

Proxy Voting

As of December 1, 2023



Background

An investment adviser is required to adopt and implement policies and procedures that we believe are reasonably designed to ensure that proxies are voted in the best interest of clients, in accordance with fiduciary duties and Rule 206(4)-6 under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 (“Advisers Act”). The authority to vote the proxies of our clients is established through investment management agreements or comparable documents. In addition to SEC requirements governing advisers, long-standing fiduciary standards and responsibilities have been established for ERISA accounts. Unless a manager of ERISA assets has been expressly precluded from voting proxies, the Department of Labor has determined that the responsibility for these votes lies with the investment manager.

Policy

As a fixed income only manager, the occasion to vote proxies is very rare, for instance, when fixed income securities are converted into equity by their terms or in connection with a bankruptcy or corporate workout. However, the Firm has adopted and implemented policies and procedures that we believe are reasonably designed to ensure that proxies are voted in the best interest of clients, in accordance with our fiduciary duties and Rule 206(4)-6 under the Advisers Act. In addition to SEC requirements governing advisers, our proxy voting policies reflect the long-standing fiduciary standards and responsibilities for ERISA accounts. Unless a manager of ERISA assets has been expressly precluded from voting proxies, the Department of Labor has determined that the responsibility for these votes lies with the investment manager.

While the guidelines included in the procedures are intended to provide a benchmark for voting standards, each vote is ultimately cast on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the Firm’s contractual obligations to our clients and all other relevant facts and circumstances at the time of the vote (such that these guidelines may be overridden to the extent the Firm deems appropriate).

In exercising its voting authority, Western Asset will not consult or enter into agreements with officers, directors or employees of Franklin Resources (Franklin Resources includes Franklin Resources, Inc. and organizations operating as Franklin Resources) or any of its affiliates (other than Western Asset affiliated companies) regarding the voting of any securities owned by its clients.

Procedures

Responsibility and Oversight

The Legal & Compliance Group is responsible for administering and overseeing the proxy voting process. The gathering of proxies is coordinated through the Corporate Actions team of the Investment Operations Group (“Corporate Actions”). Research analysts and portfolio managers are responsible for determining appropriate voting positions on each proxy utilizing any applicable guidelines contained in these procedures.

Client Authority

The Investment Management Agreement for each client is reviewed at account start-up for proxy voting instructions. If an agreement is silent on proxy voting, but contains an overall delegation of discretionary authority or if the account represents assets of an ERISA plan, Western Asset will assume responsibility for proxy voting. The Portfolio Compliance Group maintains a matrix of proxy voting authority.

Proxy Gathering

Registered owners of record, client custodians, client banks and trustees (“Proxy Recipients”) that receive proxy materials on behalf of clients should forward them to Corporate Actions. Proxy Recipients for new clients (or, if Western Asset becomes aware that the applicable Proxy Recipient for an existing client has changed, the Proxy Recipient for the existing client) are notified at start-up of appropriate routing to Corporate Actions of proxy materials received and reminded of their responsibility to forward all proxy materials on a timely basis. If Western Asset personnel other than Corporate Actions receive proxy materials, they should promptly forward the materials to Corporate Actions.

Proxy Voting

Once proxy materials are received by Corporate Actions, they are forwarded to the Portfolio Compliance Group for coordination and the following actions:

- a. Proxies are reviewed to determine accounts impacted.
- b. Impacted accounts are checked to confirm Western Asset voting authority.
- c. Where appropriate, the Regulatory Affairs Group reviews the issues presented to determine any material conflicts of interest. (see Conflicts of Interest section of these procedures for further information on determining material conflicts of interest.)
- d. If a material conflict of interest exists, (i) to the extent reasonably practicable and permitted by applicable law, the client is promptly notified, the conflict is disclosed and Western Asset obtains the client’s proxy voting instructions, and (ii) to the extent that it is not

reasonably practicable or permitted by applicable law to notify the client and obtain such instructions (e.g., the client is a mutual fund or other commingled vehicle or is an ERISA plan client), Western Asset seeks voting instructions from an independent third party

- e. The Portfolio Compliance Group provides proxy material to the appropriate research analyst or portfolio manager to obtain their recommended vote. Research analysts and portfolio managers determine votes on a case-by-case basis taking into account the voting guidelines contained in these procedures. For avoidance of doubt, depending on the best interest of each individual client, Western Asset may vote the same proxy differently for different clients. The analyst's or portfolio manager's basis for their decision is documented and maintained by the Portfolio Compliance Group.
- f. Portfolio Compliance Group votes the proxy pursuant to the instructions received in (d) or (e) and returns the voted proxy as indicated in the proxy materials.

Timing

Western Asset's Legal and Compliance Department personnel act in such a manner to ensure that, absent special circumstances, the proxy gathering and proxy voting steps noted above can be completed before the applicable deadline for returning proxy votes.

Recordkeeping

Western Asset maintains records of proxies voted pursuant to Rule 204-2 of the Advisers Act and ERISA DOL Bulletin 94-2. These records include:

- a. A copy of Western Asset's proxy voting policies and procedures.
- b. Copies of proxy statements received with respect to securities in client accounts.
- c. A copy of any document created by Western Asset that was material to making a decision how to vote proxies.
- d. Each written client request for proxy voting records and Western Asset's written response to both verbal and written client requests.
- e. A proxy log including:
 1. Issuer name;
 2. Exchange ticker symbol of the issuer's shares to be voted;
 3. Committee on Uniform Securities Identification Procedures ("CUSIP") number for the shares to be voted;
 4. A brief identification of the matter voted on;
 5. Whether the matter was proposed by the issuer or by a shareholder of the issuer;
 6. Whether a vote was cast on the matter;
 7. A record of how the vote was cast;
 8. Whether the vote was cast for or against the recommendation of the issuer's management team;
 9. Funds are required to categorize their votes so that investors can focus on the topics they find important. Categories include, for example, votes related to director elections, extraordinary transactions, say-on-pay, shareholder rights and defenses, and the environment or climate, among others; and
 10. Funds are required to disclose the number of shares voted or instructed to be cast, as well as the number of shares loaned but not recalled and, therefore, not voted by the fund.

Records are maintained in an easily accessible place for a period of not less than five (5) years with the first two (2) years in Western Asset's offices.

Disclosure

Western Asset's proxy policies and procedures are described in the Firm's Form ADV Part 2A. Clients are provided with a copy of these policies and procedures upon request. In addition, clients may receive reports on how their proxies have been voted, upon request.

Conflicts of Interest

All proxies that potentially present conflicts of interest are reviewed by the Regulatory Affairs Group for a materiality assessment. Issues to be reviewed include, but are not limited to:

- a. Whether Western Asset (or, to the extent required to be considered by applicable law, its affiliates) manages assets for the company or an employee group of the company or otherwise has an interest in the company;

- b. Whether Western Asset or an officer or director of Western Asset or the applicable portfolio manager or analyst responsible for recommending the proxy vote (together, "Voting Persons") is a close relative of or has a personal or business relationship with an executive, director or person who is a candidate for director of the company or is a participant in a proxy contest; and
- c. Whether there is any other business or personal relationship where a Voting Person has a personal interest in the outcome of the matter before shareholders.

Voting Guidelines

Western Asset's substantive voting decisions are based on the particular facts and circumstances of each proxy vote and are evaluated by the designated research analyst or portfolio manager. The examples outlined below are meant as guidelines to aid in the decision-making process.

Situations can arise in which more than one Western Asset client invests in instruments of the same issuer or in which a single client may invest in instruments of the same issuer but in multiple accounts or strategies. Multiple clients or the same client in multiple accounts or strategies may have different investment objectives, investment styles, or investment professionals involved in making decisions. While there may be differences, votes are always cast in the best interests of the client and the investment objectives agreed with Western Asset. As a result, there may be circumstances where Western Asset casts different votes on behalf of different clients or on behalf of the same client with multiple accounts or strategies.

Guidelines are grouped according to the types of proposals generally presented to shareholders. Part I deals with proposals which have been approved and are recommended by a company's board of directors; Part II deals with proposals submitted by shareholders for inclusion in proxy statements; Part III addresses issues relating to voting shares of investment companies; and Part IV addresses unique considerations pertaining to foreign issuers.

I. Board Approved Proposals

The vast majority of matters presented to shareholders for a vote involve proposals made by a company itself that have been approved and recommended by its board of directors. In view of the enhanced corporate governance practices currently being implemented in public companies, Western Asset generally votes in support of decisions reached by independent boards of directors. More specific guidelines related to certain board-approved proposals are as follows:

1. Matters relating to the Board of Directors

Western Asset votes proxies for the election of the company's nominees for directors and for board-approved proposals on other matters relating to the board of directors with the following exceptions:

- a. Votes are withheld for the entire board of directors if the board does not have a majority of independent directors or the board does not have nominating, audit and compensation committees composed solely of independent directors.
- b. Votes are withheld for any nominee for director who is considered an independent director by the company and who has received compensation from the company other than for service as a director.
- c. Votes are withheld for any nominee for director who attends less than 75% of board and committee meetings without valid reasons for absences.
- d. Votes are cast on a case-by-case basis in contested elections of directors.

2. Matters relating to Executive Compensation

Western Asset generally favors compensation programs that relate executive compensation to a company's long-term performance. Votes are cast on a case-by-case basis on board-approved proposals relating to executive compensation, except as follows:

- a. Except where the firm is otherwise withholding votes for the entire board of directors, Western Asset votes for stock option plans that will result in a minimal annual dilution.
- b. Western Asset votes against stock option plans or proposals that permit replacing or repricing of underwater options.
- c. Western Asset votes against stock option plans that permit issuance of options with an exercise price below the stock's current market price.
- d. Except where the firm is otherwise withholding votes for the entire board of directors, Western Asset votes for employee stock purchase plans that limit the discount for shares purchased under the plan to no more than 15% of their market value, have an offering period of 27 months or less and result in dilution of 10% or less.

3. Matters relating to Capitalization

The Management of a company's capital structure involves a number of important issues, including cash flows, financing needs and market conditions that are unique to the circumstances of each company. As a result, Western Asset votes on a case-by-case basis on board-approved proposals involving changes to a company's capitalization except where Western Asset is otherwise withholding votes for the entire board of directors.

- a. Western Asset votes for proposals relating to the authorization of additional common stock.
- b. Western Asset votes for proposals to effect stock splits (excluding reverse stock splits).
- c. Western Asset votes for proposals authorizing share repurchase programs.

4. Matters relating to Acquisitions, Mergers, Reorganizations and Other Transactions

Western Asset votes these issues on a case-by-case basis on board-approved transactions.

5. Matters relating to Anti-Takeover Measures

Western Asset votes against board-approved proposals to adopt anti-takeover measures except as follows:

- a. Western Asset votes on a case-by-case basis on proposals to ratify or approve shareholder rights plans.
- b. Western Asset votes on a case-by-case basis on proposals to adopt fair price provisions.

6. Other Business Matters

Western Asset for board-approved proposals approving such routine business matters such as changing the company's name, ratifying the appointment of auditors and procedural matters relating to the shareholder meeting.

- a. Western Asset votes on a case-by-case basis on proposals to amend a company's charter or bylaws.
- b. Western Asset votes against authorization to transact other unidentified, substantive business at the meeting.

7. Reporting of Financially Material Information

Western Asset generally believes issuers should disclose information that is material to their business. What qualifies as "material" can vary, so votes are cast on a case-by-case basis but consistent with the overarching principle.

II. Shareholder Proposals

SEC regulations permit shareholders to submit proposals for inclusion in a company's proxy statement. These proposals generally seek to change some aspect of a company's corporate governance structure or to change some aspect of its business operations. Western Asset votes in accordance with the recommendation of the company's board of directors on all shareholder proposals, except as follows:

1. Western Asset votes for shareholder proposals to require shareholder approval of shareholder rights plans.
2. Western Asset votes for shareholder proposals that are consistent with Western Asset's proxy voting guidelines for board-approved proposals.
3. Western Asset votes on a case-by-case basis on other shareholder proposals where the firm is otherwise withholding votes for the entire board of directors.

Environmental or social issues that are the subject of a proxy vote will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Constructive proposals that seek to advance the health of the issuer and the prospect for risk-adjusted returns to Western Assets clients are viewed more favorably than proposals that advance a single issue or limit the ability of management to meet its operating objectives.

III. Voting Shares of Investment Companies

Western Asset may utilize shares of open or closed-end investment companies to implement its investment strategies. Shareholder votes for investment companies that fall within the categories listed in Parts I and II above are voted in accordance with those guidelines.

1. Western Asset votes on a case-by-case basis on proposals relating to changes in the investment objectives of an investment company taking into account the original intent of the fund and the role the fund plays in the clients' portfolios.
2. Western Asset votes on a case-by-case basis all proposals that would result in increases in expenses (e.g., proposals to adopt 12b-1 plans, alter investment advisory arrangements or approve fund mergers) taking into account comparable expenses for similar funds and the services to be provided.

IV. Voting Shares of Foreign Issuers

In the event Western Asset is required to vote on securities held in non-U.S. issuers – *i.e.* issuers that are incorporated under the laws of a foreign jurisdiction and that are not listed on a U.S. securities exchange or the NASDAQ stock market, the following guidelines are used, which are premised on the existence of a sound corporate governance and disclosure framework. These guidelines, however, may not be appropriate under some circumstances for foreign issuers and therefore apply only where applicable.

1. Western Asset votes for shareholder proposals calling for a majority of the directors to be independent of management.
2. Western Asset votes for shareholder proposals seeking to increase the independence of board nominating, audit and compensation committees.
3. Western Asset votes for shareholder proposals that implement corporate governance standards similar to those established under U.S. federal law and the listing requirements of U.S. stock exchanges, and that do not otherwise violate the laws of the jurisdiction under which the company is incorporated.
4. Western Asset votes on a case-by-case basis on proposals relating to (1) the issuance of common stock in excess of 20% of a company's outstanding common stock where shareholders do not have preemptive rights, or (2) the issuance of common stock in excess of 100% of a company's outstanding common stock where shareholders have preemptive rights.

V. Environmental, Social and Governance (“ESG”) Matters

Western Asset incorporates ESG considerations, among other relevant risks, as part of the overall process where appropriate. The Firm seeks to identify and consider material risks to the investment thesis, including material risks presented by ESG factors. While Western Asset is primarily a fixed income manager, opportunities to vote proxies are considered on the investment merits of the instruments and strategies involved.

As a general proposition, Western Asset votes to encourage disclosure of information material to their business. This principle extends to ESG matters. What qualifies as “material” can vary, so votes are cast on a case-by-case basis but consistent with the overarching principle. Western Asset recognizes that objective standards and criteria may not be available or universally agreed and that there may be different views and subjective analysis regarding factors and their significance.

Targeted environmental or social issues that are the subject of a proxy vote will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Constructive proposals that seek to advance the health of the issuer and the prospect for risk-adjusted returns to Western Assets clients are viewed more favorably than proposals that advance a single issue or limit the ability of management to meet its operating objectives.

Retirement Accounts

For accounts subject to ERISA, as well as other retirement accounts, Western Asset is presumed to have the responsibility to vote proxies for the client. The Department of Labor has issued a bulletin that states that investment managers have the responsibility to vote proxies on behalf of Retirement Accounts unless the authority to vote proxies has been specifically reserved to another named fiduciary. Furthermore, unless Western Asset is expressly precluded from voting the proxies, the Department of Labor has determined that the responsibility remains with the investment manager.

In order to comply with the Department of Labor's position, Western Asset will be presumed to have the obligation to vote proxies for its retirement accounts unless Western Asset has obtained a specific written instruction indicating that: (a) the right to vote proxies has been reserved to a named fiduciary of the client, and (b) Western Asset is precluded from voting proxies on behalf of the client. If Western Asset does not receive such an instruction, Western Asset will be responsible for voting proxies in the best interests of the retirement account client and in accordance with any proxy voting guidelines provided by the client.

Disclosure

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