

## RESPONSIBILITY OF THE INVESTMENT MANAGERS TO VOTE PROXIES

Franklin Equity Group, a separate investment group within Franklin Templeton, comprised of investment personnel from the SEC-registered investment advisers listed on [Appendix A](#) (hereinafter individually an "Investment Manager" and collectively the "Investment Managers") have delegated the administrative duties with respect to voting proxies for securities to the Franklin Templeton Proxy Group. Proxy duties consist of disseminating proxy materials and analyses of issuers whose stock is owned by any client (including both investment companies and any separate accounts managed by the Investment Managers) that has either delegated proxy voting administrative responsibility to the Investment Managers or has asked for information and/or recommendations on the issues to be voted. The Investment Managers will inform advisory clients that have not delegated the voting responsibility but that have requested voting advice about the Investment Managers' views on such proxy votes. The Proxy Group also provides these services to other advisory affiliates of the Investment Managers.

The Proxy Group will process proxy votes on behalf of, and the Investment Managers vote proxies solely in the best interests of, separate account clients, the Investment Managers'-managed investment company shareholders, or shareholders of funds that have appointed Franklin Templeton International Services S.à.r.l. ("FTIS S.à.r.l.") as the Management Company, provided such funds or clients have properly delegated such responsibility in writing, or, where employee benefit plan assets subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as amended, are involved ("ERISA accounts"), in the best interests of the plan participants and beneficiaries (collectively, "Advisory Clients"), unless (i) the power to vote has been specifically retained by the named fiduciary in the documents in which the named fiduciary appointed the Investment Managers or (ii) the documents otherwise expressly prohibit the Investment Managers from voting proxies. The Investment Managers recognize that the exercise of voting rights on securities held by ERISA plans for which the Investment Managers have voting responsibility is a fiduciary duty that must be exercised with care, skill, prudence and diligence.

In certain circumstances, Advisory Clients are permitted to direct their votes in a solicitation pursuant to the Investment Management Agreement. An Advisory Client that wishes to direct its vote shall give reasonable prior written notice to the Investment Managers indicating such intention and provide written instructions directing the Investment Managers or the Proxy Group to vote regarding the solicitation. Where such prior written notice is received, the Proxy Group will vote proxies in accordance with such written notification received from the Advisory Client.

The Investment Managers have adopted and implemented Proxy Voting Policies and Procedures ("Proxy Policies") that they believe are reasonably designed to ensure that proxies are voted in the best interest of Advisory Clients in accordance with their fiduciary duties and rule 206(4)-6 under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. To the extent that the Investment Managers have a subadvisory agreement with an affiliated investment manager (the "Affiliated Subadviser") with respect to a particular Advisory Client, the Investment Managers may delegate proxy voting responsibility to the Affiliated Subadviser. The Investment Managers may also delegate proxy voting responsibility to a subadviser that is not an Affiliated Subadviser in certain limited situations as disclosed to fund shareholders (e.g., where an Investment Manager to a pooled investment vehicle has engaged a subadviser that is not an Affiliated Subadviser to manage all or a portion of the assets).

## HOW THE INVESTMENT MANAGERS VOTE PROXIES

### Proxy Services

All proxies received by the Proxy Group will be voted based upon the Investment Managers' instructions and/or policies. To assist it in analyzing proxies of equity securities, the Investment Managers subscribe to Institutional Shareholder Services Inc. ("ISS"), an unaffiliated third-party corporate governance research service that provides in-depth analyses of shareholder meeting agendas and vote recommendations. In addition, the Investment Managers subscribe to ISS's Proxy Voting Service and Vote Disclosure Service. These services include receipt of proxy ballots, custodian bank relations, account maintenance, vote execution, ballot reconciliation,

\* Rule 38a-1 under the Investment Company Act of 1940 ("1940 Act") and Rule 206(4)-7 under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 ("Advisers Act") (together the "Compliance Rule") require registered investment companies and registered investment advisers to, among other things, adopt and implement written policies and procedures reasonably designed to prevent violations of the federal securities laws ("Compliance Rule Policies and Procedures").

vote record maintenance, comprehensive reporting capabilities, and vote disclosure services. Also, the Investment Managers subscribe to Glass, Lewis & Co., LLC ("Glass Lewis"), an unaffiliated third-party analytical research firm, to receive analyses and vote recommendations on the shareholder meetings of publicly held U.S. companies, as well as a limited subscription to its international research.

In addition, the Investment Manager receives in-house voting research from Franklin Templeton's Stewardship Team (FT Stewardship). FT Stewardship provides customized research on specific corporate governance issues that is tailored to the investment manager and corporate engagement undertaken. This research may include opinions on voting decisions, however there is no obligation or inference for the Investment Manager to formally vote in line with these opinions. This research supports the independent vote decision making process and may reduce reliance on third-party advice for certain votes.

Although analyses provided by ISS, Glass Lewis, and/or another independent third-party proxy service provider (each a "Proxy Service") are thoroughly reviewed and considered in making a final voting decision, the Investment Managers do not consider recommendations from a Proxy Service or any third-party to be determinative of the Investment Managers' ultimate decision. Rather, the Investment Managers exercise their independent judgment in making voting decisions. As a matter of policy, the officers, directors and employees of the Investment Managers and the Proxy Group will not be influenced by outside sources whose interests conflict with the interests of Advisory Clients.

For ease of reference, the Proxy Policies often refer to all Advisory Clients. However, our processes and practices seek to ensure that proxy voting decisions are suitable for individual Advisory Clients. In some cases, the Investment Managers' evaluation may result in an individual Advisory Client or Investment Manager voting differently, depending upon the nature and objective of the fund or account, the composition of its portfolio, whether the Investment Manager has adopted a specialty or custom voting policy, and other factors.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

All conflicts of interest will be resolved in the best interests of the Advisory Clients. The Investment Managers are affiliates of a large, diverse financial services firm with many affiliates and makes its best efforts to mitigate conflicts of interest. However, as a general matter, the Investment Managers take the position that relationships between certain affiliates that do not use the "Franklin Templeton" name ("Independent Affiliates") and an issuer (e.g., an investment management relationship between an issuer and an Independent Affiliate) do not present a conflict of interest for an Investment Manager in voting proxies with respect to such issuer because: (i) the Investment Managers operate as an independent business unit from the Independent Affiliate business units, and (ii) informational barriers exist between the Investment Managers and the Independent Affiliate business units.

Material conflicts of interest could arise in a variety of situations, including as a result of the Investment Managers' or an affiliate's (other than an Independent Affiliate as described above): (i) material business relationship with an issuer or proponent, (ii) direct or indirect pecuniary interest in an issuer or proponent; or (iii) significant personal or family relationship with an issuer or proponent. Material conflicts of interest are identified by the Proxy Group based upon analyses of client, distributor, broker dealer, and vendor lists, information periodically gathered from directors and officers, and information derived from other sources, including public filings. The Proxy Group gathers and analyzes this information on a best-efforts basis, as much of this information is provided directly by individuals and groups other than the Proxy Group, and the Proxy Group relies on the accuracy of the information it receives from such parties.

Nonetheless, even though a potential conflict of interest between the Investment Managers or an affiliate (other than an Independent Affiliate as described above) and an issuer may exist: (1) the Investment Managers may vote in opposition to the recommendations of an issuer's management even if contrary to the recommendations of a third-party proxy voting research provider; (2) if management has made no recommendations, the Proxy Group may defer to the voting instructions of the Investment Managers; and (3) with respect to shares held by Franklin Resources, Inc. or its affiliates for their own corporate accounts, such shares may be voted without regard to these conflict procedures.

Otherwise, in situations where a material conflict of interest is identified between the Investment Managers or one of its affiliates (other than Independent Affiliates) and an issuer, the Proxy Group may vote consistent with the voting recommendation of a Proxy Service or send the proxy directly to the relevant Advisory Clients with the Investment Managers' recommendation regarding the vote for approval. To address certain affiliate conflict situations, the Investment Managers will employ pass-through voting or mirror voting when required pursuant to a fund's governing documents or applicable law.

Where the Proxy Group refers a matter to an Advisory Client, it may rely upon the instructions of a representative of the Advisory Client, such as the board of directors or trustees, a committee of the board, or an appointed delegate in the case of a U.S. registered investment company, a conducting officer in the case of a fund that has appointed FTIS S.à.r.l as its Management Company, the Independent Review Committee for Canadian investment funds, or a plan administrator in the case of an employee benefit plan. A quorum of the board of directors or trustees or of a committee of the board can be reached by a majority of members, or a majority of non-recused members. The Proxy Group may determine to vote all shares held by Advisory Clients of the Investment Managers and affiliated Investment Managers (other than Independent Affiliates) in accordance with the instructions of one or more of the Advisory Clients.

The Investment Managers may also decide whether to vote proxies for securities deemed to present conflicts of interest that are sold following a record date, but before a shareholder meeting date. The Investment Managers may consider various factors in deciding whether to vote such proxies, including the Investment Managers' long-term view of the issuer's securities for investment, or it may defer the decision to vote to the applicable Advisory Client. The Investment Managers also may be unable to vote, or choose not to vote, a proxy for securities deemed to present a conflict of interest for any of the reasons outlined in the first paragraph of the section of these policies entitled "Proxy Procedures."

### **Weight Given Management Recommendations**

One of the primary factors the Investment Managers consider when determining the desirability of investing in a particular company is the quality and depth of that company's management. Accordingly, the recommendation of management on any issue is a factor that the Investment Managers consider in determining how proxies should be voted. However, the Investment Managers do not consider recommendations from management to be determinative of the Investment Managers' ultimate decision. Each issue is considered on its own merits, and the Investment Managers will not support the position of a company's management in any situation where it determines that the ratification of management's position would adversely affect the investment merits of owning that company's shares.

### **Engagement with Issuers**

The Investment Managers believe that engagement with issuers is important to good corporate governance and to assist in making proxy voting decisions. The Investment Managers may engage with issuers to discuss specific ballot items to be voted on in advance of an annual or special meeting to obtain further information or clarification on the proposals. The Investment Managers may also engage with management on a range of environmental, social or corporate governance issues throughout the year.

### **THE PROXY GROUP**

The Proxy Group is part of Franklin Templeton's Stewardship Team. Full-time staff members and support staff are devoted to proxy voting administration and oversight and providing support and assistance where needed. On a daily basis, the Proxy Group will review each proxy upon receipt as well as any agendas, materials and recommendations that they receive from a Proxy Service or other sources. The Proxy Group maintains a record of all shareholder meetings that are scheduled for companies whose securities are held by the Investment Managers' managed funds and accounts. For each shareholder meeting, a member of the Proxy Group will consult with the research analyst that follows the security and provide the analyst with the agenda, analyses of one or more Proxy Services, recommendations and any other information provided to the Proxy Group. Except in situations identified as presenting material conflicts of interest, the Investment Managers' research analyst and relevant portfolio manager(s) are responsible for making the final voting decision based on their review of the agenda, analyses of one or more Proxy Services, proxy statements, their knowledge of the company and any other information publicly available.

In situations where the Investment Managers have not responded with vote recommendations to the Proxy Group by the deadline date, the Proxy Group may vote consistent with the vote recommendations of a Proxy Service. Except in cases where the Proxy Group is voting consistent with the voting recommendation of a Proxy Service, the Proxy Group must obtain voting instructions from the Investment Managers' research analysts, relevant portfolio manager(s), legal counsel and/or the Advisory Client prior to submitting the vote. In the event that an account holds a security that an Investment Manager did not purchase on its behalf, and the Investment Manager does not normally consider the security as a potential investment for other accounts, the Proxy Group may vote consistent with the voting recommendations of a Proxy Service or take no action on the meeting.

## **PROXY ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURES**

### **Situations Where Proxies Are Not Voted**

The Proxy Group is fully cognizant of its responsibility to process proxies and maintain proxy records as may be required by relevant rules and regulations. In addition, the Investment Managers understand their fiduciary duty to vote proxies and that proxy voting decisions may affect the value of shareholdings. Therefore, the Investment Managers will generally attempt to process every proxy they receive for all domestic and foreign securities.

However, there may be situations in which the Investment Managers may be unable to successfully vote a proxy, or may choose not to vote a proxy, such as where: (i) a proxy ballot was not received from the custodian bank; (ii) a meeting notice was received too late; (iii) there are fees imposed upon the exercise of a vote and it is determined that such fees outweigh the benefit of voting; (iv) there are legal encumbrances to voting, including blocking restrictions in certain markets that preclude the ability to dispose of a security if an Investment Manager votes a proxy or where the Investment Manager is prohibited from voting by applicable law, economic or other sanctions, or other regulatory or market requirements, including but not limited to, effective Powers of Attorney; (v) additional documentation or the disclosure of beneficial owner details is required; (vi) the Investment Managers held shares on the record date but has sold them prior to the meeting date; (vii) the Advisory Client held shares on the record date, but the Advisory Client closed the account prior to the meeting date; (viii) a proxy voting service is not offered by the custodian in the market; (ix) due to either system error or human error, the Investment Managers' intended vote is not correctly submitted; (x) the Investment Managers believe it is not in the best interest of the Advisory Client to vote the proxy for any other reason not enumerated herein; or (xi) a security is subject to a securities lending or similar program that has transferred legal title to the security to another person.

### **Rejected Votes**

Even if the Investment Managers use reasonable efforts to vote a proxy on behalf of their Advisory Clients, such vote or proxy may be rejected because of (a) operational or procedural issues experienced by one or more third parties involved in voting proxies in such jurisdictions; (b) changes in the process or agenda for the meeting by the issuer for which the Investment Managers do not have sufficient notice; or (c) the exercise by the issuer of its discretion to reject the vote of the Investment Managers. In addition, despite the best efforts of the Proxy Group and its agents, there may be situations where the Investment Managers' votes are not received, or properly tabulated, by an issuer or the issuer's agent.

### **Securities on Loan**

The Investment Managers or their affiliates may, on behalf of one or more of the proprietary registered investment companies advised by the Investment Managers or their affiliates, make efforts to recall any security on loan where the Investment Manager or its affiliates (a) learn of a vote on an event that may materially affect a security on loan and (b) determine that it is in the best interests of such proprietary registered investment companies to recall the security for voting purposes. The ability to timely recall shares is not entirely within the control of the Investment Managers. Under certain circumstances, the recall of shares in time for such shares to be voted may not be possible due to applicable proxy voting record dates or other administrative considerations.

### **Split Voting**

There may be instances in certain non-U.S. markets where split voting is not allowed. Split voting occurs when a position held within an account is voted in accordance with two differing instructions. Some markets and/or issuers only allow voting on an entire position and do not accept split voting. In certain cases, when more than one Franklin Templeton investment manager has accounts holding shares of an issuer that are held in an omnibus structure, the Proxy Group will seek direction from an appropriate representative of the Advisory Client with multiple Investment Managers (such as a conducting officer of the Management Company in the case of a SICAV), or the Proxy Group will submit the vote based on the voting instructions provided by the Investment Manager with accounts holding the greatest number of shares of the security within the omnibus structure.

### **Bundled Items**

If several issues are bundled together in a single voting item, the Investment Managers will assess the total benefit to shareholders and the extent that such issues should be subject to separate voting proposals.

### **PROCEDURES FOR MEETINGS INVOLVING FIXED INCOME SECURITIES & PRIVATELY HELD ISSUERS**

From time to time, certain custodians may process events for fixed income securities through their proxy voting channels rather than corporate action channels for administrative convenience. In such cases, the Proxy Group will receive ballots for such events on the ISS voting platform. The Proxy Group will solicit voting instructions from the Investment Managers for each account or fund involved. If the Proxy Group does not receive voting instructions from the Investment Managers, the Proxy Group will take no action on the event. The Investment Managers may be unable to vote a proxy for a fixed income security, or may choose not to vote a proxy, for the reasons described under the section entitled "Proxy Procedures."

In the rare instance where there is a vote for a privately held issuer, the decision will generally be made by the relevant portfolio managers or research analysts.

The Proxy Group will monitor such meetings involving fixed income securities or privately held issuers for conflicts of interest in accordance with these procedures. If a fixed income or privately held issuer is flagged as a potential conflict of interest, the Investment Managers may nonetheless vote as it deems in the best interests of its Advisory Clients. The Investment Managers will report such decisions on an annual basis to Advisory Clients as may be required.

## **Appendix A**

These Proxy Policies apply to accounts managed by personnel within Franklin Equity Group, which includes the following Investment Managers:

Franklin Advisers, Inc. (FAV)  
Franklin Templeton Institutional, LLC

The following Proxy Policies apply to FAV only:

### **HOW THE INVESTMENT MANAGERS VOTE PROXIES**

#### **Proxy Services**

Certain of the Investment Managers' separate accounts or funds (or a portion thereof) are included under Franklin Templeton Investment Solutions ("FTIS"), a separate investment group within Franklin Templeton, and employ a quantitative strategy.

For such accounts, FTIS's proprietary methodologies rely on a combination of quantitative, qualitative, and behavioral analysis rather than fundamental security research and analyst coverage that an actively-managed portfolio would ordinarily employ. Accordingly, absent client direction, in light of the high number of positions held by such accounts and the considerable time and effort that would be required to review proxy statements and ISS or Glass Lewis recommendations, the Investment Manager may review ISS's non-US Benchmark guidelines, ISS's specialty guidelines (in particular, ISS's Sustainability guidelines), or Glass Lewis's US guidelines (the "the ISS and Glass Lewis Proxy Voting Guidelines") and determine, consistent with the best interest of its clients, to provide standing instructions to the Proxy Group to vote proxies according to the recommendations of ISS or Glass Lewis.

The Investment Manager, however, retains the ability to vote a proxy differently than ISS or Glass Lewis recommends if the Investment Manager determines that it would be in the best interests of Advisory Clients.