

### POLICY

## **Applicable Entities / Rules**

Applicable Entities:	American Century Investment Management, Inc.
Statutory/Regulatory:	Investment Company Act §30(b), Rule 30b1-4; Investment Advisers Act §206, 206(4)-6
Effective Date(s):	September/October 2004, Last Revised December 2023
Policy or Summary:	Policy
Related Summary:	Proxy Voting Policies and Procedures
Related Documents:	

American Century Investment Management, Inc. (the "Adviser") is the investment manager for a variety of advisory clients, including the American Century family of funds. In such capacity, the Adviser has been delegated the authority to vote proxies with respect to investments held in the accounts it manages. The following is a statement of the proxy voting policies that have been adopted by the Adviser. In the exercise of proxy voting authority which has been delegated to it by particular clients, the Adviser will apply the following policies in accordance with, and subject to, any specific policies that have been adopted by the client and communicated to and accepted by the Adviser in writing.

## I. General Principles

In providing the service of voting client proxies, the Adviser is guided by general fiduciary principles, must act prudently, solely in the interest of its clients, and must not subordinate client interests to unrelated objectives. Except as otherwise indicated in these Policies, the Adviser will vote all proxies with respect to investments held in the client accounts it manages. The Adviser will attempt to consider all factors of its vote that could affect the value of the investment. Although in most instances the Adviser will vote proxies consistently across all client accounts, the votes will be based on the best interests of each client. As a result, accounts managed by the Adviser may at times vote differently on the same proposals. Examples of when an account's vote might differ from other accounts managed by the Adviser include, but are not limited to, proxy contests and proposed mergers. In short, the Adviser will vote proxies in the manner that it believes will do the most to maximize shareholder value.

## II. Specific Proxy Matters

## A. Routine Matters

- 1. Election of Directors
  - a) **Generally.** The Adviser will generally support the election of directors that result in a board made up of a majority of independent directors. In general, the Adviser will vote in favor of management's director nominees if they are running unopposed. The Adviser believes that management is in the best possible position to evaluate the qualifications of directors and the needs and dynamics of a particular board. The Adviser of course maintains the ability to vote against any candidate whom it feels is not



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qualified or if there are specific concerns about the individual, such as allegations of criminal wrongdoing or breach of fiduciary responsibilities. Additional information the Adviser may consider concerning director nominees include, but is not limited to, whether (i) there is an adequate explanation for repeated absences at board meetings, (ii) the nominee receives non-board fee compensation, or (iii) there is a family relationship between the nominee and the company's chief executive officer or controlling shareholder, and/or (iv) the nominee has sufficient time and commitment to serve effectively in light of the nominee's service on other public company boards. When management's nominees are opposed in a proxy contest, the Adviser will evaluate which nominees' publiclyannounced management policies and goals are most likely to maximize shareholder value, as well as the past performance of the incumbents.

- b) **Committee Service.** The Adviser will withhold votes for non-independent directors who serve on the audit and/or compensation committees of the board.
- c) **Classification of Boards.** The Adviser will support proposals that seek to declassify boards. Conversely, the Adviser will oppose efforts to adopt classified board structures.
- d) *Majority Independent Board.* The Adviser will support proposals calling for a majority of independent directors on a board. The Adviser believes that a majority of independent directors can help to facilitate objective decision making and enhances accountability to shareholders.
- e) *Majority Vote Standard for Director Elections.* The Adviser will vote in favor of proposals calling for directors to be elected by an affirmative majority of the votes cast in a board election, provided that the proposal allows for a plurality voting standard in the case of contested elections. The Adviser may consider voting against such shareholder proposals where a company's board has adopted an alternative measure, such as a director resignation policy, that provides a meaningful alternative to the majority voting standard and appropriately addresses situations where an incumbent director fails to receive the support of the majority of the votes cast in an uncontested election.
- f) Withholding Campaigns. The Adviser will support proposals calling for shareholders to withhold votes for directors where such actions will advance the principles set forth in paragraphs (1) through (5) above.

## 2. Ratification of Selection of Auditors

The Adviser will generally rely on the judgment of the issuer's audit committee in selecting the independent auditors who will provide the best service to the company. The Adviser believes that independence of the auditors is paramount and will vote against auditors whose independence appears to be impaired. The Adviser will vote against proposed auditors in those circumstances where (1) an



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auditor has a financial interest in or association with the company, and is therefore not independent; (2) non-audit fees comprise more than 50% of the total fees paid by the company to the audit firm; or (3) there is reason to believe that the independent auditor has previously rendered an opinion to the issuer that is either inaccurate or not indicative of the company's financial position.

## **B.** Compensation Matters

#### 1. Executive Compensation

- a) Advisory Vote on Compensation. The Adviser believes there are more effective ways to convey concerns about compensation than through an advisory vote on compensation (such as voting against specific excessive incentive plans or withholding votes from compensation committee members). The Adviser will consider and vote on a case-by-case basis on say-on-pay proposals and will generally support management proposals unless there are inadequate risk-mitigation features or other specific concerns exist, including if the Adviser concludes that executive compensation is (i) misaligned with shareholder interests, (ii) unreasonable in amount, or (iii) not in the aggregate meaningfully tied to the company's performance.
- b) *Frequency of Advisory Votes on Compensation.* The Adviser generally supports the triennial option for the frequency of say-on-pay proposals, but will consider management recommendations for an alternative approach.

## 2. Equity Based Compensation Plans

The Adviser believes that equity-based incentive plans are economically significant issues upon which shareholders are entitled to vote. The Adviser recognizes that equity-based compensation plans can be useful in attracting and maintaining desirable employees. The cost associated with such plans must be measured if plans are to be used appropriately to maximize shareholder value. The Adviser will conduct a case-by-case analysis of each stock option, stock bonus or similar plan or amendment, and generally approve management's recommendations with respect to adoption of or amendments to a company's equity-based compensation plans, provided that the total number of shares reserved under all of a company's plans is reasonable and not excessively dilutive.

The Adviser will review equity-based compensation plans or amendments thereto on a case-by-case basis. Factors that will be considered in the determination include the company's overall capitalization, the performance of the company relative to its peers, and the maturity of the company and its industry; for example,



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technology companies often use options broadly throughout its employee base which may justify somewhat greater dilution.

Amendments which are proposed in order to bring a company's plan within applicable legal requirements will be reviewed by the Adviser's legal counsel; amendments to executive bonus plans to comply with IRS Section 162(m) disclosure requirements, for example, are generally approved.

The Adviser will generally vote against the adoption of plans or plan amendments that:

- Provide for immediate vesting of all stock options in the event of a change of control of the company without reasonable safeguards against abuse (see "Anti-Takeover Proposals" below);
- Reset outstanding stock options at a lower strike price unless accompanied by a corresponding and proportionate reduction in the number of shares designated. The Adviser will generally oppose adoption of stock option plans that explicitly or historically permit repricing of stock options, regardless of the number of shares reserved for issuance, since their effect is impossible to evaluate;
- Establish restriction periods shorter than three years for restricted stock grants;
- Do not reasonably associate awards to performance of the company; or
- Are excessively dilutive to the company.

#### C. Anti-Takeover Proposals

In general, the Adviser will vote against any proposal, whether made by management or shareholders, which the Adviser believes would materially discourage a potential acquisition or takeover. In most cases an acquisition or takeover of a particular company will increase share value. The adoption of anti-takeover measures may prevent or frustrate a bid from being made, may prevent consummation of the acquisition, and may have a negative effect on share price when no acquisition proposal is pending. The items below discuss specific anti-takeover proposals.

#### 1. Cumulative Voting

The Adviser will vote in favor of any proposal to adopt cumulative voting and will vote against any proposal to eliminate cumulative voting that is already in place, except in cases where a company has a staggered board. Cumulative voting gives minority shareholders a stronger voice in the company and a greater chance for representation on the board. The Adviser believes that the elimination of cumulative voting constitutes an anti-takeover measure.



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## 2. Staggered Board

If a company has a "staggered board," its directors are elected for terms of more than one year and only a segment of the board stands for election in any year. Therefore, a potential acquiror cannot replace the entire board in one year even if it controls a majority of the votes. Although staggered boards may provide some degree of continuity and stability of leadership and direction to the board of directors, the Adviser believes that staggered boards are primarily an antitakeover device and will vote against establishing them and for eliminating them. However, the Adviser does not necessarily vote against the re-election of directors serving on staggered boards.

## 3. "Blank Check" Preferred Stock

Blank check preferred stock gives the board of directors the ability to issue preferred stock, without further shareholder approval, with such rights, preferences, privileges and restrictions as may be set by the board. In response to a hostile takeover attempt, the board could issue such stock to a friendly party or "white knight" or could establish conversion or other rights in the preferred stock which would dilute the common stock and make an acquisition impossible or less attractive. The argument in favor of blank check preferred stock is that it gives the board flexibility in pursuing financing, acquisitions or other proper corporate purposes without incurring the time or expense of a shareholder vote. Generally, the Adviser will vote against blank check preferred stock. However, the Adviser may vote in favor of blank check preferred if the proxy statement discloses that such stock is limited to use for a specific, proper corporate objective as a financing instrument.

## 4. Elimination of Preemptive Rights

When a company grants preemptive rights, existing shareholders are given an opportunity to maintain their proportional ownership when new shares are issued. A proposal to eliminate preemptive rights is a request from management to revoke that right.

While preemptive rights will protect the shareholder from having its equity diluted, it may also decrease a company's ability to raise capital through stock offerings or use stock for acquisitions or other proper corporate purposes. Preemptive rights may therefore result in a lower market value for the company's stock. In the long term, shareholders could be adversely affected by preemptive rights. The Adviser generally votes against proposals to grant preemptive rights, and for proposals to eliminate preemptive rights.



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### 5. Non-targeted Share Repurchase

A non-targeted share repurchase is generally used by company management to prevent the value of stock held by existing shareholders from deteriorating. A nontargeted share repurchase may reflect management's belief in the favorable business prospects of the company. The Adviser finds no disadvantageous effects of a non-targeted share repurchase and will generally vote for the approval of a non-targeted share repurchase subject to analysis of the company's financial condition.

## 6. Increase in Authorized Common Stock

The issuance of new common stock can also be viewed as an anti-takeover measure, although its effect on shareholder value would appear to be less significant than the adoption of blank check preferred. The Adviser will evaluate the amount of the proposed increase and the purpose or purposes for which the increase is sought. If the increase is not excessive and is sought for proper corporate purposes, the increase will be approved. Proper corporate purposes might include, for example, the creation of additional stock to accommodate a stock split or stock dividend, additional stock required for a proposed acquisition, or additional stock required to be reserved upon exercise of employee stock option plans or employee stock purchase plans. Generally, the Adviser will vote in favor of an increase in authorized common stock of up to 100%; increases in excess of 100% are evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and will be voted affirmatively if management has provided sound justification for the increase.

## 7. "Supermajority" Voting Provisions or Super Voting Share Classes

A "supermajority" voting provision is a provision placed in a company's charter documents which would require a "supermajority" (ranging from 66 to 90%) of shareholders and shareholder votes to approve any type of acquisition of the company. A super voting share class grants one class of shareholders a greater per-share vote than those of shareholders of other voting classes. The Adviser believes that these are standard anti-takeover measures and will generally vote against them. The supermajority provision makes an acquisition more time-consuming and expensive for the acquiror. A super voting share class favors one group of shareholders disproportionately to economic interest. Both are often proposed in conjunction with other anti-takeover measures.

## 8. "Fair Price" Amendments

This is another type of charter amendment that would require an offeror to pay a "fair" and uniform price to all shareholders in an acquisition. In general, fair price amendments are designed to protect shareholders from coercive, two-tier tender



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offers in which some shareholders may be merged out on disadvantageous terms. Fair price amendments also have an anti-takeover impact, although their adoption is generally believed to have less of a negative effect on stock price than other anti-takeover measures. The Adviser will carefully examine all fair price proposals. In general, the Adviser will vote against fair price proposals unless the Adviser concludes that it is likely that the share price will not be negatively affected and the proposal will not have the effect of discouraging acquisition proposals.

## 9. Limiting the Right to Call Special Shareholder Meetings.

The corporation statutes of many states allow minority shareholders at a certain threshold level of ownership (frequently 10%) to call a special meeting of shareholders. This right can be eliminated (or the threshold increased) by amendment to the company's charter documents. The Adviser believes that the right to call a special shareholder meeting is significant for minority shareholders; the elimination of such right will be viewed as an anti-takeover measure and the Adviser will generally vote against proposals attempting to eliminate this right and for proposals attempting to restore it.

### 10. Poison Pills or Shareholder Rights Plans

Many companies have now adopted some version of a poison pill plan (also known as a shareholder rights plan). Poison pill plans generally provide for the issuance of additional equity securities or rights to purchase equity securities upon the occurrence of certain hostile events, such as the acquisition of a large block of stock.

The basic argument against poison pills is that they depress share value, discourage offers for the company and serve to "entrench" management. The basic argument in favor of poison pills is that they give management more time and leverage to deal with a takeover bid and, as a result, shareholders may receive a better price. The Adviser believes that the potential benefits of a poison pill plan are outweighed by the potential detriments. The Adviser will generally vote against all forms of poison pills.

The Adviser will, however, consider on a case-by-case basis poison pills that are very limited in time and preclusive effect. The Adviser will generally vote in favor of such a poison pill if it is linked to a business strategy that will – in our view – likely result in greater value for shareholders, if the term is less than three years, and if shareholder approval is required to reinstate the expired plan or adopt a new plan at the end of this term.

#### 11. Golden Parachutes



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Golden parachute arrangements provide substantial compensation to executives who are terminated as a result of a takeover or change in control of their company. The existence of such plans in reasonable amounts probably has only a slight anti-takeover effect. In voting, the Adviser will evaluate the specifics of the plan presented.

## 12. Reincorporation

Reincorporation in a new state is often proposed as one part of a package of antitakeover measures. Several states (such as Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana) now provide some type of legislation that greatly discourages takeovers. Management believes that Delaware in particular is beneficial as a corporate domicile because of the well-developed body of statutes and case law dealing with corporate acquisitions.

The Adviser will examine reincorporation proposals on a case-by-case basis. Generally, if the Adviser believes that the reincorporation will result in greater protection from takeovers, the reincorporation proposal will be opposed. The Adviser will also oppose reincorporation proposals involving jurisdictions that specify that directors can recognize non-shareholder interests over those of shareholders. When reincorporation is proposed for a legitimate business purpose and without the negative effects identified above, the Adviser will generally vote affirmatively.

#### 13. Confidential Voting

Companies that have not previously adopted a "confidential voting" policy allow management to view the results of shareholder votes. This gives management the opportunity to contact those shareholders voting against management in an effort to change their votes.

Proponents of secret ballots argue that confidential voting enables shareholders to vote on all issues on the basis of merit without pressure from management to influence their decision. Opponents argue that confidential voting is more expensive and unnecessary; also, holding shares in a nominee name maintains shareholders' confidentiality. The Adviser believes that the only way to insure anonymity of votes is through confidential voting, and that the benefits of confidential voting outweigh the incremental additional cost of administering a confidential voting system. Therefore, the Adviser will generally vote in favor of any proposal to adopt confidential voting.

#### 14. Opting In or Out of State Takeover Laws

State takeover laws typically are designed to make it more difficult to acquire a



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corporation organized in that state. The Adviser believes that the decision of whether or not to accept or reject offers of merger or acquisition should be made by the shareholders, without unreasonably restrictive state laws that may impose ownership thresholds or waiting periods on potential acquirors. Therefore, the Adviser will generally vote in favor of opting out of restrictive state takeover laws.

## D. Transaction Related Proposals

The Adviser will review transaction related proposals, such as mergers, acquisitions, and corporate reorganizations, on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the impact of the transaction on each client account. In some instances, such as the approval of a proposed merger, a transaction may have a differential impact on client accounts depending on the securities held in each account. For example, whether a merger is in the best interest of a client account may be influenced by whether an account holds, and in what proportion, the stock of both the acquirer and the acquiror. In these circumstances, the Adviser may determine that it is in the best interests of the accounts to vote the accounts' shares differently on proposals related to the same transaction.

## E. Other Matters

## 1. Proposals Involving Environmental, Social, and Governance ("ESG") Matters

The Adviser believes that certain ESG issues can potentially impact an issuer's long-term financial performance and has developed an analytical framework, as well as a proprietary assessment tool, to integrate risks and opportunities stemming from ESG issues into our investment process. This ESG integration process extends to our proxy voting practices in that our Sustainable Research Team analyzes on a case-by-case basis the financial materiality and potential risks or economic impact of the ESG issues underpinning proxy proposals and makes voting recommendations based thereon for the Adviser's consideration. The Sustainable Research Team evaluates ESG-related proposals based on a rational linkage between the proposal, its potential economic impact, and its potential to maximize long-term shareholder value.

Where the economic effect of such proposals is unclear and there is not a specific written client-mandate, the Adviser believes it is generally impossible to know how to vote in a manner that would accurately reflect the views of the Adviser's clients, and, therefore, the Adviser will generally rely on management's assessment of the economic effect if the Adviser believes the assessment is not unreasonable.

Shareholders may also introduce proposals which are the subject of existing law or regulation. Examples of such proposals would include a proposal to require disclosure of a company's contributions to political action committees or a



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proposal to require a company to adopt a non-smoking workplace policy. The Adviser believes that such proposals may be better addressed outside the corporate arena and, absent a potential economic impact, will generally vote with management's recommendation. In addition, the Adviser will generally vote against any proposal which would require a company to adopt practices or procedures which go beyond the requirements of existing, directly applicable law.

#### 2. Anti-Greenmail Proposals

"Anti-greenmail" proposals generally limit the right of a corporation, without a shareholder vote, to pay a premium or buy out a 5% or greater shareholder. Management often argues that they should not be restricted from negotiating a deal to buy out a significant shareholder at a premium if they believe it is in the best interest of the company. Institutional shareholders generally believe that all shareholders should be able to vote on such a significant use of corporate assets. The Adviser believes that any repurchase by the company at a premium price of a large block of stock should be subject to a shareholder vote. Accordingly, it will generally vote in favor of anti-greenmail proposals.

#### 3. Indemnification

The Adviser will generally vote in favor of a corporation's proposal to indemnify its officers and directors in accordance with applicable state law. Indemnification arrangements are often necessary in order to attract and retain qualified directors. The adoption of such proposals appears to have little effect on share value.

## 4. Non-Stock Incentive Plans

Management may propose a variety of cash-based incentive or bonus plans to stimulate employee performance. In general, the cash or other corporate assets required for most incentive plans is not material, and the Adviser will vote in favor of such proposals, particularly when the proposal is recommended in order to comply with IRC Section 162(m) regarding salary disclosure requirements. Case-by-case determinations will be made of the appropriateness of the amount of shareholder value transferred by proposed plans.

#### 5. Director Tenure

These proposals ask that age and term restrictions be placed on the board of directors. The Adviser believes that these types of blanket restrictions are not necessarily in the best interests of shareholders and therefore will vote against such proposals, unless they have been recommended by management.



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### 6. Directors' Stock Options Plans

The Adviser believes that stock options are an appropriate form of compensation for directors, and the Adviser will generally vote for director stock option plans which are reasonable and do not result in excessive shareholder dilution. Analysis of such proposals will be made on a case-by-case basis, and will take into account total board compensation and the company's total exposure to stock option plan dilution.

#### 7. Director Share Ownership

The Adviser will generally vote against shareholder proposals which would require directors to hold a minimum number of the company's shares to serve on the board of directors, in the belief that such ownership should be at the discretion of Board members.

#### 8. Non-U.S. Proxies

The Adviser will generally evaluate non-U.S. proxies in the context of the voting policies expressed herein but will also, where feasible, take into consideration differing laws, regulations, and practices in the relevant foreign market in determining if and how to vote. There may also be circumstances when practicalities and costs involved with non-U.S. investing make it disadvantageous to vote shares. For instance, the Adviser generally does not vote proxies in circumstances where share blocking restrictions apply, when meeting attendance is required in person, or when current share ownership disclosure is required.

## III. Use of Proxy Advisory Services

The Adviser may retain proxy advisory firms to provide services in connection with voting proxies, including, without limitation, to provide information on shareholder meeting dates and proxy materials, translate proxy materials printed in a foreign language, provide research on proxy proposals and voting recommendations in accordance with the voting policies expressed herein, provide systems to assist with casting the proxy votes, and provide reports and assist with preparation of filings concerning the proxies voted.

Prior to the selection of a proxy advisory firm and periodically thereafter, the Adviser will consider whether the proxy advisory firm has the capacity and competency to adequately analyze proxy issues and the ability to make recommendations based on material accurate information in an impartial manner. Such considerations may include some or all of the following (i) periodic sampling of votes cast through the firm's systems to determine that votes are in accordance with the Adviser's policies and its clients best interests, (ii) onsite visits to the proxy advisory firm's office and/or discussions with the firm to determine whether the firm continues to have the resources (e.g. staffing, personnel, technology, etc.) capacity and competency to carry out its obligations to the Adviser, (iii) a review of the firm's policies and procedures,



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with a focus on those relating to identifying and addressing conflicts of interest and monitoring that current and accurate information is used in creating recommendations, (iv) requesting that the firm notify the Adviser if there is a change in the firm's material policies and procedures, particularly with respect to conflicts, or material business practices (e.g., entering or exiting new lines of business), and reviewing any such change, and (v) in case of an error made by the firm, discussing the error with the firm and determining whether appropriate corrective and preventative action is being taken. In the event the Adviser discovers an error in the research or voting recommendations provided by the firm, it will take reasonable steps to investigate the error and seek to determine whether the firm is taking reasonable steps to reduce similar errors in the future.

While the Adviser takes into account information from many different sources, including independent proxy advisory services, the decision on how to vote proxies will be made in accordance with these policies.

## **IV.** Monitoring Potential Conflicts of Interest

Corporate management has a strong interest in the outcome of proposals submitted to shareholders. As a consequence, management often seeks to influence large shareholders to vote with their recommendations on particularly controversial matters. In the vast majority of cases, these communications with large shareholders amount to little more than advocacy for management's positions and give the Adviser's staff the opportunity to ask additional questions about the matter being presented. Companies with which the Adviser has direct business relationships could theoretically use these relationships to attempt to unduly influence the manner in which the Adviser votes on matters for its clients. To ensure that such a conflict of interest does not affect proxy votes cast for the Adviser's clients, our proxy voting personnel regularly catalog companies with whom the Adviser has significant business relationships; all discretionary (including case-by-case) voting for these companies will be voted by the client or an appropriate fiduciary responsible for the client (e.g., a committee of the independent directors of a fund or the trustee of a retirement plan).

In addition, to avoid any potential conflict of interest that may arise when one American Century fund owns shares of another American Century fund, the Adviser will "echo vote" such shares, if possible. Echo voting means the Adviser will vote the shares in the same proportion as the vote of all the other holders of the fund's shares. So, for example, if shareholders of a fund cast 80% of their votes in favor of a proposal and 20% against the proposal, any American Century fund that owns shares of such fund will cast 80% of its shares in favor of the proposal and 20% against. When this is not possible (as in the case where the other American Century funds are the only shareholders), the shares of the underlying fund will be voted in the same proportion as the vote of the shareholders of the corresponding American Century policy portfolio for proposals common to both funds. In the case where the policy portfolio does not have a common proposal, shares will be voted in consultation with a committee of the independent directors.



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The voting policies expressed above are of course subject to modification in certain circumstances and will be reexamined from time to time. With respect to matters that do not fit in the categories stated above, the Adviser will exercise its best judgment as a fiduciary to vote in the manner which will most enhance shareholder value.

Case-by-case determinations will be made by the Adviser's staff, which is overseen by the General Counsel of the Adviser, in consultation with equity managers. Electronic records will be kept of all votes made.