.

Taxation of Tax-Exempt Holders of Our Stock

Tax-exempt entities, including qualified employee pension and profit sharing trusts and individual retirement accounts, are generally exempt from U.S. federal income taxation. However, they are subject to taxation on their unrelated business taxable income, or "UBTI." While many investments in real estate generate UBTI, the IRS has issued a ruling that dividend distributions from a REIT to an exempt employee pension trust do not constitute UBTI. Based on that ruling, amounts that we distribute to tax-exempt stockholders generally should not constitute UBTI so long as shares of our stock are not otherwise used in an unrelated trade or business. However, if a tax-exempt stockholder were to finance its investment in our stock with debt, a portion of the income that it receives from us would constitute UBTI pursuant to the "debt-financed property" rules.

Although REIT dividends that are attributable to excess inclusion income would constitute UBTI in the hands of most tax-exempt stockholders, we will not generate excess inclusion income for our stockholders. Specifically, to the extent that we form, purchase or hold any equity interest in taxable mortgage pools or REMIC residual interests, any excess inclusion income generated by such interest will be blocked by our existing TRS or a future TRS.

Tax-exempt stockholders that are social clubs, voluntary employee benefit associations, supplemental unemployment benefit trusts and qualified group legal services plans, exempt from taxation under special provisions of the U.S. federal income tax laws, are subject to different UBTI rules, which generally will require them to characterize distributions that they receive from us as UBTI.

In certain circumstances, a qualified employee pension trust or profit sharing trust that owns more than 10% of our stock could be required to treat a percentage of the dividends that it receives from us as UBTI if we are a “pension-held REIT.” We will not be a pension-held REIT unless either (a) one pension trust owns more than 25% of the value of our capital stock or (b) a group of pension trusts individually holding more than 10% of our capital stock collectively own more than 50% of the value of our capital stock. However, the restrictions on ownership and transfer of our capital stock are designed to, among other things, prevent a tax-exempt entity from owning more than 10% of the value of our capital stock, thus making it unlikely that we will become a pension-held REIT.

Taxation of Non-U.S. Holders

The term “non-U.S. holder” means a beneficial owner of our capital stock that is not a U.S. holder or a partnership (or an entity or arrangement treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes). The rules governing U.S. federal income taxation of nonresident alien individuals, foreign corporations, foreign partnerships and other foreign holders are complex. This section is only a summary of such rules. We urge non-U.S. holders to consult their tax advisors to determine the impact of U.S. federal, state and local income tax laws on ownership of our capital stock, including any reporting requirements.

The portion of distributions received by non-U.S. holders payable out of our earnings and profits that are not attributable to gains from sales or exchanges of “United States real property interests” (as defined below) and which are not effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business of the non-U.S. holder will generally be subject to U.S. federal withholding tax at the rate of 30%, unless reduced or eliminated by an applicable income tax treaty. Under some treaties, however, lower rates generally applicable to dividends do not apply to dividends from REITs. If a distribution is treated as effectively connected with the non-U.S. holder’s conduct of a U.S. trade or business, the distribution will not incur the 30% withholding tax, but the non-U.S. holder generally will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on the distribution at graduated rates, in the same manner as U.S. holders are taxed on distributions, and also may be subject to the 30% branch profits tax in the case of a corporate non-U.S. holder. In general, non-U.S. holders will not be considered to be engaged in a U.S. trade or business solely as a result of their ownership of our capital stock. It is expected that the applicable withholding agent will withhold U.S. income tax at the rate of 30% on the gross amount of any distribution that we do not designate as a capital gain distribution or retained capital gain and is paid to a non-U.S. holder unless either:

- a lower treaty rate applies and the non-U.S. holder files with the applicable withholding agent an IRS Form W-8BEN or W-8BEN-E evidencing eligibility for that reduced rate, or
- the non-U.S. holder files with the applicable withholding agent an IRS Form W-8ECI claiming that the distribution is effectively connected income.

Capital gain dividends received or deemed received by a non-U.S. holder from us that are not attributable to gain from our sale or exchange of “United States real property interests,” as defined below, are generally not subject to U.S. federal income or withholding tax, unless either (1) the non-U.S. holder’s investment in our capital stock is effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business conducted by such non-U.S. holder (in which case the non-U.S. holder will be subject to the same treatment as U.S. holders with respect to such gain) or (2) the non-U.S. holder is a nonresident alien individual who was present in the U.S. for 183 days or more during the taxable year and has a “tax home” in the U.S. (in which case the non-U.S. holder will be subject to a 30% tax on the individual’s net capital gain for the year).

A non-U.S. holder will not incur tax on a distribution on shares of our capital stock in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits if the excess portion of the distribution does not exceed the adjusted tax basis of its capital stock. Instead, the excess portion of the distribution will reduce such non-U.S. holder’s adjusted tax basis of its capital stock. A non-U.S. holder will be subject to tax on a distribution that exceeds both our current and accumulated earnings and profits and the adjusted basis of its capital stock, if the non-U.S. holder otherwise would be subject to tax on gain from the sale or disposition of its shares of our capital stock, as described below. Because we generally cannot determine at the time we make a distribution whether the distribution will exceed our current and accumulated earnings and profits, it is expected that the applicable withholding agent normally will withhold tax on the entire amount of any distribution at the same rate applicable to withholding on a dividend. However, a non-U.S. holder may obtain a refund of amounts that the applicable withholding agent withheld if we later determine that a distribution in fact exceeded our current and accumulated earnings and profits.

Under FATCA, U.S. withholding tax at a 30% rate will be imposed on dividends paid on our capital stock received by non-U.S. holders or U.S. holders who own our capital stock through foreign accounts or foreign intermediaries if certain disclosure requirements related to U.S. accounts or ownership are not satisfied. If payment of withholding taxes is required, non-U.S. holders that are otherwise eligible for an exemption from, or reduction of, U.S. withholding taxes with respect of such dividends and proceeds will be required to seek a refund from the IRS to obtain the benefit of such exemption or reduction. We will not pay any additional amounts in respect of amounts withheld.

For any year in which we qualify as a REIT, a non-U.S. holder may incur tax on distributions that are attributable to gain from our sale or exchange of "United States real property interests" under special provisions of the U.S. federal income tax laws known as the "Foreign Investment in Real Property Tax Act of 1980," or FIRPTA. The term "United States real property interests" includes interests in real property and shares in corporations at least 50% of whose assets consist of interests in real property. The term "United States real property interests" generally does not include mortgage loans or mortgage-backed securities. As a result, we do not anticipate that we will generate material amounts of gain that would be subject to FIRPTA. Under the FIRPTA rules, subject to exceptions discussed below, a non-U.S. holder is taxed on distributions attributable to gain from sales of United States real property interests as if the gain were effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business of the non-U.S. holder. A non-U.S. holder thus would be taxed on such a distribution at the normal capital gain rates applicable to U.S. holders, subject to applicable alternative minimum tax and a special alternative minimum tax in the case of a nonresident alien individual. A non-U.S. corporate holder not entitled to treaty relief or exemption also may be subject to the 30% branch profits tax on such a distribution. Unless a non-U.S. holder qualifies for the exception described in the next paragraph, the applicable withholding agent must withhold 21% of any such distribution that we could designate as a capital gain dividend. A non-U.S. holder may receive a credit against such holder's tax liability for the amount withheld.

Capital gain distributions on shares of our capital stock that are attributable to our sale of real property will be treated as ordinary dividends, rather than as gain from the sale of a United States real property interest, as long as (i) (a) the applicable class of our capital stock is "regularly traded" on an established securities market in the United States and (b) the non-U.S. holder does not own more than 10% of the applicable class of our capital stock during the one-year period preceding the distribution date or (ii) the non-U.S. holder was treated as a "qualified shareholder" or "qualified foreign pension fund," each as defined below.

As a result, non-U.S. holders generally would be subject to withholding tax on such capital gain distributions in the same manner as they are subject to withholding tax on ordinary dividends. We believe our common stock, our Series A Preferred Stock, our Series B Preferred Stock, our Series C Preferred Stock and our Series D Preferred Stock currently are treated as being regularly traded on an established securities market in the United States. If the applicable class of our capital stock is not regularly traded on an established securities market in the United States or the non-U.S. holder owned more than 10% of the applicable class of our capital stock at any time during the one-year period prior to the distribution, capital gain distributions that are attributable to our sale of real property generally would be subject to tax under FIRPTA. Moreover, if a non-U.S. holder disposes of our capital stock during the 30-day period preceding a dividend payment, and such non-U.S. holder (or a person related to such non-U.S. holder) acquires or enters into a contract or option to acquire shares of our capital stock within 61 days of the 1st day of the 30 day period described above, and any portion of such dividend payment would, but for the disposition, be treated as a United States real property interest capital gain to such non-U.S. holder, then such non-U.S. holder will be treated as having United States real property interest capital gain in an amount that, but for the disposition, would have been treated as United States real property interest capital gain.

A non-U.S. holder generally will not incur tax under FIRPTA with respect to gain realized upon a disposition of shares of our capital stock as long as we are not a United States real property holding corporation during a specified testing period. If at least 50% of a REIT's assets are United States real property interests, then the REIT will be a United States real property holding corporation. We do not anticipate that we will be a United States real property holding corporation based on our investment strategy. In the unlikely event that at least 50% of the assets we hold were determined to be United States real property interests, gains from the sale of shares of our capital stock by a non-U.S. holder could be subject to a FIRPTA tax. However, even if that event were to occur, a non-U.S. holder generally would not incur tax under FIRPTA on gain from the sale of shares of our capital stock if we were a "domestically controlled qualified investment entity." A domestically controlled qualified investment entity includes a REIT in which, at all times during a specified testing period, less than 50% in value of its stock are held directly or indirectly by non-U.S. persons. We believe that we likely are a domestically controlled qualified investment entity, and that a sale of shares of our capital stock would not be subject to taxation under FIRPTA. However, we do not intend to maintain records to determine whether we are a domestically controlled qualified investment entity for this purpose and no assurance can be given that we are or will remain a domestically controlled qualified investment entity.

If the applicable class of our capital stock is regularly traded on an established securities market in the United States, an additional exception to the tax under FIRPTA on gain from stock sales will be available, even if we do not qualify as a domestically controlled qualified investment entity at the time the non-U.S. holder sells shares of our capital stock. Under that exception, the gain from such a sale by such a non-U.S. holder will not be subject to tax under FIRPTA if:

- the applicable class of our capital stock is considered regularly traded under applicable U.S. Treasury regulations on an established securities market, such as the NYSE; and
- the non-U.S. holder owned, actually or constructively, 10% or less of the applicable class of our capital stock at all times during a specified testing period.

As noted above, we believe our common stock, our Series A Preferred Stock, our Series B Preferred Stock, our Series C Preferred Stock and our Series D Preferred Stock currently are treated as being regularly traded on an established securities market. If the gain on the sale of shares of our capital stock were taxed under FIRPTA, a non-U.S. holder would be taxed on that gain in the same manner as U.S. holders, subject to applicable alternative minimum tax and a special alternative minimum tax in the case of nonresident alien individuals. In such case, under FIRPTA, the purchaser of capital stock may be required to withhold 15% of the purchase price and remit this amount to the IRS.

Backup withholding will generally not apply to payments of dividends made by us or our paying agents, in their capacities as such, to a non-U.S. holder provided that the non-U.S. holder furnishes to the applicable withholding agent the required certification as to its non-U.S. status, such as providing a valid IRS Form W-8BEN, W-8BEN-E or W-8ECI, or certain other requirements are met. Notwithstanding the foregoing, backup withholding may apply if the applicable withholding agent has actual knowledge, or reason to know, that the holder is a U.S. person that is not an exempt recipient. Payments of the net proceeds from a disposition or a redemption effected outside the United States by a non-U.S. holder made by or through a foreign office of a broker generally will not be subject to information reporting or backup withholding. However, information reporting (but not backup withholding) generally will apply to such a payment if the broker has certain connections with the U.S. unless the broker has documentary evidence in its records that the beneficial owner is a non-U.S. holder and specified conditions are met or an exemption is otherwise established. Payment of the net proceeds from a disposition by a non-U.S. holder of capital stock made by or through the U.S. office of a broker is generally subject to information reporting and backup withholding unless the non-U.S. holder certifies under penalties of perjury that it is not a U.S. person and satisfies certain other requirements, or otherwise establishes an exemption from information reporting and backup withholding.

Backup withholding is not an additional tax. Any amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules may be refunded or credited against the non-U.S. holder's U.S. federal income tax liability if certain required information is timely furnished to the IRS. Non-U.S. holders are urged to consult their own tax advisors regarding application of backup withholding to them and the availability of, and procedure for obtaining an exemption from, backup withholding.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Conversion of Preferred Stock

The conversion of our preferred stock into our common stock may be a taxable exchange for a non-U.S. holder if our preferred stock constitutes a “United States real property interest.” Even if our preferred stock constitutes a “United States real property interest,” if our common stock also constitutes a “United States real property interest,” a non-U.S. holder generally would not recognize gain or loss upon a conversion of preferred stock into our common stock so long as certain FIRPTA-related reporting requirements are satisfied. If our preferred stock constitutes a “United States real property interest” and such requirements are not satisfied, however, a conversion will be treated as a taxable exchange of preferred stock for our common stock. Such a deemed taxable exchange will be subject to tax under FIRPTA at the rate of tax, including any applicable capital gains rates, that would apply to a U.S. holder of the same type (e.g., a corporate or a non-corporate stockholder, as the case may be) on the excess, if any, of the fair market value of such non-U.S. holder’s common stock received over such non-U.S. holder’s adjusted basis in its preferred stock. Collection of such tax will be enforced by a refundable withholding tax at a rate of 15% of the value of the common stock.

Any common shares received in a conversion that are attributable to accumulated and unpaid dividends on the converted preferred shares will be treated as a distribution that is potentially taxable as a dividend as described under "—Taxation of Non-U.S. Holders" above. Cash received upon conversion in lieu of a fractional common share generally will be treated as a payment in a taxable exchange for such fractional share as described under "—Taxation of Non-U.S. Holders" above.

Non-U.S. holders are urged to consult with their tax advisors regarding the U.S. federal income tax consequences of any transaction by which such non-U.S. holder exchanges shares of our common stock received on a conversion of preferred stock for cash or other property.

Redemption of Preferred Stock

As described under "—Taxation of U.S. Holders on a Redemption of Preferred Stock" above, a redemption that satisfies certain tests set forth in Section 302(b) of the Code will be treated as a taxable exchange and a redemption that does not satisfy certain tests under Section 302(b) of the Code will be treated as a distribution that is taxable as dividend income (to the extent of our current or accumulated earnings and profits). For a more detailed discussion of the treatment of a redemption of preferred stock, see "—Taxation of U.S. Holders on a Redemption of Preferred Stock."

Legislative or Other Actions Affecting REITs

The present U.S. federal income tax treatment of REITs may be modified, possibly with retroactive effect, by legislative, judicial, or administrative action at any time. The REIT rules are constantly under review by persons involved in the legislative process and by the IRS and the U.S. Treasury which may result in statutory changes as well as revisions to regulations and interpretations. In addition, several proposals have been made that would make substantial changes to the federal income tax laws generally. We cannot predict whether any of these changes will become law. We cannot predict the long-term effect of any future tax law changes on REITs and their stockholders. Prospective investors are urged to consult with their tax advisors regarding the effect of potential changes to the federal tax laws on an investment in our capital stock.

State, Local and Foreign Taxes

We and/or our subsidiaries and stockholders may be subject to taxation by various states, localities or foreign jurisdictions, including those in which we, our subsidiaries, or our stockholders transact business, own property or reside. We or our subsidiaries may derive income or own properties located in numerous jurisdictions and may be required to file tax returns in some or all of those jurisdictions. The state, local and foreign tax treatment of us and our stockholders may differ from the U.S. federal income tax treatment of us and our stockholders described above. Consequently, stockholders should consult their tax advisors regarding the application and effect of state, local and foreign income and other tax laws upon an investment in our securities.

SELLING SECURITY HOLDERS

Information about selling security holders and the terms of the securities offered for resale, where applicable, will be set forth in a prospectus supplement, in a post-effective amendment, or in filings we make with the SEC that are incorporated into this prospectus by reference. Selling security holders may be deemed to be underwriters in connection with the securities they resell, and any profits on the resale may be deemed to be underwriting discounts and commissions under the Securities Act. The selling security holders will receive all the proceeds from the resale of our securities. We will not receive any proceeds from resales by selling security holders..

LEGAL MATTERS

Certain legal matters in connection with offerings of securities hereunder will be passed upon for us by Vinson & Elkins L.L.P., and with respect to U.S. federal income tax matters, Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP.

EXPERTS

The financial statements and management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting (which is included in Management's Annual Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting) incorporated in this Prospectus by reference to the Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2024 have been so incorporated in reliance on the report of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, given on the authority of said firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

The financial statements of LendSure Mortgage Corp. incorporated in this Prospectus by reference to Exhibits 99.1 and 99.2 of the Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2024 have been so incorporated in reliance on the report of Richey May & Co., an independent registered public accounting firm, given on the authority of said firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

The financial statements of Longbridge incorporated in this Prospectus by reference to Exhibit 99.5 of the Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2024 have been so incorporated in reliance on the report of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, given on the authority of said firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

This prospectus is only part of a registration statement on Form S-3 we have filed with the SEC under the Securities Act and therefore omits some of the information contained in the registration statement. We have also filed exhibits and schedules to the registration statement which are excluded from this prospectus, and you should refer to the applicable exhibit or schedule for a complete description of any statement referring to any contract or other document. You may inspect or obtain a copy of the registration statement, including the exhibits and schedules, as described in the next paragraph.

Our SEC filings, including our registration statement, are available to you on the SEC's website at www.sec.gov. In addition, copies of our SEC filings are available free of charge through our website (www.ellingtonfinancial.com) as soon as reasonably practicable after filing with the SEC. The information contained on, or otherwise accessible through our website is not part of, or incorporated by reference into, this prospectus.

DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

We have elected to “incorporate by reference” certain information into this prospectus. By incorporating by reference, we are disclosing important information to you by referring you to documents we have filed separately with the SEC. These documents contain important information about us, our business and our finances. Any information contained in this prospectus or in any document incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus will be deemed to have been modified or superseded to the extent that a statement contained in this prospectus, in any other document we subsequently file with the SEC that also is incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus or in any applicable prospectus supplement modifies or supersedes the original statement. The following documents previously filed with the SEC pursuant to the Exchange Act are incorporated by reference into this prospectus and registration statement of which this prospectus is a part except for any document or portion thereof deemed to be “furnished” and not filed in accordance with SEC rules:

- Our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended [December 31, 2024](#);
- Our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the quarters ended [March 31, 2025](#), [June 30, 2025](#) and [September 30, 2025](#);
- Our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed on [January 8, 2025](#), [February 11, 2025](#), [March 7, 2025](#), [March 11, 2025](#), [April 3, 2025](#), [May 7, 2025](#) (except with respect to Items 2.02 and 7.01 and the associated Exhibit 99.1), [May 29, 2025](#) (except with respect to Item 7.01 and the associated Exhibit 99.1), [June 10, 2025](#), [July 8, 2025](#), [August 7, 2025](#) (except with respect to Items 2.02 and Item 7.01 and the associated Exhibit 99.1), [September 8, 2025](#), [September 29, 2025](#), [October 1, 2025](#), [October 6, 2025](#), [October 7, 2025](#), [November 10, 2025](#) and [December 4, 2025](#);
- The information specifically incorporated by reference into our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2024 from our [Definitive Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A filed with the SEC on April 18, 2025](#);
- The description of our common stock incorporated by reference in our registration statement on [Form 8-A/A filed on March 4, 2019](#) under the Exchange Act, including any amendment or report filed for the purpose of updating such description;
- The description of our Series A Preferred Stock in our Registration Statement on [Form 8-A filed on October 21, 2019](#) under the Exchange Act, including any amendment or report filed for the purpose of updating such description;
- The description of our Series B Preferred Stock in our Registration Statement on [Form 8-A filed on December 10, 2021](#) under the Exchange Act, including any amendment or report filed for the purpose of updating such description;
- The description of our Series C Preferred Stock in our Registration Statement on [Form 8-A filed on February 3, 2023](#) under the Exchange Act, including any amendment or report filed for the purpose of updating such description; and
- The description of our Series D Preferred Stock in our Registration Statement on [Form 8-A filed on December 13, 2023](#) under the Exchange Act, including any amendment or report filed for the purpose of updating such description.

If any statement in this prospectus is inconsistent with a statement in one of the incorporated documents referred to above, then the statement in the incorporated document will be deemed to have been superseded by the statement in this prospectus.

We also incorporate by reference any of the following documents that we file with the SEC after the date of the initial registration statement through the date the offering of securities under this registration statement is terminated (other than any portion of these documents that is furnished or otherwise deemed not to be filed):

- Reports filed under Section 13(a) and (c) of the Exchange Act;
- Definitive proxy or information statements filed under Section 14 of the Exchange Act in connection with any subsequent stockholders’ meeting; and
- Any reports filed under Section 15(d) of the Exchange Act.

You may obtain copies of any of these filings at no cost by contacting us as described below, or through contacting the SEC or accessing its website as described under the heading "Where You Can Find More Information." To obtain a free copy of any of the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus (other than exhibits, unless they are specifically incorporated by reference in the documents) please contact us in writing or by phone at:

Ellington Financial Inc.
53 Forest Avenue
Old Greenwich, CT 06870
(203) 409-3575

Ellington Financial

8,775,000

Shares of Common Stock

Prospectus Supplement

Joint Book-Running Managers

Morgan Stanley

Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC

January 26, 2026

Calculation of Filing Fee Tables

S-3

Ellington Financial Inc.

Table 1: Newly Registered and Carry Forward Securities

Not Applicable

Security Type	Security Class Title	Fee Calculation or Carry Forward Rule	Amount Registered	Proposed Maximum Offering Price Per Unit	Maximum Aggregate Offering Price	Fee Rate	Amount of Registration Fee	Carry Forward Form Type	Carry Forward File Number	Carry Forward Initial Effective Date	Filing Fee Previously Paid in Connection with Unsold Securities to be Carried Forward
Newly Registered Securities											
Fees to be Paid	1 Equity	Common Stock, par value \$ 0.001 per share	457(o)		\$136,231,875.00	0.0001381	\$18,813.63				
Fees Previously Paid											
Carry Forward Securities											
Carry Forward Securities					\$						\$
		Total Offering Amounts:			\$136,231,875.00		\$18,813.63				
		Total Fees Previously Paid:					\$ 0.00				
		Total Fee Offsets:					\$ 0.00				
		Net Fee Due:					\$18,813.63				

Offering Note

- 1 The registration fee is calculated in accordance with Rule 457(o) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "Securities Act"), based on the proposed maximum aggregate offering price, and Rule 457(r) under the Securities Act. In accordance with Rules 456(b) and 457(r) under the Securities Act, the registrant initially deferred payment of all of the registration fee for Registration Statement No. 333-292424. Includes the potential issuance of 1,316,250 shares of Common Stock pursuant to the exercise in full of the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares.

Table 2: Fee Offset Claims and Sources

Not Applicable

Registrant or Filer Name	Form or Filing Type	File Number	Initial Filing Date	Filing Date	Fee Offset Claimed	Security Type Associated with Fee Offset Claimed	Security Title Associated with Fee Offset Claimed	Unsold Securities Associated with Fee Offset Claimed	Unsold Aggregate Offering Amount Associated with Fee Offset Claimed	Fee Paid with Fee Offset Source
Rules 457(b) and 0-11(a)(2)										
Fee Offset Claims	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Fee Offset Sources	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rule 457(p)										
Fee Offset Claims	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Fee Offset Sources	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 3: Combined Prospectuses

Not Applicable

Security Type	Security Class Title	Amount of Securities Previously Registered	Maximum Aggregate Offering Price of Securities Previously Registered	Form Type	File Number	Initial Effective Date
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Narrative Disclosure

The maximum aggregate offering price of the securities to which the prospectus relates is \$136,231,875.00. The prospectus is a final prospectus for the related offering.