

Required fields are shown with yellow backgrounds and asterisks.

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20549
Form 19b-4

File No. * SR 2025 - * 14

Amendment No. (req. for Amendments *)

Filing by MIAX Sapphire, LLC

Pursuant to Rule 19b-4 under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

Initial * <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amendment * <input type="checkbox"/>	Withdrawal <input type="checkbox"/>	Section 19(b)(2) * <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Section 19(b)(3)(A) * <input type="checkbox"/>	Section 19(b)(3)(B) * <input type="checkbox"/>
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Pilot <input type="checkbox"/>	Extension of Time Period for Commission Action * <input type="checkbox"/>	Date Expires * <input type="text"/>	Rule <input type="checkbox"/> 19b-4(f)(1) <input type="checkbox"/> 19b-4(f)(4) <input type="checkbox"/> 19b-4(f)(2) <input type="checkbox"/> 19b-4(f)(5) <input type="checkbox"/> 19b-4(f)(3) <input type="checkbox"/> 19b-4(f)(6)		
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Notice of proposed change pursuant to the Payment, Clearing, and Settlement Act of 2010
Section 806(e)(1) *

Section 806(e)(2) *

Security-Based Swap Submission pursuant to the Securities Exchange Act of 1934
Section 3C(b)(2) *

Exhibit 2 Sent As Paper Document

Exhibit 3 Sent As Paper Document

Description

Provide a brief description of the action (limit 250 characters, required when Initial is checked *).

Proposal to amend Exchange Rule 402, Criteria for Underlying Securities to list and trade options on the iShares Ethereum Trust

Contact Information

Provide the name, telephone number, and e-mail address of the person on the staff of the self-regulatory organization prepared to respond to questions and comments on the action.

First Name * Tanya Last Name * Kitaigorovski

Title * AVP, Associate Counsel

E-mail * tkitaigorovski@miaxglobal.com

Telephone * (609) 413-5787 Fax

Signature

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange of 1934, MIAX Sapphire, LLC has duly caused this filing to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned thereunto duly authorized.

Date 03/26/2025 (Title *)

By Tanya Kitaigorovski AVP, Associate Counsel
(Name *)

NOTE: Clicking the signature block at right will initiate digitally signing the form. A digital signature is as legally binding as a physical signature, and once signed, this form cannot be changed.

Tanya Kitaigorovski Date: 2025.03.26
17:25:19 -04'00'

Required fields are shown with yellow backgrounds and astericks.

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20549

For complete Form 19b-4 instructions please refer to the EDFS website.

Form 19b-4 Information *

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SR-SAPPHIRE-2025-14 - 19b4.docx

The self-regulatory organization must provide all required information, presented in a clear and comprehensible manner, to enable the public to provide meaningful comment on the proposal and for the Commission to determine whether the proposal is consistent with the Act and applicable rules and regulations under the Act.

Exhibit 1 - Notice of Proposed Rule Change *

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SR-SAPPHIRE-2025-14 - Exhibit 1.doc

The Notice section of this Form 19b-4 must comply with the guidelines for publication in the Federal Register as well as any requirements for electronic filing as published by the Commission (if applicable). The Office of the Federal Register (OFR) offers guidance on Federal Register publication requirements in the Federal Register Document Drafting Handbook, October 1998 Revision. For example, all references to the federal securities laws must include the corresponding cite to the United States Code in a footnote. All references to SEC rules must include the corresponding cite to the Code of Federal Regulations in a footnote. All references to Securities Exchange Act Releases must include the release number, release date, Federal Register cite, Federal Register date, and corresponding file number (e.g., SR-[SRO]-xx-xx). A material failure to comply with these guidelines will result in the proposed rule change being deemed not properly filed. See also Rule 0-3 under the Act (17 CFR 240.0-3)

Exhibit 1A - Notice of Proposed Rule Change, Security-Based Swap Submission, or Advanced Notice by Clearing Agencies *

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The Notice section of this Form 19b-4 must comply with the guidelines for publication in the Federal Register as well as any requirements for electronic filing as published by the Commission (if applicable). The Office of the Federal Register (OFR) offers guidance on Federal Register publication requirements in the Federal Register Document Drafting Handbook, October 1998 Revision. For example, all references to the federal securities laws must include the corresponding cite to the United States Code in a footnote. All references to SEC rules must include the corresponding cite to the Code of Federal Regulations in a footnote. All references to Securities Exchange Act Releases must include the release number, release date, Federal Register cite, Federal Register date, and corresponding file number (e.g., SR-[SRO]-xx-xx). A material failure to comply with these guidelines will result in the proposed rule change being deemed not properly filed. See also Rule 0-3 under the Act (17 CFR 240.0-3)

Exhibit 2- Notices, Written Comments, Transcripts, Other Communications

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Copies of notices, written comments, transcripts, other communications. If such documents cannot be filed electronically in accordance with Instruction F, they shall be filed in accordance with Instruction G.

Exhibit Sent As Paper Document

Exhibit 3 - Form, Report, or Questionnaire

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Copies of any form, report, or questionnaire that the self-regulatory organization proposes to use to help implement or operate the proposed rule change, or that is referred to by the proposed rule change.

Exhibit Sent As Paper Document

Exhibit 4 - Marked Copies

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The full text shall be marked, in any convenient manner, to indicate additions to and deletions from the immediately preceding filing. The purpose of Exhibit 4 is to permit the staff to identify immediately the changes made from the text of the rule with which it has been working.

Exhibit 5 - Proposed Rule Text

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SR-SAPPHIRE-2025-14 - Exhibit 5.doc

The self-regulatory organization may choose to attach as Exhibit 5 proposed changes to rule text in place of providing it in Item I and which may otherwise be more easily readable if provided separately from Form 19b-4. Exhibit 5 shall be considered part of the proposed rule change

Partial Amendment

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If the self-regulatory organization is amending only part of the text of a lengthy proposed rule change, it may, with the Commission's permission, file only those portions of the text of the proposed rule change in which changes are being made if the filing (i.e. partial amendment) is clearly understandable on its face. Such partial amendment shall be clearly identified and marked to show deletions and additions.

1. Text of the Proposed Rule Change

(a) MIAX Sapphire, LLC (“MIAX Sapphire” or the “Exchange”), pursuant to the provisions of Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the “Act”)¹ and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,² proposes to amend Exchange Rule 402, Criteria for Underlying Securities to list and trade options on the iShares Ethereum Trust (the “Trust”).

Notice of the proposed rule change for publication in the Federal Register is attached hereto as Exhibit 1, and the text of the proposed rule change is attached hereto as Exhibit 5.

(b) Not applicable.

(c) Not applicable.

2. Procedures of the Self-Regulatory Organization

The proposed rule change was approved by the Chief Executive Officer of the Exchange or his designee pursuant to authority delegated by the Exchange Board of Directors on February 27, 2025. Exchange staff will advise the Board of Directors of any action taken pursuant to delegated authority. No other action by the Exchange is necessary for the filing of the proposed rule change.

Questions and comments on the proposed rule change may be directed to Tanya Kitaigorovski, AVP, Associate Counsel, at (609) 413-5787.

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

a. Purpose

The Exchange proposes to amend Exchange Rule 402, Criteria for Underlying

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

Securities,³ to allow the Exchange to list and trade options on the Trust, designating it as appropriate for options trading on the Exchange.⁴ This is a competitive filing based on similar proposals submitted by Nasdaq ISE, LLC (“ISE”) and Cboe Exchange, Inc. (“Cboe”), which are currently pending with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “Commission”).⁵

Current Exchange Rule 402(i)(4) provides that, subject to certain other criteria set forth in that Rule, securities deemed appropriate for options trading include shares or other securities (“Exchange Traded Fund Shares” or “ETFs”) that represent certain types of interests,⁶ including

³ The Exchange notes that its affiliate options exchanges, Miami International Securities Exchange, LLC (“MIAX”) and MIAX Pearl, LLC (“MIAX Pearl”), submitted (or will submit) substantively similar proposals. The Exchange notes that all the rules of Chapter III of MIAX, including Exchange Rules 307 and 309, are incorporated by reference into the MIAX Pearl and MIAX Sapphire rulebooks. The Exchange also notes that all of the rules of Chapter III of MIAX, including Exchange Rules 307 and 309, and the rules of Chapter IV of MIAX, including Exchange Rule 402, are incorporated by reference into the MIAX Emerald, LLC (“MIAX Emerald”) rulebook.

⁴ See Securities Exchange Act Release Nos. 100224 (May 23, 2024), 89 FR 46937 (May 30, 2024) (SR-NYSEArca-2023-70; SR-NYSEArca-2024-31; SR-NASDAQ-2023-045; SR-CboeBZX-2023-069; SR-CboeBZX-2023-070; SR-CboeBZX-2023-087; SR-CboeBZX-2023-095; and SRCboeBZX-2024-018) (Order Granting Accelerated Approval of Proposed Rule Changes, as Modified by Amendments Thereto, to List and Trade Shares of Ether-Based Exchange-Traded Products) (“Ethereum ETP Approval Order”).

⁵ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 100661 (August 6, 2024), 89 FR 65690 (August 12, 2024) (SR-ISE-2024-35) (“ISE Proposal”); and SR-Cboe-2025-021.

⁶ See Exchange Rule 402(i), which permits options trading on exchange-traded funds that: (1) represent interests in registered investment companies (or series thereof) organized as open-end management investment companies, unit investment trusts or similar entities that hold portfolios of securities and/or financial instruments (“Funds”), including, but not limited to, stock index futures contracts, options on futures, options on securities and indices, equity caps, collars and floors, swap agreements, forward contracts, repurchase agreements and reverse repurchase agreements (the “Financial Instruments”), and money market instruments, including, but not limited to, U.S. government securities and repurchase agreements (the “Money Market Instruments”) comprising or otherwise based on or representing investments in broad-based indexes or portfolios of securities and/or Financial Instruments and Money Market Instruments (or that hold securities in one or more other registered investment companies that themselves hold such portfolios of securities and/or Financial Instruments and Money Market Instruments); (2) represent interests in a trust or similar entity that holds a specified non-U.S. currency or currencies deposited with the trust which when aggregated in some specified minimum number may be surrendered to the trust or similar entity by the beneficial owner to receive the specified non-U.S. currency or currencies and pays the beneficial owner interest and other distributions on the deposited non-U.S. currency or currencies, if any, declared and paid by the trust (“Currency Trust Shares”); (3) represent commodity pool interests principally engaged, directly or indirectly, in holding and/or managing portfolios or baskets of securities, commodity futures contracts, options on commodity futures contracts, swaps, forward contracts and/or options on physical commodities and/or non-U.S. currency (“Commodity Pool ETFs”); (4) are issued by the SPDR® Gold Trust, the iShares COMEX Gold Trust, the iShares Silver Trust, the Aberdeen Standard Silver ETF Trust, the Aberdeen Standard Physical Gold Trust, the Aberdeen Standard Palladium ETF Trust, the Aberdeen Standard Platinum ETF Trust, the Goldman Sachs Physical Gold ETF, the Sprott

interests in certain specific trusts that hold financial instruments, money market instruments, precious metals (which are deemed commodities), or Bitcoin (which is another crypto currency and deemed a commodity).

In addition, Exchange Rule 402(i)(5)(i) requires that the ETFs must either (1) meet the criteria and standards set forth in Exchange Rule 402(a) or 402(b),⁷ or (2) be available for creation or redemption each business day from or through the issuer in cash or in kind at a price related to net asset value, and the issuer must be obligated to issue ETFs in a specified aggregate number even if some or all of the investment assets required to be deposited have not been received by the issuer, subject to the condition that the person obligated to deposit the investments has undertaken to deliver the investment assets as soon as possible and such undertaking is secured by the delivery and maintenance of collateral consisting of cash or cash equivalents satisfactory to the issuer, as provided in the respective prospectus.

The Exchange proposes to add the Trust to the list of ETFs on which the Exchange may list options in Rule 402(i)(4). The shares are issued by the Trust, a Delaware statutory trust. The Trust will operate pursuant to a trust agreement (the “Trust Agreement”) between the Sponsor, BlackRock Fund Advisors (the “Trustee”) as the trustee of the Trust and will appoint Wilmington Trust, National Association, as Delaware Trustee of the Trust (the “Delaware

Physical Gold Trust, the iShares Bitcoin Trust, the Grayscale Bitcoin Trust, the Grayscale Bitcoin Mini Trust, the Bitwise Bitcoin ETF, the Fidelity Wise Origin Bitcoin Fund, or the ARK 21 Shares Bitcoin ETF; or (5) represent an interest in a registered investment company (“Investment Company”) organized as an open-end management company or similar entity, that invests in a portfolio of securities selected by the Investment Company’s investment adviser consistent with the Investment Company’s investment objectives and policies, which is issued in a specified aggregate minimum number in return for a deposit of a specified portfolio of securities and/or a cash amount with a value equal to the next determined net asset value (“NAV”), and when aggregated in the same specified minimum number, may be redeemed at a holder’s request, which holder will be paid a specified portfolio of securities and/or cash with a value equal to the next determined NAV (“Managed Fund Share”); provided that all of the conditions listed in (5)(i) and 5(ii) are met.

⁷ Subparagraphs (a) and (b) of Exchange Rule 402 provide for guidelines to be used by the Exchange when evaluating potential underlying securities for Exchange option transactions.

Trustee”) by such time that the Registration Statement is effective. The Trust issues shares representing fractional undivided beneficial interests in its net assets. The assets of the Trust will consist only of ether (“ether” or “ETH”) held by a custodian on behalf of the Trust, except under limited circumstances when transferred through the Trust’s prime broker temporarily (described below), and cash. Neither the Trust, nor the Sponsor, nor the Ether Custodian (as defined below), nor any other person associated with the Trust will, directly or indirectly, engage in action where any portion of the Trust’s ETH becomes subject to the Ethereum proof-of-stake validation or is used to earn additional ETH or generate income or other earnings. Coinbase Custody Trust Company, LLC (the “Ether Custodian”), is the custodian for the Trust’s ether holdings, and maintains a custody account for the Trust (“Custody Account”); Coinbase, Inc. (the “Prime Execution Agent”), an affiliate of the Ether Custodian, is the prime broker for the Trust and maintains a trading account for the Trust (“Trading Account”); and The Bank of New York Mellon is the custodian for the Trust’s cash holdings (the “Cash Custodian” and together with the Ether Custodian, the “Custodians”) and the administrator of the Trust (the “Trust Administrator”). Under the Trust Agreement, the Trustee may delegate all or a portion of its duties to any agent, and has delegated the bulk of the day-to-day responsibilities to the Trust Administrator and certain other administrative and recordkeeping functions to its affiliates and other agents. The Trust is not an investment company registered under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (the “1940 Act”).

The investment objective of the Trust is to reflect generally the performance of the price of ether. The Trust seeks to reflect such performance before payment of the Trust’s expenses and liabilities. The Shares are intended to constitute a simple means of making an investment similar to an investment in ether through the public securities market rather than by acquiring, holding

and trading ether directly on a peer-to-peer or other basis or via a digital asset platform. The Shares have been designed to remove the obstacles represented by the complexities and operational burdens involved in a direct investment in ether, while at the same time having an intrinsic value that reflects, at any given time, the investment exposure to the ether owned by the Trust at such time, less the Trust's expenses and liabilities. Although the Shares are not the exact equivalent of a direct investment in ether, they provide investors with an alternative method of achieving investment exposure to ether through the public securities market, which may be more familiar to them.

An investment in the shares is backed by ether held by the Ether Custodian on behalf of the Trust. All of the Trust's ether will be held in the Custody Account, other than the Trust's ether which is temporarily maintained in the Trading Account under limited circumstances, i.e., in connection with creation and redemption Basket⁸ activity or sales of ether deducted from the Trust's holdings in payment of Trust expenses or the Sponsor's fee (or, in extraordinary circumstances, upon liquidation of the Trust). The Custody Account includes all of the Trust's ether held at the Ether Custodian, but does not include the Trust's ether temporarily maintained at the Prime Execution Agent in the Trading Account from time to time. The Ether Custodian will keep all of the private keys associated with the Trust's ether held in the Custody Account in "cold storage".⁹ The hardware, software, systems, and procedures of the Ether Custodian may not be available or cost effective for many investors to access directly.

The Exchange believes that offering options on the Trust will benefit investors by

⁸ The Trust issues and redeems shares only in blocks of 40,000 or integral multiples thereof. A block of 40,000 shares is called a "Basket." These transactions take place in exchange for ether.

⁹ The term "cold storage" refers to a safeguarding method by which the private keys corresponding to the Trust's ether are generated and stored in an offline manner, subject to layers of procedures designed to enhance security. Private keys are generated by the Ether Custodian in offline computers that are not connected to the internet so that they are more resistant to being hacked.

providing them with an additional, relatively lower cost investing tool to gain exposure to spot ether as well as a hedging vehicle to meet their investment needs in connection with ether products and positions. Similar to other commodity ETFs in which options may be listed on the Exchange (e.g. SPDR® Gold Trust, the iShares COMEX Gold Trust, the iShares Silver Trust, or Aberdeen Standard Physical Gold Trust),¹⁰ the proposed ETF is a trust that essentially offers the same objectives and benefits to investors.

Options on the Trust will trade in the same manner as any other ETF options on the Exchange. The Exchange Rules that currently apply to the listing and trading of all ETFs options on the Exchange, including, for example, Exchange Rules that govern listing criteria, expiration and exercise prices, minimum increments, position and exercise limits, margin requirements, customer accounts and trading halt procedures will apply to the listing and trading of options on the Trust on the Exchange. Today, these rules apply to options on the various commodities ETFs deemed appropriate for options trading on the Exchange pursuant to current Exchange Rule 402(i)(4).

The Exchange's initial listing standards for ETFs on which options may be listed and traded on the Exchange will apply to the Trust. Pursuant to Exchange Rule 402(a), a security (which includes ETFs) on which options may be listed and traded on the Exchange must be registered (with the Commission) and be an NMS stock (as defined in Rule 600 of Regulation NMS under the Act),¹¹ and be characterized by a substantial number of outstanding shares that

¹⁰ See Exchange Rule 402(i)(4).

¹¹ An "NMS stock" means any NMS security other than an option, and an "NMS security" means any security or class of securities for which transaction reports are collected, processed, and made available pursuant to an effective transaction reporting plan (or an effective national market system plan for reporting transaction in listed options). See 17 CFR § 242.600(b)(64) (definition of "NMS security") and (65) (definition of "NMS stock").

are widely held and actively traded.¹² Additionally, Exchange Rule 402(i)(5)(i) requires that the ETFs must either (1) meet the criteria and standards set forth in Exchange Rule 402(a) or 402(b),¹³ or (2) be available for creation or redemption each business day from or through the issuer in cash or in kind at a price related to net asset value, and the issuer must be obligated to issue ETFs in a specified aggregate number even if some or all of the investment assets required to be deposited have not been received by the issuer, subject to the condition that the person obligated to deposit the investments has undertaken to deliver the investment assets as soon as possible and such undertaking is secured by the delivery and maintenance of collateral consisting of cash or cash equivalents satisfactory to the issuer, as provided in the respective prospectus. The Trust satisfies Exchange Rule 402(i)(5)(i), as it is subject to this creation and redemption process.

Options on the Trust will also be subject to the Exchange's continued listing standards set forth in Exchange Rule 403(g), for ETFs deemed appropriate for options trading pursuant to Exchange Rule 402(i). Specifically, Exchange Rule 403(g) provides that ETFs that were initially approved for options trading pursuant to Exchange Rule 402(i) shall be deemed not to meet the requirements for continued approval, and the Exchange shall not open for trading any additional series of option contracts of the class covering that such ETFs, if the ETFs cease to be an NMS stock or the ETFs, are delisted from trading pursuant to Exchange Rule 403(b)(4), are halted or suspended from trading in their primary market. Additionally, options on ETFs may be subject to the suspension of opening transactions in any of the following circumstances: (1) in the case of

¹² The criteria and guidelines for a security to be considered widely held and actively traded are set forth in Exchange Rule 403(b).

¹³ Subparagraphs a and b of Exchange Rule 402 provide for guidelines to be used by the Exchange when evaluating potential underlying securities for Exchange option transactions.

options covering ETFs approved for trading under Exchange Rule 402(i)(5)(i)(A), in accordance with the terms of paragraphs (b)(1), (2), and (3) of Exchange Rule 403; (2) in the case of options covering ETFs approved for trading under Exchange Rule 402(i)(5)(i)(B), following the initial twelve-month period beginning upon the commencement of trading in the ETFs on a national securities exchange and are defined as an NMS stock, there are fewer than 50 record and/or beneficial holders of such ETFs for 30 or more consecutive trading days; (3) the value of the index or portfolio of securities, non-U.S. currency, or portfolio of commodities including commodity futures contracts, options on commodity futures contracts, swaps, forward contracts and/or options on physical commodities and/or financial instruments and money market instruments on which the ETFs are based is no longer calculated or available; or (4) such other event shall occur or condition exist that in the opinion of the Exchange makes further dealing in such options on the Exchange inadvisable.

Options on the Trust would be physically settled contracts with American-style exercise.¹⁴ Consistent with current Exchange Rule 404, which governs the opening of options series on a specific underlying security (including ETFs), the Exchange will open at least one expiration month for options on the Trust¹⁵ at the commencement of trading on the Exchange

¹⁴ See Exchange Rule 401, which provides that the rights and obligations of holders and writers are set forth in the Rules of the Options Clearing Corporation (“OCC”); see also OCC Rules, Chapters VIII (which governs exercise and assignment) and Chapter IX (which governs the discharge of delivery and payment obligations arising out of the exercise of physically settled stock option contracts).

¹⁵ See Exchange Rule 404(b). The monthly expirations are subject to certain listing criteria for underlying securities described within Exchange Rule 404 and its Interpretations and Policies. Monthly listings expire the third Friday of the month. The term “expiration date” (unless separately defined elsewhere in the OCC By-Laws), when used in respect of an option contract (subject to certain exceptions), means the third Friday of the expiration month of such option contract, or if such Friday is a day on which the exchange on which such option is listed is not open for business, the preceding day on which such exchange is open for business. See OCC By-Laws Article I, Section 1. Pursuant to Exchange Rule 404(c), additional series of options of the same class may be opened for trading on the Exchange when the Exchange deems it necessary to maintain an orderly market, to meet customer demand or when the market price of the underlying stock moves more than five strike prices from the initial exercise price or prices. Pursuant to Exchange Rule 404(e), new series of options on an individual stock may be added until the beginning of the month in which the options contract will expire. Due to unusual market conditions, the Exchange, in its

and may also list series of options on the Trust for trading on a weekly,¹⁶ monthly,¹⁷ or quarterly¹⁸ basis. The Exchange may also list long-term equity option series (“LEAPS”) that expire from 12 to 39 months from the time they are listed.¹⁹

Pursuant to Exchange Rule 404, Interpretations and Policies .06, which governs strike prices of series of options on ETFs, the interval between strike prices of series of options on ETFs approved for options trading pursuant to Exchange Rule 402(i) shall be fixed at a price per share which is reasonably close to the price per share at which the underlying security is traded in the primary market at or about the same time such series of options is first open for trading on the Exchange, or at such intervals as may have been established on another options exchange prior to the initiation of trading on the Exchange. With respect to the Short Term Options Series or Weekly Program, during the month prior to expiration of an option class that is selected for the Short Term Option Series Program, the strike price intervals for the related non-Short Term Option (“Related non-Short Term Option”) shall be the same as the strike price intervals for the Short Term Option.²⁰ Specifically, the Exchange may open for trading Short Term Option Series at strike price intervals of (i) \$0.50 or greater where the strike price is less than \$100, and \$1 or greater where the strike price is between \$100 and \$150 for all option classes that participate in the Short Term Options Series Program; (ii) \$0.50 for option classes that trade in one dollar increments and are in the Short Term Option Series Program; or (iii) \$2.50 or greater where the

discretion, may add a new series of options on an individual stock until the close of trading on the business day prior to expiration.

¹⁶ See Exchange Rule 404, Interpretations and Policies .02.

¹⁷ See Exchange Rule 404, Interpretations and Policies .13.

¹⁸ See Exchange Rule 404, Interpretations and Policies .03.

¹⁹ See Exchange Rule 406.

²⁰ See Exchange Rule 404, Interpretations and Policies .02(e).

strike price is above \$150.²¹ Additionally, the Exchange may list series of options pursuant to the \$1 Strike Price Interval Program,²² the \$0.50 Strike Program,²³ and the \$2.50 Strike Price Program.²⁴ Pursuant to Exchange Rule 510, where the price of a series of options for a Bitcoin Fund is less than \$3.00, the minimum increment will be \$0.05, and where the price is \$3.00 or higher, the minimum increment will be \$0.10²⁵ consistent with the minimum increments for options on other ETFs listed on the Exchange. Any and all new series of Trust options that the Exchange lists will be consistent and comply with the expirations, strike prices, and minimum increments set forth in Rules 404 and 510, as applicable.

Trust options will trade in the same manner as any other ETF options on the Exchange. The Exchange Rules that currently apply to the listing and trading of all ETFs options on the Exchange, including, for example, Exchange Rules that govern listing criteria, expiration and exercise prices, minimum increments, position and exercise limits, margin requirements, customer accounts and trading halt procedures will apply to the listing and trading of Bitcoin Funds options on the Exchange in the same manner as they apply to other options on all other ETFs that are listed and traded on the Exchange, including the precious-metal backed commodity ETFs already deemed appropriate for options trading on the Exchange pursuant to current Exchange Rule 402(i)(4).

As mentioned above, the rules for position and exercise limits for options on ETFs, including Trust options, are determined pursuant to MIAX Rules 307 and 309, respectively, as

²¹ Id.

²² See Exchange Rule 404, Interpretation and Policy .01.

²³ See Exchange Rule 404, Interpretation and Policy .04.

²⁴ See Exchange Rule 404(f).

²⁵ See Exchange Rule 510.

incorporated by reference into the MIAX Sapphire Rulebook. Position and exercise limits for ETF options vary according to the number of outstanding shares and the trading volumes of the underlying ETF over the past six months, where the largest in capitalization and the most frequently traded ETFs have an option position and exercise limit of 250,000 contracts (with adjustments for splits, re-capitalizations, etc.) on the same side of the market; and smaller capitalization ETFs have position and exercise limits of 200,000, 75,000, 50,000 or 25,000 contracts (with adjustments for splits, re-capitalizations, etc.) on the same side of the market. The Exchange further notes that MIAX Rule 1502, which governs margin requirements applicable to trading on the Exchange, including options on ETFs, will also apply to the trading of the Trust options, as MIAX Chapter XV (Margins) is also incorporated by reference into the MIAX Sapphire Rulebook. Notwithstanding the position limits in MIAX Rule 307(d) and exercise limits in MIAX Rule 309, the Exchange proposes the position and exercise limits for the Trust to be 25,000 contracts on the same side pursuant to proposed Interpretations and Policies .01 to MIAX Rule 307 and proposed Interpretations and Policies.01 to MIAX Rule 309.

Today, the Exchange has an adequate surveillance program in place for options. The Exchange intends to apply those same program procedures to the Trust options that it applies to the Exchange's other options products.²⁶ The Exchange's staff will have access to the surveillance programs conducted by its affiliate exchanges, MIAX and MIAX Pearl, with respect to trading in the shares of the underlying Trust when conducting surveillances for market abuse or manipulation in the options on the Trust. Additionally, the Exchange is a member of the Intermarket Surveillance Group ("ISG") under the Intermarket Surveillance Group Agreement.

²⁶ The surveillance program includes real-time patterns for price and volume movements and post-trade surveillance patterns (e.g., spoofing, marking the close, pinging, phishing).

ISG members work together to coordinate surveillance and investigative information sharing in the stock, options, and futures markets. In addition to obtaining surveillance data from MIAX and MIAX Pearl, the Exchange will be able to obtain information regarding trading in the shares of the underlying Trusts from ISE, Cboe and other markets through ISG. In addition, the Exchange has a Regulatory Services Agreement with the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (“FINRA”). Pursuant to a multi-party 17d-2 joint plan, all options exchanges allocate regulatory responsibilities to FINRA to conduct certain options-related market surveillance that are common to rules of all options exchanges.²⁷

The underlying shares of spot Ethereum exchange-traded products (“ETPs”), including the Trust, are also subject to safeguards related to addressing market abuse and manipulation. As the Commission stated in its order approving proposals of several exchanges to list and trade shares of spot Ethereum-based ETPs,

[e]ach Exchange has a comprehensive surveillance sharing agreement with the [Chicago Mercantile Exchange (“CME”)] via their common membership in the Intermarket Surveillance Group. This facilitates the sharing of information that is available to the CME through its surveillance of its markets, including its surveillance of the CME Ethereum futures market.²⁸

The Exchange states that, given the consistently high correlation between the CME Ethereum futures market and the spot Ethereum market, as confirmed by the Commission through robust correlation analysis, the Commission was able to conclude that such surveillance

²⁷ Section 19(g)(1) of the Act, among other things, requires every SRO registered as a national securities exchange or national securities association to comply with the Act, the rules and regulations thereunder, and the SRO's own rules, and, absent reasonable justification or excuse, enforce compliance by its members and persons associated with its members. See 15 U.S.C. 78q(d)(1) and 17 CFR 240.17d-2. Section 17(d)(1) of the Act allows the Commission to relieve an SRO of certain responsibilities with respect to members of the SRO who are also members of another SRO (“common members”). Specifically, Section 17(d)(1) allows the Commission to relieve an SRO of its responsibilities to: (i) receive regulatory reports from such members; (ii) examine such members for compliance with the Act and the rules and regulations thereunder, and the rules of the SRO; or (iii) carry out other specified regulatory responsibilities with respect to such members.

sharing agreements could reasonably be “expected to assist in surveilling for fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices in the specific context of the [Ethereum ETPs].”²⁹ In light of surveillance measures related to both options and futures as well as the Trust,³⁰ the Exchange believes that existing surveillance procedures are designed to deter and detect possible manipulative behavior which might potentially arise from listing and trading the proposed options on the Trust. Further, the Exchange represents that it will implement any new surveillance procedures it deems necessary to effectively monitor the trading of options on the Trust.

Quotation and last sale information for ETFs is available via the Consolidated Tape Association (“CTA”) high speed line. Quotation and last sale information for such securities is also available from the exchange on which such securities are listed. Quotation and last sale information for options on the Trust will be available via Options Price Reporting Authority (“OPRA”) and major market data vendors. The Exchange has also analyzed its capacity and represents that it believes the Exchange and OPRA have the necessary systems capacity to handle the additional traffic associated with the listing of new series that may result from the introduction of options on the Trust up to the number of expirations currently permissible under the Rules.

The Exchange believes that offering options on the Trust will benefit investors by providing them with an additional, relatively lower cost investing tool to gain exposure to the price of Ethereum and hedging vehicle to meet their investment needs in connection with Ethereum-related products and positions. The Exchange expects investors will transact in options

on the Trust in the unregulated over-the-counter (“OTC”) options market,³¹ but may prefer to trade such options in a listed environment to receive the benefits of trading listing options, including (1) enhanced efficiency in initiating and closing out position; (2) increased market transparency; and (3) heightened contra-party creditworthiness due to the role of OCC as issuer and guarantor of all listed options. The Exchange believes that listing Trust options may cause investors to bring this liquidity to the Exchange, would increase market transparency and enhance the process of price discovery conducted on the Exchange through increased order flow. The ETFs that hold financial instruments, money market instruments, or precious metal commodities on which the Exchange may already list and trade options are trusts structured in substantially the same manner as the Trust and essentially offer the same objectives and benefits to investors, just with respect to different assets. The Exchange notes that it has not identified any issues with the continued listing and trading of any options on ETFs, including ETFs that hold commodities (i.e., precious metals and Bitcoin) that it currently lists and trades on the Exchange.

Finally, the Exchange notes that applicable Exchange rules will require that customers receive appropriate disclosure before trading options in the Trust.³² Further, brokers opening accounts and recommending options transactions must comply with relevant customer suitability standards.³³

b. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the Act and the rules

³¹ The Exchange understands from customers that investors have historically transacted in options on ETFs in the OTC options market if such options were not available for trading in a listed environment.

³² See Exchange Rules 1307(b) and (e).

³³ See Exchange Rule 1309.

and regulations thereunder applicable to the Exchange and, in particular, the requirements of Section 6(b) of the Act.³⁴ Specifically, the Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the Section 6(b)(5)³⁵ 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 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)³⁶ requirement that the rules of an exchange not be designed to permit unfair discrimination between customers, issuers, brokers, or dealers.

In particular, the Exchange believes that the proposal to list and trade options on the Trust will remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system and, in general, protect investors because offering options on the Trust will provide investors with a greater opportunity to realize the benefits of utilizing options on an ETF based on spot Ethereum, including cost efficiencies and increased hedging strategies. The Exchange believes that offering options on a competitively priced ETF based on spot Ethereum will benefit investors by providing them with an additional, relatively lower-cost risk management tool, allowing them to manage, more easily, their positions and associated risks in their portfolios in connection with exposure to spot Ethereum. Additionally, the Exchange's offering of Trust options will provide investors with the ability to transact in such options in a

³⁴ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

³⁵ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

³⁶ Id.

listed market environment as opposed to in the unregulated OTC options market, which would increase market transparency and enhance the process of price discovery conducted on the Exchange through increased order flow to the benefit of all investors. Today, the Exchange lists options on other commodity (including Ethereum) ETFs structured as a trust, which essentially offer the same objectives and benefits to investors, and for which the Exchange has not identified any issues with the continued listing and trading of options on those ETFs.

The Exchange also believes the proposal to permit options on the Trust will remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system, because options on the Trust will comply with current Exchange Rules. Options on the Trust satisfy the initial listing standards and continued listing standards currently in the Exchange Rules applicable to options on all ETFs, including ETFs that hold other commodities already deemed appropriate for options trading on the Exchange pursuant to Exchange Rule 402(i)(4). Additionally, as demonstrated above, the Trust is characterized by a substantial number of shares that are widely held and actively traded. Further, Rules that currently govern the listing and trading of options on ETFs, including permissible expirations, strike prices, minimum increments, position and exercise limits (including as proposed in the filing submitted by Exchange's affiliate, MIAAX), and margin requirements, will govern the listing and trading of options on the Trust.

The Exchange believes the proposed position and exercise limits are designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices and promote just and equitable principles of trade, as they are designed to address potential manipulative schemes and adverse market impacts surrounding the use of options, such as disrupting the market in the security underlying the options. The proposed position and exercise limits for options for the Trust is 25,000 contracts,

which is currently the lowest limit applicable to any equity options (including ETF options) and the position and exercise limits that apply to comparable ETFs that hold Bitcoin. The Exchange believes the proposed position and exercise limits are extremely conservative for the Trust options given the trading volume and outstanding shares for the Trust.

The Exchange represents that it has the necessary systems capacity to support the new Trust options. As discussed above, the Exchange believes that its existing surveillance and reporting safeguards are designed to deter and detect possible manipulative behavior which might arise from listing and trading ETF options, including Trust options. The Exchange's existing surveillance and reporting safeguards are designed to deter and detect possible manipulative behavior which might arise from listing and trading options on ETFs and ETPs, such as (existing) precious metal-commodity backed ETP options as well as the proposed options on the Trust. The Exchange's existing surveillance and reporting safeguards are designed to deter and detect possible manipulative behavior which might arise from listing and trading options on ETFs and ETPs, such as (existing) precious metal-commodity backed ETP options as well as the proposed options on the Trust. The Exchange believes that its surveillance procedures are adequate to properly monitor the trading of options on the Trust in all trading sessions and to deter and detect violations of Exchange rules. Specifically, the Exchange's market surveillance staff will have access to surveillances that it conducts, and that FINRA conducts on its behalf, with respect to the Trust and, as appropriate, would review activity in the underlying Fund when conducting surveillances for market abuse or manipulation in the options on the Trust.

Additionally, the Exchange is a member of the ISG under the Intermarket Surveillance Group Agreement. ISG members work together to coordinate surveillance and investigative information sharing in the stock, options, and futures markets. In addition to obtaining surveillance data from

MIAX and MIAX Sapphire, the Exchange will be able to obtain information from ISE, Cboe and other markets through ISG. In addition, the Exchange has a Regulatory Services Agreement with FINRA. Pursuant to a multi-party 17d-2 joint plan, all options exchanges allocate regulatory responsibilities to FINRA to conduct certain options-related market surveillance that are common to rules of all options exchanges.³⁷

The underlying shares of spot Ethereum ETPs, including the Trust, are also subject to safeguards related to addressing market abuse and manipulation. As the Commission stated in its order approving proposals of several exchanges to list and trade shares of spot Ethereum-based ETPs, “[e]ach Exchange has a comprehensive surveillance-sharing agreement with the CME via their common membership in the Intermarket Surveillance Group. This facilitates the sharing of information that is available to the CME through its surveillance of its markets, including its surveillance of the CME ether futures market.”³⁸ The Exchange states that, given the consistently high correlation between the CME Ethereum futures market and the spot Ethereum market, as confirmed by the Commission through robust correlation analysis, the Commission was able to conclude that such surveillance sharing agreements could reasonably be “expected to assist in surveilling for fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices in the specific context of the [Ether ETPs].”³⁹ In light of the foregoing, the Exchange believes that existing surveillance procedures

³⁷ Section 19(g)(1) of the Act, among other things, requires every SRO registered as a national securities exchange or national securities association to comply with the Act, the rules and regulations thereunder, and the SRO's own rules, and, absent reasonable justification or excuse, enforce compliance by its members and persons associated with its members. See 15 U.S.C. 78q(d)(1) and 17 CFR 240.17d-2. Section 17(d)(1) of the Act allows the Commission to relieve an SRO of certain responsibilities with respect to members of the SRO who are also members of another SRO (“common members”). Specifically, Section 17(d)(1) allows the Commission to relieve an SRO of its responsibilities to: (i) receive regulatory reports from such members; (ii) examine such members for compliance with the Act and the rules and regulations thereunder, and the rules of the SRO; or (iii) carry out other specified regulatory responsibilities with respect to such members.

³⁸ See Ethereum ETP Approval Order, 89 FR at 46938.

³⁹ See Ethereum ETP Approval Order, 89 FR at 46941.

are designed to deter and detect possible manipulative behavior which might potentially arise from listing and trading the proposed options on the Trust.

Further, the Exchange represents that it will implement any new surveillance procedures it deems necessary to effectively monitor the trading of options on the Trust.

Finally, the Exchange notes that this proposal will remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system and, in general, protect investors because applicable Exchange rules will require that customers receive appropriate disclosure before trading options on the Trust⁴⁰ and will require that brokers opening accounts and recommending options transactions must comply with relevant customer suitability standards.⁴¹

4. 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. In this regard and as indicated above, the Exchange notes that the rule change is being proposed as a competitive response to the filing submitted by ISE and Cboe.⁴²

The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any burden on intramarket competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act as options on the Trust will be equally available to all market participants who wish to trade such options and will trade generally in the same manner as other options. Moreover, options on the Trust will be subject to Exchange Rules that currently govern the listing and trading of options on ETFs, including permissible expirations, strike prices, minimum increments, position

⁴⁰ See Rule 1307(b) and (e).

⁴¹ See Rule 1309.

⁴² See supra note 5.

and exercise limits (including as proposed in the filing submitted by Exchange's affiliate, MIAX), and margin requirements. Also, and as stated above, the Exchange already lists options on other cryptocurrency backed commodity ETFs structured as trusts.⁴³ Further, the Trust would need to satisfy the maintenance listing standards set forth in the Exchange Rules in the same manner as any other ETF for the Exchange to continue listing options on them.

The Exchange does not believe that the proposal to list and trade options on the Trust will impose any burden on intermarket competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. To the extent that the advent of the Trust options trading on the Exchange may make the Exchange a more attractive marketplace to market participants at other exchanges, such market participants are free to elect to become market participants on the Exchange. Additionally, other options exchanges are free to amend their listing rules, as applicable, to permit them to list and trade options on Trust. The Exchange notes that listing and trading Trust options on the Exchange will subject such options to transparent exchange-based rules as well as price discovery and liquidity, as opposed to alternatively trading such options in the OTC market.

The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change may relieve any burden on, or otherwise promote, competition as it is designed to increase competition for order flow on the Exchange in a manner that is beneficial to investors by providing them with a lower-cost option to hedge their investment portfolios. The Exchange notes that it operates in a highly competitive market in which market participants can readily direct order flow to competing venues that offer similar products. Ultimately, the Exchange believes that offering the Trust options for trading on the Exchange will promote competition by providing investors with an additional, relatively low-

⁴³ See Exchange Rule 402(i)(4).

cost means to hedge their portfolios and meet their investment needs in connection with Ethereum prices and Ethereum-related products and positions on a listed options exchange.

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

No written comments were either solicited or received.

6. Extension of Time Period for Commission Action

The Exchange does not consent to an extension of the time period for Commission action on the proposed rule change specified in Section 19(b)(2) of the Act.⁴⁴

7. Basis for Summary Effectiveness Pursuant to Section 19(b)(3) or for Accelerated Effectiveness Pursuant to Section 19(b)(2)

The proposed rule change is filed for accelerated effectiveness pursuant to Section 19(b)(2) of the Act.⁴⁵ The Exchange requests that the Commission approve the proposed rule change on an accelerated basis pursuant to Section 19(b)(2) of the Act so that it may be operative as soon as practicable. Offering options on the Trust will provide investors with an opportunity to realize the benefits of utilizing options on the Trust, including cost efficiencies and increased hedging strategies. The Exchange believes that offering Trust options will benefit investors by providing them with a relatively lower-cost risk management tool, which will allow them to manage their positions and associated risk in their portfolios more easily in connection with exposure to the price of Ethereum and with Ethereum-related products and positions.

Additionally, the Exchange's offering of Trust options will provide investors with the ability to transact in such options in a listed market environment as opposed to in the unregulated OTC options market, which would increase market transparency and enhance the process of

⁴⁴ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(2).

⁴⁵ Id.

price discovery conducted on the Exchange through increased order flow to the benefit of all investors. The Exchange also notes that it already lists options on other commodity-based ETFs (including Bitcoin),⁴⁶ which, as described above, are trusts structured in substantially the same manner as the Trust and essentially offer the same objectives and benefits to investors and for which the Exchange has not identified any issues with the continued listing and trading of commodity backed ETF options it currently lists for trading.

Additionally, options on the Trust satisfy the initial listing standards and continued listing standards currently in the Exchange Rules applicable to options on all ETFs, including ETFs that hold commodities already deemed appropriate for options trading on the Exchange. Trust options will trade in the same manner as any other ETF options, and the same Exchange Rules that currently govern the listing and trading of all ETF options, including permissible expirations, strike prices and minimum increments, and applicable margin requirements, will govern the listing and trading of options on the Trust in the same manner.

The Exchange represents that it has the necessary systems capacity to support any additional traffic that may be generated by the trading of options on the Trust. In addition, the Exchange represents that its existing surveillance procedures are adequate to properly monitor the trading of options on the Trust in all trading sessions and to deter and detect violations of Exchange rules. The Exchange further represents that it will implement new surveillance procedures, as necessary, to effectively monitor the trading of options on the Trust.

A nearly identical proposal to list options on the Trust is currently pending before the Commission, and has been pending since July of 2024. Therefore, the public and the Commission have had ample time to consider the substance of this proposal. The current (and

⁴⁶ See Exchange Rule 402(i)(4).

final) action date for the ISE Proposal is April 9, 2025. Therefore, to the extent the Commission approves the ISE Proposal at that time, it is imperative and essential for competitive purposes the Commission approve this proposal at the same time, as it will ensure fair competition among the exchanges by allowing the Exchange to list options on the Trust at the same time as another options exchange.

8. Proposed Rule Change Based on Rules of Another Self-Regulatory Organization or of the Commission

The proposed rule change is substantively similar to the proposals by ISE and Cboe.⁴⁷

9. Security-Based Swap Submissions Filed Pursuant to Section 3C of the Act

Not applicable.

10. Advance Notices Filed Pursuant to Section 806(e) of the Payment, Clearing and Settlement Supervision Act

Not applicable.

11. Exhibits

1. Notice of proposed rule for publication in the Federal Register.

5. Text of proposed rule change.

⁴⁷ Id.

EXHIBIT 1

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
(Release No. 34- ; File No. SR-SAPPHIRE-2025-14)

April ____, 2025

Self-Regulatory Organizations: Notice of Filing of a Proposed Rule Change by MIAX Sapphire, LLC to Amend Exchange Rule 402, Criteria for Underlying Securities to list and trade options on the iShares Ethereum Trust

Pursuant to the provisions of 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 March ____, 2025, MIAX Sapphire, LLC (“MIAX Sapphire” or “Exchange”) filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (“Commission”) a proposed rule change as described in Items I, II, and III 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

The Exchange proposes to amend Exchange Rule 402, Criteria for Underlying Securities to list and trade options on the iShares Ethereum Trust.

The text of the proposed rule change is available on the Exchange’s website at <https://www.miaxglobal.com/markets/us-options/miax-sapphire/rule-filings>, at the Exchange’s principal office, 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

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

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 Exchange Rule 402, Criteria for Underlying Securities,³ to allow the Exchange to list and trade options on the Trust, designating it as appropriate for options trading on the Exchange.⁴ This is a competitive filing based on similar proposals submitted by Nasdaq ISE, LLC (“ISE”) and Cboe Exchange, Inc. (“Cboe”), which are currently pending with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “Commission”).⁵

Current Exchange Rule 402(i)(4) provides that, subject to certain other criteria set forth in that Rule, securities deemed appropriate for options trading include shares or other securities (“Exchange Traded Fund Shares” or “ETFs”) that represent certain types of interests,⁶ including

³ The Exchange notes that its affiliate options exchanges, Miami International Securities Exchange, LLC (“MIAX”) and MIAX Pearl, LLC (“MIAX Pearl”), submitted (or will submit) substantively similar proposals. The Exchange notes that all the rules of Chapter III of MIAX, including Exchange Rules 307 and 309, are incorporated by reference into the MIAX Pearl and MIAX Sapphire rulebooks. The Exchange also notes that all of the rules of Chapter III of MIAX, including Exchange Rules 307 and 309, and the rules of Chapter IV of MIAX, including Exchange Rule 402, are incorporated by reference into the MIAX Emerald, LLC (“MIAX Emerald”) rulebook.

⁴ See Securities Exchange Act Release Nos. 100224 (May 23, 2024), 89 FR 46937 (May 30, 2024) (SR-NYSEArca-2023-70; SR-NYSEArca-2024-31; SR-NASDAQ-2023-045; SR-CboeBZX-2023-069; SR-CboeBZX-2023-070; SR-CboeBZX-2023-087; SR-CboeBZX-2023-095; and SRCboeBZX-2024-018) (Order Granting Accelerated Approval of Proposed Rule Changes, as Modified by Amendments Thereto, to List and Trade Shares of Ether-Based Exchange-Traded Products) (“Ethereum ETP Approval Order”).

⁵ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 100661 (August 6, 2024), 89 FR 65690 (August 12, 2024) (SR-ISE-2024-35) (“ISE Proposal”); and SR-Cboe-2025-021.

⁶ See Exchange Rule 402(i), which permits options trading on exchange-traded funds that: (1) represent interests in registered investment companies (or series thereof) organized as open-end management investment companies, unit investment trusts or similar entities that hold portfolios of securities and/or financial instruments (“Funds”), including, but not limited to, stock index futures contracts, options on futures, options on securities and indices, equity caps, collars and floors, swap agreements, forward contracts, repurchase agreements and reverse repurchase agreements (the “Financial Instruments”), and money market instruments, including, but not limited to, U.S. government securities and repurchase agreements (the “Money Market Instruments”) comprising or otherwise based on or representing investments in broad-based indexes or portfolios of securities and/or Financial Instruments and Money Market Instruments (or that hold securities in one or more other registered investment companies that

interests in certain specific trusts that hold financial instruments, money market instruments, precious metals (which are deemed commodities), or Bitcoin (which is another crypto currency and deemed a commodity).

In addition, Exchange Rule 402(i)(5)(i) requires that the ETFs must either (1) meet the criteria and standards set forth in Exchange Rule 402(a) or 402(b),⁷ or (2) be available for creation or redemption each business day from or through the issuer in cash or in kind at a price related to net asset value, and the issuer must be obligated to issue ETFs in a specified aggregate number even if some or all of the investment assets required to be deposited have not been received by the issuer, subject to the condition that the person obligated to deposit the investments has undertaken to deliver the investment assets as soon as possible and such undertaking is secured by the delivery and maintenance of collateral consisting of cash or cash equivalents satisfactory to the issuer, as provided in the respective prospectus.

themselves hold such portfolios of securities and/or Financial Instruments and Money Market Instruments); (2) represent interests in a trust or similar entity that holds a specified non-U.S. currency or currencies deposited with the trust which when aggregated in some specified minimum number may be surrendered to the trust or similar entity by the beneficial owner to receive the specified non-U.S. currency or currencies and pays the beneficial owner interest and other distributions on the deposited non-U.S. currency or currencies, if any, declared and paid by the trust (“Currency Trust Shares”); (3) represent commodity pool interests principally engaged, directly or indirectly, in holding and/or managing portfolios or baskets of securities, commodity futures contracts, options on commodity futures contracts, swaps, forward contracts and/or options on physical commodities and/or non-U.S. currency (“Commodity Pool ETFs”); (4) are issued by the SPDR® Gold Trust, the iShares COMEX Gold Trust, the iShares Silver Trust, the Aberdeen Standard Silver ETF Trust, the Aberdeen Standard Physical Gold Trust, the Aberdeen Standard Palladium ETF Trust, the Aberdeen Standard Platinum ETF Trust, the Goldman Sachs Physical Gold ETF, the Sprott Physical Gold Trust, the iShares Bitcoin Trust, the Grayscale Bitcoin Trust, the Grayscale Bitcoin Mini Trust, the Bitwise Bitcoin ETF, the Fidelity Wise Origin Bitcoin Fund, or the ARK 21 Shares Bitcoin ETF; or (5) represent an interest in a registered investment company (“Investment Company”) organized as an open-end management company or similar entity, that invests in a portfolio of securities selected by the Investment Company’s investment adviser consistent with the Investment Company’s investment objectives and policies, which is issued in a specified aggregate minimum number in return for a deposit of a specified portfolio of securities and/or a cash amount with a value equal to the next determined net asset value (“NAV”), and when aggregated in the same specified minimum number, may be redeemed at a holder’s request, which holder will be paid a specified portfolio of securities and/or cash with a value equal to the next determined NAV (“Managed Fund Share”); provided that all of the conditions listed in (5)(i) and 5(ii) are met.

⁷ Subparagraphs (a) and (b) of Exchange Rule 402 provide for guidelines to be used by the Exchange when evaluating potential underlying securities for Exchange option transactions.

The Exchange proposes to add the Trust to the list of ETFs on which the Exchange may list options in Rule 402(i)(4). The shares are issued by the Trust, a Delaware statutory trust. The Trust will operate pursuant to a trust agreement (the “Trust Agreement”) between the Sponsor, BlackRock Fund Advisors (the “Trustee”) as the trustee of the Trust and will appoint Wilmington Trust, National Association, as Delaware Trustee of the Trust (the “Delaware Trustee”) by such time that the Registration Statement is effective. The Trust issues shares representing fractional undivided beneficial interests in its net assets. The assets of the Trust will consist only of ether (“ether” or “ETH”) held by a custodian on behalf of the Trust, except under limited circumstances when transferred through the Trust’s prime broker temporarily (described below), and cash. Neither the Trust, nor the Sponsor, nor the Ether Custodian (as defined below), nor any other person associated with the Trust will, directly or indirectly, engage in action where any portion of the Trust’s ETH becomes subject to the Ethereum proof-of-stake validation or is used to earn additional ETH or generate income or other earnings. Coinbase Custody Trust Company, LLC (the “Ether Custodian”), is the custodian for the Trust’s ether holdings, and maintains a custody account for the Trust (“Custody Account”); Coinbase, Inc. (the “Prime Execution Agent”), an affiliate of the Ether Custodian, is the prime broker for the Trust and maintains a trading account for the Trust (“Trading Account”); and The Bank of New York Mellon is the custodian for the Trust’s cash holdings (the “Cash Custodian” and together with the Ether Custodian, the “Custodians”) and the administrator of the Trust (the “Trust Administrator”). Under the Trust Agreement, the Trustee may delegate all or a portion of its duties to any agent, and has delegated the bulk of the day-to-day responsibilities to the Trust Administrator and certain other administrative and recordkeeping functions to its affiliates and other agents. The Trust is not an investment company registered under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (the “1940 Act”).

The investment objective of the Trust is to reflect generally the performance of the price of ether. The Trust seeks to reflect such performance before payment of the Trust's expenses and liabilities. The Shares are intended to constitute a simple means of making an investment similar to an investment in ether through the public securities market rather than by acquiring, holding and trading ether directly on a peer-to-peer or other basis or via a digital asset platform. The Shares have been designed to remove the obstacles represented by the complexities and operational burdens involved in a direct investment in ether, while at the same time having an intrinsic value that reflects, at any given time, the investment exposure to the ether owned by the Trust at such time, less the Trust's expenses and liabilities. Although the Shares are not the exact equivalent of a direct investment in ether, they provide investors with an alternative method of achieving investment exposure to ether through the public securities market, which may be more familiar to them.

An investment in the shares is backed by ether held by the Ether Custodian on behalf of the Trust. All of the Trust's ether will be held in the Custody Account, other than the Trust's ether which is temporarily maintained in the Trading Account under limited circumstances, i.e., in connection with creation and redemption Basket⁸ activity or sales of ether deducted from the Trust's holdings in payment of Trust expenses or the Sponsor's fee (or, in extraordinary circumstances, upon liquidation of the Trust). The Custody Account includes all of the Trust's ether held at the Ether Custodian, but does not include the Trust's ether temporarily maintained at the Prime Execution Agent in the Trading Account from time to time. The Ether Custodian will keep all of the private keys associated with the Trust's ether held in the Custody Account in

⁸ The Trust issues and redeems shares only in blocks of 40,000 or integral multiples thereof. A block of 40,000 shares is called a "Basket." These transactions take place in exchange for ether.

“cold storage”.⁹ The hardware, software, systems, and procedures of the Ether Custodian may not be available or cost effective for many investors to access directly.

The Exchange believes that offering options on the Trust will benefit investors by providing them with an additional, relatively lower cost investing tool to gain exposure to spot ether as well as a hedging vehicle to meet their investment needs in connection with ether products and positions. Similar to other commodity ETFs in which options may be listed on the Exchange (e.g. SPDR® Gold Trust, the iShares COMEX Gold Trust, the iShares Silver Trust, or Aberdeen Standard Physical Gold Trust),¹⁰ the proposed ETF is a trust that essentially offers the same objectives and benefits to investors.

Options on the Trust will trade in the same manner as any other ETF options on the Exchange. The Exchange Rules that currently apply to the listing and trading of all ETFs options on the Exchange, including, for example, Exchange Rules that govern listing criteria, expiration and exercise prices, minimum increments, position and exercise limits, margin requirements, customer accounts and trading halt procedures will apply to the listing and trading of options on the Trust on the Exchange. Today, these rules apply to options on the various commodities ETFs deemed appropriate for options trading on the Exchange pursuant to current Exchange Rule 402(i)(4).

The Exchange’s initial listing standards for ETFs on which options may be listed and traded on the Exchange will apply to the Trust. Pursuant to Exchange Rule 402(a), a security (which includes ETFs) on which options may be listed and traded on the Exchange must be

⁹ The term “cold storage” refers to a safeguarding method by which the private keys corresponding to the Trust’s ether are generated and stored in an offline manner, subject to layers of procedures designed to enhance security. Private keys are generated by the Ether Custodian in offline computers that are not connected to the internet so that they are more resistant to being hacked.

¹⁰ See Exchange Rule 402(i)(4).

registered (with the Commission) and be an NMS stock (as defined in Rule 600 of Regulation NMS under the Act),¹¹ and be characterized by a substantial number of outstanding shares that are widely held and actively traded.¹² Additionally, Exchange Rule 402(i)(5)(i) requires that the ETFs must either (1) meet the criteria and standards set forth in Exchange Rule 402(a) or 402(b),¹³ or (2) be available for creation or redemption each business day from or through the issuer in cash or in kind at a price related to net asset value, and the issuer must be obligated to issue ETFs in a specified aggregate number even if some or all of the investment assets required to be deposited have not been received by the issuer, subject to the condition that the person obligated to deposit the investments has undertaken to deliver the investment assets as soon as possible and such undertaking is secured by the delivery and maintenance of collateral consisting of cash or cash equivalents satisfactory to the issuer, as provided in the respective prospectus. The Trust satisfies Exchange Rule 402(i)(5)(i), as it is subject to this creation and redemption process.

Options on the Trust will also be subject to the Exchange's continued listing standards set forth in Exchange Rule 403(g), for ETFs deemed appropriate for options trading pursuant to Exchange Rule 402(i). Specifically, Exchange Rule 403(g) provides that ETFs that were initially approved for options trading pursuant to Exchange Rule 402(i) shall be deemed not to meet the requirements for continued approval, and the Exchange shall not open for trading any additional series of option contracts of the class covering that such ETFs, if the ETFs cease to be an NMS

¹¹ An "NMS stock" means any NMS security other than an option, and an "NMS security" means any security or class of securities for which transaction reports are collected, processed, and made available pursuant to an effective transaction reporting plan (or an effective national market system plan for reporting transaction in listed options). See 17 CFR § 242.600(b)(64) (definition of "NMS security") and (65) (definition of "NMS stock").

¹² The criteria and guidelines for a security to be considered widely held and actively traded are set forth in Exchange Rule 403(b).

¹³ Subparagraphs a and b of Exchange Rule 402 provide for guidelines to be used by the Exchange when evaluating potential underlying securities for Exchange option transactions.

stock or the ETFs, are delisted from trading pursuant to Exchange Rule 403(b)(4), are halted or suspended from trading in their primary market. Additionally, options on ETFs may be subject to the suspension of opening transactions in any of the following circumstances: (1) in the case of options covering ETFs approved for trading under Exchange Rule 402(i)(5)(i)(A), in accordance with the terms of paragraphs (b)(1), (2), and (3) of Exchange Rule 403; (2) in the case of options covering ETFs approved for trading under Exchange Rule 402(i)(5)(i)(B), following the initial twelve-month period beginning upon the commencement of trading in the ETFs on a national securities exchange and are defined as an NMS stock, there are fewer than 50 record and/or beneficial holders of such ETFs for 30 or more consecutive trading days; (3) the value of the index or portfolio of securities, non-U.S. currency, or portfolio of commodities including commodity futures contracts, options on commodity futures contracts, swaps, forward contracts and/or options on physical commodities and/or financial instruments and money market instruments on which the ETFs are based is no longer calculated or available; or (4) such other event shall occur or condition exist that in the opinion of the Exchange makes further dealing in such options on the Exchange inadvisable.

Options on the Trust would be physically settled contracts with American-style exercise.¹⁴ Consistent with current Exchange Rule 404, which governs the opening of options series on a specific underlying security (including ETFs), the Exchange will open at least one expiration month for options on the Trust¹⁵ at the commencement of trading on the Exchange

¹⁴ See Exchange Rule 401, which provides that the rights and obligations of holders and writers are set forth in the Rules of the Options Clearing Corporation (“OCC”); see also OCC Rules, Chapters VIII (which governs exercise and assignment) and Chapter IX (which governs the discharge of delivery and payment obligations arising out of the exercise of physically settled stock option contracts).

¹⁵ See Exchange Rule 404(b). The monthly expirations are subject to certain listing criteria for underlying securities described within Exchange Rule 404 and its Interpretations and Policies. Monthly listings expire the third Friday of the month. The term “expiration date” (unless separately defined elsewhere in the OCC By-Laws), when used in respect of an option contract (subject to certain exceptions), means the third Friday of the expiration month of such option contract, or if such Friday is a day on which the exchange on which such option is listed is not open for business, the preceding day on which such exchange is open for

and may also list series of options on the Trust for trading on a weekly,¹⁶ monthly,¹⁷ or quarterly¹⁸ basis. The Exchange may also list long-term equity option series (“LEAPS”) that expire from 12 to 39 months from the time they are listed.¹⁹

Pursuant to Exchange Rule 404, Interpretations and Policies .06, which governs strike prices of series of options on ETFs, the interval between strike prices of series of options on ETFs approved for options trading pursuant to Exchange Rule 402(i) shall be fixed at a price per share which is reasonably close to the price per share at which the underlying security is traded in the primary market at or about the same time such series of options is first open for trading on the Exchange, or at such intervals as may have been established on another options exchange prior to the initiation of trading on the Exchange. With respect to the Short Term Options Series or Weekly Program, during the month prior to expiration of an option class that is selected for the Short Term Option Series Program, the strike price intervals for the related non-Short Term Option (“Related non-Short Term Option”) shall be the same as the strike price intervals for the Short Term Option.²⁰ Specifically, the Exchange may open for trading Short Term Option Series at strike price intervals of (i) \$0.50 or greater where the strike price is less than \$100, and \$1 or greater where the strike price is between \$100 and \$150 for all option classes that participate in

business. See OCC By-Laws Article I, Section 1. Pursuant to Exchange Rule 404(c), additional series of options of the same class may be opened for trading on the Exchange when the Exchange deems it necessary to maintain an orderly market, to meet customer demand or when the market price of the underlying stock moves more than five strike prices from the initial exercise price or prices. Pursuant to Exchange Rule 404(e), new series of options on an individual stock may be added until the beginning of the month in which the options contract will expire. Due to unusual market conditions, the Exchange, in its discretion, may add a new series of options on an individual stock until the close of trading on the business day prior to expiration.

¹⁶ See Exchange Rule 404, Interpretations and Policies .02.

¹⁷ See Exchange Rule 404, Interpretations and Policies .13.

¹⁸ See Exchange Rule 404, Interpretations and Policies .03.

¹⁹ See Exchange Rule 406.

²⁰ See Exchange Rule 404, Interpretations and Policies .02(e).

the Short Term Options Series Program; (ii) \$0.50 for option classes that trade in one dollar increments and are in the Short Term Option Series Program; or (iii) \$2.50 or greater where the strike price is above \$150.²¹ Additionally, the Exchange may list series of options pursuant to the \$1 Strike Price Interval Program,²² the \$0.50 Strike Program,²³ and the \$2.50 Strike Price Program.²⁴ Pursuant to Exchange Rule 510, where the price of a series of options for a Bitcoin Fund is less than \$3.00, the minimum increment will be \$0.05, and where the price is \$3.00 or higher, the minimum increment will be \$0.10²⁵ consistent with the minimum increments for options on other ETFs listed on the Exchange. Any and all new series of Trust options that the Exchange lists will be consistent and comply with the expirations, strike prices, and minimum increments set forth in Rules 404 and 510, as applicable.

Trust options will trade in the same manner as any other ETF options on the Exchange. The Exchange Rules that currently apply to the listing and trading of all ETFs options on the Exchange, including, for example, Exchange Rules that govern listing criteria, expiration and exercise prices, minimum increments, position and exercise limits, margin requirements, customer accounts and trading halt procedures will apply to the listing and trading of Bitcoin Funds options on the Exchange in the same manner as they apply to other options on all other ETFs that are listed and traded on the Exchange, including the precious-metal backed commodity ETFs already deemed appropriate for options trading on the Exchange pursuant to current Exchange Rule 402(i)(4).

As mentioned above, the rules for position and exercise limits for options on ETFs,

²¹ Id.

²² See Exchange Rule 404, Interpretation and Policy .01.

²³ See Exchange Rule 404, Interpretation and Policy .04.

²⁴ See Exchange Rule 404(f).

²⁵ See Exchange Rule 510.

including Trust options, are determined pursuant to MIAX Rules 307 and 309, respectively, as incorporated by reference into the MIAX Sapphire Rulebook. Position and exercise limits for ETF options vary according to the number of outstanding shares and the trading volumes of the underlying ETF over the past six months, where the largest in capitalization and the most frequently traded ETFs have an option position and exercise limit of 250,000 contracts (with adjustments for splits, re-capitalizations, etc.) on the same side of the market; and smaller capitalization ETFs have position and exercise limits of 200,000, 75,000, 50,000 or 25,000 contracts (with adjustments for splits, re-capitalizations, etc.) on the same side of the market. The Exchange further notes that MIAX Rule 1502, which governs margin requirements applicable to trading on the Exchange, including options on ETFs, will also apply to the trading of the Trust options, as MIAX Chapter XV (Margins) is also incorporated by reference into the MIAX Sapphire Rulebook. Notwithstanding the position limits in MIAX Rule 307(d) and exercise limits in MIAX Rule 309, the Exchange proposes the position and exercise limits for the Trust to be 25,000 contracts on the same side pursuant to proposed Interpretations and Policies .01 to MIAX Rule 307 and proposed Interpretations and Policies.01 to MIAX Rule 309.

Today, the Exchange has an adequate surveillance program in place for options. The Exchange intends to apply those same program procedures to the Trust options that it applies to the Exchange's other options products.²⁶ The Exchange's staff will have access to the surveillance programs conducted by its affiliate exchanges, MIAX and MIAX Pearl, with respect to trading in the shares of the underlying Trust when conducting surveillances for market abuse or manipulation in the options on the Trust. Additionally, the Exchange is a member of the Intermarket Surveillance Group ("ISG") under the Intermarket Surveillance Group Agreement.

²⁶ The surveillance program includes real-time patterns for price and volume movements and post-trade surveillance patterns (e.g., spoofing, marking the close, ping, phishing).

ISG members work together to coordinate surveillance and investigative information sharing in the stock, options, and futures markets. In addition to obtaining surveillance data from MIAX and MIAX Pearl, the Exchange will be able to obtain information regarding trading in the shares of the underlying Trusts from ISE, Cboe and other markets through ISG. In addition, the Exchange has a Regulatory Services Agreement with the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (“FINRA”). Pursuant to a multi-party 17d-2 joint plan, all options exchanges allocate regulatory responsibilities to FINRA to conduct certain options-related market surveillance that are common to rules of all options exchanges.²⁷

The underlying shares of spot Ethereum exchange-traded products (“ETPs”), including the Trust, are also subject to safeguards related to addressing market abuse and manipulation. As the Commission stated in its order approving proposals of several exchanges to list and trade shares of spot Ethereum-based ETPs,

[e]ach Exchange has a comprehensive surveillance sharing agreement with the [Chicago Mercantile Exchange (“CME”)] via their common membership in the Intermarket Surveillance Group. This facilitates the sharing of information that is available to the CME through its surveillance of its markets, including its surveillance of the CME Ethereum futures market.²⁸

The Exchange states that, given the consistently high correlation between the CME Ethereum futures market and the spot Ethereum market, as confirmed by the Commission through robust correlation analysis, the Commission was able to conclude that such surveillance

²⁷ Section 19(g)(1) of the Act, among other things, requires every SRO registered as a national securities exchange or national securities association to comply with the Act, the rules and regulations thereunder, and the SRO's own rules, and, absent reasonable justification or excuse, enforce compliance by its members and persons associated with its members. See 15 U.S.C. 78q(d)(1) and 17 CFR 240.17d-2. Section 17(d)(1) of the Act allows the Commission to relieve an SRO of certain responsibilities with respect to members of the SRO who are also members of another SRO (“common members”). Specifically, Section 17(d)(1) allows the Commission to relieve an SRO of its responsibilities to: (i) receive regulatory reports from such members; (ii) examine such members for compliance with the Act and the rules and regulations thereunder, and the rules of the SRO; or (iii) carry out other specified regulatory responsibilities with respect to such members.

sharing agreements could reasonably be “expected to assist in surveilling for fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices in the specific context of the [Ethereum ETPs].”²⁹ In light of surveillance measures related to both options and futures as well as the Trust,³⁰ the Exchange believes that existing surveillance procedures are designed to deter and detect possible manipulative behavior which might potentially arise from listing and trading the proposed options on the Trust. Further, the Exchange represents that it will implement any new surveillance procedures it deems necessary to effectively monitor the trading of options on the Trust.

Quotation and last sale information for ETFs is available via the Consolidated Tape Association (“CTA”) high speed line. Quotation and last sale information for such securities is also available from the exchange on which such securities are listed. Quotation and last sale information for options on the Trust will be available via Options Price Reporting Authority (“OPRA”) and major market data vendors. The Exchange has also analyzed its capacity and represents that it believes the Exchange and OPRA have the necessary systems capacity to handle the additional traffic associated with the listing of new series that may result from the introduction of options on the Trust up to the number of expirations currently permissible under the Rules.

The Exchange believes that offering options on the Trust will benefit investors by providing them with an additional, relatively lower cost investing tool to gain exposure to the price of Ethereum and hedging vehicle to meet their investment needs in connection with Ethereum-related products and positions. The Exchange expects investors will transact in options

on the Trust in the unregulated over-the-counter (“OTC”) options market,³¹ but may prefer to trade such options in a listed environment to receive the benefits of trading listing options, including (1) enhanced efficiency in initiating and closing out position; (2) increased market transparency; and (3) heightened contra-party creditworthiness due to the role of OCC as issuer and guarantor of all listed options. The Exchange believes that listing Trust options may cause investors to bring this liquidity to the Exchange, would increase market transparency and enhance the process of price discovery conducted on the Exchange through increased order flow. The ETFs that hold financial instruments, money market instruments, or precious metal commodities on which the Exchange may already list and trade options are trusts structured in substantially the same manner as the Trust and essentially offer the same objectives and benefits to investors, just with respect to different assets. The Exchange notes that it has not identified any issues with the continued listing and trading of any options on ETFs, including ETFs that hold commodities (i.e., precious metals and Bitcoin) that it currently lists and trades on the Exchange.

Finally, the Exchange notes that applicable Exchange rules will require that customers receive appropriate disclosure before trading options in the Trust.³² Further, brokers opening accounts and recommending options transactions must comply with relevant customer suitability standards.³³

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the Act and the rules and regulations thereunder applicable to the Exchange and, in particular, the requirements of

³¹ The Exchange understands from customers that investors have historically transacted in options on ETFs in the OTC options market if such options were not available for trading in a listed environment.

³² See Exchange Rules 1307(b) and (e).

³³ See Exchange Rule 1309.

Section 6(b) of the Act.³⁴ Specifically, the Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the Section 6(b)(5)³⁵ 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 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)³⁶ requirement that the rules of an exchange not be designed to permit unfair discrimination between customers, issuers, brokers, or dealers.

In particular, the Exchange believes that the proposal to list and trade options on the Trust will remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system and, in general, protect investors because offering options on the Trust will provide investors with a greater opportunity to realize the benefits of utilizing options on an ETF based on spot Ethereum, including cost efficiencies and increased hedging strategies. The Exchange believes that offering options on a competitively priced ETF based on spot Ethereum will benefit investors by providing them with an additional, relatively lower-cost risk management tool, allowing them to manage, more easily, their positions and associated risks in their portfolios in connection with exposure to spot Ethereum. Additionally, the Exchange's offering of Trust options will provide investors with the ability to transact in such options in a listed market environment as opposed to in the unregulated OTC options market, which would

³⁴ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

³⁵ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

³⁶ Id.

increase market transparency and enhance the process of price discovery conducted on the Exchange through increased order flow to the benefit of all investors. Today, the Exchange lists options on other commodity (including Ethereum) ETFs structured as a trust, which essentially offer the same objectives and benefits to investors, and for which the Exchange has not identified any issues with the continued listing and trading of options on those ETFs.

The Exchange also believes the proposal to permit options on the Trust will remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system, because options on the Trust will comply with current Exchange Rules. Options on the Trust satisfy the initial listing standards and continued listing standards currently in the Exchange Rules applicable to options on all ETFs, including ETFs that hold other commodities already deemed appropriate for options trading on the Exchange pursuant to Exchange Rule 402(i)(4). Additionally, as demonstrated above, the Trust is characterized by a substantial number of shares that are widely held and actively traded. Further, Rules that currently govern the listing and trading of options on ETFs, including permissible expirations, strike prices, minimum increments, position and exercise limits (including as proposed in the filing submitted by Exchange's affiliate, MIAX), and margin requirements, will govern the listing and trading of options on the Trust.

The Exchange believes the proposed position and exercise limits are designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices and promote just and equitable principles of trade, as they are designed to address potential manipulative schemes and adverse market impacts surrounding the use of options, such as disrupting the market in the security underlying the options. The proposed position and exercise limits for options for the Trust is 25,000 contracts, which is currently the lowest limit applicable to any equity options (including ETF options) and the position and exercise limits that apply to comparable ETFs that hold Bitcoin. The Exchange

believes the proposed position and exercise limits are extremely conservative for the Trust options given the trading volume and outstanding shares for the Trust.

The Exchange represents that it has the necessary systems capacity to support the new Trust options. As discussed above, the Exchange believes that its existing surveillance and reporting safeguards are designed to deter and detect possible manipulative behavior which might arise from listing and trading ETF options, including Trust options. The Exchange's existing surveillance and reporting safeguards are designed to deter and detect possible manipulative behavior which might arise from listing and trading options on ETFs and ETPs, such as (existing) precious metal-commodity backed ETP options as well as the proposed options on the Trust. The Exchange's existing surveillance and reporting safeguards are designed to deter and detect possible manipulative behavior which might arise from listing and trading options on ETFs and ETPs, such as (existing) precious metal-commodity backed ETP options as well as the proposed options on the Trust. The Exchange believes that its surveillance procedures are adequate to properly monitor the trading of options on the Trust in all trading sessions and to deter and detect violations of Exchange rules. Specifically, the Exchange's market surveillance staff will have access to surveillances that it conducts, and that FINRA conducts on its behalf, with respect to the Trust and, as appropriate, would review activity in the underlying Fund when conducting surveillances for market abuse or manipulation in the options on the Trust. Additionally, the Exchange is a member of the ISG under the Intermarket Surveillance Group Agreement. ISG members work together to coordinate surveillance and investigative information sharing in the stock, options, and futures markets. In addition to obtaining surveillance data from MIAX and MIAX Sapphire, the Exchange will be able to obtain information from ISE, Cboe and other markets through ISG. In addition, the Exchange has a Regulatory Services Agreement with FINRA. Pursuant to a multi-party 17d-2 joint plan, all options exchanges allocate regulatory

responsibilities to FINRA to conduct certain options-related market surveillance that are common to rules of all options exchanges.³⁷

The underlying shares of spot Ethereum ETPs, including the Trust, are also subject to safeguards related to addressing market abuse and manipulation. As the Commission stated in its order approving proposals of several exchanges to list and trade shares of spot Ethereum-based ETPs, “[e]ach Exchange has a comprehensive surveillance-sharing agreement with the CME via their common membership in the Intermarket Surveillance Group. This facilitates the sharing of information that is available to the CME through its surveillance of its markets, including its surveillance of the CME ether futures market.”³⁸ The Exchange states that, given the consistently high correlation between the CME Ethereum futures market and the spot Ethereum market, as confirmed by the Commission through robust correlation analysis, the Commission was able to conclude that such surveillance sharing agreements could reasonably be “expected to assist in surveilling for fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices in the specific context of the [Ethereum ETPs].”³⁹ In light of the foregoing, the Exchange believes that existing surveillance procedures are designed to deter and detect possible manipulative behavior which might potentially arise from listing and trading the proposed options on the Trust.

Further, the Exchange represents that it will implement any new surveillance procedures

³⁷ Section 19(g)(1) of the Act, among other things, requires every SRO registered as a national securities exchange or national securities association to comply with the Act, the rules and regulations thereunder, and the SRO's own rules, and, absent reasonable justification or excuse, enforce compliance by its members and persons associated with its members. See 15 U.S.C. 78q(d)(1) and 17 CFR 240.17d-2. Section 17(d)(1) of the Act allows the Commission to relieve an SRO of certain responsibilities with respect to members of the SRO who are also members of another SRO (“common members”). Specifically, Section 17(d)(1) allows the Commission to relieve an SRO of its responsibilities to: (i) receive regulatory reports from such members; (ii) examine such members for compliance with the Act and the rules and regulations thereunder, and the rules of the SRO; or (iii) carry out other specified regulatory responsibilities with respect to such members.

³⁸ See Ethereum ETP Approval Order, 89 FR at 46938.

³⁹ See Ethereum ETP Approval Order, 89 FR at 46941.

it deems necessary to effectively monitor the trading of options on the Trust.

Finally, the Exchange notes that this proposal will remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system and, in general, protect investors because applicable Exchange rules will require that customers receive appropriate disclosure before trading options on the Trust⁴⁰ and will require that brokers opening accounts and recommending options transactions must comply with relevant customer suitability standards.⁴¹

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. In this regard and as indicated above, the Exchange notes that the rule change is being proposed as a competitive response to the filing submitted by ISE and Cboe.⁴²

The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any burden on intramarket competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act as options on the Trust will be equally available to all market participants who wish to trade such options and will trade generally in the same manner as other options. Moreover, options on the Trust will be subject to Exchange Rules that currently govern the listing and trading of options on ETFs, including permissible expirations, strike prices, minimum increments, position and exercise limits (including as proposed in the filing submitted by Exchange's affiliate, MIAX), and margin requirements. Also, and as stated above, the Exchange already lists options on other cryptocurrency backed commodity ETFs structured as trusts.⁴³ Further, the Trust would

⁴⁰ See Rule 1307(b) and (e).

⁴¹ See Rule 1309.

⁴² See supra note 5.

⁴³ See Exchange Rule 402(i)(4).

need to satisfy the maintenance listing standards set forth in the Exchange Rules in the same manner as any other ETF for the Exchange to continue listing options on them.

The Exchange does not believe that the proposal to list and trade options on the Trust will impose any burden on intermarket competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. To the extent that the advent of the Trust options trading on the Exchange may make the Exchange a more attractive marketplace to market participants at other exchanges, such market participants are free to elect to become market participants on the Exchange. Additionally, other options exchanges are free to amend their listing rules, as applicable, to permit them to list and trade options on Trust. The Exchange notes that listing and trading Trust options on the Exchange will subject such options to transparent exchange-based rules as well as price discovery and liquidity, as opposed to alternatively trading such options in the OTC market.

The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change may relieve any burden on, or otherwise promote, competition as it is designed to increase competition for order flow on the Exchange in a manner that is beneficial to investors by providing them with a lower-cost option to hedge their investment portfolios. The Exchange notes that it operates in a highly competitive market in which market participants can readily direct order flow to competing venues that offer similar products. Ultimately, the Exchange believes that offering the Trust options for trading on the Exchange will promote competition by providing investors with an additional, relatively low-cost means to hedge their portfolios and meet their investment needs in connection with Ethereum prices and Ethereum-related products and positions on a listed options exchange.

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

Written comments were neither solicited nor received.

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

Within 45 days of the date of publication of this notice in the Federal Register or within such longer period up to 90 days (i) as the Commission may designate if it finds such longer period to be appropriate and publishes its reasons for so finding or (ii) as to which the Exchange consents, the Commission will:

- A. by order approve or disapprove such proposed rule change, or
- B. institute proceedings to determine whether the proposed rule change should be disapproved.

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 (<https://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>); or
- Send an email to rule-comments@sec.gov. Please include file number SR-SAPPHIRE-2025-14 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-SAPPHIRE-2025-14. This file number should be included on the subject line if email 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 (<https://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>).

Copies 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 a.m. and 3 p.m. Copies of the filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. Do not include personal identifiable information in submissions; you should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. We may redact in part or withhold entirely from publication submitted material that is obscene or subject to copyright protection. All submissions should refer to file number SR-SAPPHIRE-2025-14 and should be submitted on or before [INSERT DATE 21 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*].

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.⁴⁴

Sherry R. Haywood,
Assistant Secretary.

⁴⁴ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).

EXHIBIT 5

New text is underlined;
Deleted text is in [brackets]

MIAX Sapphire Options Exchange Rules

Rule 402. Criteria for Underlying Securities

(a) — (h) No Change.

(i) Securities deemed appropriate for options trading shall include shares or other securities (“Exchange-Traded Fund Shares”) that are traded on a national securities exchange and are defined as an “NMS stock” under Rule 600 of Regulation NMS, and that:

(1) — (3) No Change.

(4) are issued by the SPDR® Gold Trust, the iShares COMEX Gold Trust, the iShares Silver Trust, the Aberdeen Standard Silver ETF Trust, the Aberdeen Standard Physical Gold Trust, the Aberdeen Standard Palladium ETF Trust, the Aberdeen Standard Platinum ETF Trust, the Goldman Sachs Physical Gold ETF, the Sprott Physical Gold Trust, the iShares Bitcoin Trust, the Grayscale Bitcoin Trust, the Grayscale Bitcoin Mini Trust, the Bitwise Bitcoin ETF, the Fidelity Wise Origin Bitcoin Fund, [or] the ARK 21Shares Bitcoin ETF, or the iShares Ethereum Trust; or

(5) No change.

(j) — (k) No change.
