

FIRST TRUST EXCHANGE-TRADED FUND VIII  
(the "Trust")

FIRST TRUST SECURITIZED PLUS ETF  
(the "Fund")

SUPPLEMENT TO THE FUND'S PROSPECTUS AND STATEMENT OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

DATED FEBRUARY 1, 2026

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Fund's Prospectus or Statement of Additional Information, effective February 1, 2026, the Fund's annual unitary management fee will be reduced to 0.65% of the Fund's average daily net assets.

Accordingly, at such time, the "Fees and Expenses of the Fund" section in the Fund's prospectus is replaced in its entirety with the following:

**Fees and Expenses of the Fund**

The following table describes the fees and expenses you may pay if you buy, hold and sell shares of the Fund. **Investors may pay other fees, such as brokerage commissions and other fees to financial intermediaries, which are not reflected in the table and example below.**

**Shareholder Fees**

(fees paid directly from your investment)

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Maximum Sales Charge (Load) Imposed on Purchases (as a percentage of offering price) | None |
|--|------|

**Annual Fund Operating Expenses**

(expenses that you pay each year as a percentage of the value of your investment)

|                                       |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| Management Fees                       | 0.65% |
| Distribution and Service (12b-1) Fees | 0.00% |
| Other Expenses                        | 0.00% |
| Acquired Fund Fees and Expenses       | 0.01% |
| Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses  | 0.66% |

**Example**

The example below is intended to help you compare the cost of investing in the Fund with the cost of investing in other funds.

The example assumes that you invest \$10,000 in the Fund for the time periods indicated and then hold or sell all of your shares at the end of those periods. The example also assumes that your investment has a 5% return each year and that the Fund's operating expenses remain at current levels. Although your actual costs may be higher or lower, based on these assumptions your costs would be:

| 1 Year | 3 Years | 5 Years | 10 Years |
|--------|---------|---------|----------|
| \$67   | \$211   | \$368   | \$822    |

Additionally, the Fund is no longer eligible for any breakpoint discounts described in the Fund's prospectus or statement of additional information. Accordingly, any reference to such breakpoint discounts in the Fund's prospectus or statement of additional information is removed in its entirety.

PLEASE KEEP THIS SUPPLEMENT WITH YOUR FUND'S PROSPECTUS  
AND STATEMENT OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

# STATEMENT OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

INVESTMENT COMPANY ACT FILE NO. 811-23147

## FIRST TRUST EXCHANGE-TRADED FUND VIII

FUND NAME

First Trust Securitized Plus ETF

TICKER SYMBOL

DEED

EXCHANGE

NYSE Arca

**DATED JANUARY 2, 2026**

This Statement of Additional Information ("SAI") is not a prospectus. It should be read in conjunction with the prospectus dated January 2, 2026, as it may be revised from time to time (the "Prospectus"), for First Trust Securitized Plus ETF (the "Fund"), a series of the First Trust Exchange-Traded Fund VIII (the "Trust"). Capitalized terms used herein that are not defined have the same meaning as in the Prospectus, unless otherwise noted. A copy of the Prospectus may be obtained without charge by writing to the Trust's distributor, First Trust Portfolios L.P., 120 East Liberty Drive, Suite 400, Wheaton, Illinois 60187, or by calling toll free at (800) 621-1675.

The audited financial statements for the Fund's most recent fiscal year appear in the Fund's Form N-CSR dated August 31, 2025, which was filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") on November 10, 2025. The financial statements from the Form N-CSR are incorporated herein by reference. The Form N-CSR is available without charge by calling (800) 621-1675 or by visiting the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>.

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## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE TRUST AND THE FUND

The Trust was organized as a Massachusetts business trust on February 22, 2016 and is authorized to issue an unlimited number of shares in one or more series. The Trust is an open-end management investment company, registered under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (the "1940 Act"). This SAI relates to the Fund, which is a diversified series.

The Fund, as a series of the Trust, represents a beneficial interest in a separate portfolio of securities and other assets, with its own objective and policies.

The Board of Trustees of the Trust (the "Board," "Board of Trustees" or "Trustees") has the right to establish additional series in the future, to determine the preferences, voting powers, rights and privileges thereof and to modify such preferences, voting powers, rights and privileges without shareholder approval. Shares of any series may also be divided into one or more classes at the discretion of the Trustees.

The Trust or any series or class thereof may be terminated at any time by the Board of Trustees upon written notice to the shareholders.

Each share has one vote with respect to matters upon which a shareholder vote is required consistent with the requirements of the 1940 Act and the rules promulgated thereunder. Shares of all series of the Trust vote together as a single class except as otherwise required by the 1940 Act or if the matter being voted on affects only a particular series, and, if a matter affects a particular series differently from other series, the shares of that series will vote separately on such matter. The Trust's Declaration of Trust (the "Declaration") requires a shareholder vote only on those matters where the 1940 Act requires a vote of shareholders and otherwise permits the Trustees to take actions without seeking the consent of shareholders. For example, the Declaration gives the Trustees broad authority to approve reorganizations between the Fund and another entity, such as another exchange-traded fund, or the sale of all or substantially all of the Fund's assets, or the termination of the Trust or any Fund without shareholder approval if the 1940 Act would not require such approval.

The Declaration provides that by becoming a shareholder of the Fund, each shareholder shall be expressly held to have agreed to be bound by the provisions of the Declaration and to any By-laws adopted by the Trust. The Declaration provides that, except as set forth therein and authorized by the Trustees, shareholders have no rights, privileges, claims or remedies under any contract or agreement entered into by the Trust or the Fund with any service provider or other agent to or contractor with the Trust or the Fund including, without limitation, any third party beneficiary rights.

The Declaration may, except in limited circumstances, be amended by the Trustees in any respect without a shareholder vote. The Declaration provides that the Trustees may establish the number of Trustees and that vacancies on the Board of Trustees may be filled by the remaining Trustees, except when election of Trustees by the shareholders is required under the 1940 Act. Trustees are then elected by a plurality of votes cast by shareholders at a meeting at which a quorum is present. The Declaration also provides that Trustees may be removed, with or without cause, by a vote of shareholders holding at least two-thirds of the voting power of the Trust, or by a vote of two-thirds of the remaining Trustees. The provisions of the Declaration relating to the election and removal of Trustees may not be amended without the approval of two-thirds of the Trustees.

The holders of Fund shares are required to disclose information on direct or indirect ownership of Fund shares as may be required to comply with various laws applicable to the Fund or as the Trustees may determine, and ownership of Fund shares may be disclosed by the Fund if so required by law or regulation. In addition, pursuant to the Declaration, the Trustees may, in their discretion, require the Trust to redeem shares held by any shareholder for any reason under terms set by the Trustees.

The Declaration provides a detailed process for the bringing of derivative actions by shareholders in order to permit legitimate inquiries and claims while avoiding the time, expense, distraction and other harm that can be caused to the Fund or its shareholders as a result of spurious shareholder demands and derivative actions. In addition, the Declaration provides that actions that are derivative in nature may not be brought directly. Prior to bringing a derivative action, a demand must first be made on the Trustees. The Declaration details various information, certifications, undertakings and acknowledgements that must be included in the demand. Following receipt of the demand, the Trustees have a period of 90 days, which may be extended by an additional 60 days, to consider the demand. If a majority of the Trustees who are considered independent for the purposes of considering the demand determine that maintaining the suit would not be in the best interests of the Fund, the Trustees are required to reject the demand and the complaining shareholder may not proceed with the derivative action unless the shareholder is able to sustain the burden of proof to a court that the decision of the

Trustees not to pursue the requested action was not a good faith exercise of their business judgment on behalf of the Fund. In making such a determination, a Trustee is not considered to have a personal financial interest by virtue of being compensated for his or her services as a Trustee. If a demand is rejected, the complaining shareholder will be responsible for the costs and expenses (including attorneys' fees) incurred by the Fund in connection with the consideration of the demand under a number of circumstances. In addition, if a court determines that a derivative action was made without reasonable cause or for an improper purpose, or if a derivative or direct action is dismissed on the basis of a failure to comply with the procedural provisions relating to shareholder actions as set forth in the Declaration, or if a direct action is dismissed by a court for failure to state a claim, the shareholder bringing the action may be responsible for the Fund's costs, including attorneys' fees.

The provisions of the Declaration provide that any direct or derivative action commenced by a shareholder must be brought only in the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts (Boston Division) or if any such action may not be brought in that court, then in the Business Litigation Session of Suffolk Superior Court in Massachusetts (the "*Chosen Courts*"). Except as prohibited by applicable law, if a shareholder commences an applicable action in a court other than a Chosen Court without the consent of the Fund, then such shareholder may be obligated to reimburse the Fund and any applicable Trustee or officer of the Fund made party to such proceeding for the costs and expenses (including attorneys' fees) incurred in connection with any successful motion to dismiss, stay or transfer of the action. The Declaration also provides that any shareholder bringing an action against the Fund waives the right to trial by jury to the fullest extent permitted by law.

The Trust is not required to and does not intend to hold annual meetings of shareholders.

Under Massachusetts law applicable to Massachusetts business trusts, shareholders of such a trust may, under certain circumstances, be held personally liable as partners for its obligations. However, the Declaration contains an express disclaimer of shareholder liability for acts or obligations of the Trust and requires that notice of this disclaimer be given in each agreement, obligation or instrument entered into or executed by the Trust or the Trustees. The Declaration further provides for indemnification out of the assets and property of the Trust for all losses and expenses of any shareholder held personally liable for the obligations of the Trust. Thus, the risk of a shareholder incurring financial loss on account of shareholder liability is limited to circumstances in which both inadequate insurance existed and the Trust or the Fund itself was unable to meet its obligations.

The Declaration provides that a Trustee acting in his or her capacity as Trustee is liable to the Trust for his or her own bad faith, willful misfeasance, gross negligence, or reckless disregard of his or her duties involved in the conduct of the individual's office, and for nothing else and shall not be liable for errors of judgment or mistakes of fact or law. The Declaration also provides that the Trustees of the Trust will be subject to the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts relating to Massachusetts business trusts, but not to the laws of Massachusetts relating to the trustees of common law trusts, such as donative or probate type trusts. The Declaration further provides that a Trustee acting in his or her capacity as Trustee is not personally liable to any person other than the Trust, for any act, omission, or obligation of the Trust. The Declaration requires the Trust to indemnify any persons who are or who have been Trustees, officers or employees of the Trust for any liability for actions or failure to act except to the extent prohibited by applicable federal law. In making any determination as to whether any person is entitled to the advancement of expenses in connection with a claim for which indemnification is sought, such person is entitled to a rebuttable presumption that he or she did not engage in conduct for which indemnification is not available. The Declaration provides that any Trustee who serves as chair of the Board of Trustees or of a committee of the Board of Trustees, as lead independent Trustee or as audit committee financial expert, or in any other similar capacity will not be subject to any greater standard of care or liability because of such position.

These provisions are not intended to restrict any shareholder rights under the federal securities laws and the Declaration specifically provides that no provision of the Declaration shall be effective to require a waiver of compliance with any provision of, or restrict any shareholder rights expressly granted by, the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "*1933 Act*"), the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "*1934 Act*") or the 1940 Act, or any valid rule, regulation or order of the Securities Exchange Commission thereunder.

The Fund is advised by First Trust Advisors L.P. (the "*Advisor*" or "*First Trust*").

The shares of the Fund are principally listed and traded on NYSE Arca, Inc. ("*NYSE Arca*" or the "*Exchange*"), as shown on the cover of this SAI. ETFs, such as the Fund, do not sell or redeem individual shares of the Fund. Instead, financial entities known as "Authorized Participants" (which are discussed in greater detail below) have contractual arrangements with the Fund or the Distributor to purchase and redeem Fund shares directly with the Fund in large blocks of shares known as

"Creation Units." An Authorized Participant that purchases a Creation Unit of Fund shares deposits with the Fund a "basket" of securities, cash and/or other assets identified by the Fund that day, and then receives the Creation Unit of Fund shares in return for those assets. The redemption process is the reverse of the purchase process: the Authorized Participant redeems a Creation Unit of Fund shares for a basket of securities, cash and/or other assets. The basket is generally representative of the Fund's portfolio, and together with a cash balancing amount, it is equal to the NAV of the Fund shares comprising the Creation Unit. Pursuant to Rule 6c-11 of the 1940 Act, the Fund may utilize baskets that are not representative of the Fund's portfolio. Such "custom baskets" are discussed in the section entitled "Creation and Redemption of Creation Units."

Fund shares may be issued in advance of receipt of deposit securities subject to various conditions including a requirement to maintain on deposit with the Fund cash at least equal to 115% of the market value of the missing deposit securities. See the section entitled "Creation and Redemption of Creation Units." In each instance of such cash creations or redemptions, transaction fees may be imposed that will be higher than the transaction fees associated with in-kind creations or redemptions. In all cases, such fees will be limited in accordance with the requirements of the SEC applicable to management investment companies offering redeemable securities.

## **EXCHANGE LISTING AND TRADING**

There can be no assurance that the requirements of the Exchange necessary to maintain the listing of shares of the Fund will continue to be met. The Exchange may, but is not required to, remove the shares of the Fund from listing if (i) following the initial 12-month period beginning at the commencement of trading of the Fund, there are fewer than 50 beneficial owners of the shares of the Fund for 30 or more consecutive trading days; or (ii) such other event shall occur or condition exist that, in the opinion of the Exchange, makes further dealings on the Exchange inadvisable. The Exchange will remove the shares of the Fund from listing and trading upon termination of the Fund.

As in the case of other stocks traded on the Exchange, brokers' commissions on transactions will be based on negotiated commission rates at customary levels.

The Fund reserves the right to adjust the price levels of shares in the future to help maintain convenient trading ranges for investors. Any adjustments would be accomplished through stock splits or reverse stock splits, which would have no effect on the net assets of the Fund.

## **INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE AND POLICIES**

The Prospectus describes the investment objective and certain policies of the Fund. The following supplements the information contained in the Prospectus concerning the investment objective and policies of the Fund.

The Fund is subject to the following fundamental policies, which may not be changed without approval of the holders of a majority of the outstanding voting securities (as such term is defined in the 1940 Act) of the Fund:

- (1) The Fund may not issue senior securities, except as permitted under the 1940 Act.
- (2) The Fund may not borrow money, except as permitted under the 1940 Act.
- (3) The Fund will not underwrite the securities of other issuers except to the extent the Fund may be considered an underwriter under the 1933 Act, in connection with the purchase and sale of portfolio securities.
- (4) The Fund will not purchase or sell real estate or interests therein, unless acquired as a result of ownership of securities or other instruments (but this shall not prohibit the Fund from purchasing or selling securities or other instruments backed by real estate or of issuers engaged in real estate activities).
- (5) The Fund may not make loans to other persons, except through (i) the purchase of debt securities permissible under the Fund's investment policies, (ii) repurchase agreements, or (iii) the lending of portfolio securities, *provided* that no such loan of portfolio securities may be made by the Fund if, as a result, the aggregate of such loans would exceed 33⅓% of the value of the Fund's total assets.
- (6) The Fund may not purchase or sell physical commodities unless acquired as a result of ownership of securities or other instruments (but this shall not prevent the Fund from purchasing or selling options, futures contracts, forward contracts or other derivative instruments, or from investing in securities or other instruments backed by physical commodities).

- (7) The Fund may not invest 25% or more of the value of its total assets in securities of issuers in any one industry or group of industries. This restriction does not apply to obligations issued or guaranteed by the U.S. government, its agencies or instrumentalities, or securities of other investment companies.
- (8) With respect to 75% of total assets, the Fund may not purchase the securities of any issuer (except securities issued or guaranteed by the United States government or any agency or instrumentality thereof) if, as a result, (i) more than 5% of the Fund's total assets would be invested in securities of that issuer; or (ii) the Fund would hold more than 10% of the outstanding voting securities of that issuer.

For purposes of applying restriction (1) above, under the 1940 Act as currently in effect, the Fund is not permitted to issue senior securities, except that the Fund may borrow from any bank if immediately after such borrowing the value of the Fund's total assets is at least 300% of the principal amount of all of the Fund's borrowings (*i.e.*, the principal amount of the borrowings may not exceed 33⅓% of the Fund's total assets). In the event that such asset coverage shall at any time fall below 300%, the Fund shall, within three days thereafter (not including Sundays and holidays), reduce the amount of its borrowings to an extent that the asset coverage of such borrowing shall be at least 300%. The fundamental investment limitations set forth above limit the Fund's ability to engage in certain investment practices and purchase securities or other instruments to the extent permitted by, or consistent with, applicable law. As such, these limitations will change as the statute, rules, regulations or orders (or, if applicable, interpretations) change, and no shareholder vote will be required or sought.

Except for restriction (2) above, if a percentage restriction is adhered to at the time of investment, a later increase in percentage resulting from a change in market value of the investment or the total assets will not constitute a violation of that restriction. With respect to restriction (2), if the limitations are exceeded as a result of a change in market value then the Fund will reduce the amount of borrowings within three days thereafter to the extent necessary to comply with the limitations (not including Sundays and holidays).

Notwithstanding restriction (7) above, to the extent the Fund invests in other investment companies, it will consider, to the extent practicable, the industry concentration of the underlying investment companies when determining compliance with the limitations set forth in restriction (7) above.

The foregoing fundamental policies of the Fund may not be changed without the affirmative vote of the majority of the outstanding voting securities of the Fund. The 1940 Act defines a majority vote as the vote of the lesser of (i) 67% or more of the voting securities represented at a meeting at which more than 50% of the outstanding securities are represented; or (ii) more than 50% of the outstanding voting securities. With respect to the submission of a change in an investment policy to the holders of outstanding voting securities of the Fund, such matter shall be deemed to have been effectively acted upon with respect to the Fund if a majority of the outstanding voting securities of the Fund vote for the approval of such matter, notwithstanding that such matter has not been approved by the holders of a majority of the outstanding voting securities of any other series of the Trust affected by such matter.

The Fund has adopted a non-fundamental investment policy pursuant to Rule 35d-1 under the 1940 Act (a "*Name Policy*") whereby the Fund, under normal market conditions, will invest at least 80% of its assets (including investment borrowings) in fixed income securities. As a result, the Fund must provide shareholders with a notice meeting the requirements of Rule 35d-1(c) at least 60 days prior to any change of the Fund's Name Policy.

In addition to the foregoing fundamental policies, the Fund is also subject to strategies and policies discussed herein which, unless otherwise noted, are non-fundamental policies and may be changed by the Board of Trustees.

## **INVESTMENT STRATEGIES**

Under normal market conditions, the Fund pursues its objective by investing at least 80% of its net assets (including investment borrowings) in securitized debt securities, including asset-backed securities, residential and commercial mortgage-backed securities and collateralized loan obligations. The Fund seeks to outperform the Bloomberg Barclays U.S. Mortgage-Backed Securities Index over time through the utilization of independent, bottom-up research to identify securities that are relatively undervalued.

## Types of Investments

**Collateralized Loan Obligations (“CLOs”).** A CLO is a financing company (generally called a Special Purpose Vehicle or “SPV”) created to reapportion the risk and return characteristics of a pool of assets. While the assets underlying CLOs are typically Senior Loans, the assets may also include (i) unsecured loans, (ii) other debt securities that are rated below investment grade, (iii) debt tranches of other CLOs and (iv) equity securities incidental to investments in Senior Loans. When investing in CLOs, the Fund will not invest in equity tranches, which are the lowest tranche. However, the Fund may invest in lower debt tranches of CLOs, which typically experience a lower recovery, greater risk of loss or deferral or non-payment of interest than more senior debt tranches of the CLO. In addition, the Fund intends to invest in CLOs consisting primarily of individual Senior Loans of borrowers and not repackaged CLO obligations from other high risk pools. The underlying Senior Loans purchased by CLOs are generally performing at the time of purchase but may become non-performing, distressed or defaulted. CLOs with underlying assets of non-performing, distressed or defaulted loans are not contemplated to comprise a significant portion of the Fund's investments in CLOs. The key feature of the CLO structure is the prioritization of the cash flows from a pool of debt securities among the several classes of the CLO. The SPV is a company founded solely for the purpose of securitizing payment claims arising out of this diversified asset pool. On this basis, marketable securities are issued by the SPV which, due to the diversification of the underlying risk, generally represent a lower level of risk than the original assets. The redemption of the securities issued by the SPV typically takes place at maturity out of the cash flow generated by the collected claims.

Holders of CLOs bear risks of the underlying investments, index or reference obligation and are subject to counterparty risk.

The Fund may have the right to receive payments only from the CLOs, and generally does not have direct rights against the issuer or the entity that sold the assets to be securitized. While certain CLOs enable the investor to acquire interests in a pool of securities without the brokerage and other expenses associated with directly holding the same securities, investors in CLOs generally pay their share of the CLO's administrative and other expenses. Although it is difficult to predict whether the prices of indices and securities underlying a CLO will rise or fall, these prices and, therefore, the prices of CLOs will be influenced by the same types of political and economic events that affect issuers of securities and capital markets generally. If the issuer of a CLO uses shorter term financing to purchase longer term securities, the issuer may be forced to sell its securities at below market prices if it experiences difficulty in obtaining short-term financing, which may adversely affect the value of the CLOs owned by the Fund.

Certain CLOs may be thinly traded or have a limited trading market. CLOs are typically privately offered and sold. As a result, investments in CLOs may be characterized by the Fund as illiquid securities. In addition to the general risks associated with debt securities discussed herein, CLOs carry additional risks, including, but not limited to: (i) the possibility that distributions from collateral securities will not be adequate to make interest or other payments; (ii) the quality of the collateral may decline in value or default; (iii) the possibility that the investments in CLOs are subordinate to other classes or tranches thereof; and (iv) the complex structure of the security may not be fully understood at the time of investment and may produce disputes with the issuer or unexpected investment results.

**Cash Equivalents and Short-Term Investments/Temporary Defensive Positions.** The Fund may invest in securities with maturities of less than one year or cash equivalents, or it may hold cash. The percentage of the Fund invested in such holdings varies and depends on several factors, including market conditions. For temporary defensive purposes, the Fund may depart from its principal investment strategies and invest part or all of its assets in these securities, or it may hold cash. During such periods, the Fund may not be able to achieve its investment objective. The Fund may adopt a temporary defensive strategy when the Advisor believes securities in which the Fund normally invests have elevated risks due to political or economic factors and in other extraordinary circumstances. Cash equivalents, short-term investments and temporary defensive positions held by the Fund may include, without limitation, the types of investments set forth below.

- (1) The Fund may invest in U.S. government securities, including bills, notes and bonds differing as to maturity and rates of interest, which are either issued or guaranteed by the U.S. Treasury or by U.S. government agencies or instrumentalities. U.S. government securities include securities that are issued or guaranteed by the U.S. Treasury, by various agencies of the U.S. government, or by various instrumentalities that have been established or sponsored by the U.S. government. U.S. Treasury securities are backed by the “full faith and credit” of the United States. Securities issued or guaranteed by federal agencies and U.S. government-sponsored instrumentalities may or may not be backed by the full faith and credit of the United States. Some of the U.S. government agencies that issue or guarantee securities include the Export-Import Bank of the United States, the Farmers Home Administration, the Federal Housing Administration, the

Maritime Administration, the Small Business Administration and The Tennessee Valley Authority. An instrumentality of the U.S. government is a government agency organized under federal charter with government supervision. Instrumentalities issuing or guaranteeing securities include, among others, the Federal Home Loan Banks, the Federal Land Banks, the Central Bank for Cooperatives, Federal Intermediate Credit Banks and the Federal National Mortgage Association ("*Fannie Mae*"). In the case of those U.S. government securities not backed by the full faith and credit of the United States, the investor must look principally to the agency or instrumentality issuing or guaranteeing the security for ultimate repayment and may not be able to assert a claim against the United States itself in the event that the agency or instrumentality does not meet its commitment. The U.S. government, its agencies and instrumentalities do not guarantee the market value of their securities; consequently, the value of such securities may fluctuate. In addition, the Fund may invest in sovereign debt obligations of non-U.S. countries. A sovereign debtor's willingness or ability to repay principal and interest in a timely manner may be affected by a number of factors, including its cash flow situation, the extent of its non-U.S. reserves, the availability of sufficient non-U.S. exchange on the date a payment is due, the relative size of the debt service burden to the economy as a whole, the sovereign debtor's policy toward principal international lenders and the political constraints to which it may be subject. In addition, the Fund may invest in short-term fixed income securities issued by or on behalf of municipal or corporate issuers.

- (2) The Fund may invest in certificates of deposit issued against funds deposited in a bank or savings and loan association. Such certificates are for a definite period of time, earn a specified rate of return and are normally negotiable. If such certificates of deposit are non-negotiable, they will be considered illiquid investments and be subject to the Fund's 15% restriction on investments in illiquid investments. Pursuant to the certificate of deposit, the issuer agrees to pay the amount deposited plus interest to the bearer of the certificate on the date specified thereon. Under current FDIC regulations, the maximum insurance payable as to any one certificate of deposit is \$250,000; therefore, certificates of deposit purchased by the Fund may not be fully insured. The Fund may only invest in certificates of deposit issued by U.S. banks with at least \$1 billion in assets.
- (3) The Fund may invest in bankers' acceptances of U.S. and foreign banks and similar institutions, which are short-term credit instruments used to finance commercial transactions. Generally, an acceptance is a time draft drawn on a bank by an exporter or an importer to obtain a stated amount of funds to pay for specific merchandise. The draft is then "accepted" by a bank that, in effect, unconditionally guarantees to pay the face value of the instrument on its maturity date. The acceptance may then be held by the accepting bank as an asset, or it may be sold in the secondary market at the going rate of interest for a specific maturity.
- (4) The Fund may invest in repurchase agreements, which involve purchases of debt securities with counterparties that are deemed by the Advisor to present acceptable credit risks. In such an action, at the time the Fund purchases the security, it simultaneously agrees to resell and redeliver the security to the seller, who also simultaneously agrees to buy back the security at a fixed price and time. This assures a predetermined yield for the Fund during its holding period since the resale price is always greater than the purchase price and reflects an agreed-upon market rate. Such actions afford an opportunity for the Fund to invest temporarily available cash. The Fund may enter into repurchase agreements only with respect to obligations of the U.S. government, its agencies or instrumentalities, certificates of deposit or bankers' acceptances in which the Fund may invest. Repurchase agreements may be considered loans to the seller, collateralized by the underlying securities. The risk to the Fund is limited to the ability of the seller to pay the agreed-upon sum on the repurchase date; in the event of default, the repurchase agreement provides that the Fund is entitled to sell the underlying collateral. If the value of the collateral declines after the agreement is entered into, however, and if the seller defaults under a repurchase agreement when the value of the underlying collateral is less than the repurchase price, the Fund could incur a loss of both principal and interest. The portfolio managers monitor the value of the collateral at the time the action is entered into and at all times during the term of the repurchase agreement. The portfolio managers do so in an effort to determine that the value of the collateral always equals or exceeds the agreed-upon repurchase price to be paid to the Fund. If the seller were to be subject to a federal bankruptcy proceeding, the ability of the Fund to liquidate the collateral could be delayed or impaired because of certain provisions of the bankruptcy laws.

- (5) The Fund may invest in bank time deposits, which are monies kept on deposit with banks or savings and loan associations for a stated period of time at a fixed rate of interest. There may be penalties for the early withdrawal of such time deposits, in which case the yields of these investments will be reduced.
- (6) The Fund may invest in commercial paper, which are short-term unsecured promissory notes, including variable rate master demand notes issued by corporations to finance their current operations. Master demand notes are direct lending arrangements between the Fund and a corporation. There is no secondary market for the notes. However, they are redeemable by the Fund at any time. The Fund's portfolio managers will consider the financial condition of the corporation (e.g., earning power, cash flow and other liquidity ratios) and will regularly monitor the corporation's ability to meet all of its financial obligations, because the Fund's liquidity might be impaired if the corporation were unable to pay principal and interest on demand.
- (7) The Fund may invest in shares of money market funds, as consistent with its investment objective and policies. Shares of money market funds are subject to management fees and other expenses of those funds. Therefore, investments in money market funds will cause the Fund to bear proportionately the costs incurred by the money market funds' operations. At the same time, the Fund will continue to pay its own management fees and expenses with respect to all of its assets, including any portion invested in the shares of other investment companies. It is possible for the Fund to lose money by investing in money market funds.

**High Yield Securities.** The Fund may invest in securities that are rated below investment grade, commonly referred to as "junk" bonds, at the time of purchase. The ratings of a rating agency represent its opinion as to the quality of securities it undertakes to rate. Ratings are not absolute standards of quality; consequently, securities with the same maturity, duration, coupon, and rating may have different yields. For purposes of determining whether a security is below investment grade, the lowest available rating will be considered. If a security owned by the Fund is subsequently downgraded, the Fund will not be required to dispose of such security. If a downgrade occurs, the Advisor will consider what action, including the sale of such security, is in the best interests of the Fund. The Credit Rating Definitions, as published by the three major rating agencies, are set forth in *Exhibit B* to this SAI.

Because the risk of default is higher for below investment grade securities than for investment grade securities, the Advisor's research and credit analysis will be an especially important part of managing securities of this type. The Advisor will attempt to identify those issuers of below investment grade securities whose financial condition the Advisor believes are adequate to meet future obligations or who have improved or are expected to improve in the future. The Advisor's analysis focuses on relative values based on such factors as interest or dividend coverage, asset coverage, earnings prospects and the experience and managerial strength of the issuer.

**Illiquid Investments.** The Fund may invest in illiquid investments (*i.e.*, any investment that the Fund reasonably expects cannot be sold or disposed of in current market conditions in seven calendar days or less without the sale or disposition significantly changing the market value of the investment). For purposes of this restriction, illiquid investments may include, but are not limited to, certain restricted securities (securities the disposition of which is restricted under the federal securities laws), securities that may only be resold pursuant to Rule 144A under the 1933 Act, and repurchase agreements with maturities in excess of seven days, among others. However, the Fund will not acquire illiquid investments if, as a result, such investments would comprise more than 15% of the value of the Fund's net assets. The Advisor, subject to oversight by the Board of Trustees, has the ultimate authority to determine, to the extent permissible under the federal securities laws, which investments are liquid or illiquid for purposes of this 15% limitation under the Fund's liquidity risk management program, adopted pursuant to Rule 22e-4 under the 1940 Act.

Restricted securities may be sold only in privately negotiated transactions or in a public offering with respect to which a registration statement is in effect under the 1933 Act. Where registration is required, the Fund may be obligated to pay all or part of the registration expenses and a considerable period may elapse between the time of the decision to sell and the time the Fund may be permitted to sell a security under an effective registration statement. If, during such a period, adverse market conditions were to develop, the Fund might obtain a less favorable price than that which prevailed when it decided to sell. Illiquid investments will be priced at fair value as determined in good faith under procedures adopted by the Board of Trustees. If, through the appreciation of illiquid investments or the depreciation of liquid investments, the Fund should be in a position where more than 15% of the value of its net assets are invested in illiquid investments, including restricted securities which are not readily marketable, the Advisor will report such occurrence to the Board of Trustees and take such steps as are deemed advisable to protect liquidity in accordance with the Fund's liquidity risk management program.

**Investment Companies.** The Fund may also invest in securities of other investment companies, including exchange-traded funds (“ETFs”). An ETF is a fund that holds a portfolio of securities and trades on a securities exchange, and its shares may, at times, trade at a premium or discount to their net asset value. As a shareholder in a pooled investment vehicle, the Fund will bear its ratable share of that vehicle’s expenses, and would remain subject to payment of the Fund’s management fees with respect to assets so invested. Shareholders would therefore be subject to duplicative expenses to the extent the Fund invests in other pooled investment vehicles. In addition, the Fund will incur brokerage costs when purchasing and selling shares of ETFs. Other pooled investment vehicles may be leveraged, and the net asset value and market value of their securities will therefore be more volatile and the yield to shareholders will tend to fluctuate more than the yield of unleveraged pooled investment vehicles.

**Loans.** The Fund may invest in fixed and floating rate loans (“Loans”). Loans may include senior floating rate loans (“Senior Loans”) and secured and unsecured loans, second lien or more junior loans and bridge loans (“Junior Loans”). Loans are typically arranged through private negotiations between borrowers in the United States or in foreign or emerging markets which are generally corporate issuers or issuers of sovereign debt obligations (“Obligors”) and one or more financial institutions and other lenders (“lenders”). The Funds may invest in Loans by purchasing assignments of all or a portion of Loans (“assignments”) or Loan participations (“participations”) from third parties.

The Fund has direct rights against the Obligor on the Loan when it purchases an Assignment. Assignments are arranged through private negotiations between potential assignees and potential assignors. With respect to Participations, typically, the Fund will have a contractual relationship only with the Lender and not with the Obligor. The agreement governing Participations may limit the rights of the Fund to vote on certain changes which may be made to the Loan agreement, such as waiving a breach of a covenant. However, the holder of a Participation will generally have the right to vote on certain fundamental issues such as changes in principal amount, payment dates and interest rate. Participations may entail certain risks relating to the creditworthiness of the parties from which the participations are obtained.

A Loan is typically originated, negotiated and structured by a U.S. or foreign commercial bank, insurance company, finance company or other financial institution (the “Agent”) for a group of Loan investors. The Agent typically administers and enforces the Loan on behalf of the other Loan investors in the syndicate. The Agent’s duties may include responsibility for the collection of principal and interest payments from the Obligor and the apportionment of these payments to the credit of all Loan investors. The Agent is also typically responsible for monitoring compliance with the covenants contained in the Loan agreement based upon reports prepared by the Obligor. In addition, an institution, typically but not always the Agent, holds any collateral on behalf of the Loan investors. In the event of a default by the Obligor, it is possible, though unlikely, that the Fund could receive a portion of the borrower’s collateral. If the Fund receives collateral other than cash, any proceeds received from liquidation of such collateral will be available for investment as part of the Fund’s portfolio.

In the process of buying, selling and holding Senior Loans, the Fund may receive and/or pay certain fees. These fees are in addition to interest payments received and may include facility fees, commitment fees, commissions and prepayment penalty fees. When the Fund buys or sells a Loan it may pay a fee. In certain circumstances, the Fund may receive a prepayment penalty fee upon prepayment of a Loan.

**Mortgage-Backed Securities.** The Fund invests in mortgage-based securities. Mortgage-backed securities represent an interest in a pool of mortgage loans made by banks and other financial institutions to finance purchases of homes, commercial buildings and other real estate. The individual mortgage loans are packaged or “pooled” together for sale to investors. As the underlying mortgage loans are paid off, investors receive principal and interest payments. Mortgage-backed securities may be fixed-rate or adjustable-rate mortgage-backed securities (“ARMS”). Certain mortgage-backed securities (including RMBS and CMBS), where mortgage payments are divided up between paying the loan’s principal and paying the loan’s interest, are referred to as stripped mortgage-backed securities (“SMBS”). Further, mortgage-backed securities can also be categorized as collateralized mortgage obligations (“CMOs”) or real estate mortgage investment conduits (“REMICs”) where they are divided into multiple classes with each class being entitled to a different share of the principal and/or interest payments received from the pool of underlying assets.

The Fund may invest in mortgage-backed securities issued or guaranteed by the U.S. government or its agencies or instrumentalities, such as Government National Mortgage Association (“Ginnie Mae”), and U.S. government-sponsored entities, such as that Federal National Mortgage Association (“Fannie Mae”), and the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation (“Freddie Mac”). The Fund may invest in callable agency securities, which give the issuer (the U.S. government agency) the right to redeem the security prior to maturity. Government agency or instrumentality securities have different levels of credit support. For example, Ginnie Mae securities carry a guarantee as to the timely repayment of principal and interest that is backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. government. However, the full faith and credit guarantee does

not apply to the market prices and yields of the Ginnie Mae securities or to the net asset value, trading price or performance of the Fund, which will vary with changes in interest rates and other market conditions. Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac pass-through mortgage certificates are backed by the credit of the respective instrumentality and are not guaranteed by the U.S. government. Other securities issued by government agencies or instrumentalities, including government-sponsored entities, may only be backed by the creditworthiness of the issuing institution, not the U.S. government, or the issuers may have the right to borrow from the U.S. Treasury to meet their obligations. Many mortgage-backed securities are pass-through securities, which means they provide investors with monthly payments consisting of a pro rata share of both regular interest and principal payments as well as unscheduled prepayments on the underlying mortgage loans. Because prepayment rates of individual mortgage pools vary widely, the average life of a particular pool cannot be predicted accurately. Adjustable-rate mortgage-backed securities include ARMS and other mortgage-backed securities with interest rates that adjust periodically to reflect prevailing market rates.

**Non-U.S. Investments.** The Fund may have exposure to non-U.S. securities. Non-U.S. securities include securities issued or guaranteed by companies organized under the laws of countries other than the United States (including emerging markets), securities issued or guaranteed by foreign, national, provincial, state, municipal or other governments with taxing authority or by their agencies or instrumentalities and debt obligations of supra-national governmental entities such as the World Bank or European Union. Non-U.S. securities may also include U.S. dollar-denominated debt obligations, such as "Yankee Dollar" obligations, of foreign issuers and of supra national government entities. Yankee Dollar obligations are U.S. dollar-denominated obligations issued in the U.S. capital markets by foreign corporations, banks and governments. Foreign securities also may be traded on foreign securities exchanges or in over-the-counter ("OTC") capital markets.

Certain of the Fund's investment in foreign securities may be denominated in currencies other than the U.S. dollar. To the extent the Fund invests in such instruments, the value of the assets of the Fund as measured in U.S. dollars will be affected by changes in exchange rates. Generally, the Fund's currency exchange transactions will be conducted on a spot (*i.e.*, cash) basis at the spot rate prevailing in the currency exchange market. The cost of the Fund's currency exchange transactions will generally be the difference between the bid and offer spot rate of the currency being purchased or sold. In order to protect against uncertainty in the level of future currency exchange rates, the Fund is authorized to enter into various currency exchange transactions.

**Senior Loans.** The Fund may invest in Senior Loans, which consist generally of obligations of companies and other entities (collectively, "*borrowers*") incurred for the purpose of reorganizing the assets and liabilities of a borrower; acquiring another company; taking over control of a company (leveraged buyout); temporary refinancing; or financing internal growth or other general business purposes. Senior Loans are often obligations of borrowers who have incurred a significant percentage of debt compared to equity issued and thus are highly leveraged.

Senior Loans may be acquired by direct investment as a lender at the inception of the loan or by assignment of a portion of a loan previously made to a different lender or by purchase of a participation interest. If the Fund makes a direct investment in a Senior Loan as one of the lenders, it generally acquires the loan at or below par. This means the Fund receives a return at or above the full interest rate for the loan. If the Fund acquires its interest in Senior Loans in the secondary market or acquires a participation interest, the loans may be purchased or sold above, at, or below par, which can result in a yield that is below, equal to, or above the stated interest rate of the loan. At times, the Fund may be able to invest in Senior Loans only through assignments or participations.

When the Fund is a purchaser of an assignment, it succeeds to all the rights and obligations under the loan agreement of the assigning lender and becomes a lender under the loan agreement with the same rights and obligations as the assigning lender. These rights include the ability to vote along with the other lenders on such matters as enforcing the terms of the loan agreement (*e.g.*, declaring defaults, initiating collection action, etc.). Taking such actions typically requires at least a vote of the lenders holding a majority of the investment in the loan and may require a vote by lenders holding two-thirds or more of the investment in the loan. Because the Fund usually does not hold a majority of the investment in any loan, it will not be able by itself to control decisions that require a vote by the lenders.

A participation interest represents a fractional interest in a loan held by the lender selling the Fund the participation interest. In the case of participations, the Fund will not have any direct contractual relationship with the borrower, the Fund's rights to consent to modifications of the loan are limited and it is dependent upon the participating lender to enforce the Fund's rights upon a default. The Fund will have the right to receive payments of principal, interest, and any fees to which it is entitled only from the lender selling the participation and only upon receipt by the lender of the payments from the borrower.

The Fund may be subject to the credit of both the agent and the lender from whom the Fund acquires a participation interest. These credit risks may include delay in receiving payments of principal and interest paid by the borrower to the agent or, in the case of a participation, offsets by the lender's regulator against payments received from the borrower. In the event of the borrower's bankruptcy, the borrower's obligation to repay the loan may be subject to defenses that the borrower can assert as a result of improper conduct by the agent.

Historically, the amount of public information available about a specific Senior Loan has been less extensive than if the loan were registered or exchange-traded.

Senior loans are secured and senior to other indebtedness of the borrower. Each Senior Loan will generally be secured by collateral such as accounts receivable, inventory, equipment, real estate, intangible assets such as trademarks, copyrights and patents, and securities of subsidiaries or affiliates. The value of the collateral generally will be determined by reference to financial statements of the borrower, by an independent appraisal, by obtaining the market value of such collateral, in the case of cash or securities if readily ascertainable, or by other customary valuation techniques considered appropriate by the Advisor. The value of collateral may decline after the Fund's investment, and collateral may be difficult to sell in the event of default. Consequently, the Fund may not receive all the payments to which it is entitled. By virtue of their senior position and collateral, Senior Loans typically provide lenders with the first right to cash flows or proceeds from the sale of a borrower's collateral if the borrower becomes insolvent (subject to the limitations of bankruptcy law, which may provide higher priority to certain claims such as employee salaries, employee pensions, and taxes). This means Senior Loans are generally repaid before unsecured bank loans, corporate bonds, subordinated debt, trade creditors, and preferred or common stockholders. To the extent that the Fund invests in unsecured loans, if the borrower defaults on such loan, there is no specific collateral on which the lender can foreclose. If the borrower defaults on a subordinated loan, the collateral may not be sufficient to cover both the senior and subordinated loans.

Senior Loans will usually require, in addition to scheduled payments of interest and principal, the prepayment of the Senior Loan from free cash flow, as further described below. The degree to which borrowers prepay Senior Loans, whether as a contractual requirement or at their election, may be affected by general business conditions, the financial condition of the borrower and competitive conditions among loan investors, among others. As such, prepayments cannot be predicted with accuracy. Recent market conditions, including falling default rates among others, have led to increased prepayment frequency and loan renegotiations. These renegotiations are often on terms more favorable to borrowers. Upon a prepayment, either in part or in full, the actual outstanding debt on which the Fund derives interest income will be reduced. However, the Fund may receive a prepayment penalty fee assessed against the prepaying borrower.

Senior Loans typically pay interest at least quarterly at rates which equal a fixed percentage spread over a base rate such as the London Interbank Offered Rate ("*LIBOR*"). Although a base rate such as LIBOR can change every day, loan agreements for Senior Loans typically allow the borrower the ability to choose how often the base rate for its loan will reset. A single loan may have multiple reset periods at the same time, with each reset period applicable to a designated portion of the loan. Such reset periods can range from one day to one year, with most borrowers choosing monthly or quarterly reset periods. During periods of rising interest rates, borrowers will tend to choose longer reset periods, and during periods of declining interest rates, borrowers will tend to choose shorter reset periods. The fixed spread over the base rate on a Senior Loan typically does not change.

Senior Loans generally are arranged through private negotiations between a borrower and several financial institutions represented by an agent who is usually one of the originating lenders. In larger transactions, it is common to have several agents; however, generally only one such agent has primary responsibility for ongoing administration of a Senior Loan. Agents are typically paid fees by the borrower for their services.

The agent is primarily responsible for negotiating the loan agreement which establishes the terms and conditions of the Senior Loan and the rights of the borrower and the lenders. The agent also is responsible for monitoring collateral and for exercising remedies available to the lenders such as foreclosure upon collateral.

Loan agreements may provide for the termination of the agent's agency status in the event that it fails to act as required under the relevant loan agreement, becomes insolvent, enters Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation ("*FDIC*") receivership or, if not FDIC insured, enters into bankruptcy. Should such an agent, lender or assignor with respect to an assignment interpositioned between the Fund and the borrower, become insolvent or enter FDIC receivership or bankruptcy, any interest in the Senior Loan of such person and any loan payment held by such person for the benefit of the Fund should not be included in such person's or entity's bankruptcy estate. If, however, any such amount were included in

such person's or entity's bankruptcy estate, the Fund would incur certain costs and delays in realizing payment or could suffer a loss of principal or interest. In this event, the Fund could experience a decrease in the net asset value.

Most borrowers pay their debts from cash flow generated by their businesses. If a borrower's cash flow is insufficient to pay its debts, it may attempt to restructure its debts rather than sell collateral. Borrowers may try to restructure their debts by filing for protection under the federal bankruptcy laws or negotiating a work-out. If a borrower becomes involved in a bankruptcy proceeding, access to collateral may be limited by bankruptcy and other laws. Such action by a court could be based, for example, on a "fraudulent conveyance" claim to the effect that the borrower did not receive fair consideration for granting the security interest in the loan collateral to the Fund. If a court decides that access to collateral is limited or void, the Fund may not recover the full amount of principal and interest that is due.

A borrower may be required to comply with certain restrictive covenants contained in the loan agreement. In addition to requiring the scheduled payment of principal and interest, these covenants may include restrictions on the payment of dividends and other distributions to the borrower's shareholders, provisions requiring compliance with specific financial ratios, and limits on total indebtedness. The agreement may also require the prepayment of the loans from excess cash flow. A breach of a covenant that is not waived by the agent (or lenders directly) is normally an event of default, which provides the agent and lenders the right to call for repayment of the outstanding loan. The typical practice of an agent or a loan investor in relying exclusively or primarily on reports from the borrower to monitor the borrower's compliance with covenants may involve a risk of fraud by the borrower.

The senior loan market has seen a significant increase in loans with few or none of the financial maintenance covenants (*i.e.*, "covenant-lite loans") that have traditionally protected lenders including more aggressive terms that favor borrowers with respect to restrictions regarding additional debt, payment terms, income requirements and asset dispositions. A substantial amount of the senior loans held by the Fund are expected to be covenant-lite loans, meaning the Fund may be unable to declare an event of default if financial performance deteriorates, renegotiate the terms of the loan based upon the elevated risk levels or take other actions to help mitigate losses.

In the process of buying, selling and holding Senior Loans, the Fund may receive and/or pay certain fees. These fees are in addition to interest payments received and may include facility fees, commitment fees, commissions and prepayment penalty fees. When the Fund buys or sells a Senior Loan it may pay a facility fee. On an ongoing basis, the Fund may receive a commitment fee based on the undrawn portion of the underlying line of credit portion of a Senior Loan. In certain circumstances, the Fund may receive a prepayment penalty fee upon prepayment of a Senior Loan. Other fees received by the Fund may include covenant waiver fees, covenant modification fees or other consent or amendment fees.

Notwithstanding its intention in certain situations to not receive material, non-public information with respect to its management of investments in Senior Loans, the Advisor may from time to time come into possession of material, non-public information about the issuers of loans that may be held in the Fund's portfolio. Possession of such information may in some instances occur despite the Advisor's efforts to avoid such possession, but in other instances the Advisor may choose to receive such information (for example, in connection with participation in a creditors' committee with respect to a financially distressed issuer). The Advisor's ability to trade in these Senior Loans for the account of the Fund could potentially be limited by its possession of such information. Such limitations on the Advisor's ability to trade could have an adverse effect on the Fund by, for example, preventing the Fund from selling a Senior Loan that is experiencing a material decline in value. In some instances, these trading restrictions could continue in effect for a substantial period of time.

An increase in demand for Senior Loans may benefit the Fund by providing increased liquidity for such loans and higher sales prices, but it may also adversely affect the rate of interest payable on such loans acquired by the Fund and the rights provided to the Fund under the terms of the applicable loan agreement, and may increase the price of loans that the Fund wishes to purchase in the secondary market. A decrease in the demand for Senior Loans may adversely affect the price of loans in the Fund's portfolio, which could cause the Fund's net asset value to decline.

The Fund may acquire interests in Senior Loans which are designed to provide temporary or "bridge" financing to a borrower pending the sale of identified assets or the arrangement of longer-term loans or the issuance and sale of debt obligations. The Fund may also invest in Senior Loans of borrowers that have obtained bridge loans from other parties. A borrower's use of bridge loans involves a risk that the borrower may be unable to locate permanent financing to replace the bridge loan, which may impair the borrower's perceived creditworthiness. Bridge loans may have less liquidity than other Senior Loans that were issued to fund corporate purposes on a longer term basis.

Although not anticipated in the normal course, the Fund may occasionally acquire warrants and other equity securities as part of a unit combining a Senior Loan and equity securities of a borrower or its affiliates. The acquisition of such equity securities will only be incidental to the Fund's purchase of a Senior Loan. The Fund may also acquire equity securities or credit securities (including non-dollar denominated equity or credit securities) issued in exchange for a Senior Loan or issued in connection with the debt restructuring or reorganization of a Borrower, or if such acquisition, in the judgment of the Advisor may enhance the value of a Senior Loan or would otherwise be consistent with the Fund's investment policies. Such warrants and equity securities will typically have limited value and there is no assurance that such securities will ever obtain value.

**TBA Transactions.** The Fund may invest in securities issued in to-be-announced transactions ("*TBA Transactions*"). A TBA Transaction is a method of trading mortgage-backed securities. TBA Transactions generally are conducted in accordance with widely accepted guidelines that establish commonly observed terms and conditions for execution, settlement and delivery. In a TBA Transaction, the buyer and the seller agree on general trade parameters such as agency, settlement date, par amount and price. The actual pools delivered generally are determined two days prior to the settlement date.

**U.S. Government Securities.** U.S. government securities include U.S. Treasury obligations and securities issued or guaranteed by various agencies of the U.S. government, or by various instrumentalities which have been established or sponsored by the U.S. government. U.S. Treasury obligations are backed by the "full faith and credit" of the U.S. government. Securities issued or guaranteed by federal agencies and U.S. government sponsored instrumentalities may or may not be backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. government.

## Portfolio Turnover

The Fund buys and sells portfolio securities in the normal course of its investment activities. The proportion of the Fund's investment portfolio that is bought and sold during a year is known as the Fund's portfolio turnover rate. A portfolio turnover rate of 100% would occur, for example, if all of the portfolio securities (other than short-term securities) were replaced once during the fiscal year. A high portfolio turnover rate could result in the payment by the Fund of increased brokerage costs, expenses and taxes. The portfolio turnover rates for the specified periods are set forth in the table below. Significant variations in portfolio turnover from year-to-year are generally the result of fluctuations in the size of the Fund or changes to the Fund's portfolio holdings.

### Portfolio Turnover Rate

#### Fiscal Year Ended August 31,

| <u>2025</u> | <u>2024</u> |
|-------------|-------------|
| 178%        | 408%        |

## Lending of Portfolio Securities

In order to generate additional income, as a non-principal investment strategy, First Trust is authorized to select certain First Trust Funds, including the Fund, with notice to the Board of Trustees, to lend portfolio securities representing up to 33⅓% of the value of its total assets to broker-dealers, banks or other institutional borrowers of securities. As with other extensions of credit, there may be risks of delay in recovery of the securities or even loss of rights in the collateral should the borrower of the securities fail financially. However, such First Trust Funds will only enter into loan arrangements with broker-dealers, banks or other institutions which First Trust has determined are creditworthy under guidelines approved by the Board of Trustees. The First Trust Funds will pay a portion of the income earned on the lending transaction to the placing broker and may pay administrative and custodial fees in connection with these loans. First Trust may select any First Trust Fund to participate in the securities lending program, at its discretion with notice to the Board of Trustees.

In these loan arrangements, the First Trust Funds will receive collateral in the form of cash, U.S. government securities or other high-grade debt obligations in an amount at least equal to the value of the borrowed securities, marked to market daily. This collateral must be valued daily by First Trust or the First Trust Fund's lending agent and, if the market value of the loaned securities increases, the borrower must furnish additional collateral to the First Trust Fund. During the time portfolio securities are on loan, the borrower pays the First Trust Fund any dividends or interest paid on the securities. Loans are subject to termination at any time by the First Trust Fund or the borrower. While a First Trust Fund does not have the right to vote securities on loan, it would terminate the loan and regain the right to vote if that were considered important

with respect to the investment. When a First Trust Fund lends portfolio securities to a borrower, payments in lieu of dividends made by the borrower to the First Trust Fund will not constitute "qualified dividends" taxable at the same rate as long-term capital gains, even if the actual dividends would have constituted qualified dividends had the First Trust Fund held the securities. Please see "Securities Lending Risk" below for a description of the risks associated with securities lending activities.

## **INVESTMENT RISKS**

The following risk disclosure supplements the discussion of the Fund's investment risks that appears in the Prospectus.

### ***Overview***

An investment in the Fund should be made with an understanding of the risks that an investment in the Fund's shares entails, including the risk that the financial condition of the issuers of the equity securities held by the Fund or the general condition of the securities market may worsen and the value of the equity securities and therefore the value of the Fund may decline. The Fund may not be an appropriate investment for those who are unable or unwilling to assume the risks involved generally with such an investment. The past market and earnings performance of any of the equity securities included in the Fund is not predictive of their future performance.

### ***Additional Market Disruption Risk***

Some countries in which the Fund may invest have experienced security concerns, war or threats of war and aggression, terrorism, economic uncertainty, natural and environmental disasters and/or systemic market dislocations that have led, and in the future may lead, to increased short term market volatility and may have adverse long term effects on the economies and markets of such countries generally, each of which may negatively impact the Fund's investments. For example, in February 2022, Russia commenced a military attack on Ukraine. In response, various countries, including the United States, issued broad-ranging sanctions on Russia and certain Russian companies and individuals. The hostilities between the two countries may escalate and any existing or future sanctions could have a severe adverse effect on Russia's economy, currency, companies and region as well as negatively impact other regional and global economic markets of the world (including Europe and the United States), companies in such countries and various sectors, industries and markets for securities and commodities globally, such as oil and natural gas. Accordingly, the hostilities and sanctions may have a negative effect on the Fund's investments and performance beyond any direct exposure to Russian issuers or those of adjoining geographic regions. Russia may also take retaliatory actions or countermeasures, such as cyberattacks and espionage, which may negatively impact the countries and companies in which the Fund may invest. The extent and duration of the military action or future escalation of such hostilities; the extent and impact of existing and any future sanctions, market disruptions and volatility; and the result of any diplomatic negotiations cannot be predicted. These and any related events could have a significant negative impact on certain of the Fund's investments as well as the Fund's performance, and the value or liquidity of certain securities held by the Fund may decline significantly. Additionally, the events occurring in one country or region may spread through, or otherwise affect, other countries and regions and therefore adversely impact the Fund's investments in such countries and regions.

### ***Agency Mortgage-Related Securities Risk***

Agency mortgage-related securities are instruments that are guaranteed by the U.S. government through agencies such as Ginnie Mae, and are backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. government. Other agency mortgage-related securities are guaranteed by government-related agencies, such as Fannie Mae, but are not backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. government. On September 6, 2008, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac were placed in conservatorship under the Federal Housing Finance Agency ("FHFA"). FHFA has all rights, titles, powers and privileges of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac and their assets. In addition, the U.S. Treasury entered into a Senior Preferred Stock Purchase Agreement with Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. In connection with the Senior Preferred Stock Purchase Agreement, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac are required to submit an annual risk management plan to the U.S. Treasury. Both Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac continue to operate under the conservatorship of FHFA and the funding from the Senior Preferred Stock Purchase Agreement to meet their obligations. As conservator, FHFA has the authority to, among other things, repudiate contracts and sell assets or liabilities of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac without prior approval or consent. Parties holding Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac mortgage-backed securities would have to rely on the satisfaction of those loans and would be exposed to the counterparty's credit risk in the event FHFA repudiates such a contract or sells the assets or liabilities of such a contract.

### **Agent Risk**

Selling lenders, agents and other entities that may be positioned between the Fund and the Obligor will likely conduct their principal business activities in the banking, finance and financial services industries. Investments in loans may be more impacted by a single economic, political or regulatory occurrence affecting such industries than other types of investments. Entities engaged in such industries may be more susceptible to, among other things, fluctuations in interest rates, changes in the Federal Open Market Committee's monetary policy, government regulations concerning such industries and concerning capital raising activities generally and fluctuations in the financial markets generally. An agent, lender or other entity positioned between the Fund and the Obligor may become insolvent or enter FDIC receivership or bankruptcy. The Fund might incur certain costs and delays in realizing payment on a loan or suffer a loss of principal and/or interest if assets or interests held by the agent, lender or other party positioned between the Fund and the Obligor are determined to be subject to the claims of the agent's, lender's or such other party's creditors.

### **Collateral, Subordination and Litigation Risk**

With respect to Loans that are secured, the Fund is subject to the risk that collateral securing the Loan will decline in value or have no value or that the Fund's lien is or will become junior in payment to other liens. A decline in value, whether as a result of bankruptcy proceedings or otherwise, could cause the Loan to be under-collateralized or unsecured. There may be no formal requirement for the obligor to pledge additional collateral. In addition, collateral may consist of assets that may not be readily liquidated, and there is no assurance that the liquidation of such assets would satisfy an obligor's obligation on a Loan.

If an obligor becomes involved in bankruptcy proceedings, a court may invalidate the Loan or the Fund's security interest in loan collateral or subordinate the Fund's rights under a Senior Loan or Junior Loan to the interest of the obligor's other creditors, including unsecured creditors, or cause interest or principal previously paid to be refunded to the obligor. If a court required interest or principal to be refunded, it could negatively affect Fund performance. Such action by a court could be based, for example, on a "fraudulent conveyance" claim to the effect that the obligor did not receive fair consideration for granting the security interest in the Loan collateral to the Fund. For Senior Loans made in connection with a highly leveraged transaction, consideration for granting a security interest may be deemed inadequate if the proceeds of the Loan were not received or retained by the obligor, but were instead paid to other persons (such as shareholders of the obligor) in an amount which left the obligor insolvent or without sufficient working capital. There are also other events, such as the failure to perfect a security interest due to faulty documentation or faulty official filings, which could lead to the invalidation of the Fund's security interest in Loan collateral. If the Fund's security interest in Loan collateral is invalidated or the Senior Loan is subordinated to other debt of an obligor in bankruptcy or other proceedings, the Fund would have substantially lower recovery, and perhaps no recovery on the full amount of the principal and interest due on the Loan, or the Fund could have to refund interest.

Lenders and investors in Loans can be sued by other creditors and shareholders of the obligors. Losses can be greater than the original Loan amount and occur years after the principal and interest on the Loan have been repaid.

### **Credit Rating Agency Risk**

Credit ratings are determined by credit rating agencies such as Standard & Poor's, Moody's Investors Service, Inc. and Fitch Ratings, and are only the opinions of such entities. Ratings assigned by a rating agency are not absolute standards of credit quality and do not evaluate market risk or the liquidity of securities. First Trust makes no warranty whatsoever regarding the ability of such ratings to accurately reflect the credit worthiness of an issuer. Any shortcomings, changes to or inefficiencies in credit rating agencies' processes for determining credit ratings may adversely affect the credit ratings of securities held by the Fund or securities in which the Fund would otherwise invest and, as a result, may adversely affect those securities' perceived or actual credit risk, as well as the Fund's performance.

### **Debt Securities Risk**

The risks of investing in debt securities include (without limitation): (i) credit risk, e.g., the issuer or guarantor of a debt security may be unable or unwilling (or be perceived as unable or unwilling) to make timely principal and/or interest payments or otherwise honor its obligations; (ii) interest rate risk, e.g., when interest rates go up, the value of a debt security generally goes down, and when interest rates go down, the value of a debt security generally goes up; (iii) liquidity risk and valuation risk, e.g., debt securities generally do not trade on a securities exchange, making them generally less liquid and more difficult to value than common stock; (iv) call risk and income risk, e.g., during a period of falling interest rates, the issuer may redeem a security by repaying it early, which may reduce the Fund's income if the proceeds are reinvested at lower interest rates; and (v) extension risk, e.g., if interest rates rise, repayments of debt securities may occur more slowly

than anticipated by the market, which may drive the prices of these securities down because their interest rates are lower than the current interest rate and the securities remain outstanding longer. Debt securities most frequently trade in institutional round lot size transactions. If the Fund purchases bonds in amounts less than the institutional round lot size, which are frequently referred to as "odd" lots, the odd lot size positions may have more price volatility than institutional round lot size positions.

### ***Information Risk***

There is typically less publicly available information concerning Mortgage-Related Investments than other types of fixed income investments. As a result, the Fund generally will be dependent on reports and other information provided by the entity pooling the Mortgage-Related Investments or the obligor, either directly or through an intermediary, to evaluate the obligor's creditworthiness or to determine the obligor's compliance with the covenants and other terms of the loan agreement. Such reliance may make investments in Mortgage-Related Investments more susceptible to fraud than other types of investments.

### ***Leverage Risk***

Leverage risk is the risk that the Fund may be more volatile than if it had not been leveraged due to leverage's tendency to exaggerate the effect of any increase or decrease in the value of the Fund's portfolio. The use of leverage may also cause the Fund to liquidate portfolio positions when it may not be advantageous to do so to satisfy its obligations.

### ***Liquidity Risk***

Whether or not the securities held by the Fund are listed on a securities exchange, the principal trading market for certain of the securities may be in the OTC market. As a result, the existence of a liquid trading market for the securities may depend on whether dealers will make a market in the securities. Certain regions, countries or asset types may also suffer periods of relative illiquidity. There can be no assurance that a market will be made for any of the securities, that any market for the securities will be maintained or that there will be sufficient liquidity of the securities in any markets made. The price at which the securities are held by the Fund will be adversely affected if trading markets for the securities are limited or absent.

### ***Listing Standards Risk***

The Fund is required to comply with listing requirements adopted by the Exchange. Non-compliance with such requirements may result in the Fund's shares being delisted by the Exchange. Any resulting liquidation of the Fund could cause the Fund to incur elevated transaction costs and could result in negative tax consequences for its shareholders.

### ***Market Risk***

Market risk is the risk that a particular security, or shares of the Fund in general, may fall in value. Securities are subject to market fluctuations caused by such factors as economic, political, regulatory or market developments, changes in interest rates and perceived trends in securities prices. Shares of the Fund could decline in value or underperform other investments due to short-term market movements or any longer periods during more prolonged market downturns. In addition, local, regional or global events such as war, acts of terrorism, spread of infectious diseases or other public health issues, recessions, natural disasters or other events could have a significant negative impact on the Fund and its investments. Such events may affect certain geographic regions, countries, sectors and industries more significantly than others. Such events could adversely affect the prices and liquidity of the Fund's portfolio securities or other instruments and could result in disruptions in the trading markets. Any of such circumstances could have a materially negative impact on the value of the Fund's shares and result in increased market volatility. During any such events, the Fund's shares may trade at increased premiums or discounts to their net asset value and the bid/ask spread on the Fund's shares may widen.

Health crises caused by the outbreak of infectious diseases or other public health issues, may exacerbate other pre-existing political, social, economic, market and financial risks. The impact of any such events, could negatively affect the global economy, as well as the economies of individual countries or regions, the financial performance of individual companies, sectors and industries, and the markets in general in significant and unforeseen ways. Any such impact could adversely affect the prices and liquidity of the securities and other instruments in which the Fund invests and negatively impact the Fund's investment return. For example, an outbreak of a respiratory disease designated as COVID-19 was first detected in China in December 2019 and subsequently spread internationally. The ensuing policies enacted by governments and central banks have caused and may continue to cause significant volatility and uncertainty in global financial markets,

negatively impacting global growth prospects. While vaccines have been developed, there is no guarantee that vaccines will be effective against future variants of the disease.

In addition, the operations of the Fund, the Advisor and the Fund's other service providers may be significantly impacted, or even temporarily or permanently halted, as a result of government quarantine measures, voluntary and precautionary restrictions on travel or meetings and other factors related to a public health emergency, including its potential adverse impact on the health of any such entity's personnel.

### ***Non-U.S. Securities Risk***

An investment in non-U.S. securities involves risks in addition to the usual risks inherent in domestic investments, including currency risk. The value of a non-U.S. security in U.S. dollars tends to decrease when the value of the U.S. dollar rises against the non-U.S. currency in which the security is denominated and tends to increase when the value of the U.S. dollar falls against such currency. Non-U.S. securities are affected by the fact that in many countries there is less publicly available information about issuers than is available in the reports and ratings published about companies in the United States and companies may not be subject to uniform accounting, auditing and financial reporting standards. Other risks inherent in non-U.S. investments may include expropriation; confiscatory taxation; withholding taxes on dividends and interest; less extensive regulation of non-U.S. brokers, securities markets and issuers; diplomatic developments; and political or social instability. Non-U.S. economies may differ favorably or unfavorably from the U.S. economy in various respects, and many non-U.S. securities are less liquid and their prices tend to be more volatile than comparable U.S. securities. From time to time, non-U.S. securities may be difficult to liquidate rapidly without adverse price effects.

### ***Regulatory Changes***

To the extent that legislation or state or federal regulators that regulate certain financial institutions impose additional requirements or restrictions with respect to the ability of such institutions to make loans, particularly in connection with highly leveraged transactions, the availability of mortgage-backed securities for investment may be adversely affected. Furthermore, such legislation or regulation could depress the market value of mortgage-backed securities held by the Fund.

### ***Securities Lending Risk***

Securities lending involves exposure to certain risks, including counterparty risk, collateral risk and operational risk. Counterparty risk is the risk that the borrower may fail to return the securities in a timely manner or at all. As a result, a First Trust Fund engaged in securities lending transactions may suffer a loss and there may be a delay in recovering the lent securities. Any delay in the return of securities on loan may restrict the ability of a Fund to meet delivery or payment obligations. Collateral risk is the risk that the collateral received may be realized at a value lower than the value of the securities lent, whether due to inaccurate pricing of the collateral, adverse market movements in the value of the collateral, intra-day increases in the value of the securities lent, a deterioration in the credit rating of the collateral issuer, or the illiquidity of the market in which the collateral is traded. Securities lending also entails operational risks, such as settlement failures or delays in the settlement of instructions. Such failures or delays may restrict the ability of a Fund to meet delivery or payment obligations. Lastly, securities lending activities may result in adverse tax consequences for a Fund and its shareholders. For instance, substitute payments for dividends received by a Fund for securities loaned out by the Fund will not be considered qualified dividend income. A Fund could lose money if its short-term investment of the collateral declines in value over the period of the loan.

## **MANAGEMENT OF THE FUND**

### **Trustees and Officers**

The general supervision of the duties performed for the Fund under the investment management agreement is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees. There are eight Trustees of the Trust, one of whom is an "interested person" (as the term is defined in the 1940 Act) and seven of whom are Trustees who are not officers or employees of First Trust or any of its affiliates ("*Independent Trustees*"). The Trustees set broad policies for the Fund, choose the Trust's officers and hire the Trust's investment advisor. The officers of the Trust manage its day-to-day operations and are responsible to the Board of Trustees. The following is a list of the Trustees and executive officers of the Trust and a statement of their present positions and principal occupations during the past five years, the number of portfolios each Trustee oversees and the other directorships they have held during the past five years, if applicable. Each Trustee has been elected for an indefinite term. The officers of the Trust serve indefinite terms. Each Trustee, except for James A. Bowen, is an Independent Trustee.

Mr. Bowen is deemed an “interested person” (as that term is defined in the 1940 Act) (“*Interested Trustee*”) of the Trust due to his position as Chief Executive Officer of First Trust, investment advisor to the Fund. The following table identifies the Trustees and Officers of the Trust. Unless otherwise indicated, the address of all persons below is c/o First Trust Advisors L.P., 120 East Liberty Drive, Suite 400, Wheaton, IL 60187.

| Name and Year of Birth                                  | Position and Offices with Trust   | Term of Office and Year First Elected or Appointed   | Principal Occupations During Past 5 Years   | Number of Portfolios in the First Trust Fund Complex Overseen by Trustee | Other Trusteeships or Directorships Held by Trustee During the Past 5 Years   |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| <b>TRUSTEE WHO IS AN INTERESTED PERSON OF THE TRUST</b> |                                   |  |   |  |   |
| James A. Bowen <sup>(1)</sup><br>1955                   | Chairman of the Board and Trustee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indefinite term</li> <li>• Since inception</li> </ul> | Chief Executive Officer, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P.; Chairman of the Board of Directors, BondWave LLC (Software Development Company) and Stonebridge Advisors LLC (Investment Advisor) | 325 Portfolios   | None  |
| <b>INDEPENDENT TRUSTEES</b>                             |                                   |  |   |  |   |
| Thomas J. Driscoll<br>1961                              | Trustee                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indefinite term</li> <li>• Since 2025</li> </ul>      | Retired; Partner, Deloitte LLP and Deloitte Tax LLP (1998 to January 2024)  | 325 Portfolios   | None  |
| Richard E. Erickson<br>1951                             | Trustee                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indefinite term</li> <li>• Since inception</li> </ul> | Retired; Physician, Edward-Elmhurst Medical Group (2021 to September 2023); Physician and Officer, Wheaton Orthopedics (1990 to 2021)   | 325 Portfolios   | None  |
| Thomas R. Kadlec<br>1957                                | Trustee                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indefinite term</li> <li>• Since inception</li> </ul> | Retired; President, ADM Investor Services, Inc. (Futures Commission Merchant) (2010 to July 2022)   | 325 Portfolios   | Director, National Futures Association; formerly, Director of ADM Investor Services, Inc., ADM Investor Services International, ADMIS Hong Kong Ltd., ADMIS Singapore Ltd. and Futures Industry Association   |
| Denise M. Keefe<br>1964                                 | Trustee                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indefinite term</li> <li>• Since 2021</li> </ul>      | Senior Vice President, Advocate Health, Continuing Health Division (Integrated Healthcare System) (2023 to present); Executive Vice President, Advocate Aurora Health (Integrated Healthcare System) (2018 to 2023)   | 325 Portfolios   | Director and Board Chair of Advocate Home Health Services, Advocate Home Care Products and Advocate Hospice; Director and Board Chair of Aurora At Home (since 2018); Director of Advocate Physician Partners Accountable Care Organization; Director of RML Long Term Acute Care Hospitals; Director of Senior Helpers (2021 to 2024); and Director of MobileHelp (2022 to 2024) |
| Robert F. Keith<br>1956                                 | Trustee                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indefinite term</li> <li>• Since inception</li> </ul> | President, Hibs Enterprises (Financial and Management Consulting)   | 325 Portfolios   | Formerly, Director of Trust Company of Illinois   |

| Name and Year of Birth      | Position and Offices with Trust | Term of Office and Year First Elected or Appointed   | Principal Occupations During Past 5 Years   | Number of Portfolios in the First Trust Fund Complex Overseen by Trustee | Other Trusteeships or Directorships Held by Trustee During the Past 5 Years |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| <b>INDEPENDENT TRUSTEES</b> |                                 |  |   |  |   |
| Niel B. Nielson<br>1954     | Trustee                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since inception</li> </ul> | Senior Advisor (2018 to present), Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer (2015 to 2018), Pelita Harapan Educational Foundation (Educational Products and Services)   | 325 Portfolios   | None  |
| Bronwyn Wright<br>1971      | Trustee                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since 2023</li> </ul>      | Independent Director to a number of Irish collective investment funds (2009 to present); Various roles at international affiliates of Citibank (1994 to 2009), including Managing Director, Citibank Europe plc and Head of Securities and Fund Services, Citi Ireland (2007 to 2009) | 325 Portfolios   | None  |

| Name and Year of Birth       | Position and Offices with Trust                                 | Term of Office and Length of Service   | Principal Occupations During Past 5 Years  |
|------------------------------|---|--|--|
| <b>OFFICERS OF THE TRUST</b> |   |  |  |
| James M. Dykas<br>1966       | President and Chief Executive Officer                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since inception</li> </ul> | Managing Director and Chief Financial Officer, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P.; Chief Financial Officer, BondWave LLC (Software Development Company) and Stonebridge Advisors LLC (Investment Advisor) |
| W. Scott Jardine<br>1960     | Secretary and Chief Legal Officer                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since inception</li> </ul> | General Counsel, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P.; Secretary and General Counsel, BondWave LLC; and Secretary, Stonebridge Advisors LLC   |
| Daniel J. Lindquist<br>1970  | Vice President  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since inception</li> </ul> | Managing Director, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P.   |
| Kristi A. Maher<br>1966      | Chief Compliance Officer and Assistant Secretary                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since inception</li> </ul> | International General Counsel, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P., February 2025 – present. Previously, Deputy General Counsel, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P.                 |
| Derek D. Maltbie<br>1972     | Treasurer, Chief Financial Officer and Chief Accounting Officer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since 2023</li> </ul>      | Senior Vice President, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P., July 2021 – present. Previously, Vice President, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P., 2014 – 2021.                       |
| Roger F. Testin<br>1966      | Vice President  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since inception</li> </ul> | Senior Vice President, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P.   |
| Stan Ueland<br>1970          | Vice President  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since inception</li> </ul> | Senior Vice President, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P.   |

(1) Mr. Bowen is deemed an "interested person" of the Trust due to his position as Chief Executive Officer of First Trust, investment advisor of the Fund.

## Unitary Board Leadership Structure

Each Trustee serves as a trustee of all open-end and closed-end funds in the First Trust fund complex (each a "First Trust Fund" and collectively, the "First Trust Fund Complex"), which is known as a "unitary" board leadership structure. Ms. Wright also serves as director of First Trust Global Funds, a public limited company established in Ireland and an open-end umbrella fund representing exchange-traded funds and one or more mutual funds, and advised by First Trust.

The management of the Fund, including general supervision of the duties performed for the Fund under the investment management agreement between the Trust, on behalf of the Fund, and the Advisor, is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees. The Trustees set broad policies for the Fund, choose the Trust's officers and hire the Fund's investment advisor, sub-advisors and other service providers. The officers of the Trust manage the day-to-day operations and are responsible to the Board. The Board is composed of seven Independent Trustees and one Interested Trustee. The Interested Trustee, James A. Bowen, serves as the Chairman of the Board for each fund in the First Trust Fund Complex.

The unitary board structure was adopted for the First Trust Funds because of the efficiencies it achieves with respect to the governance and oversight of the First Trust Funds. Each First Trust Fund is subject to the rules and regulations of the 1940 Act (and other applicable securities laws), which means that many of the First Trust Funds face similar issues with respect to certain of their fundamental activities, including risk management, portfolio liquidity, portfolio valuation and financial reporting. Because of the similar and often overlapping issues facing the First Trust Funds, including among the First Trust exchange-traded funds, the Board of the First Trust Funds believes that maintaining a unitary board structure promotes efficiency and consistency in the governance and oversight of all First Trust Funds and reduces the costs, administrative burdens and possible conflicts that may result from having multiple boards. In adopting a unitary board structure, the Trustees seek to provide effective governance through establishing a board the overall composition of which will, as a body, possess the appropriate skills, diversity, independence and experience to oversee the Fund's business.

Annually, the Board reviews its governance structure and the committee structures, their performance and functions, and it reviews any processes that would enhance Board governance over the Fund's business. The Board has determined that its leadership structure, including the unitary board and committee structure, is appropriate based on the characteristics of the funds it serves and the characteristics of the First Trust Fund Complex as a whole.

In order to streamline communication between the Advisor and the Independent Trustees and create certain efficiencies, the Board has a Lead Independent Trustee who is responsible for: (i) chairing all meetings of the Independent Trustees; (ii) working with the Advisor, Fund counsel and the independent legal counsel to the Independent Trustees to determine the agenda for Board meetings; (iii) serving as the principal contact for and facilitating communication between the Independent Trustees and the Fund's service providers, particularly the Advisor; and (iv) any other duties that the Independent Trustees may delegate to the Lead Independent Trustee. The Lead Independent Trustee is selected by the Independent Trustees and serves for such term as approved by the Independent Trustees or until his or her successor is selected. Thomas R. Kadlec currently serves as the Lead Independent Trustee.

The Independent Trustees may select one Independent Trustee to serve as a Vice Lead Independent Trustee for such term as approved by the Independent Trustees or until his or her successor is selected. The Vice Lead Independent Trustee assists the Lead Independent Trustee in the performance of his or her responsibilities and, in the absence of the Lead Independent Trustee, may act in the place of the Lead Independent Trustee. The Vice Lead Independent Trustee is also responsible for any other duties that the Independent Trustees may delegate to him or her. Niel B. Nielson currently serves as the Vice Lead Independent Trustee.

The Board has established five standing committees (as described below) and has delegated certain of its responsibilities to those committees. The Board and its committees meet frequently throughout the year to oversee the Fund's activities, review contractual arrangements with and performance of service providers, oversee compliance with regulatory requirements and review Fund performance. The Independent Trustees are represented by independent legal counsel at all Board and committee meetings (other than meetings of the Dividend Committee). Generally, the Board acts by majority vote of all the Trustees, including a majority vote of the Independent Trustees if required by applicable law.

The five standing committees of the Board are: the Nominating and Governance Committee, the Valuation, Risk and Regulatory Oversight Committee, the Audit Committee, the Executive Committee and the Dividend Committee. The Nominating and Governance Committee, the Valuation, Risk and Regulatory Oversight Committee, the Audit Committee and the Dividend Committee each have a Chair, and the Audit Committee has a Vice Chair. In addition, the Lead Independent Trustee and the Vice Lead Independent Trustee currently serve on the Executive Committee with the Interested Trustee.

The Nominating and Governance Committee is responsible for appointing and nominating non-interested persons to the Board of Trustees. Messrs. Driscoll, Erickson, Kadlec, Keith, Nielson and Mses. Keefe and Wright are members of the Nominating and Governance Committee. If there is no vacancy on the Board of Trustees, the Board will not actively seek recommendations from other parties, including shareholders. The Board of Trustees has adopted a mandatory retirement age of 75 for Independent Trustees, beyond which age Independent Trustees are ineligible to serve. The Committee will not consider new trustee candidates who are 72 years of age or older or will turn 72 years old during the initial term for a closed-end Fund. When a vacancy on the Board of Trustees occurs or is anticipated to occur and nominations are sought to fill such vacancy, the Nominating and Governance Committee may seek nominations from those sources it deems appropriate in its discretion, including shareholders of the Fund. To submit a recommendation for nomination as a candidate for a position on the Board of Trustees, shareholders of the Fund should mail such recommendation to W. Scott Jardine, Secretary, at the Trust's address, 120 East Liberty Drive, Suite 400, Wheaton, Illinois 60187. Such recommendation shall include the following information: (i) evidence of Fund ownership of the person or entity recommending the candidate (if a Fund shareholder); (ii) a full description of the proposed candidate's background, including education, experience, current

employment and date of birth; (iii) names and addresses of at least three professional references for the candidate; (iv) information as to whether the candidate is an "interested person" in relation to the Fund, as such term is defined in the 1940 Act, and such other information that may be considered to impair the candidate's independence; and (v) any other information that may be helpful to the Committee in evaluating the candidate. If a recommendation is received with satisfactorily completed information regarding a candidate during a time when a vacancy exists on the Board or during such other time as the Nominating and Governance Committee is accepting recommendations, the recommendation will be forwarded to the Chair of the Nominating and Governance Committee and to counsel to the Independent Trustees. During the last fiscal year, the Nominating and Governance Committee held four meetings.

The Valuation, Risk and Regulatory Oversight Committee is responsible for: (i) the oversight of the Advisor as the "Valuation Designee" under Rule 2a-5 of the 1940 Act and its implementation of the valuation of the securities held in the Fund's portfolio; (ii) the oversight of the Fund's liquidity risk management program; (iii) the oversight of the Fund's derivatives risk management program; and (iv) the oversight of First Trust's and the Sub-Advisors' (if applicable) execution of portfolio transactions and soft dollar (or similar) arrangements for the Fund. Messrs. Driscoll, Erickson, Kadlec, Keith, Nielson and Ms. Keefe and Wright are members of the Valuation, Risk and Regulatory Oversight Committee. During the last fiscal year, the Valuation, Risk and Regulatory Oversight Committee held four meetings.

The Audit Committee is responsible for overseeing the Fund's accounting and financial reporting process, the system of internal controls and audit process and for evaluating and appointing independent auditors (subject also to Board approval). Messrs. Driscoll, Erickson, Kadlec, Keith, Nielson and Ms. Keefe and Wright serve on the Audit Committee. During the last fiscal year, the Audit Committee held thirteen meetings.

The Executive Committee, which meets between Board meetings, is authorized to exercise all powers of and to act in the place of the Board to the extent permitted by each Fund's Declaration of Trust and By-Laws. Mr. Bowen, Mr. Kadlec and Mr. Nielson are members of the Executive Committee. During the last fiscal year, the Executive Committee did not hold any meetings.

The Dividend Committee is responsible for assisting the Board in, or assuming the authority and power of the Board with respect to, the declaration and setting of the Fund's dividends. Messrs. Kadlec and Nielson serve on the Dividend Committee. During the last fiscal year, the Dividend Committee did not hold any meetings.

## **Executive Officers**

The executive officers of the Trust hold the same positions with each fund in the First Trust Fund Complex as they hold with the Trust, except Mr. Ueland who is an executive officer of only the ETFs advised by First Trust and Mr. Testin who is an executive officer of only the ETFs and open-end funds advised by First Trust.

## **Risk Oversight**

As part of the general oversight of the Fund, the Board is involved in the risk oversight of the Fund. The Board has adopted and periodically reviews policies and procedures designed to address the Fund's risks. Oversight of investment and compliance risk is performed primarily at the Board level in conjunction with the Advisor's investment oversight group and the Trust's Chief Compliance Officer ("CCO"). Oversight of other risks also occurs at the committee level. The Advisor's investment oversight group reports to the Board at quarterly meetings regarding, among other things, Fund performance and the various drivers of such performance. The Board reviews reports on the Fund's and the service providers' compliance policies and procedures at each quarterly Board meeting and receives an annual report from the CCO regarding the operations of the Fund's and the service providers' compliance programs. In addition, the Independent Trustees meet privately each quarter with the CCO. The Audit Committee reviews, with the Advisor and the Fund's independent auditors, the Fund's major financial risk exposures and the steps the Advisor has taken to monitor and control these exposures, including the Fund's risk assessment and risk management policies and guidelines. The Audit Committee also, as appropriate, reviews in a general manner the processes other Board committees have in place with respect to risk assessment and risk management. The Nominating and Governance Committee monitors all matters related to the corporate governance of the Trust. The Valuation, Risk and Regulatory Oversight Committee monitors valuation risk, liquidity risk, derivatives risk and trading.

Not all risks that may affect the Fund can be identified nor can controls be developed to eliminate or mitigate their occurrence or effects. It may not be practical or cost effective to eliminate or mitigate certain risks, the processes and controls employed to address certain risks may be limited in their effectiveness, and some risks are simply beyond the

reasonable control of the Fund or the Advisor or other service providers. For instance, as the use of Internet technology has become more prevalent, the Fund and its service providers have become more susceptible to potential operational risks through breaches in cyber security (generally, intentional and unintentional events that may cause the Fund or a service provider to lose proprietary information, suffer data corruption or lose operational capacity). There can be no guarantee that any risk management systems established by the Fund, its service providers, or issuers of the securities in which the Funds invest to reduce cyber security risks will succeed, and the Fund cannot control such systems put in place by service providers, issuers or other third parties whose operations may affect the Fund and/or its shareholders. Moreover, it is necessary to bear certain risks (such as investment related risks) to achieve the Fund's goals. As a result of the foregoing and other factors, the Fund's ability to manage risk is subject to substantial limitations.

## **Board Diversification and Trustee Qualifications**

As described above, the Nominating and Governance Committee of the Board oversees matters related to the selection and nomination of Trustees. The Nominating and Governance Committee seeks to establish an effective Board with an appropriate range of skills and diversity, including, as appropriate, differences in background, professional experience, education, vocation, and other individual characteristics and traits in the aggregate. Each Trustee must meet certain basic requirements, including relevant skills and experience, time availability and, if qualifying as an Independent Trustee, independence from the Advisor, underwriters or other service providers, including any affiliates of these entities.

Listed below for each current Trustee are the experiences, qualifications and attributes that led to the conclusion, as of the date of this SAI, that each current Trustee should serve as a Trustee in light of the Trust's business and structure.

Thomas J. Driscoll was previously a Partner at Deloitte LLP and Deloitte Tax LLP (collectively, "*Deloitte*") from September 1998 to January 2024. As a Partner at Deloitte, Mr. Driscoll served in various roles including as lead client service partner, lead relationship partner and lead tax partner for various clients in the asset management, broker-dealer and financial services businesses. Mr. Driscoll also served as the Vice Chairman, Partner in Charge of Deloitte's international tax and transfer pricing (economics) business responsible for leading and managing Deloitte's international tax and transfer pricing practice with over 1,200 professionals in the United States and India. Finally, as a member of the Board of Deloitte Tax LLP, Mr. Driscoll was a part of the executive committee responsible for overseeing Deloitte's tax practice in the United States. Mr. Driscoll currently serves as Chair of the Audit Committee (since January 1, 2026) of the First Trust Funds.

Richard E. Erickson, M.D., was previously an orthopedic surgeon with Edward-Elmhurst Medical Group from 2021 to September 2023. Prior thereto, he was President of Wheaton Orthopedics (from 1990 to 2021), a co-owner and director of a fitness center and a limited partner of two real estate companies. Dr. Erickson has also served as the Lead Independent Trustee (2008 - 2009 and 2017 - 2019) and on the Executive Committee (2008 - 2009 and 2017 - 2022), Chair of the Nominating and Governance Committee (2003 - 2007 and 2014 - 2016), Chair of the Audit Committee (2012 - 2013 and 2023 - 2025) and Chair of the Valuation Committee (June 2006 - 2007; 2010 - 2011 and 2020 - 2022) of the First Trust Funds.

Thomas R. Kadlec was previously President of ADM Investor Services Inc. ("*ADMIS*"), a futures commission merchant and wholly-owned subsidiary of the Archer Daniels Midland Company ("*ADM*") from 2010 to July 2022. Mr. Kadlec was employed by ADMIS and its affiliates since 1990 in various accounting, financial, operations and risk management capacities. Mr. Kadlec served on the boards of several international affiliates of ADMIS until July 2022 and served as a member of ADM's Integrated Risk Committee from 2008 - 2018, which was tasked with the duty of implementing and communicating enterprise-wide risk management. From 2014 to 2022, Mr. Kadlec was on the board of the Futures Industry Association. In 2017, Mr. Kadlec was elected to the board of the National Futures Association. Mr. Kadlec served on the Executive Committee from the organization of the first First Trust closed-end fund in 2003 through 2005 (and 2014 - 2019) until he was elected as the first Lead Independent Trustee in December 2005, serving as such through 2007 (and 2014 - 2016). He served as Vice Lead Independent Trustee (March 2025 - December 2025). He also served as Chair of the Valuation Committee (2008 - 2009 and 2017 - 2019), Chair of the Audit Committee (2010 - 2011 and 2020 - 2022) and Chair of the Nominating and Governance Committee (2012 - 2013 and 2023 - 2025). He currently serves as Lead Independent Trustee (since January 1, 2026), on the Executive Committee (since March 12, 2024) and on the Dividend Committee (since January 1, 2026) of the First Trust Funds.

Denise M. Keefe has been Senior Vice President of Advocate Health, Continuing Health Division since 2023, and from 2018 to 2023 was Executive Vice President of Advocate Aurora Health (together, with Advocate Health, "*Advocate*"). Advocate is one of the largest integrated healthcare systems in the U.S. serving Illinois and Wisconsin. Ms. Keefe has been employed by Advocate since 1993 and is responsible for the Continuing Health Division's strategic direction, fiscal

management, business development, revenue enhancement, operational efficiencies, and human resource management of 4,000 employees. Ms. Keefe also currently serves on the boards of several organizations within the Advocate Aurora Continuing Health Division and other health care organizations, including RML Long Term Acute Care Hospitals (since 2014). Prior thereto, Ms. Keefe was Corporate Vice President, Marketing and Business Development for the Visiting Nurse Association of Chicago (1989 - 1992) and a former Board Member of Sherman West Court Skilled Nursing Facility. Ms. Keefe served as Audit Committee Vice Chair (2024 - 2025). She currently serves as Chair of the Nominating and Governance Committee (since January 1, 2026) of the First Trust Funds.

Robert F. Keith is President of Hibs Enterprises, a financial and management consulting firm. Mr. Keith has been with Hibs Enterprises since 2003. Prior thereto, Mr. Keith spent 18 years with ServiceMaster and Aramark, including three years as President and COO of ServiceMaster Consumer Services, where he led the initial expansion of certain products overseas; five years as President and COO of ServiceMaster Management Services; and two years as President of Aramark ServiceMaster Management Services. Mr. Keith is a certified public accountant and also has held the positions of Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer of ServiceMaster, at which time he oversaw the financial aspects of ServiceMaster's expansion of its Management Services division into Europe, the Middle East and Asia. Mr. Keith served as the Chair of the Audit Committee (2008 - 2009 and 2017 - 2019), Chair of the Nominating and Governance Committee (2010 - 2011 and 2020 - 2022), and Chair of the Valuation Committee (2014 - 2016). He served as Lead Independent Trustee and on the Executive Committee (2012 - 2016 and 2023 - 2025). He currently serves as Vice Chair of the Audit Committee (since January 1, 2026) of the First Trust Funds.

Niel B. Nielson, Ph.D., has been the Senior Advisor of Pelita Harapan Educational Foundation, a global provider of educational products and services since 2018. Prior thereto, Mr. Nielson served as the Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer of Pelita Harapan Educational Foundation for three years. Mr. Nielson formerly served as the President and Chief Executive Officer of Dew Learning LLC from 2012 through 2014. Mr. Nielson formerly served as President of Covenant College (2002 - 2012), and as a partner and trader (of options and futures contracts for hedging options) for Ritchie Capital Markets Group (1996 - 1997), where he held an administrative management position at this proprietary derivatives trading company. He also held prior positions in new business development for ServiceMaster Management Services Company and in personnel and human resources for NationsBank of North Carolina, N.A. and Chicago Research and Trading Group, Ltd. ("CRT"). His international experience includes serving as a director of CRT Europe, Inc. for two years, directing out of London all aspects of business conducted by the U.K. and European subsidiary of CRT. Prior to that, Mr. Nielson was a trader and manager at CRT in Chicago. Mr. Nielson served as Chair of the Audit Committee (2003 - 2007 and 2014 - 2016), Chair of the Valuation Committee (2012 - 2013 and 2023 - 2025), Chair of the Nominating and Governance Committee (2008 - 2009 and 2017 - 2019) and Lead Independent Trustee (2010 - 2011 and 2020 - 2022) of the First Trust Funds. He has also served as a member of the Executive Committee (2010 - 2011 and January 1, 2020 - March 12, 2024). He currently serves as Vice Lead Independent Trustee, on the Executive Committee and on the Dividend Committee (since January 1, 2026) of the First Trust Funds.

Bronwyn Wright has acted as an independent director to a number of Irish collective investment funds since 2009. Ms. Wright is a former Managing Director of Citibank Europe plc and Head of Securities and Fund Services for Citi Ireland. In these positions, she was responsible for the management and strategic direction of Citi Ireland's securities and fund services business which included funds, custody, security finance/lending and global agency and trust. She also had responsibility for leading, managing and growing the Trustee, Custodian and Depositary business in Ireland, the United Kingdom, Luxembourg, Jersey and Cayman. Ms. Wright currently serves as Chair of the Valuation, Risk and Regulatory Oversight Committee (since January 1, 2026) of the First Trust Funds.

James A. Bowen is Chief Executive Officer of First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P. Mr. Bowen is involved in the day-to-day management of the First Trust Funds and serves on the Executive Committee. He has over 35 years of experience in the investment company business in sales, sales management and executive management.

Effective January 1, 2026, the fixed annual retainer paid to the Independent Trustees is \$300,000 per year and an annual per fund fee of \$7,500 for each closed-end fund, \$2,000 for each actively managed fund, \$750 for each target outcome fund and \$500 for each index fund. The fixed annual retainer is allocated equally among each fund in the First Trust Fund Complex. Additionally, the Lead Independent Trustee is paid \$30,000 annually, the Vice Lead Independent Trustee is paid up to \$25,000 annually, the Chair of the Audit Committee is paid \$25,000 annually, the Chair of the Valuation, Risk and Regulatory Oversight Committee is paid \$20,000 annually, the Chair of the Nominating and Governance Committee is paid \$20,000 annually and the Vice Chair of the Audit Committee is paid \$15,000 annually to serve in such capacities with

compensation allocated equally among each fund in the First Trust Fund Complex. Trustees are also reimbursed by the funds in the First Trust Fund Complex for travel and out-of-pocket expenses incurred in connection with all meetings.

The following table sets forth the total compensation (including reimbursement for travel and out-of-pocket expenses) paid by the Fund and the First Trust Fund Complex to each of the Independent Trustees for the fiscal year ended August 31, 2025 and the calendar year ended December 31, 2024, respectively. The Trust has no retirement or pension plans. The officers and Trustee who are “interested persons” as designated above serve without any compensation from the Trust. The Trust has no employees. The Trust’s officers are compensated by First Trust.

| <b>Name of Trustee</b>            | <b>Total Compensation from the Fund <sup>(1)</sup></b> | <b>Total Compensation from the First Trust Fund Complex <sup>(2)</sup></b> |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Thomas J. Driscoll <sup>(3)</sup> | \$ —   | \$ —   |
| Richard E. Erickson               | \$2,991  | \$653,176  |
| Thomas R. Kadlec                  | \$2,999  | \$666,676  |
| Denise M. Keefe                   | \$2,988  | \$636,112  |
| Robert F. Keith                   | \$2,993  | \$657,442  |
| Niel B. Nielson                   | \$2,990  | \$644,660  |
| Bronwyn Wright                    | \$3,079  | \$617,975  |

- (1) The compensation paid by the Fund to the Independent Trustees for the fiscal year ended August 31, 2025 for services to the Fund.
- (2) The total compensation paid to the Independent Trustees for the calendar year ended December 31, 2024 for services to the 307 portfolios existing in 2024, which consisted of 12 open-end mutual funds, 13 closed-end funds and 282 exchange-traded funds.
- (3) Mr. Driscoll was appointed to the Board of Trustees of the First Trust Funds effective August 12, 2025.

The following table sets forth the dollar range of equity securities beneficially owned by the Trustees in the Fund and in other funds overseen by the Trustees in the First Trust Fund Complex as of December 31, 2024:

| <b>Trustee</b>              | <b>Dollar Range of Equity Securities in the Fund (Number of Shares Held)</b> | <b>Aggregate Dollar Range of Equity Securities in All Registered Investment Companies Overseen by Trustee in the First Trust Fund Complex</b> |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Interested Trustee</b>   |  |   |
| James A. Bowen              | None   | Over \$100,000  |
| <b>Independent Trustees</b> |  |   |
| Thomas J. Driscoll          | None   | Over \$100,000  |
| Richard E. Erickson         | None   | Over \$100,000  |
| Thomas R. Kadlec            | None   | Over \$100,000  |
| Denise M. Keefe             | None   | Over \$100,000  |
| Robert F. Keith             | None   | Over \$100,000  |
| Niel B. Nielson             | None   | Over \$100,000  |
| Bronwyn Wright              | None   | None  |

As of November 30, 2025, the Independent Trustees of the Trust and their immediate family members did not own beneficially or of record any class of securities of an investment advisor or principal underwriter of the Fund or any person directly or indirectly controlling, controlled by or under common control with an investment advisor or principal underwriter of the Fund.

As of November 30, 2025, the officers and Trustees, in the aggregate, owned less than 1% of the shares of the Fund.

The table set forth in *Exhibit A* shows the percentage ownership of each person or “group” (as that term is used in Section 13(d) of the 1934 Act) who, based on the securities position listing reports as of November 30, 2025, owned of record, or is known by the Trust to have owned of record or beneficially, 5% or more of the shares of the Fund (the “Principal Holders”). A control person is one who owns, either directly or indirectly, more than 25% of the voting securities of the Fund

or acknowledges the existence of control. A party that controls the Fund may be able to significantly influence the outcome of any item presented to shareholders for approval. The Fund does not have any knowledge of who the ultimate beneficiaries are of the shares.

**Investment Advisor.** First Trust, 120 East Liberty Drive, Suite 400, Wheaton, Illinois 60187, is the investment advisor to the Fund. First Trust is a limited partnership with one limited partner, Grace Partners of DuPage L.P., and one general partner, The Charger Corporation. Grace Partners of DuPage L.P. is a limited partnership with one general partner, The Charger Corporation, and a number of limited partners. The Charger Corporation is an Illinois corporation controlled by James A. Bowen, the Chief Executive Officer of First Trust. First Trust discharges its responsibilities to the Fund subject to the policies of the Fund.

First Trust provides investment tools and portfolios for advisors and investors. First Trust is committed to theoretically sound portfolio construction and empirically verifiable investment management approaches. Its asset management philosophy and investment discipline are deeply rooted in the application of intuitive factor analysis and model implementation to enhance investment decisions.

First Trust acts as investment advisor for the Fund and manages investment and reinvestment of the assets of the Fund. First Trust also administers the Trust's business affairs, provides office facilities and equipment and certain clerical, bookkeeping and administrative services, and permits any of its officers or employees to serve without compensation as Trustees or officers of the Trust if elected to such positions.

Pursuant to an investment agreement between First Trust and the Trust, on behalf of the Fund (the "*Investment Management Agreement*"), First Trust manages the investment of the Fund's assets and is responsible for paying all expenses of the Fund, excluding the fee payments under the Investment Management Agreement, interest, taxes, brokerage commissions and other expenses connected with the execution of portfolio transactions, distribution and service fees payable pursuant to a Rule 12b-1 plan, if any, and extraordinary expenses. The Fund has agreed to pay First Trust an annual management fee equal to 0.75% of its average daily net assets.

Under the Investment Management Agreement, First Trust shall not be liable for any loss sustained by reason of the purchase, sale or retention of any security, whether or not such purchase, sale or retention shall have been based upon the investigation and research made by any other individual, firm or corporation, if such recommendation shall have been selected with due care and in good faith, except loss resulting from willful misfeasance, bad faith, or gross negligence on the part of First Trust in the performance of its obligations and duties, or by reason of its reckless disregard of its obligations and duties. The Investment Management Agreement terminates automatically upon assignment and is terminable at any time without penalty as to the Fund by the Board of Trustees, including a majority of the Independent Trustees, or by vote of the holders of a majority of the Fund's outstanding voting securities on 60 days' written notice to First Trust, or by First Trust on 60 days' written notice to the Fund.

As approved by the Trust's Board of Trustees, the management fee paid to the Advisor will be reduced at certain levels of Fund net assets ("*breakpoints*") and calculated pursuant to the schedule below, subject to the exception described herein:

| <b>Management Fee</b> | <b>Breakpoints</b>  |
|-----------------------|---|
| 0.75000%              | Fund net assets up to and including \$2.5 billion                           |
| 0.73125%              | Fund net assets greater than \$2.5 billion up to and including \$5 billion  |
| 0.71250%              | Fund net assets greater than \$5 billion up to and including \$7.5 billion  |
| 0.69375%              | Fund net assets greater than \$7.5 billion up to and including \$10 billion |
| 0.67500%              | Fund net assets greater than \$10 billion                                   |

The following table sets forth the unitary management fee (net of fee waivers) paid by the Fund to First Trust, and the fees waived by First Trust, for the specified periods.

**Amount of Management Fees  
(Net of Fee Waivers)**

**Amount of Fees Waived By First Trust**

| Fiscal Year Ended August 31, |           |           | Fiscal Year Ended August 31, |      |          |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------------------------|------|----------|
| 2025                         | 2024      | 2023      | 2025                         | 2024 | 2023     |
| \$541,118                    | \$506,297 | \$776,946 | \$0                          | \$0  | \$46,874 |

**Portfolio Managers.** The portfolio managers of the Fund are primarily and jointly responsible for the day-to-day management of the Fund. There are currently three portfolio managers, as follows:

| Name             | Position with First Trust                       | Length of Service with First Trust | Principal Occupation During Past Five Years  |
|------------------|---|------------------------------------|--|
| James Snyder     | Senior Vice President and Portfolio Manager     | Since 2013                         | Vice President and Portfolio Manager (2013 to present), First Trust Portfolios L.P.; Senior Portfolio Manager (2013 to 2013), Fort Sheridan Advisors LLC; Senior Trader (2011 to 2012) |
| Jeremiah Charles | Senior Vice President and Portfolio Manager     | Since 2013                         | Vice President and Portfolio Manager (2013 to present), First Trust Portfolios L.P.; Vice President (2011 to 2013), CRT Capital Group LLC  |
| Owen Aronson     | Senior Investment Analyst and Portfolio Manager | Since 2020                         | Senior Investment Analyst and Portfolio Manager (2020 to present), First Trust Portfolios L.P.; Vice President (2009 to 2020), Neuberger Berman  |

Mr. Snyder is a Senior Portfolio Manager and Co-head of the First Trust Government & Securitized Products Group. At First Trust, he is responsible for the management of the firm's mortgage, securitized product and multisector bond funds. Prior to joining First Trust in 2013, James spent most of his career leading several mortgage trading and portfolio management groups at American Express Financial Advisors, where he managed the AXP Federal Income Fund, and at Deerfield Capital, where he managed Deerfield's Mortgage REIT and Opportunity Fund. Additionally, he has held senior positions at Fort Sheridan Advisors and Spyglass Capital after beginning his career in 1983 at Harris Bank. Mr. Snyder holds a B.S. and M.A. in Economics from DePaul University and an MBA from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

Mr. Charles is a Senior Portfolio Manager and Co-head of the First Trust Government & Securitized Products Group. At First Trust, he is responsible for the management of the firm's mortgage, securitized product and multisector bond funds. Prior to joining First Trust in 2013, Jeremiah spent the majority of his career as a Senior Portfolio Manager at Deerfield Capital Management where he helped manage the Deerfield Mortgage REIT. In his career, he has also held positions at CRT Capital, where he worked as a Vice President in Securitized Products and at Piper Jaffray, where he began his career in 2003 as an Analyst. Mr. Charles holds a B.S. in Finance from the Leeds School of Business at the University of Colorado, and a MS in Real Estate with honors from the Charles H. Kellstadt Graduate School of Business at DePaul University.

Mr. Aronson is a Vice President and Portfolio Manager for First Trust. Prior to joining First Trust in 2020, Mr. Aronson worked as Vice President at Neuberger Berman in the Global Securitized Products team where he was involved in the research, trading, and management of securitized risk across a range of fixed income and real estate debt portfolios. Mr. Aronson began his career as an Analyst at Lehman Brothers Asset Management in 2007. Mr. Aronson holds a B.A. in Economics from the University of Chicago.

As of August 31, 2025, none of the portfolio managers beneficially owned any shares of the Fund.

**Compensation.** The compensation structure for each portfolio manager is based upon a fixed salary as well as a discretionary bonus determined by the management of First Trust. Salaries are determined by management and are based upon an individual's position and overall value to the firm. Bonuses are also determined by management and are based upon an individual's overall contribution to the success of the firm and the profitability of the firm. Salaries and bonuses for portfolio managers are not based upon criteria such as performance of the Fund or the value of assets included in the Fund's portfolios.

### Accounts Managed by Portfolio Managers

The portfolio managers manage the investment vehicles (other than the Fund) with the number of accounts and assets, as of August 31, 2025, as set forth in the table below:

| Portfolio Managers | Registered Investment Companies Number of Accounts (\$ Assets in Thousands) | Other Pooled Investment Vehicles Number of Accounts (\$ Assets in Thousands) | Other Accounts Number of Accounts (\$ Assets in Thousands) | Registered Investment Companies With Performance Fees Number of Accounts (\$ Assets in Thousands) | Other Pooled Investment Vehicles With Performance Fees Number of Accounts (\$ Assets in Thousands) | Other Accounts With Performance Fees Number of Accounts (\$ Assets in Thousands) |
|--------------------|---|--|--|---|--|--|
| James Snyder       | 9 (\$13,631,082)  | N/A  | N/A  | N/A   | N/A  | N/A  |
| Jeremiah Charles   | 9 (\$13,631,082)  | N/A  | N/A  | N/A   | N/A  | N/A  |
| Owen Aronson       | 7 (\$12,983,565)  | N/A  | N/A  | N/A   | N/A  | N/A  |

**Conflicts.** None of the accounts managed by the portfolio managers pay an advisory fee that is based upon the performance of the account. In addition, First Trust believes that there are no material conflicts of interest that may arise in connection with the portfolio managers' management of the Fund's investments and the investments of the other accounts managed by the portfolio managers. However, because the investment strategy of the Fund and the investment strategies of many of the other accounts managed by the portfolio managers are based on fairly mechanical investment processes, the portfolio managers may recommend that certain clients sell and other clients buy a given security at the same time. In addition, because the investment strategies of the Fund and other accounts managed by the portfolio managers generally result in the clients investing in readily available securities, the Advisor believes that there should not be material conflicts in the allocation of investment opportunities between the Fund and other accounts managed by the portfolio managers.

### BROKERAGE ALLOCATIONS

First Trust is responsible for decisions to buy and sell securities for the Fund and for the placement of the Fund's securities business, the negotiation of the commissions to be paid on brokered transactions, the prices for principal trades in securities, and the allocation of portfolio brokerage and principal business. It is the policy of First Trust to seek the best execution at the best security price available with respect to each transaction, and with respect to brokered transactions in light of the overall quality of brokerage and research services provided to First Trust and its clients. The best price to the Fund means the best net price without regard to the mix between purchase or sale price and commission, if any. Purchases may be made from underwriters, dealers and, on occasion, the issuers. Commissions will be paid on the Fund's futures and options transactions, if any. The purchase price of portfolio securities purchased from an underwriter or dealer may include underwriting commissions and dealer spreads. The Fund may pay markups on principal transactions. In selecting broker-dealers and in negotiating commissions, First Trust considers, among other things, the firm's reliability, the quality of its execution services on a continuing basis and its financial condition. Fund portfolio transactions may be effected with broker-dealers who have assisted investors in the purchase of shares.

Section 28(e) of the 1934 Act permits an investment advisor, under certain circumstances, to cause an account to pay a broker or dealer who supplies brokerage and research services a commission for effecting a transaction in excess of the amount of commission another broker or dealer would have charged for effecting the transaction. Brokerage and research services include (a) furnishing advice as to the value of securities, the advisability of investing, purchasing or selling securities, and the availability of securities or purchasers or sellers of securities; (b) furnishing analyses and reports concerning issuers, industries, securities, economic factors and trends, portfolio strategy and the performance of accounts; and (c) effecting securities transactions and performing functions incidental thereto (such as clearance, settlement and custody). Such brokerage and research services are often referred to as "soft dollars." First Trust has advised the Board of Trustees that it does not currently intend to use soft dollars.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, in selecting brokers, First Trust may in the future consider investment and market information and other research, such as economic, securities and performance measurement research, provided by such brokers, and the quality and reliability of brokerage services, including execution capability, performance and financial responsibility. Accordingly, the commissions charged by any such broker may be greater than the amount another firm might

charge if First Trust determines in good faith that the amount of such commissions is reasonable in relation to the value of the research information and brokerage services provided by such broker to First Trust or the Trust. In addition, First Trust must determine that the research information received in this manner provides the Fund with benefits by supplementing the research otherwise available to the Fund. The Investment Management Agreement provides that such higher commissions will not be paid by the Fund unless First Trust determines in good faith that the amount is reasonable in relation to the services provided. The investment advisory fees paid by the Fund to First Trust under the Investment Management Agreement would not be reduced as a result of receipt by First Trust of research services.

First Trust places portfolio transactions for other advisory accounts advised by it, and research services furnished by firms through which the Fund effects its securities transactions may be used by First Trust in servicing all of its accounts; not all of such services may be used by First Trust in connection with the Fund. First Trust believes it is not possible to measure separately the benefits from research services to each of the accounts (including the Fund) advised by it. Because the volume and nature of the trading activities of the accounts are not uniform, the amount of commissions in excess of those charged by another broker paid by each account for brokerage and research services will vary. However, First Trust believes such costs to the Fund will not be disproportionate to the benefits received by the Fund on a continuing basis. First Trust seeks to allocate portfolio transactions equitably whenever concurrent decisions are made to purchase or sell securities by the Fund and another advisory account. In some cases, this procedure could have an adverse effect on the price or the amount of securities available to the Fund. In making such allocations between the Fund and other advisory accounts, the main factors considered by First Trust are the respective investment objective, the relative size of portfolio holding of the same or comparable securities, the availability of cash for investment and the size of investment commitments generally held.

### Brokerage Commissions

The following table sets forth the aggregate amount of brokerage commissions paid by the Fund for the specified periods. Significant variations in the amount the Fund paid in brokerage commissions from year-to-year are generally the result of fluctuations in the size of the Fund or changes to the Fund’s portfolio holdings. Significant variations in the amount the Fund paid in brokerage commissions from year-to-year are generally the result of fluctuations in the size of the Fund or changes to the Fund’s portfolio holdings.

#### Aggregate Amount of Brokerage Commissions

| Fiscal Year Ended August 31, |         |         |
|------------------------------|---------|---------|
| 2025                         | 2024    | 2023    |
| \$3,489                      | \$2,570 | \$6,262 |

During the last fiscal year, the Fund held securities of Barclays Capital, Inc., BOFA Securities, Inc., Citigroup Global Markets Inc., J.P. Morgan Securities LLC and Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC, each a regular broker or dealer of the Fund as defined in Rule 10b-1 under the 1940 Act. As of August 31, 2025, the Fund’s investment in each was 0.00%, 0.00%, 0.02%, 0.14%, and 0.00% of the Fund’s net assets, respectively.

### ADMINISTRATOR, FUND ACCOUNTING AGENT, CUSTODIAN, TRANSFER AGENT, DISTRIBUTOR, ADDITIONAL SERVICE PROVIDER AND EXCHANGE

**Administrator and Fund Accounting Agent.** The Fund has appointed The Bank of New York Mellon (“BNY”), located at 240 Greenwich Street, New York, New York 10286, to serve as the Fund’s administrator and provide the Fund with accounting services pursuant to a fund administration and accounting agreement (the “*Administration and Accounting Agreement*”). Under the Administration and Accounting Agreement, BNY is obligated, on a continuous basis, to provide such administrative services as the Board reasonably deems necessary for the proper administration of the Trust and the Fund. BNY generally will assist in many aspects of the Trust’s and the Fund’s operations, including accounting, bookkeeping and record keeping services (including, without limitation, the maintenance of such books and records as are required under the 1940 Act and the rules thereunder, except as maintained by other service providers), assist in preparing reports to shareholders or investors, prepare and file tax returns, supply financial information and supporting data for reports to and filings with the SEC and various state Blue Sky authorities and supply supporting documentation for meetings of the Board.

**Custodian.** The Trust has appointed BNY to serve as the Fund's custodian pursuant to a custody agreement (the "*Custody Agreement*"). Pursuant to the terms of the Custody Agreement, BNY is generally responsible for the safekeeping of the Fund's assets and performing various other administrative duties set forth in the agreement.

**Transfer Agent.** The Trust has appointed BNY to serve as the Fund's transfer agent and dividend disbursing agent pursuant to a transfer agency and service agreement (the "*Transfer Agency Agreement*"). Pursuant to the terms of the Transfer Agency Agreement, BNY is responsible for performing and facilitating the purchases and redemptions of Creation Unit Aggregations, as well as performing other customary services of a transfer agent and dividend disbursing agent.

As set forth in the Administration and Accounting Agreement, Custody Agreement and Transfer Agency Agreement, the Trust, on behalf of the Fund, has agreed to indemnify and hold harmless BNY from certain costs, expenses, damages, liabilities or claims which are sustained or incurred or which may be asserted against BNY, provided that such costs, expenses, damages, liabilities and claims did not result from BNY's own negligence or willful misconduct.

As compensation for the services provided by BNY under the Administration and Accounting Agreement, Custody Agreement and Transfer Agency Agreement, the Trust, on behalf of the Fund, has agreed to pay to BNY such compensation as may be specifically agreed upon from time to time and reimburse BNY for out-of-pocket expenses which are a normal incident of the services provided under the agreements. Pursuant to the terms of the Investment Management Agreement, the Fund does not directly pay BNY for these services, as First Trust has assumed responsibility for the payment of these expenses out of the unitary management fee it receives from the Fund.

**Distributor.** First Trust Portfolios L.P., an affiliate of First Trust, is the distributor ("*FTP*" or the "*Distributor*") and principal underwriter of the shares of the Fund. Its principal address is 120 East Liberty Drive, Suite 400, Wheaton, Illinois 60187. The Distributor has entered into a Distribution Agreement with the Trust pursuant to which it distributes Fund shares. Shares are continuously offered for sale by the Funds through the Distributor only in Creation Unit Aggregations, as described in the Prospectus and below under the heading "Creation and Redemption of Creation Units."

For the fiscal years ended August 31, 2023, August 31, 2024 and August 31, 2025, there were no underwriting commissions with respect to the sale of Fund shares, and FTP did not receive compensation on redemptions for the Fund for those periods.

**12b-1 Plan.** The Trust has adopted a Plan of Distribution pursuant to Rule 12b-1 under the 1940 Act (the "*Plan*") pursuant to which the Fund may reimburse the Distributor up to a maximum annual rate of 0.25% of its average daily net assets.

Under the Plan and as required by Rule 12b-1, the Trustees will receive and review after the end of each calendar quarter a written report provided by the Distributor of the amounts expended under the Plan and the purpose for which such expenditures were made. With the exception of the Distributor and its affiliates, no "interested person" of the Trust (as that term is defined in the 1940 Act) and no Trustee of the Trust has a direct or indirect financial interest in the operation of the Plan or any related agreement.

No fee is currently paid by the Fund under the Plan and, pursuant to a contractual agreement, the Fund will not pay 12b-1 fees any time before December 31, 2026.

**Aggregations.** Fund shares in less than Creation Unit Aggregations are not distributed by the Distributor. The Distributor will deliver the Prospectus and, upon request, this SAI to persons purchasing Creation Unit Aggregations and will maintain records of both orders placed with it and confirmations of acceptance furnished by it. The Distributor is a broker-dealer registered under the 1934 Act and a member of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority ("*FINRA*").

The Distribution Agreement provides that it may be terminated at any time, without the payment of any penalty, on at least 60 days' written notice by the Trust to the Distributor (i) by vote of a majority of the Independent Trustees or (ii) by vote of a majority of the outstanding voting securities (as defined in the 1940 Act) of the Fund. The Distribution Agreement will terminate automatically in the event of its assignment (as defined in the 1940 Act).

The Distributor has entered into agreements with participants that utilize the facilities of the Depository Trust Company (the "*DTC Participants*"), which have international operational capabilities and place orders for Creation Unit Aggregations of Fund shares. Participating Parties (which are participants in the Continuous Net Settlement System of the National Securities Clearing Corporation) shall be DTC Participants.

**Exchange.** The only relationship that NYSE Arca has with First Trust or the Distributor of the Fund in connection with the Fund is that ICE Data Indices, LLC, an affiliate of NYSE Arca, is the IPV Calculator and NYSE Arca lists the shares of the Fund pursuant to its listing agreement with the Trust. NYSE Arca is not responsible for and has not participated in the determination of pricing or the timing of the issuance or sale of the shares of the Fund or in the determination or calculation of the net asset value of the Fund. NYSE Arca has no obligation or liability in connection with the administration, marketing or trading of the Fund.

## **ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS TO FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES**

First Trust or its affiliates may from time to time make payments, out of their own resources, to certain broker-dealers, registered investment advisers, banks or other intermediaries (collectively, "*intermediaries*") that sell shares of First Trust mutual funds and ETFs ("*First Trust Funds*") to promote the sales and retention of Fund shares by those firms and their customers. The amounts of these payments vary by intermediary. The level of payments that First Trust is willing to provide to a particular intermediary may be affected by, among other factors, (i) the firm's total assets or Fund shares held in and recent net investments into First Trust Funds, (ii) the value of the assets invested in the First Trust Funds by the intermediary's customers, (iii) redemption rates, (iv) its ability to attract and retain assets, (v) the intermediary's reputation in the industry, (vi) the level and/or type of marketing assistance and educational activities provided by the intermediary, (vii) the firm's level of participation in First Trust Funds' sales and marketing programs, (viii) the firm's compensation program for its registered representatives who sell Fund shares and provide services to Fund shareholders, and (ix) the asset class of the First Trust Funds for which these payments are provided. Such payments are generally asset-based but also may include the payment of a lump sum.

First Trust and/or its affiliates may make payments, out of its own assets, to those firms as compensation and/or reimbursement for marketing support and/or program servicing to selected intermediaries that are registered as holders or dealers of record for accounts invested in one or more of the First Trust Funds or that make First Trust Fund shares available through certain selected Fund no-transaction fee institutional platforms and fee-based wrap programs at certain financial intermediaries. Program servicing payments typically apply to employee benefit plans, such as retirement plans, or fee-based advisory programs but may apply to retail sales and assets in certain situations. The payments are based on such factors as the type and nature of services or support furnished by the intermediary and are generally asset-based. Services for which an intermediary receives marketing support payments may include, but are not limited to, business planning assistance, advertising, educating the intermediary's personnel about First Trust Funds in connection with shareholder financial planning needs, placement on the intermediary's preferred or recommended fund list, and access to sales meetings, sales representatives and management representatives of the intermediary. In addition, intermediaries may be compensated for enabling representatives of First Trust and/or its affiliates to participate in and/or present at conferences or seminars, sales or training programs for invited registered representatives and other employees, client and investor events and other events sponsored by the intermediary. Services for which an intermediary receives program servicing payments typically include, but are not limited to, record keeping, reporting or transaction processing and shareholder communications and other account administration services, but may also include services rendered in connection with Fund/investment selection and monitoring, employee enrollment and education, plan balance rollover or separation, or other similar services. An intermediary may perform program services itself or may arrange with a third party to perform program services. These payments, if any, are in addition to the service fee and any applicable omnibus sub-accounting fees paid to these firms with respect to these services by the First Trust Funds out of Fund assets.

From time to time, First Trust and/or its affiliates, at its expense, may provide other compensation to intermediaries that sell or arrange for the sale of shares of the First Trust Funds, which may be in addition to marketing support and program servicing payments described above. For example, First Trust and/or its affiliates may: (i) compensate intermediaries for National Securities Clearing Corporation networking system services (e.g., shareholder communication, account statements, trade confirmations and tax reporting) on an asset-based or per-account basis; (ii) compensate intermediaries for providing Fund shareholder trading information; (iii) make one-time or periodic payments to reimburse selected intermediaries for items such as ticket charges (i.e., fees that an intermediary charges its representatives for effecting transactions in Fund shares) or exchange order, operational charges (e.g., fees that an intermediary charges for establishing the Fund on its trading system), and literature printing and/or distribution costs; (iv) at the direction of a retirement plan's sponsor, reimburse or pay direct expenses of an employee benefit plan that would otherwise be payable by the plan; (v) provide payments to broker-dealers to help defray their technology or infrastructure costs; and (vi) make payments for expenses associated with intermediaries' use of First Trust Funds including, but not limited to, the use of First Trust Funds in model portfolios.

When not provided for in a marketing support or program servicing agreement, First Trust and/ or its affiliates may also pay intermediaries for enabling First Trust and/or its affiliates to participate in and/or present at conferences or seminars, sales or training programs for invited registered representatives and other intermediary employees, client and investor events and other intermediary-sponsored events, and for travel expenses, including lodging incurred by registered representatives and other employees in connection with prospecting, asset retention and due diligence trips. These payments may vary depending upon the nature of the event. First Trust and/or its affiliates make payments for such events as it deems appropriate, subject to its internal guidelines and applicable law.

First Trust and/or its affiliates occasionally sponsor due diligence meetings for registered representatives during which they receive updates on various First Trust Funds and are afforded the opportunity to speak with portfolio managers. Although invitations to these meetings are not conditioned on selling a specific number of shares, those who have shown an interest in First Trust Funds are more likely to be considered. To the extent permitted by their firm's policies and procedures, all or a portion of registered representatives' expenses in attending these meetings may be covered by First Trust and/or its affiliates.

The amounts of payments referenced above made by First Trust and/or its affiliates could be significant and may create an incentive for an intermediary or its representatives to recommend or offer shares of the First Trust Funds to its customers. The intermediary may elevate the prominence or profile of the First Trust Funds within the intermediary's organization by, for example, placing the First Trust Funds on a list of preferred or recommended funds and/or granting First Trust and/or its affiliates preferential or enhanced opportunities to promote the First Trust Funds in various ways within the intermediary's organization. These payments are made pursuant to negotiated agreements with intermediaries. The payments do not change the price paid by investors for the purchase of a share or the amount the Fund will receive as proceeds from such sales. Furthermore, many of these payments are not reflected in the fees and expenses listed in the fee table section of the Fund's Prospectus because they are not paid by the Fund. The types of payments described herein are not mutually exclusive, and a single intermediary may receive some or all types of payments as described.

Other compensation may be offered to the extent not prohibited by state laws or any self-regulatory agency, such as FINRA. Investors can ask their intermediaries for information about any payments they receive from First Trust and/or its affiliates and the services it provides for those payments. Investors may wish to take intermediary payment arrangements into account when considering and evaluating any recommendations relating to Fund shares.

Payments to intermediaries, in certain circumstances, may also be made in connection with the distribution of model portfolios developed by First Trust, such as the inclusion of such model portfolios on an intermediary's platform, as well as in connection with the marketing and sale of, and/or product training regarding such model portfolios, or servicing of accounts tracking such model portfolios. Such payments may be variable or fixed fee payments for platform support, or other payments in the form of a variable or fixed fee or a per position fee, or may relate to the amount of assets an intermediary's clients have invested in the First Trust Funds in such models developed by First Trust, the management fee, the total expense ratio, or sales of the First Trust Funds in such models developed by First Trust. Some intermediaries also provide related data regarding transactions in specific model portfolios, First Trust Funds and investment strategies to First Trust in exchange for a fee.

First Trust and/or its affiliates may enter into arrangements with third parties, such as a software provider, whereby First Trust may license certain technology or other services from such entity in exchange for licensing or other fees which may be, in whole or in part, dependent on the value of First Trust mutual funds or ETFs held through such software or other service. Such third party may also offer price concessions to broker dealers, investment advisers or other financial intermediaries that license technology or other services that may be dependent, in whole or in part, on the value of First Trust mutual funds or ETFs held through such software or other service.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**Book Entry Only System.** The following information supplements and should be read in conjunction with the Prospectus.

**DTC Acts as Securities Depository for Fund Shares.** Shares of the Fund are represented by securities registered in the name of The Depository Trust Company ("*DTC*") or its nominee, Cede & Co., and deposited with, or on behalf of, DTC.

DTC, a limited-purpose trust company, was created to hold securities of its participants (the "*DTC Participants*") and to facilitate the clearance and settlement of securities transactions among the DTC Participants in such securities through

electronic book-entry changes in accounts of the DTC Participants, thereby eliminating the need for physical movement of securities certificates. DTC Participants include securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies, clearing corporations and certain other organizations, some of whom (and/or their representatives) own DTC. More specifically, DTC is owned by a number of its DTC Participants and by the New York Stock Exchange (the "NYSE") and FINRA. Access to the DTC system is also available to others such as banks, brokers, dealers and trust companies that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a DTC Participant, either directly or indirectly (the "Indirect Participants").

Beneficial ownership of shares is limited to DTC Participants, Indirect Participants and persons holding interests through DTC Participants and Indirect Participants. Ownership of beneficial interests in shares (owners of such beneficial interests are referred to herein as "Beneficial Owners") is shown on, and the transfer of ownership is effected only through, records maintained by DTC (with respect to DTC Participants) and on the records of DTC Participants (with respect to Indirect Participants and Beneficial Owners that are not DTC Participants). Beneficial Owners will receive from or through the DTC Participant a written confirmation relating to their purchase and sale of shares.

Conveyance of all notices, statements and other communications to Beneficial Owners is effected as follows. Pursuant to a letter agreement between DTC and the Trust, DTC is required to make available to the Trust upon request and for a fee to be charged to the Trust a listing of the shares of the Fund held by each DTC Participant. The Trust shall inquire of each such DTC Participant as to the number of Beneficial Owners holding shares, directly or indirectly, through such DTC Participant. The Trust shall provide each such DTC Participant with copies of such notice, statement or other communication, in such form, number and at such place as such DTC Participant may reasonably request, in order that such notice, statement or communication may be transmitted by such DTC Participant, directly or indirectly, to such Beneficial Owners. In addition, the Trust shall pay to each such DTC Participants a fair and reasonable amount as reimbursement for the expenses attendant to such transmittal, all subject to applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

Fund distributions shall be made to DTC or its nominee, as the registered holder of all Fund shares. DTC or its nominee, upon receipt of any such distributions, shall immediately credit DTC Participants' accounts with payments in amounts proportionate to their respective beneficial interests in shares of the Fund as shown on the records of DTC or its nominee. Payments by DTC Participants to Indirect Participants and Beneficial Owners of shares held through such DTC Participants will be governed by standing instructions and customary practices, as is now the case with securities held for the accounts of customers in bearer form or registered in a "street name," and will be the responsibility of such DTC Participants.

The Trust has no responsibility or liability for any aspect of the records relating to or notices to Beneficial Owners, or payments made on account of beneficial ownership interests in such shares, or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any records relating to such beneficial ownership interests, or for any other aspect of the relationship between DTC and the DTC Participants or the relationship between such DTC Participants and the Indirect Participants and Beneficial Owners owning through such DTC Participants.

DTC may decide to discontinue providing its service with respect to shares at any time by giving reasonable notice to the Trust and discharging its responsibilities with respect thereto under applicable law. Under such circumstances, the Trust shall take action to find a replacement for DTC to perform its functions at a comparable cost.

**Policy Regarding Investment in Other Investment Companies.** The Fund will not rely on Sections 12(d)(1)(F) or 12(d)(1)(G) of the 1940 Act to invest in other investment companies.

## **INFORMATION FOR INVESTORS IN THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA ("EEA") ONLY**

The following disclosures are included in this SAI solely for the purposes of compliance with the applicable EEA law and regulation resulting from, of and as a consequence of, the Fund's registration or notification under the EU Directive on Alternative Investment Fund Managers (Directive (2011/61/EU)) (the "AIFM Directive") national private placement regimes in certain European Union ("EU") and EEA jurisdictions. The following disclosures are not intended for, and should not be relied on by, any investor other than an investor in the relevant EU and/or EEA jurisdictions because the rules, regulations and requirements applicable to the Fund in those jurisdictions as a result of their registration or notification differ from the rules, regulations and requirements applicable to the Fund under the Investment Company Act.

### ***European Union's Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation***

While First Trust Advisors L.P. (the "Advisor") is not itself generally subject to Regulation 2019/2088 of the European Parliament and of the Council on sustainability-related disclosures in the financial sector ("SFDR"), by virtue of the Fund's registration or notification under the AIFM Directive national private placement regimes in certain EU and EEA

jurisdictions, some limited disclosures under the SFDR must be made in respect of the Fund and the following section is intended to satisfy certain of such requirements. The SFDR requires the Advisor to determine, on a product-by-product basis, whether "sustainability risks" are relevant to the Advisor's in-scope financial products, including the Fund.

For the purposes of SFDR, "sustainability risk" means an environmental, social or governance ("ESG") event or condition that, if it occurs, could cause an actual or a potential material negative impact on the value of an investment.

Solely for the purposes of SFDR, the Advisor has determined that sustainability risks are not relevant to the Fund on the basis that the Fund invests principally in investments or asset classes which, in the opinion of the Advisor, are not ordinarily subject to sustainability risk as a material negative impact on the value of those investments, as such terms are interpreted and applied under SFDR.

Consequently, the Advisor does not integrate sustainability risks into its investment decision making for the Fund and the Advisor has not assessed the likely impacts of sustainability risks on the returns of the Fund, as such terms are interpreted and applied under SFDR.

The Advisor will keep its assessment that sustainability risks are not relevant to the Fund under regular review.

SFDR requires the Advisor to disclose whether, and if so how, it considers the principal adverse impacts ("PAIs") of its investment decisions on sustainability factors, in accordance with a specific regime outlined in SFDR, in relation to the Fund. The Advisor does not consider the principal adverse impacts of its investment decisions on sustainability factors (either generally or in relation to the Fund).

In addition, the Advisor considers that its primary investment strategies and client relationships do not support adoption of the PAI regime within SFDR.

#### ***Information for Investors in the EEA Regarding Offering of the Fund***

In relation to each Member State of the EEA which has implemented the AIFM Directive, the Prospectus, and any summary Prospectus or SAI relating to the Fund, may only be distributed and shares may only be offered or placed in a Member State to the extent that: (1) the Fund is permitted to be marketed to professional investors in the relevant Member State in accordance with the AIFM Directive (as implemented into the local law/regulations of the relevant Member State); or otherwise (2) the Prospectus and SAI may be lawfully distributed and the shares may lawfully be offered or placed in that Member State (including at the initiative of the investor).

In relation to each Member State of the EEA which, at the date of this SAI, has not implemented the AIFM Directive, the Prospectus and this SAI may only be distributed and shares may only be offered or placed to the extent that the Prospectus and this SAI may be lawfully distributed and the shares may lawfully be offered or placed in that Member State (including at the initiative of the investor).

In addition, the following restrictions apply to the distribution of the Prospectus and SAI in the following Member States:

#### ***Information for Investors in the United Kingdom***

Subject always to the foregoing notice in respect of the EEA, this SAI is being issued in the United Kingdom by First Trust Global Portfolios Limited (which is authorized and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (the "FCA")) only to and/or is directed only at persons who are professional clients or eligible counterparties for the purposes of the FCA's Conduct of Business Sourcebook. The opportunity to invest in the Fund is only available to such persons in the United Kingdom, and the Prospectus and SAI must not be relied on or acted upon by any other persons in the United Kingdom.

#### ***Information for Investors in Ireland***

The distribution of this Prospectus and SAI in Ireland and the offering or purchase of shares is restricted to the individual to whom it is addressed. Accordingly, it may not be reproduced in whole or in part, nor may its contents be distributed in writing or orally to any third party and it may be read solely by the person to whom it is addressed and his/her professional advisers. Shares in the Fund will not be offered or sold by any person:

- (a) otherwise than in conformity with the provisions of the European Communities (Markets in Financial Instruments) Regulations 2007 and the European Union (Alternative Investment Fund Managers) Regulations 2013, each as amended; or

- (b) in any way which would require the publication of a prospectus under the Companies Act 2014 or any regulations made thereunder; or
- (c) in Ireland except in all circumstances that will result in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations in Ireland.

### **AIFM Directive Disclosures**

*Background.* The AIFM Directive is an EU directive which regulates the management and marketing of funds within the EEA. The AIFM Directive distinguishes between EU and non-EU funds and EU and non-EU fund managers and different obligations apply under the AIFM Directive depending on where the fund is based and where the manager is based. Certain disclosure, transparency and reporting obligations are imposed on non-EU fund managers wishing to market funds to investors in the EEA. There are additional requirements imposed on EU fund managers, which do not currently apply to First Trust.

To the extent not already disclosed to you prior to your investment in the Fund, the purpose of this section of this SAI is to satisfy the disclosures which are required to be provided to you under the AIFM Directive.

*Overview of the Fund and the Service Providers.* The Fund is a non-EU AIFs (“AIF” means an alternative investment fund for the purposes of the AIFM Directive).

First Trust Advisors L.P. (“First Trust”) is the AIFM of the Fund (“AIFM” means an alternative investment fund manager for the purposes of the AIFM Directive). First Trust is a non-EU AIFM.

The Trust has entered into agreements with various service providers including First Trust (as the Investment Advisor), the Custodian, Distributor, Transfer Agent, Administrator, index providers and the exchange where the Fund is listed in respect of the Fund. Further details regarding the duties and roles of such service providers can be found in the Prospectus and this SAI for the Fund.

In addition to the parties listed above, the Trust has appointed (i) Chapman and Cutler LLP as its legal counsel which advises it on US legal matters; (ii) Deloitte & Touche LLP as the Fund’s auditors who undertake to audit the Fund’s financial statements in accordance with the standards of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB) (United States); and (iii) CT Corporation System as the Fund’s registered agent.

First Trust is not required to ensure that the Fund appoints, and the Fund has not appointed, a depository for purposes of the AIFM Directive. (A depository in the context of the AIFM Directive, has a specific role and function. The appointment of such depository is not required for non-EU AIFs with non-EU AIFMs). As such, investors in the Fund have no rights as against any person in respect of the duties or liabilities of a depository under the AIFM Directive.

*Investors’ Contractual Rights.* In respect of each of the service providers to the Fund, investors who purchase shares in the Fund in the secondary market have no direct rights of action against the service providers, as a matter of contract law or under the establishment documents of the Trust. The proper plaintiff in an action in respect of which a wrongdoing is alleged to have been committed against the Fund or the Trust by a service provider is, prima facie, the Trust itself. An investor may bring a derivative or similar action or proceeding (“Derivative Action”) against the Trust or the Fund to recover a judgment in its favor in accordance with the provisions of the Declaration. Accordingly, investors would have no direct contractual right against the relevant service provider for breach of the agreement governing its appointment by the Trust. The foregoing disclosure is without prejudice to such other rights of action (for example, under the securities laws, tort law or in respect of breach of fiduciary duty) which might in certain situations be separately available to investors.

*Investment in the Fund.* Investors will buy shares in the Fund in secondary market transactions through brokers and will not subscribe for shares from the Trust directly. As such, there is no direct contractual relationship between the Fund and the investor in connection with the purchase or sale of shares. While the Fund is established under Massachusetts law and Massachusetts law does facilitate the enforcement of judgments obtained in foreign jurisdictions, investors who buy shares on the secondary market will have no direct contractual right of action against the Fund. Investors should refer to “How to Buy and Sell Shares” in the main body of the Prospectus for more detail. The foregoing disclosure is without prejudice to such other rights of action (for example, under the securities laws, tort law or in respect of breach of fiduciary duty) which might in certain situations be separately available to investors.

*Redemption from the Fund.* Non-US investors will sell shares in secondary market transactions through brokers and will not redeem shares from the Fund directly. Shares can be sold throughout the trading day like other publicly traded shares. Investors should refer to "How to Buy and Sell Shares" in the main body of the Prospectus for more detail.

*Liquidity Risk Management.* Investors should note that while First Trust is not required to implement liquidity management arrangements in accordance with the AIFM Directive in respect of the Fund, the Fund is subject to the liquidity limitations established by the SEC. The Trustees have delegated to First Trust the day-to-day determination of illiquidity of equity and fixed income securities as described under "Illiquid Investments" in this SAI.

*Treatment of Investors.* The Trust and the AIFM do not offer any investors preferential treatment or the right to obtain preferential treatment. Whilst the Trust does not take specific steps to ensure the fair treatment of investors, under the 1940 Act the Trustees are required to monitor how the Fund operates and oversee matters where the interests of the Fund and its shareholders may differ from those of its investment adviser.

First Trust is registered as an investment adviser with the SEC, and is subject to regulation and oversight designed to protect shareholders. Under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, First Trust is a fiduciary to its clients, including the Fund, and is therefore required to act in the best interests of clients and to place the interests of clients before its own.

*Information Regarding the Use of Leverage and Collateral.* The AIFM Directive requires disclosure of certain information relating to leverage, collateral and asset re-use arrangements. The Fund may obtain leverage through the use of derivatives and other non-fully funded investments such as reverse repurchase agreements, firm commitment agreements and standby commitment agreements if, and to the extent that, such transactions are (i) disclosed in the Fund's Prospectus and SAI and (ii) deemed appropriate investments by First Trust. These leveraged trading practices generally have not been prohibited by the SEC, though the SEC has published guidance on the manner in which the Fund may cover its leveraged trading practices to limit leverage and avoid the need to address the leverage concerns in Section 18 of the 1940 Act, which severely restricts how the Fund may use leverage. All arrangements entered into by First Trust on behalf of the Fund which result in leverage follow the parameter of the guidance published by the SEC.

As a non-EU AIFM, First Trust is not obliged to set a maximum permitted level of leverage which it may employ in its management of the Fund. The total amount of leverage employed by the Fund is provided at <http://www.ftglobalportfolios.com>.

Investors should refer to the "Investment Objective and Policies" and "Investment Strategies" section of this SAI for more details on the use and risk of leverage by the Fund.

*Shareholder Voting Rights.* The Declaration requires a shareholder vote only on those matters where the 1940 Act requires a vote of shareholders and otherwise permits the Trustees to take actions without seeking the consent of shareholders. The Fund's fundamental policies, as described in the "Investment Objective and Policies" section of this SAI, may not be changed without approval of the holders of a majority of the outstanding voting securities (as such term is defined in the 1940 Act) of the Fund. The 1940 Act defines a majority vote as the vote of the lesser of (i) 67% or more of the voting securities represented at a meeting at which more than 50% of the outstanding securities are represented; or (ii) more than 50% of the outstanding voting securities.

*Net Asset Value.* The latest NAV of the Fund, and the latest NAV per share of each class of share of the Fund, is available online at: <http://www.ftglobalportfolios.com> and online stock quote services. Generally investors will buy and sell shares of the Fund in secondary market transactions through brokers. Shares of the Fund will therefore be available at the relevant market price rather than NAV.

The historical performance of the Fund since inception is available online at: <http://www.ftglobalportfolios.com>.

*Accounts.* Under the AIFM Directive, First Trust is required to make available the N-CSR of the Funds that it markets in the EEA. This must be prepared by no later than 6 months following the end of the financial year and contain certain specific content requirements set out in the AIFM Directive. Once the N-CSR has been produced, it will be made available to investors in the manner as set out in the Prospectus.

*Professional Liability Requirements/Delegation by the AIFM/Valuation.* As a non-EU AIFM, First Trust is not subject to certain EU requirements relating to (i) the cover of professional liability risk by holding either additional of its own funds or appropriate professional liability insurance; (ii) permitted delegation and the management and disclosure of conflicts of interest relating to any such delegation; and (iii) valuation as set out in Article 19 of the AIFM Directive. As such, no

disclosures for the purposes of the AIFM Directive have been made. Notwithstanding this, First Trust and the Fund continue to comply with their requirements under US law.

*Periodic Disclosure Obligations.* The following information will be disclosed to Fund shareholders on a periodic basis by way of a posting being made on <http://www.ftglobalportfolios.com>:

- the percentage of the Fund's assets, if any, that are subject to special arrangements arising from their illiquid nature (including, but not limited to, deferrals of redemptions and suspensions);
- the current risk profile of the Fund and the risk management systems employed by the AIFM to manage those risks; and
- the total amount of leverage employed by the Fund, if any.

Whenever any new arrangements for managing the liquidity of the Fund are introduced including, but not limited to, any material changes to the liquidity management systems and procedures employed by First Trust, a disclosure to this effect will be uploaded on the Fund's website. The Fund will ensure that a notice is uploaded on an expedited basis whenever deferrals or other similar special arrangements are activated or where redemptions of shares are suspended.

A notice will be posted without undue delay whenever there is a change to a maximum level of leverage which may be employed on behalf of the Fund; and any changes are made to the right of re-use of collateral or any changes to any guarantee granted under any leveraging arrangement.

## **INFORMATION FOR INVESTORS IN HONG KONG ONLY**

The Fund is a collective investment scheme but is not authorized under Section 104 of the Securities and Futures Ordinance of Hong Kong by the Securities and Futures Commission of Hong Kong. Accordingly, the distribution of the Prospectus, and the placement of Fund shares in Hong Kong, is restricted. The Prospectus may only be distributed, circulated or issued to persons who are professional investors under the Securities and Futures Ordinance and any rules made under that Ordinance or as otherwise permitted by the Securities and Futures Ordinance.

## **INFORMATION FOR INVESTORS IN SINGAPORE ONLY**

The Prospectus has not been registered as a Prospectus with the Monetary Authority of Singapore. Accordingly, the Prospectus and any other document or material in connection with the offer or sale, or invitation for subscription or purchase, of Fund shares may not be circulated or distributed, nor may Fund shares be offered or sold, or be made the subject of an invitation for subscription or purchase, whether directly or indirectly, to persons in Singapore other than (i) to an institutional investor pursuant to Section 304 of the Securities and Futures Act, Chapter 289 of Singapore (the "SFA") or (ii) otherwise pursuant to, and in accordance with the conditions of, any other applicable provision of the SFA.

## **INFORMATION FOR INVESTORS IN TAIWAN ONLY**

Fund shares are being made available in the Republic of China ("R.O.C.") on a private placement basis only to banks, bills houses, trust enterprises, financial holding companies and other qualified entities or institutions (collectively, "Qualified Institutions") and other entities and individuals meeting specific criteria ("Other Qualified Investors") pursuant to the private placement provisions of the R.O.C. Rules Governing Offshore Funds. No other offer or sale of the shares of the Fund in the R.O.C. is permitted. R.O.C. purchasers of Fund shares may not sell or otherwise dispose of their holdings except by redemption, transfer to a Qualified Institution or Other Qualified Investor, transfer by operation of law or other means approved by the R.O.C. Financial Supervisory Commission.

## **PROXY VOTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Trust has adopted a proxy voting policy that seeks to ensure that proxies for securities held by the Fund are voted consistently with the best interests of the Fund.

The Board has delegated to First Trust the proxy voting responsibilities for the Fund and has directed First Trust to vote proxies consistent with the Fund's best interests. The First Trust Proxy Voting Policies and Procedures are attached hereto as *Exhibit B*. First Trust has engaged the services of Institutional Shareholder Services Inc. ("ISS") to make recommendations to First Trust on the voting of proxies relating to securities held by the Fund. If First Trust manages the

assets of a company or its pension plan and any of First Trust's clients hold any securities of that company, First Trust will generally vote proxies relating to such company's securities in accordance with the ISS recommendations to avoid any conflict of interest.

To the extent that the Fund invests in other registered investment companies ("*acquired funds*"), it may do so subject to the restrictions of Section 12(d)(1) of the 1940 Act and the related rules and interpretations. The ability of the Fund to invest in acquired funds under the 1940 Act and the related rules and interpretations is conditioned upon complying with a number of undertakings, some of which require the Fund to vote its shares in an acquired fund in the same proportion as other holders of the acquired fund's shares. As a result, to the extent that the Fund, or another registered investment company advised by First Trust invests in an acquired fund, First Trust will vote shares of that acquired fund in the same proportion as the other holders of that acquired fund's shares to the extent required by the 1940 Act and the related rules and interpretations.

First Trust has adopted the First Trust Proxy Voting Guidelines. While these guidelines are not intended to be all-inclusive, they do provide guidance on First Trust's general voting policies. First Trust's use of the First Trust Proxy Voting Guidelines is not intended to constrain First Trust's consideration of any proxy proposal, and there are times when First Trust deviates from the First Trust Proxy Voting Guidelines. This includes when required by Rule 12d1-4 under the 1940 Act or when agreed to by the Fund and certain acquired funds as permitted under Rule 12d1-4 under the 1940 Act, if applicable. First Trust will consider proxy voting decisions in light of merit-based considerations which it believes may impact shareholder value. First Trust retains final authority and fiduciary responsibility for proxy voting.

Information regarding how the Fund voted proxies (if any) relating to portfolio securities during the most recent 12-month period ended June 30 is available upon request and without charge on the Fund's website at <http://www.ftportfolios.com>, by calling (800) 621-1675 or by accessing the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>.

**Portfolio Schedule.** The Fund files portfolio holdings information for each month in a fiscal quarter within 60 days after the end of the relevant fiscal quarter on Form N-PORT. Portfolio holdings information for the third month of each fiscal quarter will be publicly available on the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. The Fund's complete schedule of portfolio holdings for the second and fourth quarters of each fiscal year is included in the semi-annual and annual financial statements and other information provided to shareholders, respectively, and is filed with the SEC on Form N-CSR. A semi-annual or annual financial statement and other information provided for the Fund will become available to investors within 60 days after the period to which it relates. The Trust's Forms N-PORT and Forms N-CSR are available on the SEC's website listed above.

**Policy Regarding Disclosure of Portfolio Holdings.** The Trust has adopted a policy regarding the disclosure of information about the Fund's portfolio holdings. The Board of Trustees must approve all material amendments to this policy. The Fund's portfolio holdings are publicly disseminated each day the Fund is open for business through financial reporting and news services, including publicly accessible Internet websites. In addition, a basket composition file, which includes the security names and share quantities to deliver in exchange for Fund shares, together with estimates and actual cash components, is publicly disseminated each day the New York Stock Exchange (the "*NYSE*") is open for trading via the National Securities Clearing Corporation ("*NSCC*"). Pursuant to Rule 6c-11 under the 1940 Act, information regarding the Fund's current portfolio holdings will be available on a daily basis at <http://www.ftportfolios.com/Retail/etf/home.aspx>. The Trust, First Trust, FTP and BNY will not disseminate non-public information concerning the Trust.

**Codes of Ethics.** In order to mitigate the possibility that the Fund will be adversely affected by personal trading, the Trust, First Trust and the Distributor have adopted Codes of Ethics under Rule 17j-1 of the 1940 Act. These Codes of Ethics contain policies restricting securities trading in personal accounts of the officers, Trustees and others who normally come into possession of information on portfolio transactions. Personnel subject to the Codes of Ethics may invest in securities that may be purchased or held by the Fund; however, the Codes of Ethics require that each transaction in such securities be reviewed by the Chief Compliance Officer or his or her designee. These Codes of Ethics are on public file with, and are available from, the SEC.

## CREATION AND REDEMPTION OF CREATION UNITS

**General.** ETFs, such as the Fund, generally issue and redeem their shares in primary market transactions through a creation and redemption mechanism and do not sell or redeem individual shares. Instead, financial entities known as "Authorized Participants" have contractual arrangements with an ETF or one of the ETF's service providers to purchase and redeem ETF shares directly with the ETF in large blocks of shares known as "Creation Units." Prior to the start of trading on

every business day, an ETF publishes through the National Securities Clearing Corporation (“NSCC”) the “basket” of securities, cash or other assets that it will accept in exchange for a Creation Unit of the ETF’s shares. An Authorized Participant that wishes to effectuate a creation of an ETF’s shares deposits with the ETF the “basket” of securities, cash or other assets identified by the ETF that day, and then receives the Creation Unit of the ETF’s shares in return for those assets. After purchasing a Creation Unit, the Authorized Participant may continue to hold the ETF’s shares or sell them in the secondary market. The redemption process is the reverse of the purchase process: the authorized participant redeems a Creation Unit of ETF shares for a basket of securities, cash or other assets. The combination of the creation and redemption process with secondary market trading in ETF shares and underlying securities provides arbitrage opportunities that are designed to help keep the market price of ETF shares at or close to the NAV per share of the ETF.

**Authorized Participants.** An “Authorized Participant” is a member or participant of a clearing agency registered with the SEC that has a written agreement with the Fund or one of its service providers that allows the Authorized Participant to place orders for the purchase or redemption of Creation Units (a “Participant Agreement”). Orders to purchase Creation Units must be delivered through an Authorized Participant that has executed a Participant Agreement and must comply with the applicable provisions of such Participant Agreement. Investors wishing to purchase or sell shares generally do so on an exchange. Institutional investors other than Authorized Participants are responsible for making arrangements for a redemption request to be made through an Authorized Participant.

**Business Day.** A “Business Day” is generally any day on which the New York Stock Exchange (“NYSE”), the Exchange and the Trust are open for business. As of the date of this SAI, the NYSE observes the following holidays: New Year’s Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Presidents’ Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. The Business Day on which an order to purchase or redeem Creation Units is received in proper form is referred to as the “Transmittal Date.”

**Basket Composition.** Rule 6c-11(c)(3) under of the 1940 Act requires an ETF relying on the exemptions offered by Rule 6c-11 to adopt and implement written policies and procedures governing the construction of baskets and the process that the ETF will use for the acceptance of baskets. In general, in connection with the construction and acceptance of baskets, the Advisor may consider various factors, including, but not limited to: (1) whether the securities, assets and other positions comprising a basket are consistent with the ETF’s investment objective(s), policies and disclosure; (2) whether the securities, assets and other positions can legally and readily be acquired, transferred and held by the ETF and/or Authorized Participant(s), as applicable; (3) whether to utilize cash, either in lieu of securities or other instruments or as a cash balancing amount; and (4) in the case of an ETF that tracks an index, whether the securities, assets and other positions aid index tracking.

The Fund may utilize a pro rata basket or a custom basket in reliance on Rule 6c-11. A “pro rata basket” is a basket that is a pro rata representation of the ETF’s portfolio holdings, except for minor deviations when it is not operationally feasible to include a particular instrument within the basket, except to the extent that the Fund utilized different baskets in transactions on the same Business Day.

Rule 6c-11 defines “custom baskets” to include two categories of baskets. First, a basket containing a non-representative selection of the ETF’s portfolio holdings would constitute a custom basket. These types of custom baskets include, but are not limited to, baskets that do not reflect: (i) a pro rata representation of the Fund’s portfolio holdings; (ii) a representative sampling of an ETF’s portfolio holdings; or (iii) changes due to a rebalancing or reconstitution of an ETF’s securities market index, if applicable. Second, if different baskets are used in transactions on the same Business Day, each basket after the initial basket would constitute a custom basket. For example, if an ETF exchanges a basket with either the same or another Authorized Participant that reflects a representative sampling that differs from the initial basket, that basket (and any such subsequent baskets) would be a custom basket. Similarly, if an ETF substitutes cash in lieu of a portion of basket assets for a single Authorized Participant, that basket would be a custom basket. The Advisor’s Rule 6c-11 Committee defines any deviation from a pro rata basket to be a “custom basket.” Rebalancing and reconstitution baskets do not constitute custom baskets. All cash baskets that are the initial basket on a Business Day also do not constitute custom baskets.

Under a variety of circumstances, an ETF and its shareholders may benefit from the flexibility afforded by custom baskets. In general terms, the use of custom baskets may reduce costs, increase efficiency and improve trading. Because utilizing custom baskets provides a way for an ETF to add, remove and re-weight portfolio securities without transacting in the market, it may help the ETF to avoid transaction costs and adverse tax consequences. Rule 6c-11 provides an ETF with flexibility to use “custom baskets” if the ETF has adopted written policies and procedures that: (1) set forth detailed parameters for the construction and acceptance of custom baskets that are in the best interests of the ETF and its

shareholders, including the process for any revisions to, or deviations from, those parameters; and (2) specify the titles or roles of employees of the ETF's investment advisor who are required to review each custom basket for compliance with those parameters.

The use of baskets that do not correspond pro rata to an ETF's portfolio holdings has historically created concern that an Authorized Participant could take advantage of its relationship with an ETF and pressure the ETF to construct a basket that favors an Authorized Participant to the detriment of the ETF's shareholders. For example, because ETFs rely on Authorized Participants to maintain the secondary market by promoting an effective arbitrage mechanism, an Authorized Participant holding less liquid or less desirable securities potentially could pressure an ETF into accepting those securities in its basket in exchange for liquid ETF shares (*i.e.*, dumping). An Authorized Participant also could pressure the ETF into including in its basket certain desirable securities in exchange for ETF shares tendered for redemption (*i.e.*, cherry-picking). In either case, the ETF's other investors would be disadvantaged and would be left holding shares of an ETF with a less liquid or less desirable portfolio of securities. The Advisor has adopted policies and procedures designed to mitigate these concerns but there is ultimately no guarantee that such policies and procedures will be effective.

**Basket Dissemination.** Basket files are published for consumption through the NSCC, a subsidiary of Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation, and can be utilized for pricing, creations, redemptions, rebalancing and custom scenarios. In most instances, pro rata baskets are calculated and supplied by the ETF's custodial bank based on ETF holdings, whereas non-pro rata, custom and forward-looking pro rata baskets are calculated by the Fund's investment advisor and disseminated by the ETF's custodial bank through the NSCC process.

**Placement of Creation or Redemption Orders.** All orders to purchase or redeem Creation Units are to be governed according to the applicable Participant Agreement that each Authorized Participant has executed. In general, all orders to purchase or redeem Creation Units must be received by the transfer agent in the proper form required by the Participant Agreement no later than the closing time of the regular trading session of the NYSE (ordinarily 4:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time) on each day the NYSE is open for business (the "*Closing Time*") in order for the purchase or redemption of Creation Units to be effected based on the NAV of shares of the Fund as next determined on such date after receipt of the order in proper form. However, at its discretion, the Fund may require an Authorized Participant to submit orders to purchase or redeem Creation Units be placed earlier in the day (such as instances where an applicable market for a security comprising a creation or redemption basket closes earlier than usual).

**Delivery of Redemption Proceeds.** Deliveries of securities to Authorized Participants in connection with redemption orders are generally expected to be made within one Business Day. Due to the schedule of holidays in certain countries, however, the delivery of in-kind redemption proceeds for the Fund may take longer than one Business Day after the day on which the redemption request is received in proper form. Section 22(e) of the 1940 Act generally prohibits a registered open-end management investment company from postponing the date of satisfaction of redemption requests for more than seven days after the tender of a security for redemption. This prohibition can cause operational difficulties for ETFs that hold foreign investments and exchange in-kind baskets for Creation Units. For example, local market delivery cycles for transferring foreign investments to redeeming investors, together with local market holiday schedules, can sometimes require a delivery process in excess of seven days. However, Rule 6c-11 grants relief from Section 22(e) to permit an ETF to delay satisfaction of a redemption request for more than seven days if a local market holiday, or series of consecutive holidays, or the extended delivery cycles for transferring foreign investments to redeeming Authorized Participants, or the combination thereof prevents timely delivery of the foreign investment included in the ETF's basket. Under this exemption, an ETF must deliver foreign investments as soon as practicable, but in no event later than 15 days after the tender to the ETF. The exemption therefore will permit a delay only to the extent that additional time for settlement is actually required, when a local market holiday, or series of consecutive holidays, or the extended delivery cycles for transferring foreign investments to redeeming authorized participants prevents timely delivery of the foreign investment included in the ETF's basket. If a foreign investment settles in less than 15 days, Rule 6c-11 requires an ETF to deliver it pursuant to the standard settlement time of the local market where the investment trades. Rule 6c-11 defines "foreign investment" as any security, asset or other position of the ETF issued by a foreign issuer (as defined by Rule 3b-4 under the 1934 Act), and that is traded on a trading market outside of the United States. This definition is not limited to "foreign securities," but also includes other investments that may not be considered securities. Although these other investments may not be securities, they may present the same challenges for timely settlement as foreign securities if they are transferred in kind.

**Creation Transaction Fees.** The Fund imposes fees in connection with the purchase of Creation Units. These fees may vary based upon various facts-based circumstances, including, but not limited to, the composition of the securities

included in the Creation Unit or the countries in which the transactions are settled. The price for each Creation Unit will equal the daily NAV per share of the Fund times the number of shares in a Creation Unit, plus the fees described above and, if applicable, any operational processing and brokerage costs, transfer fees, stamp taxes and part or all of the spread between the expected bid and offer side of the market related to the securities comprising the creation basket.

**Redemption Transaction Fees.** The Fund also imposes fees in connection with the redemption of Creation Units. These fees may vary based upon various facts-based circumstances, including, but not limited to, the composition of the securities included in the Creation Unit or the countries in which the transactions are settled. The price received for each Creation Unit will equal the daily NAV per share of the Fund times the number of shares in a Creation Unit, minus the fees described above and, if applicable, any operational processing and brokerage costs, transfer fees, stamp taxes and part or all of the spread between the expected bid and offer side of the market related to the securities comprising the redemption basket. Investors who use the services of a broker or other such intermediary in addition to an Authorized Participant to effect a redemption of a Creation Unit may also be assessed an amount to cover the cost of such services. The redemption fee charged by the Fund will comply with Rule 22c-2 of the 1940 Act which limits redemption fees to no more than 2% of the value of the shares redeemed.

**Suspension of Creations.** The SEC has stated its position that an ETF generally may reject or suspend the issuance of Creation Units only for a limited time and only due to extraordinary circumstances, such as when the markets on which the ETF's portfolio holdings are traded are closed for a limited period of time. The SEC has also stated that an ETF could not set transaction fees so high as to effectively suspend the issuance of Creation Units. Circumstances in which the Fund may suspend or reject creations include, but are not limited to: (i) the order is not in proper form; (ii) the purchaser or group of related purchasers, upon obtaining the Creation Units of Fund shares ordered, would own 80% or more of the currently outstanding shares of the Fund; (iii) the required consideration is not delivered; (iv) the acceptance of the basket would, in the opinion of the Fund, be unlawful; or (v) there exist circumstances outside the control of the Fund that make it impossible to process purchases of Creation Units for all practical purposes. Examples of such circumstances include: acts of God or public service or utility problems such as fires, floods, extreme weather conditions and power outages resulting in telephone, teletype and computer failures; market conditions or activities causing trading halts; systems failures involving computer or other information systems affecting the Fund, First Trust, the Distributor, DTC, NSCC, the transfer agent, the custodian, any sub-custodian or any other participant in the purchase process; and similar extraordinary events. The Fund reserves the right to reject a creation order transmitted to it provided that such action does not result in a suspension of sales of creation units in contravention of 6c-11 and the SEC's positions thereunder. The Transfer Agent shall notify a prospective creator of a Creation Unit and/or the Authorized Participant acting on behalf of such prospective creator of the rejection of the order of such person. The Trust, the Fund, the Transfer Agent, the custodian, any sub-custodian and the Distributor are under no duty, however, to give notification of any defects or irregularities in the delivery of baskets, nor shall any of them incur any liability for the failure to give any such notification.

**Suspension of Redemptions.** An ETF may suspend the redemption of Creation Units only in accordance with Section 22(e) of the 1940 Act. Section 22(e) stipulates that no registered investment company shall suspend the right of redemption, or postpone the date of payment or satisfaction upon redemption of any redeemable security in accordance with its terms for more than seven days after the tender of such security to the company or its agent designated for that purpose for redemption, except (1) for any period (A) during which the NYSE is closed other than customary week-end and holiday closings or (B) during which trading on the NYSE is restricted; (2) for any period during which an emergency exists as a result of which (A) disposal by the investment company of securities owned by it is not reasonably practicable or (B) it is not reasonably practicable for such company fairly to determine the value of its net assets; or (3) for such other periods as the SEC may by order permit for the protection of security holders of the investment company.

**Exceptions to Use of Creation Units.** Under Rule 6c-11 of the 1940 Act, ETFs are permitted to sell or redeem individual shares on the day of consummation of a reorganization, merger, conversion, or liquidation. In these limited circumstances, an ETF may need to issue or redeem individual shares and may need to transact without utilizing Authorized Participants.

## FEDERAL TAX MATTERS

This section summarizes some of the main U.S. federal income tax consequences of owning shares of the Fund. This section is current as of the date of the SAI. Tax laws and interpretations change frequently, and these summaries do not describe all of the tax consequences to all taxpayers. For example, these summaries generally do not describe your situation

if you are a corporation, a non-U.S. person, a broker-dealer or other investor with special circumstances. In addition, this section does not describe your state, local or foreign tax consequences.

This federal income tax summary is based in part on the advice of counsel to the Fund. The Internal Revenue Service (“IRS”) could disagree with any conclusions set forth in this section. The following disclosure may not be sufficient for prospective investors to use for the purpose of avoiding penalties under federal tax law.

As with any investment, prospective investors should seek advice based on their individual circumstances from their own tax advisor.

The Fund intends to qualify annually and to elect to be treated as a regulated investment company (a “RIC”) under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the “Code”).

To qualify for the favorable U.S. federal income tax treatment generally accorded to RICs, the Fund must, among other things, (i) derive in each taxable year at least 90% of its gross income from dividends, interest, payments with respect to securities loans and gains from the sale or other disposition of stock, securities or foreign currencies or other income derived with respect to its business of investing in such stock, securities or currencies, or net income derived from interests in certain publicly traded partnerships; (ii) diversify its holdings so that, at the end of each quarter of the taxable year, (a) at least 50% of the market value of the Fund’s assets is represented by cash and cash items (including receivables), U.S. government securities, the securities of other RICs and other securities, with such other securities of any one issuer generally limited for the purposes of this calculation to an amount not greater than 5% of the value of the Fund’s total assets and not greater than 10% of the outstanding voting securities of such issuer, and (b) not more than 25% of the value of its total assets is invested in the securities (other than U.S. government securities or the securities of other RICs) of any one issuer, or two or more issuers which the Fund controls which are engaged in the same, similar or related trades or businesses, or the securities of one or more of certain publicly traded partnerships; and (iii) distribute at least 90% of its investment company taxable income (which includes, among other items, dividends, interest and net short-term capital gains in excess of net long-term capital losses) and at least 90% of its net tax-exempt interest income each taxable year. There are certain exceptions for failure to qualify if the failure is for reasonable cause or is *de minimis*, and certain corrective action is taken and certain tax payments are made by the Fund.

As a RIC, the Fund generally will not be subject to U.S. federal income tax on its investment company taxable income (as that term is defined in the Code, but without regard to the deduction for dividends paid) and net capital gain (the excess of net long-term capital gain over net short-term capital loss), if any, that it distributes to shareholders. The Fund intends to distribute to its shareholders, at least annually, substantially all of its investment company taxable income and net capital gain. If the Fund retains any net capital gain or investment company taxable income, it will generally be subject to federal income tax at regular corporate rates on the amount retained. In addition, amounts not distributed on a timely basis in accordance with a calendar year distribution requirement are subject to a nondeductible 4% excise tax unless, generally, the Fund distributes during each calendar year an amount equal to the sum of (1) at least 98% of its ordinary income (not taking into account any capital gains or losses) for the calendar year, (2) at least 98.2% of its capital gains in excess of its capital losses (adjusted for certain ordinary losses) for the one-year period ending October 31 of the calendar year, and (3) any ordinary income and capital gains for previous years that were not distributed during those years. In order to prevent application of the excise tax, the Fund intends to make its distributions in accordance with the calendar year distribution requirement. A distribution will be treated as paid on December 31 of the current calendar year if it is declared by the Fund in October, November or December with a record date in such a month and paid by the Fund during January of the following calendar year. Such distributions will be taxable to shareholders in the calendar year in which the distributions are declared, rather than the calendar year in which the distributions are received.

Subject to certain reasonable cause and *de minimis* exceptions, if the Fund fails to qualify as a RIC or fails to satisfy the 90% distribution requirement in any taxable year, the Fund would be taxed as an ordinary corporation on its taxable income (even if such income were distributed to its shareholders) and all distributions out of earnings and profits would be taxed to shareholders as ordinary income.

## Distributions

Dividends paid out of the Fund’s investment company taxable income are generally taxable to a shareholder as ordinary income to the extent of the Fund’s earnings and profits, whether paid in cash or reinvested in additional shares. However, certain ordinary income distributions received from the Fund may be taxed at capital gains tax rates. In particular, ordinary income dividends received by an individual shareholder from a RIC such as the Fund are generally taxed at the same

rates that apply to net capital gain, provided that certain holding period requirements are satisfied and provided the dividends are attributable to qualifying dividends received by the Fund itself. The Fund will provide notice to its shareholders of the amount of any distributions that may be taken into account as a dividend which is eligible for the capital gains tax rates. The Fund cannot make any guarantees as to the amount of any distribution which will be regarded as a qualifying dividend.

Income from the Fund may also be subject to a 3.8% "Medicare tax." This tax generally applies to net investment income if the taxpayer's adjusted gross income exceeds certain threshold amounts, which are \$250,000 in the case of married couples filing joint returns and \$200,000 in the case of single individuals.

A corporation that owns shares generally will not be entitled to the dividends received deduction with respect to many dividends received from the Fund because the dividends received deduction is generally not available for distributions from RICs. However, certain ordinary income dividends on shares that are attributable to qualifying dividends received by the Fund from certain domestic corporations may be reported by the Fund as being eligible for the dividends received deduction.

Distributions of net capital gain (the excess of net long-term capital gain over net short-term capital loss), if any, properly reported as capital gain dividends are taxable to a shareholder as long-term capital gains, regardless of how long the shareholder has held Fund shares. An election may be available to you to defer recognition of the gain attributable to a capital gain dividend if you make certain qualifying investments within a limited time. You should talk to your tax advisor about the availability of this deferral election and its requirements. Shareholders receiving distributions in the form of additional shares, rather than cash, generally will have a tax basis in each such share equal to the value of a share of the Fund on the reinvestment date. A distribution of an amount in excess of the Fund's current and accumulated earnings and profits will be treated by a shareholder as a return of capital which is applied against and reduces the shareholder's basis in his or her shares. To the extent that the amount of any such distribution exceeds the shareholder's basis in his or her shares, the excess will be treated by the shareholder as gain from a sale or exchange of the shares.

Shareholders will be notified annually as to the U.S. federal income tax status of distributions and shareholders receiving distributions in the form of additional shares will receive a report as to the value of those shares.

## **Sale or Exchange of Fund Shares**

Upon the sale or other disposition of shares of the Fund, which a shareholder holds as a capital asset, such a shareholder may realize a capital gain or loss which will be long-term or short-term, depending upon the shareholder's holding period for the shares. Generally, a shareholder's gain or loss will be a long-term gain or loss if the shares have been held for more than one year. An election may be available to you to defer recognition of capital gain if you make certain qualifying investments within a limited time. You should talk to your tax advisor about the availability of this deferral election and its requirements.

Any loss realized on a sale or exchange will be disallowed to the extent that shares disposed of are replaced (including through reinvestment of dividends) within a period of 61 days beginning 30 days before and ending 30 days after disposition of shares or to the extent that the shareholder, during such period, acquires or enters into an option or contract to acquire substantially identical stock or securities. In such a case, the basis of the shares acquired will be adjusted to reflect the disallowed loss. Any loss realized by a shareholder on a disposition of Fund shares held by the shareholder for six months or less will be treated as a long-term capital loss to the extent of any distributions of long-term capital gain received by the shareholder with respect to such shares.

## **Taxes on Purchase and Redemption of Creation Units**

If a shareholder exchanges securities for Creation Units, the shareholder will generally recognize a gain or a loss. The gain or loss will be equal to the difference between the market value of the Creation Units at the time and the shareholder's aggregate basis in the securities surrendered and the Cash Component paid. If a shareholder exchanges Creation Units for securities, then the shareholder will generally recognize a gain or loss equal to the difference between the shareholder's basis in the Creation Units and the aggregate market value of the securities received and the Cash Redemption Amount. The IRS, however, may assert that a loss realized upon an exchange of securities for Creation Units or Creation Units for securities cannot be deducted currently under the rules governing "wash sales," or on the basis that there has been no significant change in economic position.

## Nature of Fund Investments

Certain of the Fund's investment practices are subject to special and complex federal income tax provisions that may, among other things, (i) disallow, suspend or otherwise limit the allowance of certain losses or deductions; (ii) convert lower taxed long-term capital gain into higher taxed short-term capital gain or ordinary income; (iii) convert an ordinary loss or a deduction into a capital loss (the deductibility of which is more limited); (iv) cause the Fund to recognize income or gain without a corresponding receipt of cash; (v) adversely affect the time as to when a purchase or sale of stock or securities is deemed to occur; and (vi) adversely alter the characterization of certain complex financial transactions.

## Futures Contracts and Options

The Fund's transactions in futures contracts and options will be subject to special provisions of the Code that, among other things, may affect the character of gains and losses realized by the Fund (*i.e.*, may affect whether gains or losses are ordinary or capital, or short-term or long-term), may accelerate recognition of income to the Fund and may defer Fund losses. These rules could, therefore, affect the character, amount and timing of distributions to shareholders. These provisions also (i) will require the Fund to mark-to-market certain types of the positions in its portfolio (*i.e.*, treat them as if they were closed out); and (ii) may cause the Fund to recognize income without receiving cash with which to make distributions in amounts necessary to satisfy the 90% distribution requirement for qualifying to be taxed as a RIC and the distribution requirements for avoiding excise taxes.

## Investments in Certain Foreign Corporations

If the Fund holds an equity interest in any "passive foreign investment companies" ("PFICs"), which are generally certain foreign corporations that receive at least 75% of their annual gross income from passive sources (such as interest, dividends, certain rents and royalties or capital gains) or that hold at least 50% of their assets in investments producing such passive income, the Fund could be subject to U.S. federal income tax and additional interest charges on gains and certain distributions with respect to those equity interests, even if all the income or gain is timely distributed to its shareholders. The Fund will not be able to pass through to its shareholders any credit or deduction for such taxes. The Fund may be able to make an election that could ameliorate these adverse tax consequences. In this case, the Fund would recognize as ordinary income any increase in the value of such PFIC shares, and as ordinary loss any decrease in such value to the extent it did not exceed prior increases included in income. Under this election, the Fund might be required to recognize in a year income in excess of its distributions from PFICs and its proceeds from dispositions of PFIC stock during that year, and such income would nevertheless be subject to the distribution requirement and would be taken into account for purposes of the 4% excise tax (described above). Dividends paid by PFICs are not treated as qualified dividend income.

## Backup Withholding

The Fund may be required to withhold U.S. federal income tax from all taxable distributions and sale proceeds payable to shareholders who fail to provide the Fund with their correct taxpayer identification number or fail to make required certifications, or who have been notified by the IRS that they are subject to backup withholding. Corporate shareholders and certain other shareholders specified in the Code generally are exempt from such backup withholding. This withholding is not an additional tax. Any amounts withheld may be credited against the shareholder's U.S. federal income tax liability.

## Non-U.S. Shareholders

U.S. taxation of a shareholder who, as to the United States, is a nonresident alien individual, a foreign trust or estate, a foreign corporation or foreign partnership ("*non-U.S. shareholder*") depends on whether the income of the Fund is "effectively connected" with a U.S. trade or business carried on by the shareholder.

In addition to the rules described in this section concerning the potential imposition of withholding on distributions to non-U.S. persons, distributions to non-U.S. persons that are "financial institutions" may be subject to a withholding tax of 30% unless an agreement is in place between the financial institution and the U.S. Treasury to collect and disclose information about accounts, equity investments or debt interests in the financial institution held by one or more U.S. persons or the institution is resident in a jurisdiction that has entered into such an agreement with the U.S. Treasury. For these purposes, a "financial institution" means any entity that (i) accepts deposits in the ordinary course of a banking or similar business; (ii) holds financial assets for the account of others as a substantial portion of its business; or (iii) is engaged (or holds itself out as being engaged) primarily in the business of investing, reinvesting or trading in securities, partnership

interests, commodities or any interest (including a futures contract or option) in such securities, partnership interests or commodities. This withholding tax is also currently scheduled to apply to the gross proceeds from the disposition of securities that produce U.S. source interest or dividends. However, proposed regulations may eliminate the requirement to withhold on payments of gross proceeds from dispositions.

Distributions to non-financial non-U.S. entities (other than publicly traded foreign entities, entities owned by residents of U.S. possessions, foreign governments, international organizations or foreign central banks) will also be subject to a withholding tax of 30% if the entity does not certify that the entity does not have any substantial U.S. owners or provide the name, address and TIN of each substantial U.S. owner. This withholding tax is also currently scheduled to apply to the gross proceeds from the disposition of securities that produce U.S. source interest or dividends. However, proposed regulations may eliminate the requirement to withhold on payments of gross proceeds from dispositions.

**Income Not Effectively Connected.** If the income from the Fund is not “effectively connected” with a U.S. trade or business carried on by the non-U.S. shareholder, distributions of investment company taxable income will generally be subject to a U.S. tax of 30% (or lower treaty rate), which tax is generally withheld from such distributions.

Distributions of capital gain dividends and any amounts retained by the Fund which are properly reported by the Fund as undistributed capital gains will not be subject to U.S. tax at the rate of 30% (or lower treaty rate) unless the non-U.S. shareholder is a nonresident alien individual and is physically present in the United States for more than 182 days during the taxable year and meets certain other requirements. However, this 30% tax on capital gains of nonresident alien individuals who are physically present in the United States for more than the 182 day period only applies in exceptional cases because any individual present in the United States for more than 182 days during the taxable year is generally treated as a resident for U.S. income tax purposes; in that case, he or she would be subject to U.S. income tax on his or her worldwide income at the graduated rates applicable to U.S. citizens, rather than the 30% U.S. tax. In the case of a non-U.S. shareholder who is a nonresident alien individual, the Fund may be required to withhold U.S. income tax from distributions of net capital gain unless the non-U.S. shareholder certifies his or her non-U.S. status under penalties of perjury or otherwise establishes an exemption. If a non-U.S. shareholder is a nonresident alien individual, any gain such shareholder realizes upon the sale or exchange of such shareholder's shares of the Fund in the United States will ordinarily be exempt from U.S. tax unless the gain is U.S. source income and such shareholder is physically present in the United States for more than 182 days during the taxable year and meets certain other requirements.

Distributions from the Fund that are properly reported by the Fund as an interest-related dividend attributable to certain interest income received by the Fund or as a short-term capital gain dividend attributable to certain net short-term capital gain income received by the Fund may not be subject to U.S. federal income taxes, including withholding taxes when received by certain non-U.S. shareholders, provided that the Fund makes certain elections and certain other conditions are met. For tax years after December 31, 2022, amounts paid to or recognized by a non-U.S. affiliate that are excluded from tax under the portfolio interest, capital gain dividends, short-term capital gains or tax-exempt interest dividend exceptions or applicable treaties, may be taken into consideration in determining whether a corporation is an “applicable corporation” subject to a 15% minimum tax on adjusted financial statement income.

In addition, capital gain distributions attributable to gains from U.S. real property interests (including certain U.S. real property holding corporations) will generally be subject to United States withholding tax and will give rise to an obligation on the part of the non-U.S. shareholder to file a United States tax return.

**Income Effectively Connected.** If the income from the Fund is “effectively connected” with a U.S. trade or business carried on by a non-U.S. shareholder, then distributions of investment company taxable income and capital gain dividends, any amounts retained by the Fund which are properly reported by the Fund as undistributed capital gains and any gains realized upon the sale or exchange of shares of the Fund will be subject to U.S. income tax at the graduated rates applicable to U.S. citizens, residents and domestic corporations. Non-U.S. corporate shareholders may also be subject to the branch profits tax imposed by the Code. The tax consequences to a non-U.S. shareholder entitled to claim the benefits of an applicable tax treaty may differ from those described herein. Non-U.S. shareholders are advised to consult their own tax advisors with respect to the particular tax consequences to them of an investment in the Fund.

## Capital Loss Carry-forward

Under the Regulated Investment Company Modernization Act of 2010, net capital losses of the Fund incurred in taxable years beginning after December 22, 2010 may be carried forward indefinitely, and their character is retained as short-term and/or long-term losses. To the extent that these loss carry-forwards are used to offset future capital gains, it is

probable that the capital gains so offset will not be distributed to Fund shareholders. As of August 31, 2025, the Fund had net capital loss carry-forwards outstanding for federal income tax purposes as shown in the table below. The Fund is subject to certain limitations, under U.S. tax rules, on the use of capital loss carry-forwards and net unrealized built-in losses. These limitations generally apply when there has been a 50% change in ownership.

|  |
|--|
| <b>Total<br/>Non-Expiring<br/>Capital Loss<br/>Available</b> |
| <hr/>  |
| \$41,691,653   |

## Other Taxation

Fund shareholders may be subject to state, local and foreign taxes on their Fund distributions. Shareholders are advised to consult their own tax advisors with respect to the particular tax consequences to them of an investment in the Fund.

## DETERMINATION OF NET ASSET VALUE

The Fund's net asset value is determined as set forth in the Prospectus in the section entitled "Net Asset Value."

## DIVIDENDS AND DISTRIBUTIONS

The following information supplements and should be read in conjunction with the section in the Prospectus entitled "Dividends, Distributions and Taxes."

**General Policies.** Dividends from net investment income of the Fund, if any, are declared and paid monthly. Distributions of net realized securities gains, if any, generally are declared and paid once a year, but the Trust may make distributions on a more frequent basis. The Trust reserves the right to declare special distributions if, in its reasonable discretion, such action is necessary or advisable to preserve the status of the Fund as a RIC or to avoid imposition of income or excise taxes on undistributed income.

Dividends and other distributions of Fund shares are distributed, as described below, on a *pro rata* basis to Beneficial Owners of such shares. Dividend payments are made through DTC Participants and Indirect Participants to Beneficial Owners then of record with proceeds received from the Fund.

**Dividend Reinvestment Service.** No reinvestment service is provided by the Trust. Broker-dealers may make available the DTC book-entry Dividend Reinvestment Service for use by Beneficial Owners of the Fund for reinvestment of their dividend distributions. Beneficial Owners should contact their brokers in order to determine the availability and costs of the service and the details of participation therein. Brokers may require Beneficial Owners to adhere to specific procedures and timetables. If this service is available and used, dividend distributions of both income and realized gains will be automatically reinvested in additional whole shares of the Fund purchased in the secondary market.

## MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

**Counsel.** Chapman and Cutler LLP, 320 South Canal Street, Chicago, Illinois 60606, is counsel to the Trust.

**Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm.** Deloitte & Touche LLP, 111 South Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60606, serves as the Fund's independent registered public accounting firm. The firm audits the Fund's financial statements and performs other related audit services.

## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The audited financial statements and notes thereto for the Fund, contained in the Form N-CSR dated August 31, 2025, are incorporated by reference into this Statement of Additional Information and have been audited by Deloitte & Touche LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, whose report appears in the Form N-CSR and is also incorporated by reference herein. No other parts of the Form N-CSR are incorporated by reference herein. The Form N-CSR is available without charge by calling (800) 621-1675 or by visiting the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>.

## EXHIBIT A – PRINCIPAL HOLDERS TABLE

| NAME OF BENEFICIAL OWNER         | % OF<br>OUTSTANDING<br>SHARES OWNED |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| FIRST TRUST SECURITIZED PLUS ETF |                                     |
| Raymond James & Associates, Inc. | 39.02%                              |
| Charles Schwab & Co., Inc.       | 32.19%                              |
| LPL Financial LLC                | 13.00%                              |
| National Financial Services LLC  | 5.02%                               |

- (1) Charles Schwab & Co., Inc.: 2423 E Lincoln Drive, Phoenix, Arizona 85016
- (2) LPL Financial LLC: 1055 LPL Way, Fort Mill, South Carolina 29715
- (3) National Financial Services LLC: 499 Washington Boulevard, Jersey City, New Jersey 07310
- (4) Raymond James & Associates, Inc.: 880 Carillon Parkway, St. Petersburg, Florida 33716

## EXHIBIT B – PROXY VOTING GUIDELINES

### FIRST TRUST ADVISORS L.P. PROXY VOTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

First Trust Advisors L.P. (“FTA” or the “Adviser”) serves as investment adviser to open- and closed-end investment companies, and other collective investments (“Funds”), as well as separately managed accounts (collectively, “Clients”). As part of these services, the Adviser has, in most cases, agreed to or been delegated proxy voting responsibility on such Clients’ behalf (“Proxy Clients”). FTA is required to adopt and implement policies and procedures reasonably designed to ensure proxy voting on behalf of Proxy Clients is conducted in a manner that is in their best interests and addresses how conflicts of interest between FTA’s interests and Proxy Clients’ interests are managed. FTA has adopted the following policies and procedures to comply with this requirement (the “Policy”).

- (1) It is the Adviser’s policy to seek to ensure that proxies are voted consistently and in the best economic interests of the Proxy Client. The FTA Investment Committee is responsible for the implementation of the Policy.
- (2) The Adviser engaged Institutional Shareholder Services (“ISS”) to provide proxy research, recommendations, and voting services. ISS provides a password protected website which is accessible to authorized FTA personnel to download upcoming proxy meeting data, including research reports of companies held in Proxy Client portfolios. The website can be used to view proposed proxy votes and to enter votes for upcoming meetings for Proxy Client portfolio securities.
- (3) FTA will generally follow the First Trust U.S. Proxy Voting Guidelines and First Trust International Proxy Voting Guidelines (collectively, the “Guidelines”), as appropriate, to vote proxies for Proxy Clients’ accounts, so long as such Guidelines are considered to be in the best interests of the Proxy Client, and there are no noted or perceived conflicts of interest. FTA’s use of the Guidelines is not intended to constrain FTA’s consideration of any proxy proposal, and there are times when FTA deviates from the Guidelines, including but not limited to when required by Rule 12d1-4 agreements between Fund Proxy Clients and certain acquired funds, if applicable. When FTA deviates from the Guidelines, FTA will consider such proxy voting decisions in light of merit-based considerations which it believes may impact shareholder value. The Guidelines are posted on the “News and Literature” page on the website (<http://www.ftportfolios.com>) for each Fund for which FTA votes proxies.
- (4) FTA will also vote against shareholder proposals that are not related to a company’s core business and/or do not appear to be an appropriate use of a company’s resources to maximize shareholder value.
- (5) FTA may vote against the Guidelines in other circumstances as it has final authority and fiduciary responsibility for proxy voting.
- (6) In certain circumstances, where FTA has determined that it is consistent with Proxy Clients’ best interests, FTA will not vote a proxy on behalf of one or more Proxy Clients. Such circumstances include:
  - (a) *Limited Value.* Proxies will not be required to be voted on securities in a Proxy Client’s account if the value of the Proxy Client’s economic interest in the securities is indeterminable or insignificant (less than \$1,000). Proxies will also not be required to be voted for any securities that are no longer held in Proxy Client’s account(s).
  - (b) *Securities Lending Program.* When Fund portfolio securities are out on loan, they are transferred into the borrower’s name and are voted by the borrower, in its discretion. In most cases, FTA will not recall securities on loan in order to vote a proxy. However, where FTA determines that a proxy vote, or other shareholder action, is materially important to the Fund Proxy Client’s account, FTA will make a good faith effort to recall the security for purposes of voting, understanding that in certain cases, the attempt to recall the security may not be effective in time to meet voting deadlines. In certain instances, in FTA’s discretion, disclosure regarding FTA’s process for determining whether or not to recall Fund portfolio securities on loan for proxy voting purposes may be provided as part of the Funds’ annual Form N-PX filing.

- (c) *Unjustifiable Costs.* In certain circumstances, based on cost-benefit analysis, FTA may choose not to vote when the cost of voting on behalf of a Proxy Client would exceed any anticipated benefits of the proxy proposal to such Proxy Client (e.g. foreign securities).
  - (d) *International Markets Share Blocking.* Share blocking is the "freezing" of shares for trading purposes at the custodian/sub-custodian bank level in order to vote proxies. While shares are frozen, they may not be traded. Therefore, the potential exists for a pending trade to fail if trade settlement falls on a date during the blocking period. In international markets where share blocking applies, FTA typically will not, but reserves the right to, vote proxies due to the liquidity constraints associated with share blocking.
- (7) On a regular basis, FTA Research reviews ISS recommendations on matters determined to have a potential impact of shareholder value to decide whether to vote as the Guidelines recommend and advises the FTA Investment Committee of its determination.
  - (8) FTA may determine voting in accordance with the Guidelines is not in the best interests of a Proxy Client. If there is a decision to vote against the Guidelines, the FTA Investment Committee will document the reason and instruct ISS to change the vote to reflect this decision.
  - (9) Whenever a conflict of interest arises between ISS and a target company subject to a proxy vote, the Adviser will consider the recommendation of the company and what the Adviser believes to be in the best interests of the Proxy Client and will vote the proxy without using the Guidelines. If FTA has knowledge of a material conflict of interest between itself and a Proxy Client, the Adviser shall vote the applicable proxy in accordance with the Guidelines to avoid such conflict of interest. If there is a conflict of interest between a Fund Proxy Client and FTA or other Fund service providers, FTA will vote the proxy based on the Guidelines to avoid such conflict of interest.
  - (10) If a Proxy Client requests the Adviser to follow specific voting guidelines or additional guidelines, the Adviser shall review the request and follow such guidelines, unless the Adviser determines that it is unable to do so. In such case, the Adviser shall inform the Proxy Client that it is not able to honor the Proxy Client's request.
  - (11) FTA periodically reviews proxy votes to ensure compliance with this Policy.
  - (12) This Policy, the Guidelines and votes cast for Proxy Clients are available upon request and such Proxy Client requests must be forwarded to FTA Compliance for review and response. This Policy is also provided with each advisory contract and described and provided with the Form ADV, Part 2A.

Shareholders of Fund Proxy Clients can review the Policy and a Fund's voted proxies (if any) during the most recent 12-month period ended June 30 on the First Trust website at <http://www.ftportfolios.com> or by accessing EDGAR on the SEC website at <http://www.sec.gov>.

- (13) FTA provides reasonable ongoing oversight of ISS. FTA, or ISS on behalf of FTA, maintains the following records relating to proxy voting:
  - (a) a copy of this Policy;
  - (b) a copy of each proxy form for which it is responsible to vote;
  - (c) a copy of each proxy solicitation, including proxy statements and related materials with regard to each proxy issue it votes;
  - (d) documents relating to the identification and resolution of conflicts of interest, if any;
  - (e) any documents created by FTA or ISS that were material to a proxy voting decision or that memorialized the basis for that decision; and
  - (f) a copy of each written request from any Proxy Client for information on how FTA voted proxies on the Proxy Client's behalf, and a copy of any written response by FTA to any written or oral request for information by a Proxy Client on how FTA voted proxies for that Proxy Client's account.

These records are either maintained at FTA's office or are electronically available to FTA through access to the ISS Proxy Exchange portal.

- Adopted: September 15, 2003
- Amended: December 10, 2007
- Amended: September 21, 2009
- Amended: September 12, 2016
- Amended: March 9, 2020
- Amended: June 7, 2021
- Amended: January 19, 2022
- Amended: May 13, 2022
- Amended: September 22, 2022
- Amended: July 3, 2023
- Amended: January 10, 2024
- Amended: February 8, 2024
- Amended: March 9, 2025

## EXHIBIT C – CREDIT RATING DEFINITIONS

### S&P Global Ratings

A brief description of the applicable S&P Global Ratings (“S&P”) rating symbols and their meanings (as published by S&P) follows.

An S&P issue credit rating is a forward-looking opinion about the creditworthiness of an obligor with respect to a specific financial obligation, a specific class of financial obligations, or a specific financial program (including ratings on medium-term note programs and commercial paper programs). It takes into consideration the creditworthiness of guarantors, insurers, or other forms of credit enhancement on the obligation and takes into account the currency in which the obligation is denominated. The opinion reflects S&P’s view of the obligor’s capacity and willingness to meet its financial commitments as they come due, and this opinion may assess terms, such as collateral security and subordination, which could affect ultimate payment in the event of default.

Issue credit ratings can be either long-term or short-term. Short-term issue credit ratings are generally assigned to those obligations considered short-term in the relevant market, typically with an original maturity of no more than 365 days. Short-term issue credit ratings are also used to indicate the creditworthiness of an obligor with respect to put features on long-term obligations. S&P would typically assign a long-term issue credit rating to an obligation with an original maturity of greater than 365 days. However, the ratings S&P assigns to certain instruments may diverge from these guidelines based on market practices.

### LONG-TERM ISSUE CREDIT RATINGS

Issue credit ratings are based, in varying degrees, on S&P’s analysis of the following considerations:

1. The likelihood of payment: the capacity and willingness of the obligor to meet its financial commitments on an obligation in accordance with the terms of the obligation;
2. The nature and provisions of the financial obligation and the promise S&P imputes;
3. The protection afforded by, and relative position of, the financial obligation in the event of a bankruptcy, reorganization, or other arrangement under the laws of bankruptcy and other laws affecting creditors’ rights.

An issue rating is an assessment of default risk but may incorporate an assessment of relative seniority or ultimate recovery in the event of default. Junior obligations are typically rated lower than senior obligations, to reflect lower priority in bankruptcy, as noted above. (Such differentiation may apply when an entity has both senior and subordinated obligations, secured and unsecured obligations, or operating company and holding company obligations.)

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| <b>AAA</b> | An obligation rated “AAA” has the highest rating assigned by S&P. The obligor’s capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation is extremely strong.   |
| <b>AA</b>  | An obligation rated “AA” differs from the highest-rated obligations only to a small degree. The obligor’s capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation is very strong.  |
| <b>A</b>   | An obligation rated “A” is somewhat more susceptible to the adverse effects of changes in circumstances and economic conditions than obligations in higher-rated categories. However, the obligor’s capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation is still strong. |
| <b>BBB</b> | An obligation rated “BBB” exhibits adequate protection parameters. However, adverse economic conditions or changing circumstances are more likely to weaken the obligor’s capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation.   |

Obligations rated “BB,” “B,” “CCC,” “CC” and “C” are regarded as having significant speculative characteristics. “BB” indicates the least degree of speculation and “C” the highest. While such obligations will likely have some quality and protective characteristics, these may be outweighed by large uncertainties or major exposure to adverse conditions.

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| <b>BB</b> | An obligation rated “BB” is less vulnerable to nonpayment than other speculative issues. However, it faces major ongoing uncertainties or exposure to adverse business, financial, or economic conditions that could lead to the obligor’s inadequate capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation. |
|-----------|---|

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| <b>B</b>   | An obligation rated "B" is more vulnerable to nonpayment than obligations rated "BB," but the obligor currently has the capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation. Adverse business, financial, or economic conditions will likely impair the obligor's capacity or willingness to meet its financial commitments on the obligation.  |
| <b>CCC</b> | An obligation rated "CCC" is currently vulnerable to nonpayment and is dependent upon favorable business, financial, and economic conditions for the obligor to meet its financial commitments on the obligation. In the event of adverse business, financial, or economic conditions, the obligor is not likely to have the capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation.   |
| <b>CC</b>  | An obligation rated "CC" is currently highly vulnerable to nonpayment. The "CC" rating is used when a default has not yet occurred but S&P expects default to be a virtual certainty, regardless of the anticipated time to default.   |
| <b>C</b>   | An obligation rated "C" is currently highly vulnerable to nonpayment, and the obligation is expected to have lower relative seniority or lower ultimate recovery compared with obligations that are rated higher.  |
| <b>D</b>   | An obligation rated "D" is in default or in breach of an imputed promise. For non-hybrid capital instruments, the "D" rating category is used when payments on an obligation are not made on the date due, unless S&P believes that such payments will be made within the next five business days in the absence of a stated grace period or within the earlier of the stated grace period or the next 30 calendar days. The "D" rating also will be used upon the filing of a bankruptcy petition or the taking of similar action and where default on an obligation is a virtual certainty, for example due to automatic stay provisions. A rating on an obligation is lowered to 'D' if it is subject to a distressed debt restructuring. |

**Plus (+) or Minus (-):** The ratings from "AA" to "CCC" may be modified by the addition of a plus or minus sign to show relative standing within the rating categories.

### SHORT-TERM ISSUE CREDIT RATINGS

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| <b>A-1</b> | A short-term obligation rated 'A-1' is rated in the highest category by S&P Global Ratings. The obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation is strong. Within this category, certain obligations are designated with a plus sign (+). This indicates that the obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitments on these obligations is extremely strong.  |
| <b>A-2</b> | A short-term obligation rated 'A-2' is somewhat more susceptible to the adverse effects of changes in circumstances and economic conditions than obligations in higher rating categories. However, the obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation is satisfactory.   |
| <b>A-3</b> | A short-term obligation rated 'A-3' exhibits adequate protection parameters. However, adverse economic conditions or changing circumstances are more likely to weaken an obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation.   |
| <b>B</b>   | A short-term obligation rated 'B' is regarded as vulnerable and has significant speculative characteristics. The obligor currently has the capacity to meet its financial commitments; however, it faces major ongoing uncertainties that could lead to the obligor's inadequate capacity to meet its financial commitments.   |
| <b>C</b>   | A short-term obligation rated 'C' is currently vulnerable to nonpayment and is dependent upon favorable business, financial, and economic conditions for the obligor to meet its financial commitments on the obligation.  |
| <b>D</b>   | A short-term obligation rated 'D' is in default or in breach of an imputed promise. For non-hybrid capital instruments, the 'D' rating category is used when payments on an obligation are not made on the date due, unless S&P Global Ratings believes that such payments will be made within any stated grace period. However, any stated grace period longer than five business days will be treated as five business days. The 'D' rating also will be used upon the filing of a bankruptcy petition or the taking of a similar action and where default on an obligation is a virtual certainty, for example due to automatic stay provisions. A rating on an obligation is lowered to 'D' if it is subject to a distressed debt restructuring. |

### MUNICIPAL SHORT-TERM NOTE RATINGS

An S&P U.S. municipal note rating reflects S&P's opinion about the liquidity factors and market access risks unique to the notes. Notes due in three years or less will likely receive a note rating. Notes with an original maturity of more than three years will most likely receive a long-term debt rating. In determining which type of rating, if any, to assign, S&P's analysis will review the following considerations:

1. Amortization schedule – the larger the final maturity relative to other maturities, the more likely it will be treated as a note; and
2. Source of payment – the more dependent the issue is on the market for its refinancing, the more likely it will be treated as a note.

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>SP-1</b> | Strong capacity to pay principal and interest. An issue determined to possess a very strong capacity to pay debt service is given a plus (+) designation.   |
| <b>SP-2</b> | Satisfactory capacity to pay principal and interest, with some vulnerability to adverse financial and economic changes over the term of the notes.  |
| <b>SP-3</b> | Speculative capacity to pay principal and interest.   |
| <b>D</b>    | 'D' is assigned upon failure to pay the note when due, completion of a distressed debt restructuring, or the filing of a bankruptcy petition or the taking of similar action and where default on an obligation is a virtual certainty, for example due to automatic stay provisions. |

### Moody's Investors Service, Inc.

A brief description of the applicable Moody's Investors Service, Inc. ("Moody's") rating symbols and their meanings (as published by Moody's) follows.

Credit Ratings are assigned on Moody's global long-term and short-term rating scales and are forward-looking opinions of the relative credit risks of financial obligations issued by non-financial corporates, financial institutions, structured finance vehicles, project finance vehicles, and public sector entities. Long-term ratings are assigned to issuers or obligations with an original maturity of eleven months or more and reflect both on the likelihood of a default or impairment on contractual financial obligations and the expected financial loss suffered in the event of default or impairment. Short-term ratings are assigned to obligations with an original maturity of thirteen months or less and reflect both on the likelihood of a default or impairment on contractual financial obligations and the expected financial loss suffered in the event of default or impairment.

### GLOBAL LONG-TERM RATING SCALE

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| <b>Aaa</b> | Obligations rated Aaa are judged to be of the highest quality, subject to the lowest level of credit risk.   |
| <b>Aa</b>  | Obligations rated Aa are judged to be of high quality and are subject to very low credit risk.   |
| <b>A</b>   | Obligations rated A are judged to be upper-medium grade and are subject to low credit risk.  |
| <b>Baa</b> | Obligations rated Baa are judged to be medium-grade and subject to moderate credit risk and as such may possess certain speculative characteristics. |
| <b>Ba</b>  | Obligations rated Ba are judged to be speculative and are subject to substantial credit risk.  |
| <b>B</b>   | Obligations rated B are considered speculative and are subject to high credit risk.  |
| <b>Caa</b> | Obligations rated Caa are judged to be speculative of poor standing and are subject to very high credit risk.  |
| <b>Ca</b>  | Obligations rated Ca are highly speculative and are likely in, or very near, default, with some prospect of recovery of principal and interest.      |
| <b>C</b>   | Obligations rated C are the lowest rated and are typically in default, with little prospect for recovery of principal or interest.                   |

**Note:** Moody's appends numerical modifiers 1, 2, and 3 to each generic rating classification from Aa through Caa. The modifier 1 indicates that the obligation ranks in the higher end of its generic rating category; the modifier 2 indicates a mid-range ranking; and the modifier 3 indicates a ranking in the lower end of that generic rating category.

### GLOBAL SHORT-TERM RATING SCALE

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| <b>P-1</b> | Ratings of Prime-1 reflect a superior ability to repay short-term obligations.                              |
| <b>P-2</b> | Ratings of Prime-2 reflect a strong ability to repay short-term obligations.                                |
| <b>P-3</b> | Ratings of Prime-3 reflect an acceptable ability to repay short-term obligations.                           |
| <b>NP</b>  | Issuers (or supporting institutions) rated Not Prime do not fall within any of the Prime rating categories. |

## MIG RATINGS

Moody's use the MIG scale for US municipal cash flow notes, bond anticipation notes and certain other short-term obligations, which typically mature in three years or less.

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| <b>MIG 1</b> | This designation denotes superior credit quality. Excellent protection is afforded by established cash flows, highly reliable liquidity support, or demonstrated broad-based access to the market for refinancing. |
| <b>MIG 2</b> | This designation denotes strong credit quality. Margins of protection are ample, although not as large as in the preceding group.  |
| <b>MIG 3</b> | This designation denotes acceptable credit quality. Liquidity and cash-flow protection may be narrow, and market access for refinancing is likely to be less well-established.                                     |
| <b>SG</b>    | This designation denotes speculative-grade credit quality. Debt instruments in this category may lack sufficient margins of protection.  |

## VMIG RATINGS

For variable rate demand obligations (VRDOs), Moody's assigns both a long-term rating and a short-term payment obligation rating. The long-term rating addresses the issuer's ability to meet scheduled principal and interest payments. The short-term payment obligation rating addresses the ability of the issuer or the liquidity provider to meet any purchase price payment obligation resulting from optional tenders ("on demand") and/or mandatory tenders of the VRDO. The short-term payment obligation rating uses the VMIG scale. Transitions of VMIG ratings with conditional liquidity support differ from transitions of Prime ratings reflecting the risk that external liquidity support will terminate if the issuer's long-term rating drops below investment grade. Please see our methodology that discusses obligations with conditional liquidity support.

For VRDOs, Moody's typically assigns a VMIG rating if the frequency of the payment obligation is less than every three years. If the frequency of the payment obligation is less than three years, but the obligation is payable only with remarketing proceeds, the VMIG short-term rating is not assigned and it is denoted as "NR".

Industrial development bonds in the US where the obligor is a corporate may carry a VMIG rating that reflects Moody's view of the relative likelihood of default and loss. In these cases, liquidity assessment is based on the liquidity of the corporate obligor.

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <b>VMIG 1</b> | This designation denotes superior credit quality. Excellent protection is afforded by the superior short-term credit strength of the liquidity provider and structural and legal protections.  |
| <b>VMIG 2</b> | This designation denotes strong credit quality. Good protection is afforded by the strong short-term credit strength of the liquidity provider and structural and legal protections.   |
| <b>VMIG 3</b> | This designation denotes acceptable credit quality. Adequate protection is afforded by the satisfactory short-term credit strength of the liquidity provider and structural and legal protections.   |
| <b>SG</b>     | This designation denotes speculative-grade credit quality. Demand features rated in this category may be supported by a liquidity provider that does not have a sufficiently strong short-term rating or may lack the structural or legal protections. |

## Fitch Ratings

A brief description of the applicable Fitch Ratings ("*Fitch*") ratings symbols and meanings (as published by Fitch) follows:

Fitch publishes credit ratings that are forward-looking opinions on the relative ability of an entity or obligation to meet financial commitments. Issuer Default Ratings (*IDRs*) are assigned to corporations, sovereign entities, financial institutions such as banks, leasing companies and insurers, and public finance entities (local and regional governments). Issue level ratings are also assigned and often include an expectation of recovery, which may be notched above or below the issuer level rating. Issue ratings are assigned to secured and unsecured debt securities, loans, preferred stock and other instruments. Structured finance ratings are issue ratings to securities backed by receivables or other financial assets that consider the obligations' relative vulnerability to default.

Credit ratings are indications of the likelihood of repayment in accordance with the terms of the issuance. In limited cases, Fitch may include additional considerations (*i.e.*, rate to a higher or lower standard than that implied in the obligation's documentation).

Fitch's credit rating scale for issuers and issues is expressed using the categories 'AAA' to 'BBB' (investment grade) and 'BB' to 'D' (speculative grade) with an additional +/- for AA through CCC levels indicating relative differences of probability of

default or recovery for issues. The terms "investment grade" and "speculative grade" are market conventions and do not imply any recommendation or endorsement of a specific security for investment purposes. Investment grade categories indicate relatively low to moderate credit risk, while ratings in the speculative categories signal either a higher level of credit risk or that a default already occurred.

Fitch may also disclose issues relating to a rated issuer that are not and have not been rated ("NR").

Credit ratings express risk in relative rank order, which is to say they are ordinal measures of credit risk and are not predictive of a specific frequency of default or loss.

Fitch's credit ratings do not directly address any risk other than credit risk. Credit ratings do not deal with the risk of market value loss due to changes in interest rates, liquidity and/or other market considerations. However, market risk may be considered to the extent that it influences the ability of an issuer to pay or refinance a financial commitment. Nonetheless, ratings do not reflect market risk to the extent that they influence the size or other conditionality of the obligation to pay upon a commitment (for example, payments linked to performance of an equity index).

## INTERNATIONAL CREDIT RATING SCALES

The following sections describe credit rating scales (those featuring the symbols 'AAA' - 'D' and 'F1' - 'D') and their use for issuers and obligations in corporate, public, structured and infrastructure and project finance debt markets.

Within rating categories, Fitch may use modifiers. The modifiers "+" or "-" may be appended to a rating to denote relative status within major rating categories.

### Issuer Default Ratings

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| <b>AAA</b> | Highest credit quality. 'AAA' ratings denote the lowest expectation of default risk. They are assigned only in cases of exceptionally strong capacity for payment of financial commitments. This capacity is highly unlikely to be adversely affected by foreseeable events.  |
| <b>AA</b>  | Very high credit quality. 'AA' ratings denote expectations of very low default risk. They indicate very strong capacity for payment of financial commitments. This capacity is not significantly vulnerable to foreseeable events.  |
| <b>A</b>   | High credit quality. 'A' ratings denote expectations of low default risk. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered strong. This capacity may, nevertheless, be more vulnerable to adverse business or economic conditions than is the case for higher ratings.   |
| <b>BBB</b> | Good credit quality. 'BBB' ratings indicate that expectations of default risk are currently low. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered adequate but adverse business or economic conditions are more likely to impair this capacity.  |
| <b>BB</b>  | Speculative. 'BB' ratings indicate an elevated vulnerability to default risk, particularly in the event of adverse changes in business or economic conditions over time; however, business or financial flexibility exists that supports the servicing of financial commitments.  |
| <b>B</b>   | Highly speculative. 'B' ratings indicate that material default risk is present, but a limited margin of safety remains. Financial commitments are currently being met; however, capacity for continued payment is vulnerable to deterioration in the business and economic environment.   |
| <b>CCC</b> | Substantial credit risk. Very low margin for safety. Default is a real possibility.   |
| <b>CC</b>  | Very high levels of credit risk. Default of some kind appears probable.   |
| <b>C</b>   | Near default. A default or default-like process has begun, or for a closed funding vehicle, payment capacity is irrevocably impaired. Conditions that are indicative of a 'C' category rating for an issuer include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the issuer has entered into a grace or cure period following non-payment of a material financial obligation;</li> <li>• The formal announcement by the issuer or their agent of a distressed debt exchange; and</li> <li>• A closed financing vehicle where payment capacity is irrevocably impaired such that it is not expected to pay interest and/or principal in full during the life of the transaction, but where no payment default is imminent.</li> </ul> |

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| <b>RD</b> | <p>Restricted default. 'RD' ratings indicate an issuer that in Fitch's opinion has experienced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an uncured payment default or distressed debt exchange on a bond, loan or other material financial obligation, but</li> <li>• has not entered into bankruptcy filings, administration, receivership, liquidation or other formal winding-up procedure, and</li> <li>• has not otherwise ceased operating. This would include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the selective payment default on a specific class or currency of debt;</li> <li>- the uncured expiry of any applicable original grace period, cure period or default forbearance period following a payment default on a bank loan, capital markets security or other material financial obligation.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| <b>D</b>  | <p>Default. 'D' ratings indicate an issuer that in Fitch's opinion has entered into bankruptcy filings, administration, receivership, liquidation or other formal winding-up procedure or that has otherwise ceased business and debt is still outstanding.</p>   |

Default ratings are not assigned prospectively to entities or their obligations; within this context, non-payment on an instrument that contains a deferral feature or grace period will generally not be considered a default until after the expiration of the deferral or grace period, unless a default is otherwise driven by bankruptcy or other similar circumstance, or by a distressed debt exchange.

In all cases, the assignment of a default rating reflects the agency's opinion as to the most appropriate rating category consistent with the rest of its universe of ratings and may differ from the definition of default under the terms of an issuer's financial obligations or local commercial practice.

An exchange offer will be considered a distressed debt exchange if there is a material reduction in terms compared with the original contractual terms, and the exchange is conducted to avoid bankruptcy, similar insolvency or intervention proceedings, or a traditional payment default. The application of ratings due to a distressed debt exchange event may be further explained in the relevant criteria.

### Short-Term Ratings Assigned to Issuers and Obligations

A short-term issuer or obligation rating is based in all cases on the short-term vulnerability to default of the rated entity and relates to the capacity to meet financial obligations in accordance with the documentation governing the relevant obligation. Short-term deposit ratings may be adjusted for loss severity. Short-Term Ratings are assigned to obligations whose initial maturity is viewed as "short term" based on market convention (a long-term rating can also be used to rate an issue with short maturity). Typically, this means a timeframe of up to 13 months for corporate, sovereign, and structured obligations and up to 36 months for obligations in U.S. public finance markets.

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| <b>F1</b> | Highest short-term credit quality. Indicates the strongest intrinsic capacity for timely payment of financial commitments; may have an added '+' to denote any exceptionally strong credit feature.             |
| <b>F2</b> | Good short-term credit quality. Good intrinsic capacity for timely payment of financial commitments.  |
| <b>F3</b> | Fair short-term credit quality. The intrinsic capacity for timely payment of financial commitments is adequate.   |
| <b>B</b>  | Speculative short-term credit quality. Minimal capacity for timely payment of financial commitments, plus heightened vulnerability to near term adverse changes in financial and economic conditions.           |
| <b>C</b>  | High short-term default risk. Default is a real possibility.  |
| <b>RD</b> | Restricted default. Indicates an entity that has defaulted on one or more of its financial commitments, although it continues to meet other financial obligations. Typically applicable to entity ratings only. |
| <b>D</b>  | Default. Indicates a broad-based default event for an entity, or the default of a short-term obligation.  |

### Long-Term Obligation Ratings

Ratings of individual securities or financial obligations of a financial and non-financial corporate issuer, a sovereign or a supranational address relative vulnerability to default on an ordinal scale. A measure of recovery given default on that liability is also included in the rating assessment.

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| <b>AAA</b> | Highest credit quality. 'AAA' ratings denote the lowest expectation of credit risk. They are assigned only in cases of exceptionally strong capacity for payment of financial commitments. This capacity is highly unlikely to be adversely affected by foreseeable events. |
|------------|---|

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| <b>AA</b>  | Very high credit quality. 'AA' ratings denote expectations of very low credit risk. They indicate very strong capacity for payment of financial commitments. This capacity is not significantly vulnerable to foreseeable events.  |
| <b>A</b>   | High credit quality. 'A' ratings denote expectations of low credit risk. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered strong. This capacity may, nevertheless, be more vulnerable to adverse business or economic conditions than is the case for higher ratings. |
| <b>BBB</b> | Good credit quality. 'BBB' ratings indicate that expectations of credit risk are currently low. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered adequate, but adverse business or economic conditions are more likely to impair this capacity.                       |
| <b>BB</b>  | Speculative. 'BB' ratings indicate an elevated vulnerability to credit risk, particularly in the event of adverse changes in business or economic conditions over time; however, business or financial alternatives may be available to allow financial commitments to be met.       |
| <b>B</b>   | Highly speculative. 'B' ratings indicate that material credit risk is present.   |
| <b>CCC</b> | Substantial credit risk. 'CCC' ratings indicate that substantial credit risk is present.   |
| <b>CC</b>  | Very high levels of credit risk. 'CC' ratings indicate very high levels of credit risk.  |
| <b>C</b>   | Exceptionally high levels of credit risk. 'C' indicates exceptionally high levels of credit risk.  |

## Kroll Bond Rating Agency

Kroll Bond Rating Agency ("KBRA") assigns credit ratings to issuers and their obligations using the same rating scale. In either case, KBRA's ratings are intended to reflect both the probability of default and severity of loss in the event of default, with greater emphasis on probability of default at higher rating categories. For obligations, the determination of expected loss severity is, among other things, a function of the seniority of the claim. Generally speaking, issuer-level ratings assume a loss severity consistent with a senior unsecured claim. KBRA appends an (sf) indicator to ratings assigned to structured obligations. These definitions should be used in conjunction with KBRA's rating methodologies.

## LONG-TERM CREDIT RATINGS

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| <b>AAA</b> | Determined to have almost no risk of loss due to credit-related events. Assigned only to the very highest quality obligors and obligations able to survive extremely challenging economic events.  |
| <b>AA</b>  | Determined to have minimal risk of loss due to credit-related events. Such obligors and obligations are deemed very high quality.  |
| <b>A</b>   | Determined to be of high quality with a small risk of loss due to credit-related events. Issuers and obligations in this category are expected to weather difficult times with low credit losses.  |
| <b>BBB</b> | Determined to be of medium quality with some risk of loss due to credit-related events. Such issuers and obligations may experience credit losses during stressed environments.  |
| <b>BB</b>  | Determined to be of low quality with moderate risk of loss due to credit-related events. Such issuers and obligations have fundamental weaknesses that create moderate credit risk.  |
| <b>B</b>   | Determined to be of very low quality with high risk of loss due to credit-related events. These issuers and obligations contain many fundamental shortcomings that create significant credit risk.   |
| <b>CCC</b> | Determined to be at substantial risk of loss due to credit-related events, near default, or in default with high recovery expectations.  |
| <b>CC</b>  | Determined to be near default or in default with average recovery expectations.  |
| <b>C</b>   | Determined to be near default or in default with low recovery expectations.  |
| <b>D</b>   | KBRA defines default as occurring if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a missed interest payment, principal payment, or preferred dividend payment, as applicable, on a rated obligation which is unlikely to be recovered.</li> <li>• The rated entity files for protection from creditors, is placed into receivership, or is closed by regulators such that a missed payment is likely to result.</li> <li>• The rated entity seeks and completes a distressed exchange, where existing rated obligations are replaced by new obligations with a diminished economic value.</li> </ul> |

KBRA may append - or + modifiers to ratings in categories AA through CCC to indicate, respectively, upper and lower risk levels within the broader category.

## SHORT-TERM CREDIT RATINGS

KBRA's short-term ratings indicate an ability to meet obligations that typically have maturities of 13 months or less when issued by corporate entities, financial institutions, and in connection with structured finance transactions. When applied to municipal obligations, KBRA's short-term ratings typically indicate an ability to meet obligations of three years or less. Short-term ratings may be assigned to both issuers and to specific obligations. As compared to long-term ratings, greater emphasis is placed on an obligor's liquidity profile and access to funding. KBRA appends an (sf) indicator to ratings assigned to structured finance obligations.

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| <b>K1+</b> | Exceptional ability to meet short-term obligations.  |
| <b>K1</b>  | Very strong ability to meet short-term obligations.  |
| <b>K2</b>  | Strong ability to meet short-term obligations.   |
| <b>K3</b>  | Adequate ability to meet short-term obligations.   |
| <b>B</b>   | Questionable ability to meet short-term obligations.   |
| <b>C</b>   | Little ability to meet short-term obligations.   |
| <b>D</b>   | KBRA defines default as occurring if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There is a missed interest payment, principal payment, or preferred dividend payment, as applicable, on a rated obligation which is unlikely to be recovered.</li><li>• The rated entity files for protection from creditors, is placed into receivership, or is closed by regulators such that a missed payment is likely to result.</li><li>• The rated entity seeks and completes a distressed exchange, where existing rated obligations are replaced by new obligations with a diminished economic value.</li></ul> |