

PROVIDENT FINANCIAL SERVICES, INC.

JOHN F. KUNTZ
GENERAL COUNSEL &
CORPORATE SECRETARY

March 26, 2009

Securities and Exchange Commission
100 F Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20549
Attention: Ms. Elizabeth M. Murphy, Secretary
Via e-mail: rule-comments@sec.gov

Re: Proposed Amendment to New York Stock Exchange Rule 452 (Release No. 34-59464; File No. SR-NYSE-2006-92)

Dear Sirs:

Provident Financial Services, Inc. (ticker symbol: NYSE/PFS) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the New York Stock Exchange ("NYSE") proposal to amend NYSE Rule 452 to eliminate broker discretionary voting in director elections. As an issuer of publicly traded securities, we believe that a strong proxy voting system is essential to effective governance, and we strongly support efforts to increase transparency in the system and improve communications with stockholders. However, we believe that there are problems with the current proposal that undermine the effectiveness of the proxy voting system and, without consideration of counterbalancing measures, could have negative and unintended consequences.

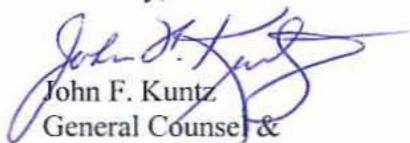
Eliminating discretionary broker voting without other reforms will suppress the voice of individual investors. Individual investors are already underrepresented in the current system, and the retail vote has further eroded with Notice & Access, and the lack of a proxy card to accompany the initial notice mailing. Any further erosion of the retail shareholder voice will shift disproportionate weight to institutional investors, and to their largely unregulated proxy advisors.

The broker vote is now a rather accurate reflection of retail stockholder sentiment given the very recent growth of "proportional voting," through which at least 10 large brokers have begun to vote unvoted shares held in "street" name proportionally to how all their other retail clients have voted. The elimination of discretionary voting would put an end to this potentially effective way to ensure the representation of individual investors, since those brokers rely on their discretionary voting authority to implement "proportional voting" policies.

We believe that that the Commission should take a comprehensive, balanced approach to the proxy voting process. Other measures should be examined that would preserve and even augment the voice of individual investors and increase the efficiency of the proxy voting system. These alternatives may include proportional voting and client directed voting. Notice & Access, a modern and cost-effective initiative, can also be easily revised to encourage the retail vote by allowing for a proxy card and return envelope to accompany the initial notice mailing.

Regulation of proxy advisors would help to restore equilibrium and integrity to the proxy voting process. We believe that no action should be taken with respect to the current proposal until these have been thoroughly analyzed and understood.

Sincerely,


John F. Kuntz
General Counsel &
Corporate Secretary

JFK/mlf