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revolution

When AOL went public in 1992, the company's market capitalization was \$61.8 million. In 1999, it was \$105 billion. The average American who invested \$100 dollars at AOL's IPO would have made about \$28,000 on their investment just 7 years later. Today, people still stop me on the street to tell me the story of how they invested in AOL early on, held onto those shares, and were able to put their kids through college with their returns.

This kind of opportunity is virtually nonexistent for the average American investing in today's public markets. Companies are no longer going public in early growth stages as AOL did. From 2001-2015, the average company was 10 years old at IPO. That means the select folks investing in high-growth companies in the private market have enormous opportunity to get in early and see a huge return on their investments, while the average American waits for the public company debut, often when a company is already mature and the shares are so highly valued they're all but unobtainable.

So why are companies waiting so long to go public? There are many contributing factors, but I believe many public companies are concerned about subjecting themselves to the short-term interests of transient shareholders. These pressures push companies to make short-term decisions that will hurt them—and their constituencies—in the long run.

Companies are responsible for putting a greater focus on how their strategic plans affect society beyond the bottom line. They are growth creators and job makers and beyond that, provide people with dignity and purpose. We should be engendering an environment where companies can focus on what's important, and where the investors with long-term horizons can recognize and support them for that focus.

I'm a supporter of LTSE because I believe their listing standards could help create this type of environment. For example, I believe long-tenured investors who have parked their capital with a company for a longer period of time ought to have greater sway in corporate decision-making. LTSE's long-term voting structure would be the first innovation of its kind to offer that option. I hope the creation of *LTSE Listings on IEX* will encourage more companies to go public, create more opportunity for investors of all kinds, and help empower the kind of community value and global change I know tomorrow's entrepreneurs are capable of.

Sincerely,

Steve Case
Chairman and CEO, Revolution
Co-Founder of AOL
Investor, LTSE