

**Part 2A of Form ADV: *Firm Brochure***

**Financial Concepts**

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**March 31, 2014**

**This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Financial Concepts. If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, please contact us at 662-327-1480 or [rsf@fincon.net](mailto:rsf@fincon.net). The information in this brochure has not been approved or verified by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or by any state securities authority.**

**Additional information about Financial Concepts also is available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov). You can search this site by a unique identifying number, known as a CRD number. Our firm's CRD number is 157616.**

## **Item 2      Material Changes**

The SEC adopted "Amendments to Form ADV" in July, 2010. This Firm Brochure, dated April 1, 2014, is our disclosure document prepared according to the SEC's requirements and rules. As you will see, this document is a narrative that is substantially different in form and content, and includes some new information that we were not previously required to disclose.

This brochure dated March 31, 2014, serves as an update to the last annual update of the brochure dated April 1, 2013. **There have not been any material changes since the last annual update of the brochure.**

Consistent with the new rules, we will ensure that you receive a summary of any material changes to this and subsequent Brochures within 120 days of the close of our business' fiscal year. Furthermore, we will provide you with other interim disclosures about material changes as necessary.

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#### **Item 4      Advisory Business**

Financial Concepts is an SEC investment adviser with its principal place of business located in Mississippi. Financial Concepts began conducting advisory business in 2011.

Listed below are the firm's principal shareholders (i.e., those individuals and/or entities controlling 25% or more of this company).

- Rhonda S. Ferguson, President

Financial Concepts offers the following advisory services to our clients:

#### **INVESTMENT SUPERVISORY SERVICES ("ISS") INDIVIDUAL PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT**

Our firm provides continuous advice to a client regarding the investment of client funds based on the individual needs of the client. Through personal discussions in which goals and objectives based on a client's particular circumstances are established, we develop a client's strategy and create and manage a portfolio based on that strategy. During our data-gathering process, we determine the client's individual objectives, time horizons, risk tolerance, and liquidity needs. As appropriate, we also review and discuss a client's prior investment history, as well as family composition and background.

We design portfolios based on a client's objectives and needs determined in the financial planning process. It is our firm's philosophy and belief that an investment portfolio should be changed based on changing financial goals and objectives, not market fluctuations. Our firm has a buy-and-hold investment strategy and we make recommendations for portfolio changes based upon on our client's life circumstances, not market fluctuations. We do not believe in market timing and do not make recommendations based on market fluctuations. We believe that purchasing power erosion and inflation are the biggest risks our clients face. We believe the protections against that risk is ownership in equities. Therefore we recommend portfolios that are primarily growth, growth and income, and balanced mutual fund portfolios.

Market risk is a part of owning equities. Therefore, our most significant value comes from behavior coaching, reminding clients of their long-term plan, goals and objectives, and the history of owning the types of portfolios designed inside their financial plans. Often our biggest value comes from helping clients avoid the mistakes of timing, emotions, and tax errors.

We communicate with clients on an ongoing basis to see if their objectives, goals and financial needs have changed. If there have been significant changes, we discuss updating their plans and their portfolios. We manage these advisory accounts on a non-discretionary basis. Account supervision is guided by the client's stated objectives (i.e., maximum capital appreciation, growth, income, or growth and income), as well as tax considerations.

Clients may impose reasonable restrictions on investing in certain securities, types of securities, or industry sectors.

Our investment recommendations are not limited to any specific product or service offered by a broker-dealer or insurance company and will generally include advice regarding the following securities:

- Variable annuities
- Mutual fund shares

Because some types of investments involve certain additional degrees of risk, they will only be implemented/recommended when consistent with the client's stated investment objectives, tolerance for risk, liquidity and suitability.

### **FINANCIAL PLANNING**

We provide financial planning services. Financial planning is a comprehensive evaluation of a client's current and future financial state by using currently known variables to predict future cash flows, asset values and withdrawal plans. Through the financial planning process, all questions, information and analysis are considered as they impact and are impacted by the entire financial and life situation of the client. Clients purchasing this service receive a written report which provides the client with a detailed financial plan designed to assist the client achieve his or her financial goals and objectives.

In general, the financial plan can address any or all of the following areas:

- **PERSONAL:** We review family records, budgeting, personal liability, estate information and financial goals.
- **TAX & CASH FLOW:** We analyze the client's income tax and spending and planning for past, current and future years; then illustrate the impact of various investments on the client's current income tax and future tax liability.
- **INVESTMENTS:** We analyze investment alternatives and their effect on the client's portfolio.
- **INSURANCE:** We review existing policies to ensure proper coverage for life, health, disability, long-term care, liability, home and automobile.
- **RETIREMENT:** We analyze current strategies and investment plans to help the client achieve his or her retirement goals.
- **DEATH & DISABILITY:** We review the client's cash needs at death, income needs of surviving dependents, estate planning and disability income.
- **ESTATE:** We assist the client in assessing and developing long-term strategies, including as appropriate, living trusts, wills, review estate tax, powers of attorney, asset protection plans, nursing homes, Medicaid and elder law.

We gather required information through in-depth personal interviews. Information

gathered includes the client's current financial status, tax status, future goals, returns objectives and attitudes towards risk. Should the client choose to implement our recommendations, we suggest the client work closely with his/her attorney, accountant, insurance agent, and/or stockbroker. Implementation of financial plan recommendations is entirely at the client's discretion.

We also provide general non-securities advice on topics that may include tax and budgetary planning, estate planning and business planning.

Financial Planning recommendations are not limited to any specific product or service offered by a broker-dealer or insurance company. All recommendations are of a generic nature. As of December 31, 2013, Financial Concepts is managing \$159,395,694 in regulatory assets.

*LIMITATIONS:* As individuals of Financial Concepts are registered as representatives of a broker-dealer and/or as insurance agents/brokers of various insurance companies, recommendations made in financial plans are limited to only those products offered through these companies.

## **Item 5 Fees and Compensation**

### **INVESTMENT SUPERVISORY SERVICES ("ISS") INDIVIDUAL PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT FEES**

Our annual fees for Investment Supervisory Services are based upon a percentage of assets under management at .50%. or a minimum of \$100. Financial Concepts also has registered representatives associated with a registered securities broker/dealer and, as such, the registered representatives have a dual role insofar as they also serve as IARs of the Financial Concepts. The registered representatives would receive a percentage of any 12b-1 fees paid to the broker-dealer, Girard Securities, Inc. To offset the dual compensation, the client's advisory fee will be reduced by the amount of any 12b-1 fees paid to the broker/dealer. If the 12b-1 fees that are payable to registered representatives, who are also IAR's of Financial Concepts, are reduced or eliminated due to regulatory changes or otherwise, the investment annual advisory fee shall automatically increase the full .50% to compensate for the reduction of 12b-1 fees. Also, any commissions paid at the point of sale by the respective mutual funds to the broker/dealer are shared by the registered representatives. New clients who invest in mutual funds and are assessed an upfront commission will not be subject to advisory fees until after a one year period.

Our fees are billed in arrears at the end of each calendar quarter based upon the value (market value or fair market value in the absence of market value) of the client's account at the end of the previous quarter. Fees will be debited from the account in accordance with the client authorization in the Investment Management Agreement.

**Limited Negotiability of Advisory Fees:** Although Financial Concepts has established the aforementioned fee schedule(s), we retain the discretion to negotiate alternative fees on a client-by-client basis. Client facts, circumstances and needs are considered in determining the fee schedule. These include the complexity of the client, assets to be placed under management, anticipated future additional assets; related accounts; portfolio style, account composition, reports, among other factors. The specific annual fee schedule is identified in the contract between the adviser and each client.

We may group certain related client accounts for the purposes of achieving the minimum account size requirements and determining the annualized fee.

Discounts, not generally available to our advisory clients, may be offered to family members and friends of associated persons of our firm.

### **FINANCIAL PLANNING FEES**

Financial Concepts' Financial Planning fee is determined based on the nature of the services being provided and the complexity of each client's circumstances. All fees are agreed upon prior to entering into a contract with any client.

**Fees Offset By Commissions:** Financial Concepts also has registered representatives associated with a registered securities broker/dealer and, as such, the registered representatives have a dual role insofar as they also serve as IARs of the Financial Concepts. The registered representatives would receive a percentage of any 12b-1 fees paid to the broker-dealer, Girard Securities, Inc. To offset the dual compensation, the client's advisory fee will be reduced by the amount of any 12b-1 fees paid to the broker/dealer. If the 12b-1 fees that are payable to registered representatives, who are also IAR's of Financial Concepts, are reduced or eliminated due to regulatory changes or otherwise, the investment annual advisory fee shall automatically increase the full .50% to compensate for the reduction of 12b-1 fees. Also, any commissions paid at the point of sale by the respective mutual funds to the broker/dealer are shared by the registered representatives. New clients who invest in mutual funds and are assessed an upfront commission will not be subject to advisory fees until after a one year period.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Termination of the Advisory Relationship:** A client agreement may be canceled at any time, by either party, for any reason upon receipt of 30 days written notice. Upon termination of any account, any prepaid, unearned fees will be promptly refunded.

**Mutual Fund Fees:** All fees paid to Financial Concepts for investment advisory services are separate and distinct from the fees and expenses charged by mutual funds and/or ETFs to their shareholders. These fees and expenses are described in each

fund's prospectus. These fees will generally include a management fee, other fund expenses, and a possible distribution fee. If the fund also imposes sales charges, a client may pay an initial or deferred sales charge. A client could invest in a mutual fund directly, without our services. In that case, the client would not receive the services provided by our firm which are designed, among other things, to assist the client in determining which mutual fund or funds are most appropriate to each client's financial condition and objectives. Accordingly, the client should review both the fees charged by the funds and our fees to fully understand the total amount of fees to be paid by the client and to thereby evaluate the advisory services being provided.

***Additional Fees and Expenses:*** In addition to our advisory fees, clients are also responsible for the fees and expenses charged by custodians and imposed by broker dealers, including, but not limited to, any transaction charges imposed by a broker dealer with which an independent investment manager effects transactions for the client's account(s). Please refer to the "Brokerage Practices" section (Item 12) of this Form ADV for additional information.

***Advisory Fees in General:*** Clients should note that similar advisory services may (or may not) be available from other registered (or unregistered) investment advisers for similar or lower fees.

***Limited Prepayment of Fees:*** Under no circumstances do we require or solicit payment of fees in excess of \$1200 more than six months in advance of services rendered.

***ERISA Accounts:*** Financial Concepts is deemed to be a fiduciary to advisory clients that are employee benefit plans or individual retirement accounts (IRAs) pursuant to the Employee Retirement Income and Securities Act ("ERISA"), and regulations under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (the "Code"), respectively. As such, our firm is subject to specific duties and obligations under ERISA and the Internal Revenue Code that include among other things, restrictions concerning certain forms of compensation. To avoid engaging in prohibited transactions, Financial Concepts may only charge fees for investment advice about products for which our firm and/or our related persons do not receive any commissions or 12b-1 fees, or conversely, investment advice about products for which our firm and/or our related persons receive commissions or 12b-1 fees, however, only when such fees are used to offset Financial Concept's advisory fees.

## **Item 6      Performance-Based Fees and Side-By-Side Management**

Financial Concepts does not charge performance-based fees.

## **Item 7      Types of Clients**

Financial Concepts provides advisory services to the following types of clients:



- Individuals (other than high net worth individuals)
- High Net Worth Individuals
- Charitable Organizations

## **Item 8      Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss**

### **METHODS OF ANALYSIS**

We use the following methods of analysis in formulating our investment advice and/or managing client assets:

***Fundamental Analysis:*** We attempt to measure the intrinsic value of a security by looking at economic and financial factors (including the overall economy, industry conditions, and the financial condition and management of the company itself) to determine if the company is underpriced (indicating it may be a good time to buy) or overpriced (indicating it may be time to sell).

Fundamental analysis does not attempt to anticipate market movements. This presents a potential risk, as the price of a security can move up or down along with the overall market regardless of the economic and financial factors considered in evaluating the stock.

***Risks for all forms of analysis:*** Our securities analysis methods rely on the assumption that the companies whose securities we purchase and sell, the rating agencies that review these securities, and other publicly-available sources of information about these securities, are providing accurate and unbiased data. While we are alert to indications that data may be incorrect, there is always a risk that our analysis may be compromised by inaccurate or misleading information.

### **INVESTMENT STRATEGIES**

We use the following strategies in managing client accounts, provided that such strategies are appropriate to the needs of the client and consistent with the client's investment objectives, risk tolerance, and time horizons, among other considerations:

***Long-term purchases:*** We purchase securities with the idea of holding them in the client's account for a year or longer. Typically we employ this strategy when:

- we believe the securities to be currently undervalued, and/or
- we want exposure to a particular asset class over time, regardless of the current projection for this class.

A risk in a long-term purchase strategy is that by holding the security for this length of time, we may not take advantage of short-term gains that could be profitable to a client. Moreover, if our predictions are incorrect, a security may decline sharply in value before we make the decision to sell.

***Risk of Loss:*** Securities investments are not guaranteed and you may lose money on

your investments. We ask that you work with us to help us understand your tolerance for risk.

#### **Item 9      Disciplinary Information**

We are required to disclose any legal or disciplinary events that are material to a client's or prospective client's evaluation of our advisory business or the integrity of our management. Our firm and our management personnel have no reportable disciplinary events to disclose.

#### **Item 10      Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations**

Management personnel of Financial Concepts are separately licensed as registered representatives of Girard Securities, Inc. a FINRA member broker/dealer. These individuals, in their separate capacity, can effect securities transactions for which they will receive separate, yet customary compensation.

If a Financial Planning client executes recommended securities transactions through associated persons of our firm in their separate capacities as registered representatives of a broker dealer, these individuals will earn commissions which are separate and distinct from fees charged for advisory services. In some instances, depending on the size of the transaction, advisory fees will be discounted, at our discretion, for commissions earned. Commissions will not be credited towards future advisory fees.

Management personnel and other related persons of our firm are licensed as registered representatives of a broker-dealer and/or licensed as insurance agents or brokers. In their separate capacities, these individuals are able to implement investment recommendations for advisory clients for separate and typical compensation (i.e., commissions, 12b-1 fees or other sales-related forms of compensation). This presents a conflict of interest to the extent that these individuals recommend that a client invest in a security which results in a commission being paid to the individuals. Clients are not under any obligation to engage these individuals when considering implementation of advisory recommendations. The implementation of any or all recommendations is solely at the discretion of the client.

While Financial Concepts and these individuals endeavor at all times to put the interest of the clients first as part of our fiduciary duty, clients should be aware that the receipt of additional compensation itself creates a conflict of interest, and may affect the judgment of these individuals when making recommendations.

In addition, the management persons and other employees of Financial Concepts are: (1) management persons and registered representatives of Girard Securities, Inc., member FINRA, SIPC broker-dealer; and, (2) and Financial Concepts associate insurance agents. These individuals may also be insurance agents for one or more insurance companies. In their separate capacities as registered representatives and/or

insurance agents, these individuals are able to effect securities transactions and/or purchase insurance and insurance-related investment products for Financial Concept's advisory clients, for which these individuals may receive separate and additional compensation. Clients, however, are not under any obligation to engage these individuals when considering the purchase/sale of securities or insurance.

Clients should be aware that the receipt of additional compensation by Financial Concepts and its management persons or employees creates a conflict of interest that may impair the objectivity of our firm and these individuals when making advisory recommendations. Financial Concepts endeavors at all times to put the interest of its clients first as part of our fiduciary duty as a registered investment adviser; we take the following steps to address this conflict:

- we disclose to clients the existence of all material conflicts of interest, including the potential for our firm and our employees to earn compensation from advisory clients in addition to our firm's advisory fees;
- we disclose to clients that they are not obligated to purchase recommended investment products from our employees or affiliated companies;
- we collect, maintain and document accurate, complete and relevant client background information, including the client's financial goals, objectives and risk tolerance;
- our firm's management conducts regular reviews of each client account to verify that all recommendations made to a client are suitable to the client's needs and circumstances;
- we require that our employees seek prior approval of any outside employment activity so that we may ensure that any conflicts of interests in such activities are properly addressed;
- we periodically monitor these outside employment activities to verify that any conflicts of interest continue to be properly addressed by our firm; and,
- we educate our employees regarding the responsibilities of a fiduciary, including the need for having a reasonable and independent basis for the investment advice provided to clients.

#### **Item 11 Code of Ethics, Participation or Interest in Client Transactions and Personal Trading**

Our firm has adopted a Code of Ethics which sets forth high ethical standards of business conduct that we require of our employees, including compliance with applicable federal securities laws.

Financial Concepts and our personnel owe a duty of loyalty, fairness and good faith towards our clients, and have an obligation to adhere not only to the specific provisions of the Code of Ethics but to the general principles that guide the Code.

Our Code of Ethics includes policies and procedures for the review of quarterly securities transactions reports as well as initial and annual securities holdings reports that must be submitted by the firm's access persons. Among other things, our Code of Ethics also requires the prior approval of any acquisition of securities in a limited offering (e.g., private placement) or an initial public offering. Our code also provides for oversight, enforcement and recordkeeping provisions.

Financial Concepts' Code of Ethics further includes the firm's policy prohibiting the use of material non-public information. While we do not believe that we have any particular access to non-public information, all employees are reminded that such information may not be used in a personal or professional capacity.

A copy of our Code of Ethics is available to our advisory clients and prospective clients. You may request a copy by email sent to [rsf@fincon.net](mailto:rsf@fincon.net), or by calling us at 662-327-1480.

Financial Concepts and individuals associated with our firm are prohibited from engaging in principal transactions.

Financial Concepts and individuals associated with our firm are prohibited from engaging in agency cross transactions.

Our Code of Ethics is designed to assure that the personal securities transactions, activities and interests of our employees will not interfere with (i) making decisions in the best interest of advisory clients and (ii) implementing such decisions while, at the same time, allowing employees to invest for their own accounts.

Our firm and/or individuals associated with our firm may buy or sell for their personal accounts securities identical to or different from those recommended to our clients. In addition, any related person(s) may have an interest or position in a certain security(ies) which may also be recommended to a client.

It is the expressed policy of our firm that no person employed by us may purchase or sell any security prior to a transaction(s) being implemented for an advisory account, thereby preventing such employee(s) from benefiting from transactions placed on behalf of advisory accounts.

As these situations represent actual or potential conflicts of interest to our clients, we have established the following policies and procedures for implementing our firm's Code of Ethics, to ensure our firm complies with its regulatory obligations and provides our clients and potential clients with full and fair disclosure of such conflicts of interest:

1. No principal or employee of our firm may put his or her own interest above the interest of an advisory client.
2. No principal or employee of our firm may buy or sell securities for their personal portfolio(s) where their decision is a result of information received as a result of

his or her employment unless the information is also available to the investing public.

3. It is the expressed policy of our firm that no person employed by us may purchase or sell any security prior to a transaction(s) being implemented for an advisory account. This prevents such employees from benefiting from transactions placed on behalf of advisory accounts.
4. Our firm requires prior approval for any IPO or private placement investments by related persons of the firm.
5. We maintain a list of all reportable securities holdings for our firm and anyone associated with this advisory practice that has access to advisory recommendations ("access person"). These holdings are reviewed on a regular basis by our firm's Chief Compliance Officer or his/her designee.
6. We have established procedures for the maintenance of all required books and records.
7. All of our principals and employees must act in accordance with all applicable Federal and State regulations governing registered investment advisory practices.
8. We require delivery and acknowledgement of the Code of Ethics by each supervised person of our firm.
9. We have established policies requiring the reporting of Code of Ethics violations to our senior management.
10. Any individual who violates any of the above restrictions may be subject to termination.

As disclosed in the preceding section of this Brochure (Item 10), related persons of our firm are separately registered as securities representatives of a broker-dealer and/or licensed as an insurance agent/broker of various insurance companies. Please refer to Item 10 for a detailed explanation of these relationships and important conflict of interest disclosures

## **Item 12 Brokerage Practices**

Financial Concepts does not have any soft-dollar arrangements and does not receive any soft-dollar benefits.

Financial Concepts clears all its trades through Girard Securities, Inc. ("Girard"), Member FINRA/SIPC. Girard, in turn, clears its trades through National Financial Services ("NFS") or through Pershing, except for such mutual funds and insurance products that may be held directly with the respective mutual fund or insurance company. Our firm and/or our officers and representatives may be eligible to receive an invitation to annual conferences that are intended to be educational in nature. In the past, educational trips of have been sponsored by our broker/dealer, Girard, and the American Funds Group. Girard has also sponsored a conference based on minimum

production requirements.

While we endeavor at all times to put the interest of our clients first as part of our fiduciary duty, the possibility of receiving educational trips based on production could create a conflict of interest, and could affect the judgment of these individuals when making recommendations.

Financial Concepts may require that clients provide us with written authority to determine the broker-dealer to use and the commission costs that will be charged to our clients for these transactions.

Clients must include any limitations on this discretionary authority in this written authority statement. Clients may change/amend these limitations as required. Such amendments must be provided to us in writing.

As a matter of policy and practice, Financial Concepts does not generally block client trades and, therefore, we implement client transactions separately for each account. Consequently, certain client trades may be executed before others, at a different price and/or commission rate. Additionally, our clients may not receive volume discounts available to advisers who block client trades.

### **Item 13     Review of Accounts**

#### **INVESTMENT SUPERVISORY SERVICES ("ISS") INDIVIDUAL PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT**

**REVIEWS:** While the underlying securities within Individual Portfolio Management Services accounts are continually monitored, these accounts are reviewed at least quarterly. Accounts are reviewed in the context of each client's stated investment objectives and guidelines. More frequent reviews may be triggered by material changes in variables such as the client's individual circumstances, or the market, political or economic environment.

These accounts are reviewed by: **Rhonda Ferguson**

**REPORTS:** In addition to the monthly statements and confirmations of transactions that clients receive from their broker-dealer, we provide yearly reports summarizing account performance, balances and holdings.

#### **FINANCIAL PLANNING SERVICES**

**REVIEWS:** While reviews may occur at different stages depending on the nature and terms of the specific engagement, typically no formal reviews will be conducted for Financial Planning clients unless otherwise contracted for.

**REPORTS:** Financial Planning clients will receive a completed financial plan. Additional reports will not typically be provided unless otherwise contracted for.

#### **Item 14      Client Referrals and Other Compensation**

It is Financial Concepts' policy not to engage solicitors or to pay related or non-related persons for referring potential clients to our firm.

It is Financial Concepts' policy not to accept or allow our related persons to accept any form of compensation, including cash, sales awards or other prizes, from a non-client in conjunction with the advisory services we provide to our clients.

#### **Item 15      Custody**

We previously disclosed in the "Fees and Compensation" section (Item 5) of this Brochure that our firm directly debits advisory fees from client accounts.

As part of this billing process, the client's custodian is advised of the amount of the fee to be deducted from that client's account. On at least a quarterly basis, the custodian is required to send to the client a statement showing all transactions within the account during the reporting period.

Because the custodian does not calculate the amount of the fee to be deducted, it is important for clients to carefully review their custodial statements to verify the accuracy of the calculation, among other things. Clients should contact us directly if they believe that there may be an error in their statement.

Our firm does not have actual or constructive custody of client accounts.

#### **Item 16      Investment Discretion**

As previously disclosed in Item 4 of this brochure, our firm does not provide discretionary asset management services.

#### **Item 17      Voting Client Securities**

As a matter of firm policy, we do not vote proxies on behalf of clients. Therefore, although our firm may provide investment advisory services relative to client investment assets, clients maintain exclusive responsibility for: (1) directing the manner in which proxies solicited by issuers of securities beneficially owned by the client shall be voted, and (2) making all elections relative to any mergers, acquisitions, tender offers, bankruptcy proceedings or other type events pertaining to the client's investment assets. Clients are responsible for instructing each custodian of the assets, to forward to the client copies of all proxies and shareholder communications relating to the client's investment assets.

We do not offer any consulting assistance regarding proxy issues to clients.

**Item 18      Financial Information**

We are also required to disclose any financial condition that is reasonable likely to impair our ability to meet our contractual obligations. Financial Concepts has no additional financial circumstances to report.

Under no circumstances do we require or solicit payment of fees in excess of \$1200 per client more than six months in advance of services rendered. Therefore, we are not required to include a financial statement.

Financial Concepts has not been the subject of a bankruptcy petition at any time during the past ten years.