

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
(Release No. 34-84695; File No. SR-CboeBZX-2018-084)

November 30, 2018

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc.; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of a Proposed Rule Change to Amend Rule 19.8, Long-Term Options Contracts

Pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (“Act”),¹ and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,² notice is hereby given that on November 23, 2018, Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc. (“Exchange” or “BZX Options”) filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (“Commission”) the proposed rule change as described in Items I and II below, which Items have been prepared by the Exchange. The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comments on the proposed rule change from interested persons.

I. Self-Regulatory Organization’s Statement of the Terms of Substance of the Proposed Rule Change

Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc. (the “Exchange” or “BZX Options”) proposes to amend Rule 19.8, Long-Term Options Contracts. The text of the proposed rule change is provided below.

(additions are underlined; deletions are [bracketed])

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Rules of Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc.

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Rule 19.8. Long-Term Options Contracts

[(a)] Notwithstanding conflicting language in Rule 19.6 (Series of Options Contracts Open for Trading), the Exchange may list long-term options contracts that expire from twelve (12) to thirty-nine (39) months from the time they are listed. There may be up to ten (10) additional expiration

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

months for options on SPY and up to six (6) additional expiration months for all other option classes. Strike price interval, bid/ask differential and continuity rules shall not apply to such options series until the time to expiration is less than nine (9) months.

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The text of the proposed rule change is also available on the Exchange's website (<http://www.cboe.com/AboutCBOE/CBOELegalRegulatoryHome.aspx>), at the Exchange's Office of the Secretary, and at the Commission's Public Reference Room.

II. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

In its filing with the Commission, the Exchange included statements concerning the purpose of and basis for the proposed rule change and discussed any comments it received on the proposed rule change. The text of these statements may be examined at the places specified in Item IV below. The Exchange has prepared summaries, set forth in sections A, B, and C below, of the most significant aspects of such statements.

A. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

1. Purpose

The Exchange proposes to amend Rule 19.8, Long-Term Option Contracts, to permit the listing and trading of up to ten (10) long-term expiration months for long-term options on the SPDR® S&P 500® exchange-traded fund ("SPY") in response to customer demand.³ Rule 19.8

³ The proposed rule change also deletes the paragraph letter (a) in Rule 19.8, as there is only one paragraph in the Rule, making a paragraph letter unnecessary. In contrast to Rule 19.8, Rule 29.11(b)(1)(A) (which applies to index options) permits the Exchange to list long-term index options series based on either the full or reduced value of the underlying index, adding up to ten (10) expiration months. The Exchange seeks to list ten (10) long-term expiration months on SPY, just as it now may list ten (10) expiration months on long-term index option series, in order to provide investors with a wider choice of investments.

currently provides that the Exchange may list long-term option contracts that expire from twelve (12) to thirty-nine (39) months from the time they are listed (“long-term expiration months”). There may be up to six (6) long-term expiration months per option class.⁴ The proposal will add liquidity to the SPY options market by allowing market participants to hedge risks relating to SPY positions over a longer period with a known and limited cost.

The SPY options market today is characterized by its tremendous daily and annual liquidity. As a consequence, the Exchange believes that the listing of additional SPY long-term expiration months would be well received by investors. This proposal to expand the number of permitted SPY long-term expiration months would not apply to long-term expiration months on any other class of options.⁵

The Exchange proposes to implement the proposed rule change on the date of this rule filing.

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the “Act”) and the rules and regulations thereunder applicable to the Exchange and, in particular, the requirements of Section 6(b) of the Act.⁶ Specifically, the Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the Section 6(b)(5)⁷ requirements that the rules of an exchange be designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices, to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to foster cooperation and

⁴ Pursuant to rule 19.8, strike price interval, bid/ask differential, and continuity rules do not apply to such options series until the time to expiration is less than nine (9) months.

⁵ Historically, SPY is the largest and most actively traded ETF in the United States as measured by its assets under management and the value of shares traded.

⁶ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

⁷ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

coordination with persons engaged in regulating, clearing, settling, processing information with respect to, and facilitating transactions in securities, to remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system, and, in general, to protect investors and the public interest. Additionally, the Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the Section 6(b)(5)⁸ requirement that the rules of an exchange not be designed to permit unfair discrimination between customers, issuers, brokers, or dealers.

In particular, the proposed rule change offers market participants additional long-term expiration months on SPY options for their investment and risk management purposes. The proposal is intended simply to provide additional trading opportunities which have been requested by customers, thereby facilitating transactions in options and contributing to the protection of investors and the maintenance of fair and orderly markets. The proposed rule change responds to the continuing needs of market participants, particularly portfolio managers and other institutional customers, by providing protection from long-term market moves and by offering an alternative to hedging portfolios with future positions or off-exchange customized derivative instruments.

Rule 19.8 has permitted up to six (6) long-term expiration months in option classes since the launch of BZX Options in 2010. Other exchanges, such as Nasdaq PHLX LLC (“Phlx”), have permitted up to six “LEAPS” since 1991, when it increased the number of permissible expiration months from four to six. As noted by Phlx (in its recent proposal to permit up to ten LEAPS expiration months for options on SPY), when the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “Commission”) approved the increase to six expiration months, the Commission stated that it did not believe that increasing the number of expiration months to six would cause, by itself, a

⁸ Id.

proliferation of expiration months. The Commission also required that Phlx monitor the volume of additional options series listed as a result of the rule change, and the effect on Phlx's system capacity and quotation dissemination displays.⁹

The Exchange believes that the addition today of four (4) additional long-term expiration months on SPY options likewise does not represent a proliferation of expiration months, but is instead a very modest expansion of long-term options in response to stated customer demand. Significantly, the proposal would feature new long-term expiration months in only a single class of options that are very liquid and heavily traded, as discussed above. Additionally, the Exchange notes by way of precedent, that ten (10) expiration months are already permitted for long-term index options series. Further, the Exchange has the necessary systems capacity to support the new SPY long-term expiration months.

B. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Burden on Competition

The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any burden on competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. The proposal merely provides investors additional investment and risk management opportunities by providing flexibility to the Exchange to list additional long-term options expiration series, expanding the number of SPY long-term expiration months offered on the Exchange from six (6) long-term expiration months to ten (10) long-term expiration months. Other options exchanges currently permit the listing of ten (10) long-term expiration months for SPY.¹⁰

⁹ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 84449 (October 18, 2018), 83 FR 53699 (October 24, 2018) (SR-Phlx-2018-64); see also Securities Exchange Act Release No. 29103 (April 18, 1991), 56 FR 19132 (April 25, 1991) (approving SR-Phlx-91-18).

¹⁰ See, e.g., Phlx Rule 1012(a)(i)(D); Miami International Securities Exchange, LLC ("MIAX") Rule 406(a); and NYSE Arca, Inc. ("Arca") Rule 6.4-O(d)(i).

C. Self-Regulatory Organization’s Statement on Comments on the Proposed Rule Change Received from Members, Participants, or Others

The Exchange neither solicited nor received comments on the proposed rule change.

III. Date of Effectiveness of the Proposed Rule Change and Timing for Commission Action

Because the foregoing proposed rule change does not: (i) significantly affect the protection of investors or the public interest; (ii) impose any significant burden on competition; and (iii) become operative for 30 days from the date on which it was filed, or such shorter time as the Commission may designate, it has become effective pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A) of the Act¹¹ and Rule 19b-4(f)(6) thereunder.¹²

A proposed rule change filed under Rule 19b-4(f)(6)¹³ normally does not become operative prior to 30 days after the date of the filing. However, pursuant to Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii),¹⁴ the Commission may designate a shorter time if such action is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest. The Exchange has asked the Commission to waive the 30-day operative delay so that the proposal may become operative upon filing. The Exchange’s proposal would conform the Exchange’s rules relating to the permitted number of long term expiration months for long-term options on SPY to those of other exchanges.¹⁵

Accordingly, the Commission believes that the proposal raises no new or novel regulatory issues, and waiver of the 30-day operative delay is consistent with the protection of investors and the

¹¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

¹² 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6). In addition, Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii) requires a self-regulatory organization to give the Commission written notice of its intent to file the proposed rule change, along with a brief description and text of the proposed rule change, at least five business days prior to the date of filing of the proposed rule change, or such shorter time as designated by the Commission. The Commission has waived this requirement in this case.

¹³ Id.

¹⁴ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6)(iii).

¹⁵ See supra note 10.

public interest. The Commission therefore waives the 30-day operative delay and designates the proposal operative upon filing.¹⁶

At any time within 60 days of the filing of the proposed rule change, the Commission summarily may temporarily suspend such rule change if it appears to the Commission that such action is necessary or appropriate in the public interest, for the protection of investors, or otherwise in furtherance of the purposes of the Act.

IV. Solicitation of Comments

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views, and arguments concerning the foregoing, including whether the proposed rule change is consistent with the Act. Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

Electronic comments:

- Use the Commission's Internet comment form (<http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>); or
- Send an e-mail to rule-comments@sec.gov. Please include File Number SR-CboeBZX-2018-084 on the subject line.

Paper comments:

- Send paper comments in triplicate to Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F Street, NE, Washington, DC 20549-1090.

All submissions should refer to File Number SR-CboeBZX-2018-084. This file number should be included on the subject line if e-mail is used. To help the Commission 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/rules/sro.shtml>). Copies

¹⁶ For purposes only of waiving the 30-day operative delay, the Commission has also considered the proposed rule's impact on efficiency, competition, and capital formation. See 15 U.S.C. 78c(f).

of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the proposed rule change that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the proposed rule change between the Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the public in accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be 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 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Copies of the filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. All comments received will be posted without change. Persons submitting comments are cautioned that we do not redact or edit personal identifying information from comment submissions. You should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. All submissions should refer to File Number SR-CboeBZX-2018-084, and should be submitted on or before [insert date 21 days from publication in the Federal Register].

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.¹⁷

Eduardo A. Aleman
Assistant Secretary

¹⁷ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).