

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Release No. 34-66164; File No. 4-645

Comment Request for Study Regarding Financial Literacy Among Investors

AGENCY: Securities and Exchange Commission.

ACTION: Request for comment.

SUMMARY: In connection with a study regarding financial literacy among investors as mandated by Section 917 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010 (the “Dodd-Frank Act”), the Securities and Exchange Commission is requesting public comment on the following: methods to improve the timing, content, and format of disclosures to investors with respect to financial intermediaries, investment products, and investment services; the most useful and understandable relevant information that retail investors need to make informed financial decisions before engaging a financial intermediary or purchasing an investment product or service that is typically sold to retail investors, including shares of registered open-end investment companies; and methods to increase the transparency of expenses and conflicts of interests in transactions involving investment services and products, including shares of registered open-end investment companies.

DATES: Comments should be received on or before **[insert date 60 days from publication in the Federal Register]**.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

Electronic Comments:

- Use the Commission’s Internet comment form (<http://www.sec.gov/rules/other.shtml>);

or

- Send an e-mail to rule-comments@sec.gov. Please include **File Number 4-645** on the subject line.

Paper Comments:

- Send paper comments in triplicate to Elizabeth M. Murphy, Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F Street, NE, Washington, DC 20549–1090. All submissions should refer to **File Number 4-645**. This file number should be included on the subject line if e-mail is used. To help us process and review your comments more efficiently, please use only one method. The Commission will post all comments on the Commission’s Internet website (<http://www.sec.gov>). Comments are also available for website viewing and printing in the Commission’s Public Reference Room, 100 F Street, NE, Washington, DC 20549, on official business days between the hours of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. All comments received will be posted without change; we do not edit personal identifying information from submissions. You should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lori J. Schock, Director, (202) 551–6500 or Mary S. Head, Deputy Director, (202) 551–6500, Office of Investor Education and Advocacy, Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F Street, NE, Washington, DC 20549–2551.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Section 917 of the Dodd-Frank Act requires the Commission to conduct a study regarding financial literacy (the “Study”) among investors and submit a report on the study to the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the House of Representatives Committee on Financial Services no later than two years after enactment of the Dodd-Frank Act, that is, by July 21, 2012.

The provisions of Section 917(a) of the Dodd-Frank Act require that the Study include a number of specific components. In particular, Sections 917(a)(2)-(4) of the Dodd-Frank Act require that the Study identify:

- (i) methods to improve the timing, content, and format of disclosures to investors with respect to financial intermediaries, investment products, and investment services;
- (ii) the most useful and understandable relevant information that retail investors need to make informed financial decisions before engaging a financial intermediary or purchasing an investment product or service that is typically sold to retail investors, including shares of registered open-end investment companies (“mutual funds”); and
- (iii) methods to increase the transparency of expenses and conflicts of interest in transactions involving investment services and products, including shares of mutual funds.

As part of its study of the issues raised in Sections 917(a)(2)-(4) of the Dodd-Frank Act, the Commission's Office of Investor Education and Advocacy is conducting investor testing using qualitative and quantitative public opinion research methods. In addition, the Commission is soliciting public comment on each of the issues identified in Sections 917(a)(2)-(4) of the Dodd-Frank Act.¹ All interested parties are invited to submit their views on one or more of these issues. Comments will be of greatest assistance if accompanied by supporting data and analysis.

By the Commission.

Elizabeth M. Murphy
Secretary

Dated: January 17, 2012

¹ In April 2011, pursuant to Section 917(a)(5) of the Dodd-Frank Act, the Commission formally solicited public comment regarding the most effective existing private and public efforts to educate investors and has received more than 80 public comments. See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 64306 (April 19, 2011), [76 FR 22740 (April 22, 2011)]. The public comments are available at <http://www.sec.gov/comments/4-626/4-626.shtml>.