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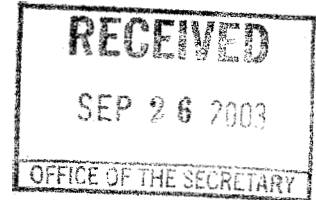
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September 24, 2003

57-14-03

William H. Donaldson, Chairman  
Securities and Exchange Commission  
450 Fifth Street, NW  
Washington, DC 28549



Dear Mr. Donaldson:

I would like to take this opportunity to commend the Securities and Exchange Commission for all of its work to date on the development of rules that would give shareholder nominees access to registrant proxy statements and cards. Since the submission of shareholder proposals on proxy access the AFSCME Employees Pension Plan filed fast proxy season, the Commission has taken a fair-minded and well-seasoned approach to dealing with the complex question reforming the director election process. The Division of Corporation Finance has done a particularly outstanding job of soliciting the views and concerns about director elections from institutional investors like ourselves who have formed opinions about the proxy access rule.

We share the Commission's belief that understanding how individual investors vote in current director elections and determining their views on proxy access for shareholder nominees would enhance the process of access rulemaking. Earlier this month, AFSCME commissioned Harris Interactive to undertake a public opinion poll of individual investors on these subjects, The key findings of the survey of more than 1,000 individual investors by Harris Interactive show:

- Eighty percent think there should be a process to allow shareholders to nominate candidates for boards of directors;
- Ninety percent agree that corporate misconduct has weakened investor confidence in the stock market;
- More than half of the shareholders agree that corporate management is not in the best position to decide who should be nominated to the board of directors.

The full results reveal a number of important details about individual investors' proxy voting patterns, such as the reasons why shareholders vote against board nominees, and under what conditions they think proxy access should be utilized.

We have enclosed a copy of the poll results for you use,

Very Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerald W. McEntee". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "G".

GERALD W. McENTEE  
International President

GWMcE:rfc  
Enclosure

cc: Paul S. Atkins, Commissioner  
Roel C. Campos, Commissioner  
Cynthia A. Glassman, Commissioner  
Harvey J. Goldschmid, Commissioner  
Alan L. Beller, Director, Division of Corporation Finance  
Martin Dunn, Deputy Director, Division of Corporation Finance  
Jonathan G. Katz, Secretary



HarrisInteractive

MARKET RESEARCH

*The Harris Poll*® PEOPLE

# **Views of Corporate Governance**

Conducted For:

**The American Federation of State,  
County and Municipal Employees  
(AFSCME)**

**September 23, 2003**



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# Introduction



## **Introduction**

- The *Views of Corporate Governance Study* was conducted by Harris Interactive on behalf of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).
  
- The primary objective of this survey was to explore the attitudes and behavior of individual investors on important corporate governance issues. More specifically, the survey focused on:
  - Shareholders' voting behavior;
  - Attitudes towards the current board member nomination process; and
  - Attitudes toward proposals to reform the current process.
  
- The study was conducted online among 1,030 adults, 18 or older who own individual shares of public corporations. Interviews were conducted between August 29 and September 2, 2003, and averaged 12 minutes in length.

# Major Findings



## Major Findings

Overall, investors have concerns with the current nomination process and many think it is important that shareholders have more choice among board member candidates. Investors express a strong preference for a system where all qualified candidates, whether nominated by shareholders or corporate management, are listed on the proxy ballots.

Large majorities believe shareholders should have access to corporate proxy materials to nominate board member candidates rather than leaving this decision solely in the hands of corporate management.

- Further supporting these beliefs, large proportions of individual investors agree that corporations should have a more open nominating process and should disclose more information about the nominating process. A greater openness and participatory spirit would increase investor confidence.

As a result, investors show strong support for an anticipated Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) proposal which would make it easier for shareholders or groups of shareholders to nominate board members.

In addition, shareholders are supportive of several proposed reforms that would provide them with greater access to the proxy ballot as soon as the next annual meeting. Support of these proposals indicates that shareholders want corporations to be accountable for their actions and more open to greater shareholder participation.





## Major Findings (Cont'd)

- As to their specific voting behavior, the vast majority of shareholders has voted *in favor* of corporate management proposals though substantial majorities have voted *against* proposals or *for and against* proposals on the same ballot.
- More specifically, investors most commonly vote *in favor* of board member nominees and *against* salary and compensation packages for top executives or board members.

Long-term investors (6 or more years) are more likely to vote. Their voting behavior suggests that they read the proxy materials carefully as they are more likely than shorter-term (5 years or less) investors to vote *for* or *against* corporate management proposals.

- Support for corporate management nominees is also mixed with majorities of shareholders having *withheld support* from a management nominee. Those who think having a wider choice of nominees is extremely or very important are even more likely to have *withheld support* from a nominee.

# Executive Summary



## Attitudes Toward Current Nomination Process

Individual investors think it is important that there should be more choice among board member nominees and that shareholders or groups of shareholders as well as corporate management should be provided opportunities for nomination.

- More than six in ten (62%) individual investors think it is at least important (33% extremely or very important and 29% important) to be able to have a choice among different candidates for nomination to boards of directors whether nominated by corporate management or shareholders.
- > Longer-term investors are more likely to think having this choice is important. More than four in ten (41%) long-term investors (20 or more years) and one-third (33%) of those who have been investing 6-20 years think more choice is extremely or very important, compared to one-fourth (25%) of shorter-term investors (5 years or less).
- > Between 27% and 34% of investors, regardless of how long they have been investing, think having a greater choice of board member candidates is important.
- The vast majority of shareholders (84%) agrees that corporations should be required to include in the proxy materials all qualified candidates for nomination to the board of directors while just 16% think corporations should be allowed to continue to list only the qualified candidates supported by corporate management.
- Similarly, eight in ten investors (80%) think there should be a process to allow shareholders to nominate candidates for boards of directors, while one-fifth (20%) think corporate management should control all nominations to the board of directors.
- Interestingly, this is consistent across all groups. There is not much variation in these views when examining the length of time investors have owned individual company stock.



## **Attitudes Toward Current Nomination Process (Cont'd)**

■ Large majorities of shareholders agree that corporations should be required to have a more open nomination process which allows candidates to be nominated by shareholders or groups of shareholders as well as by corporate management. Recent corporate scandals have weakened overall investor confidence and fewer than half believe that management is best situated to make important corporate governance decisions on their own.

- Ninety ten shareholders (90%) agree and 60% strongly agree that corporate misconduct in the United States has weakened investor confidence in the stock market.
- The same proportion (90%) agrees that corporations should be required to disclose more information about the process for nominating directors to serve on boards (50% strongly agree and 40% somewhat agree).
- A smaller but still large majority (85%) agrees (38% strongly agree) that shareholders should be able to use corporate proxy materials to nominate candidates for election to the boards of directors, and 80% strongly (24%) or somewhat agree (56%) that open elections, in which shareholders can use corporate proxy materials to nominate board members, would increase investor confidence.
- Slightly over half of investors (55%) agree that the reason individual shareholders do not vote is because corporate management has the exclusive right to use proxy materials to nominate board of director candidates (10% strongly agree and 45% somewhat agree).
- Fewer than half (49%) of shareholders strongly (5%) or somewhat agree (44%) that corporate management is in the best position to decide who should be nominated to the board of directors and 44% think that individual shareholders do not vote because they have faith in management to make the best decision (6% strongly agree and 38% somewhat agree).



## **Attitudes Toward Reform Proposals**

- **There is a great deal of support among individual investors to reform the current system in which the corporation has exclusive access to proxy materials. Shareholders favor a timely, open process in which they are more involved in nominating director candidates.**
  - Nearly two-thirds of investors (67%) favor a Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) proposal that would make it easier for major, long-term shareholders or groups of shareholders, to nominate candidates for corporate boards of directors in non-takeover situations.
  - This view is held more strongly among those investing longer (58% among those investing 5 years or less, 66% among those investing 6-20 years and 68% among those investing for 20 or more years).
  - Virtually all shareholders (95%) believe that they should have the right to nominate board of director candidates in at least some situations. More than four in ten (44%) think shareholders should be able to nominate board of director candidates all the time, more than half (52%) of investors think they should be able to nominate director candidates in some situations and just 5% report that shareholders should never have this right.
  - The longer an investor has owned individual company stocks, the more likely they are to think shareholders should be entitled to nominate candidates all the time (53% among long-term investors vs. 36% of those investing for 5 years or less and 44% of those investing for between 6 and 20 years).
  - Nearly nine in ten respondents (87%) believe shareholders should have access to the corporate proxy materials to nominate candidates at the next annual meeting if one of several events occurs, including shareholder request or corporate scandal.



## **Attitudes Toward Reform Proposals (Cont'd)**

- There is strong support for various proposals which would enable shareholders to be able to nominate board of director candidates using the corporation's proxy materials. Support for these proposals suggests that shareholders want corporations to be held accountable for their actions and more open to greater shareholder participation.
  - Perhaps not surprising, given the scandals at Enron, Worldcom and ImClone but a large majority of shareholders (81%) favors a proposal which would provide shareholders greater access to proxy materials if there has been a major corporate scandal.
  - Eight in ten (81%) believe shareholders should have access to the ballot at their request. Nearly the same proportion (80%) agrees that if the corporation fails to act on a shareholder proposal that received a majority vote, shareholders should receive the right to nominate board of director candidates.
  - Seven in ten would favor shareholders nominating board member candidates using the corporation's proxy materials if the corporation's financial performance declines significantly compared to other corporations in the same industry (72%) or if the Securities and Exchange Commission has required the corporation to revise its financial statements (71%).
  - Two-thirds (67%) favor a proposal allowing greater shareholder participation following a corporate board election, where a candidate nominated by corporate management does not receive significant shareholder support.



## **Investor Profile**

- Individual shareholder's experiences investing in companies reflects a belief that stocks are a long-term investment. Investor experience is demonstrated both by the length of time they have owned individual company stock and the number of companies in which they own shares.
  - Nearly three-quarters of individual investors (73%) have been investing in individual stocks for more than 5 years, with more than half investing in stocks for more than 10 years. The typical investor has invested in individual companies for 12 years.
  - Most investors (81%) are currently investing in more than one company. The typical investor owns stocks in 5 different companies and this number rises the longer one has been investing.
  - The shorter-term investor, who has owned individual company shares for less than five years typically owns shares in 2 companies, those investing between 6 and 20 years typically own shares of 5 different companies and long-term investors (those investing for 20 or more years) own stocks in 8 different companies.



## Investor Demographics

■ **significant proportion of investors' net worth is derived from their ownership of individual stocks. The longer an investor has owned individual company shares the more money they have in this kind of investment and the higher their total net worth.**

■ **investors who have owned individual shares for less than 5 years, they typically have an investment of \$5,000 and a net worth of \$101,000. Nearly half (45%) of this group has less than \$10,000 invested in individual company shares (as compared to 14% of those who have owned this kind of investment between 6 and 20 years and 6% of those who have owned individual shares for 20 years or longer).**

■ **investors with medium to long-term ownership of individual stock the investments and net worth grow even larger. Investors who have owned shares between 6 and 20 years typically have \$42,000 invested in individual companies and \$239,000 in total net worth. The typical long-term investor has \$102,000 invested in individual company stocks and an overall net worth of \$657,000.**

■ **these data also show that the proportion of money invested in individual shares to overall net worth also rises the longer one owns this kind of investment.**

➤ **To demonstrate, shorter-term (5 years or less) investors have just 5% of their assets in individual shares whereas mid (6 to 20 years) and long-term (20 years or more)**





## Overall Shareholder Voting Behavior

For the most part, individual investors are paying attention to their investments by reviewing the materials they receive and voting on issues put before them by corporate management.

- The overwhelming majority of investors (92%) recall receiving proxy materials in the past two years and nearly the same proportion (94%) recall that the proxy materials included a ballot to vote on corporate governance issues or board member candidates.
- Over six in ten (62%) investors have voted at least once on the proxy materials they received. A significant minority (38%) of investors have not voted.
- In addition to or perhaps because they have larger investments, longer-term (6 or more years) individual shareholders are more likely to vote on corporate proposals and board member candidates. Fully eight in ten (83%) long-term investors vote on proxy ballots. In comparison, fewer, but still majorities of mid-term investors (71% of those investing between 6 and 20 years) vote and many (61%) of shorter-term investors vote.



## Overall Shareholder Voting Behavior (Cont'd)

- Individual investors are using their proxy votes to express their views on corporate management proposals. However, their support of corporate management is mixed. While investors' frequently support corporate management proposals, majorities have also voted against proposals, especially as they relate to compensation issues.
  - Among those who have ever voted, the overwhelming majority (93%) of investors has voted in favor of the proposals made by corporate management. Nearly three-quarters (74%) have voted against corporate management proposals, and a slightly smaller proportion (67%) have voted for and against corporate proposals on the same proxy ballot.
  - As to specific voting behavior, by far the most common thing individual investors' vote in favor of are board of directors nominees (86% as compared to 52% who have withheld or not supported board nominees). Majorities have also shown support for general corporate governance issues (62%) and changes to by-laws (61%).
  - Among the issues most likely to be voted against or not supported by majorities of investors are:
    - > Salary and compensation packages for top executives (62%);
    - > Salary and compensation packages for board members (59%); and
    - > Individuals nominated to the board of directors (52%).
  - Interestingly and perhaps evidence of the degree to which they watch over their investments, long-term individual investors are more likely to vote for and against nearly every kind of major corporate proposal.



## **Overall Shareholder Voting Behavior (Cont'd)**

- **Investor support of corporate management, as it relates specifically to board member nominees is also mixed**
  - While the vast majority (92%) have ever voted for a nominee supported by corporate management, nearly six in ten (59%) have *withheld support* from a nominee and over half (55%) have both *shown support and disapproval* of board member nominees on the same proxy ballot.
  - Investors who think it is extremely or very important to have a choice of board of director candidates are more likely to have withheld support from a corporate management nominee (78% as compared to 50% of those who think this choice is important and 43% who think it is not important) or both supported and not supported a nominee on the same ballot (68% of those who think choice is extremely or very important vs. 54% of investors who think choice is important and 41% who think this choice is not important).



# Detailed Findings



# Voted For/Against Corporate Proposals

% Yes

	Total	Years Investing		
		5 Years or Less	6-20 Years	20 Years or More
Base:	724	102	322	300
	Ø	%	%	Ø
Have ever <i>voted for</i> the proposals made by corporate management	93	87	95	96
Have ever <i>voted against</i> the proposals made by corporate management	74	72	77	70
Have ever <i>voted for and against</i> proposals made by corporate management on the same proxy ballot	67	65	69	65

Q516: In the proxy materials, corporate management states their position on issues coming before shareholders for a vote. Have you ever voted for the proposals made by corporate management?

Base: Ever vote in shareholder elections



# Issues Voted For/Against

## Voting Behavior on Various Corporate Governance Issues

	Total Voted For	Total Voted Against	Years Investing					
			Voted For			Voted Against		
			5 Years or Less	6-20 Years	20 Years or More	5 Years or Less	6-20 Years	20 Years or More
Base:	703	577	96	314	293	83	259	235
	yo	%	yo	%	%	yo	%	%
Individuals nominated to board of directors	86	52	75	86	92	41	53	58
General corporate governance issues	62	36	51	61	70	39	33	38
Changes to by-laws	61	41	51	59	70	39	38	47
Mergers or acquisitions	45	30	37	44	52	25	29	37
Salary and compensation packages for top executives	38	62	33	31	51	48	60	73
Salary and compensation packages for board members	38	59	32	34	48	54	59	63
Other	17	8	16	17	17	11	9	7

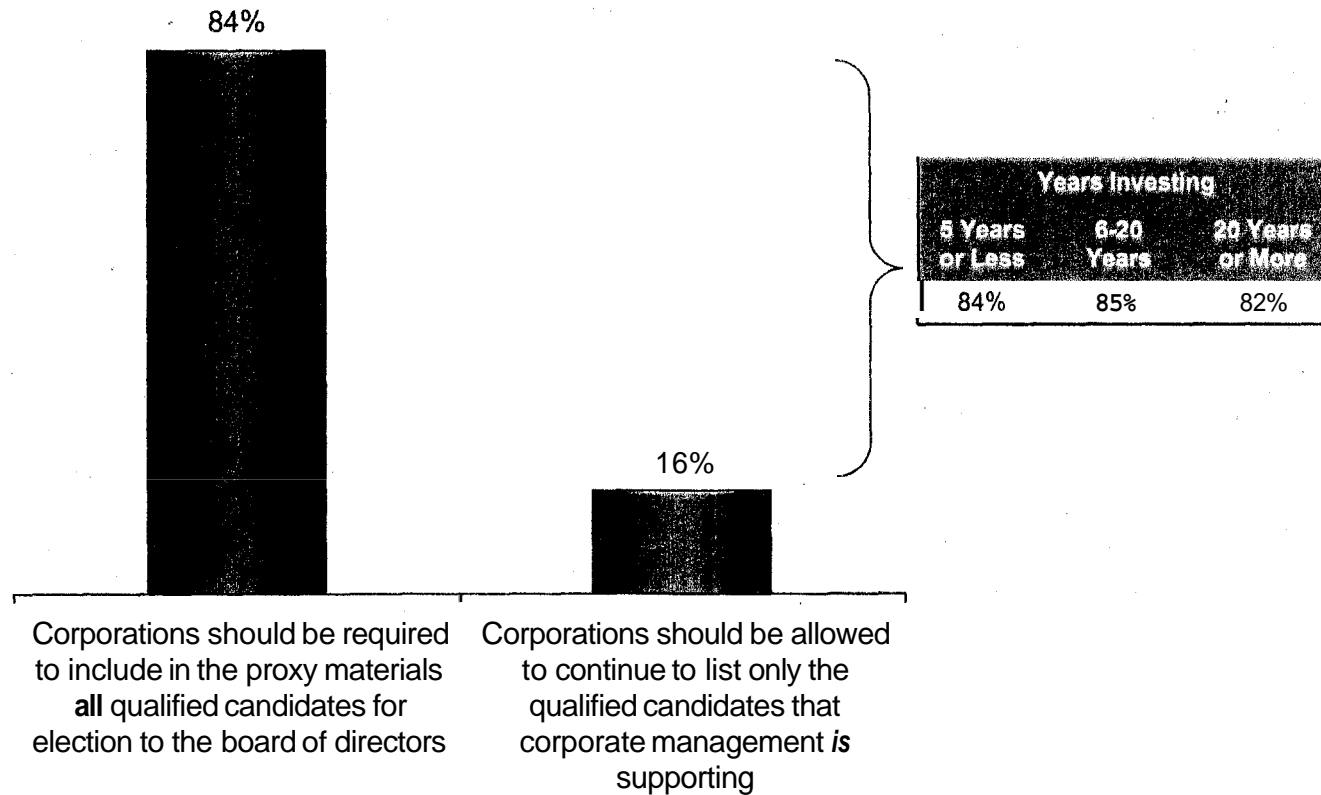
Q517/Q520: On what kinds of issues have you voted for/against proposals made by corporate management?

Base: Ever vote for/against corporate proposals in shareholder elections



# Attitudes Toward Current Board Member Nomination Process

Including all Candidates in Proxy Materials



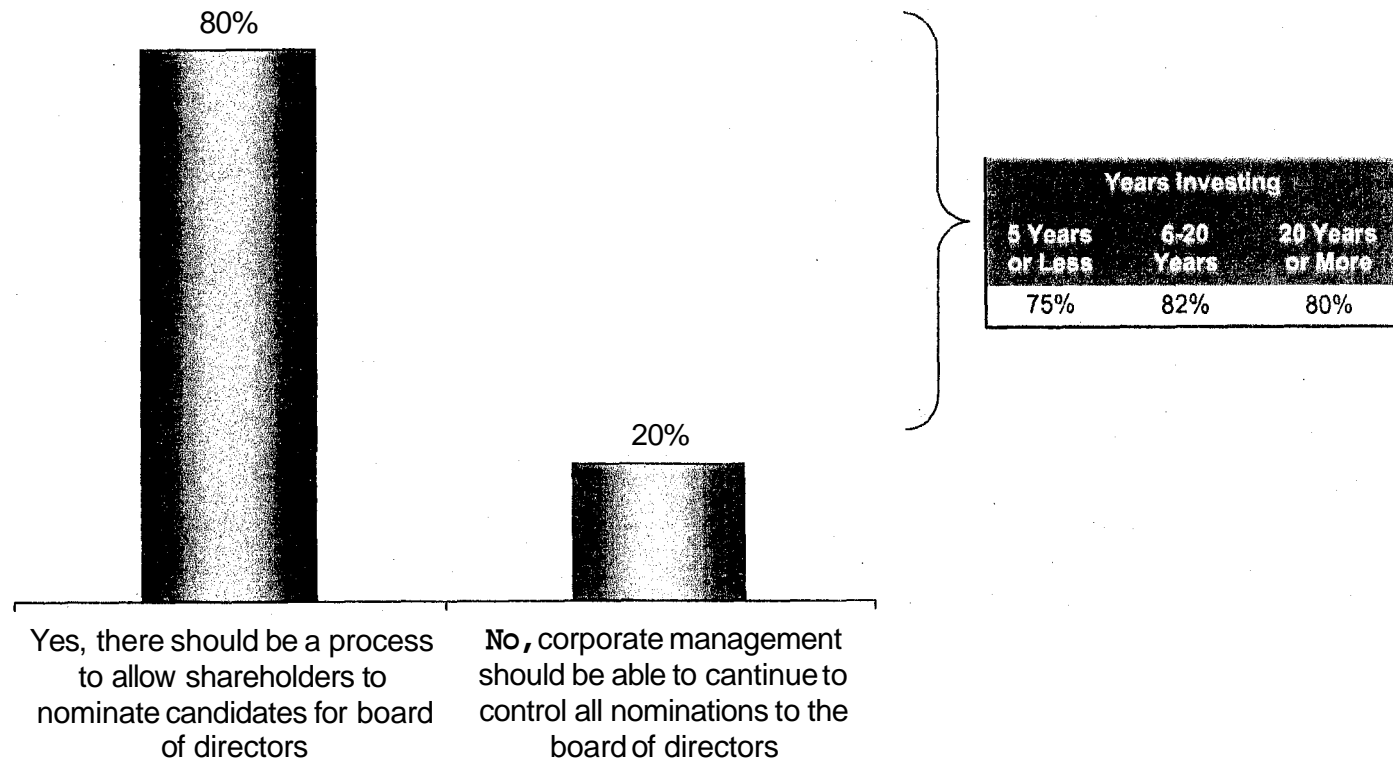
Q6 10: Currently, shareholders do not nominate board of director candidates in non-takeover situations because they do not have access to the corporations proxy materials. Which of the following statements best describes your opinion?

Base: All respondents



# Attitudes Toward Current Board Member Nomination Process

## Shareholder Access to Nominate Board Members



Q615: In a non-takeover situation, should there also be a process in which shareholders can nominate one or more candidates for election to the boards of directors and place those names in the proxy materials that are mailed to all shareholders?

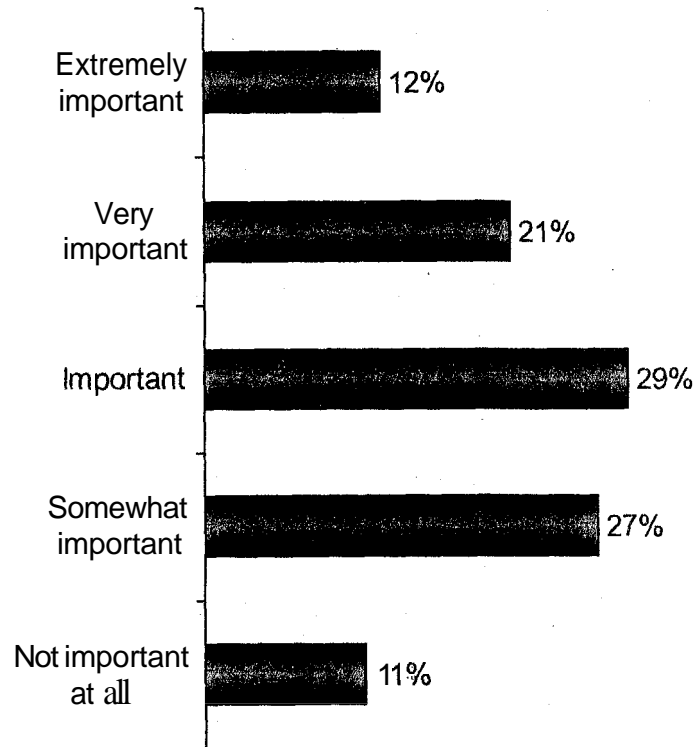
Base: All respondents





# Importance of Having Choice Among Director Candidates

## Importance of Having a Choice



	Years Investing			
	Total	5 Years or Less	6-20 Years	20 Years or More
Base:	1030	202	470	358
	%	%	%	%
Extremely/Very Important (Net)	33	25	33	41
Important	29	34	27	27
Somewhat/Not at all Important (Net)	38	41	39	32

Q620: In a non-takeover situation, how important is it to you to be able to have a choice among different candidates for election to boards of directors whether nominated by corporate management or shareholders?

Base: All respondents



# Overall Shareholder Attitudes Toward Current Nomination Process

## General Attitudes Toward \_\_\_\_\_

		Strongly/ Somewhat Agree	Somewhat/ Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Corporate misconduct in the United States has weakened investor confidence in the stock market	%	90	10	60	30	7	3
Corporations should be required to disclose more information about the process for nominating directors to serve on the boards	%	90	10	50	40	8	2
Shareholders are the owners of public corporations in which they own stock, so shareholders should be able to use proxy materials to nominate candidates for election to the boards of directors	%	85	15	38	47	12	4
Open elections, in which shareholders can use the proxy materials to nominate qualified candidates to serve on corporate boards would increase investor confidence in how those companies are managed	%	80	20	24	56	16	4
Individual shareholders do not vote because corporate management has the exclusive right to use proxy materials to nominate board of director candidates	%	55	45	10	45	31	14
Corporate management is in the best position to decide who should be nominated to the corporation's board of directors	%	49	51	5	44	37	15
Individual shareholders do not vote because they have faith in corporate management to make the best decision for the company	%	44	22	6	38	34	22

Q626: Please indicate which actions you have ever taken with regard to voting for a director candidate who was nominated by corporate management.

Base: All respondents



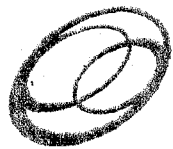
# Shareholder Attitudes Toward Current Nomination Process By Years Investing

% Strongly/Somewhat Agree

	Years Investing			
	Total	5 Years or Less	6-20 Years	20 Years or More
Base:	1030	202	470	358
	%	%	%	%
Corporate misconduct in the United States has weakened investor confidence in the stock market.	90	88	91	91
Corporations should be required to disclose more information about the process for nominating directors to serve on the boards.	90	89	90	91
Shareholders are the owners of public corporations in which they own stock, so shareholders should be able to use proxy materials to nominate candidates for election to the boards of directors.	85	87	86	80
Open elections, in which shareholders can use the proxy materials to nominate qualified candidates to serve on corporate boards would increase investor confidence in how those companies are managed.	80	85	79	79
Individual shareholders do not vote because corporate management has the exclusive right to use proxy materials to nominate board of director candidates.	55	59	52	57
Corporate management is in the best position to decide who should be nominated to the corporation's board of directors.	49	51	45	52
Individual shareholders <b>do</b> not vote because they have faith in corporate management to make the best decision for the company.	44	48	40	48

Q626: For each of *the* following statements, please indicate how much you agree or disagree.

Base: *All respondents*



## Shareholder Attitudes Toward Current Nomination Process By Frequency of Shareholders Nominating Candidates

% Strongly/Somewhat Agree

	Total	How Often Entitled to Nominate Candidate		
		Never	In Some Situations	All the Time
Base:	1030	46	469	515
	%	%	%	%
Corporate misconduct in the United States has weakened investor confidence in the stock market.	90	72	91	91
Corporations should be required to disclose more information about the process for nominating directors to serve on the boards.	90	53	88	96
Shareholders are the owners of public corporations in which they own stock, so shareholders should be able to use proxy materials to nominate candidates for election to the boards of directors.	85	26	82	94
Open elections, in which shareholders can use the proxy materials to nominate qualified candidates to serve on corporate boards would increase investor confidence in how those companies are managed,	80	35	75	91
Individual shareholders <b>do</b> not vote because corporate management has the exclusive right to use proxy materials to nominate board of director candidates.	55	38	55	56
Corporate management is in the <b>best</b> position to decide who should be nominated to the corporation's board of directors.	49	76	59	34
Individual shareholders do not vote because they have faith in corporate management to make the best decision for the company.	44	68	50	34

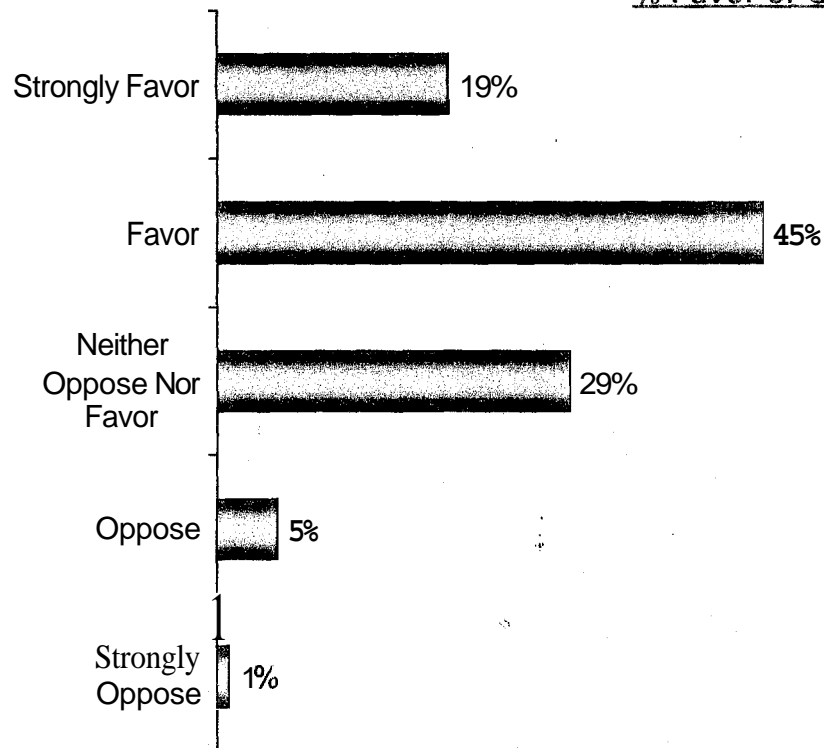
Q626: For each of the following statements, please indicate how much you agree or disagree.

Base: All respondents



# Support of SEC Reform Proposal

% Favor or Oppose SEC Reform



	Years Investing			
	Total	5 Years or Less	6-20 Years	20 Years or More
Base:	1030	202	470	358
	%	%	%	%
Strongly Favor/ Favor (Net)	65	58	66	68
Neither Oppose nor favor	29	36	29	24
Oppose/Strongly Oppose (Net)	6	6	5	8

Q630: Please indicate how much you would favor or oppose a proposal the Securities and Exchange Commission is considering that would make it easier for major, long-term shareholders or groups of shareholders, in non-takeover situations, to nominate candidates for corporate boards of directors.

Base: All respondents



# Frequency and Timing of When Shareholders Should Be Able to Nominate Candidates

## Frequency

	Years Investing			
	Total	5 Years or Less	6-20 Years	20 Years or More
Base:	1030	202	470	358
	%	%	%	%
Ever (Net)	95	96	97	92
All the time	44	36	44	53
In some situations	52	61	53	39
Never	5	4	3	8

## Timing of Nomination

	Years Investing			
	Total	5 Years or Less	6-20 Years	20 Years or More
Base:	1030	202	470	358
	%	%	%	%
At the next annual meeting	87	87	88	85
Beyond the next annual meeting	13	13	12	15

Q635: Please indicate how often you think shareholders should be able to nominate board of director candidates using the corporation's proxy materials?

Q645: If one of these events occurs, how soon should shareholders have access to the proxy ballot to nominate candidates to the board of directors?

Base: All respondents



# Overall Support for Reform Proposals

## Attitudes Toward Reform Proposals

		Strongly Favor/ Favor	Oppose/ Strongly Oppose	Strongly Favor Favor	Favor	Neither Oppose nor Favor	Oppose	Strongly Oppose
At the request of a majority of shareholders	%	81	3	35	46	16	3	*
If there has been a major corporation scandal	%	81	4	54	28	14	3	2
If the corporation fails to act on a shareholder proposal that received a majority vote	%	80	4	41	39	17	2	1
If the corporation's financial performance declines significantly compared to other corporations in the same industry	%	72	7	30	42	21	6	1
If the Securities and Exchange Commission has required the corporation to revise its financial statements	%	71	5	32	39	24	4	1
Following a corporate board election, where a corporate nominated candidate does not receive significant shareholder support	%	67	6	22	45	27	5	1

Q641 Please indicate how much you favor or oppose the following proposals which would allow shareholders to be able to nominate board of director candidates using the corporation's proxy materials

Base. All respondents



# Support For Nomination Process Reform Proposals

## % Strongly Favor/Favor

	Total	Years Investing		
		5 Years or Less	6-20 Years	20 Years or More
Base	1030	202	470	358
	%	%	%	%
If there has been a major corporate scandal	81	78	83	83
At the request of a majority of shareholders.	81	73	84	83
If the corporation fails to act on a shareholder proposal that received a majority vote	80	73	82	81
If the corporation's financial performance declines significantly compared to other corporations in the same industry	72	61	77	73
If the Securities and Exchange Commission has required the corporation to revise its financial statements	71	70	70	73
Following a corporate board election, where a corporate nominated candidate does not receive significant shareholder support	67	67	67	68

Q641: Please indicate how much you favor or oppose the following proposals which would allow shareholders to be able to nominate board director candidates using the corporation's proxy materials.



# Methodology



## **Methodology**

The Views of Corporate Governance study was conducted online within the United States, from August 29 to September 2, 2003, among 1,030 adults who are 18 years of age or older and who own individual stocks of public corporations.

### **Online Sample Selection**

- ◆ Sample for the Harris Poll Online (HPOL) surveys is drawn from the HPOL multi-million member database of households who are registered as participants in Harris' online database.

### **Control of the Online Sample**

- ◆ In order to maintain the reliability and integrity in the sample, a password protection procedure is used. Each invitation contains a password that is uniquely assigned to that e-mail address. A respondent is required to enter the password at the beginning of the survey in order to gain access to the survey. Password protection ensures that a respondent completes the survey only one time and that any other non-invited respondent cannot use the URL.



## **Methodology**

### **Online Interviewing Procedures**

- ◆ Harris Interactive, Inc. uses a unique capability and proprietary technology when conducting online surveys. More specifically, Harris' online interviewing utilizes:
  - The Harris Poll Online (HPOL) multi-million member database of cooperative respondents who have opted in to receive invitations to take part in online surveys;
  - Harris' proprietary technology for emailing to large groups of respondents and enabling large numbers of respondents to simultaneously complete the survey online; and
  - Advanced survey interviewing techniques, adapted to the online environment, including password protection, skip patterns, and visually appealing fonts and formatting
- ◆ Interviews are conducted using a self-administered, online questionnaire, via Harris' proprietary, web-assisted interviewing software. The Harris Online interviewing system permits online data entry of interviews by the respondents.



# Methodology

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## Weighting the Data

- ◆ Figures for age, sex, race, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. “Propensity score” weighting was also used to adjust for respondents’ propensity to be online.

## Reliability of Survey Percentages

- ◆ In theory, one can expect that 95% of surveys with probability samples of this size would produce results that were within plus or minus 3 percentage points of what they would be if the entire population had been polled using the same methods.
- ◆ Unfortunately, there are several other possible sources of error in all polls or surveys that are probably more serious than theoretical calculations of sampling error. They include refusals to be interviewed (non-response), question wording and question order, interviewer bias, weighting by demographic control data and screening. It is difficult or impossible to quantify the errors that may result from these factors.

