

RESOLVED, that shareholders of Merrill Lynch request the board of directors to adopt a policy that provides shareholders the opportunity at each annual shareholder meeting to vote on an advisory resolution, proposed by management, to ratify the compensation of the named executive officers (“NEOs”) set forth in the proxy statement’s Summary Compensation Table (the “SCT”) and the accompanying narrative disclosure of material factors provided to understand the SCT (but not the Compensation Discussion and Analysis). The proposal submitted to shareholders should make clear that the vote is non-binding and would not affect any compensation paid or awarded to any NEO.

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

In our view, senior executive compensation at Merrill Lynch has not always been structured in ways that best serve shareholders’ interests. For example, according to the 2007 proxy, the six named executive officers were paid more than \$287 million in reported total compensation in 2006, out of which former Chairman and CEO Stanley O’Neal received more than \$91 million.

We believe that existing U.S. corporate governance arrangements, including SEC rules and stock exchange listing standards, do not provide shareholders with sufficient mechanisms for providing input to boards on senior executive compensation. In contrast to U.S. practice, in the United Kingdom, public companies allow shareholders to cast an advisory vote on the “directors’ remuneration report,” which discloses executive compensation. Such a vote isn’t binding, but gives shareholders a clear voice that could help shape senior executive compensation. A recent study of executive compensation in the U.K. before and after the adoption of the shareholder advisory vote there found that CEO cash and total compensation became more sensitive to negative operating performance after the vote’s adoption. (Sudhakar Balachandran et al., “Solving the Executive Compensation Problem through Shareholder Votes? Evidence from the U.K.” (Oct. 2007).)

Currently U.S. stock exchange listing standards require shareholder approval of equity-based compensation plans; those plans, however, set general parameters and accord the compensation committee substantial discretion in making awards and establishing performance thresholds for a particular year. Shareholders do not have any mechanism for providing ongoing feedback on the application of those general standards to individual pay packages.

Similarly, performance criteria submitted for shareholder approval to allow a company to deduct compensation in excess of \$1 million are broad and do not constrain compensation committees in setting performance targets for particular senior executives. Withholding votes from compensation committee members who are standing for reelection is a blunt and insufficient instrument for registering dissatisfaction with the way in which the committee has administered compensation plans and policies in the previous year.

Accordingly, we urge Merrill Lynch’s board to allow shareholders to express their opinion about senior executive compensation by establishing an annual referendum process. The results of such a vote could provide Merrill Lynch with useful information about shareholders’

views on the company's senior executive compensation, as reported each year, and would facilitate constructive dialogue between shareholders and the board.

We urge shareholders to vote for this proposal.