

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
(Release No. 34-100133; File No. SR-ISE-2024-17)

May 14, 2024

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Nasdaq ISE, LLC; Notice of Filing of Proposed Rule Change to Amend the Strike Interval for Options on SPDR[®] Gold Shares

Pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (“Act”),¹ and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,² notice is hereby given that on May 3, 2024, Nasdaq ISE, LLC (“ISE” or “Exchange”) filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (“Commission”) the proposed rule change as described in Items I and II below, which Items have been prepared by the Exchange. The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comments on the proposed rule change from interested persons.

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

The Exchange proposes to amend the strike interval for options on SPDR[®] Gold Shares (“GLD”).

The text of the proposed rule change is available on the Exchange’s Website at <https://listingcenter.nasdaq.com/rulebook/ise/rules>, at the principal office of the Exchange, and at the Commission’s Public Reference Room.

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

In its filing with the Commission, the Exchange included statements concerning the purpose of and basis for the proposed rule change and discussed any comments it received on the proposed rule change. The text of these statements may be examined at the places specified in

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

Item IV below. The Exchange has prepared summaries, set forth in sections A, B, and C below, of the most significant aspects of such statements.

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

1. Purpose

The Exchange proposes to amend Options 4, Section 5, “Series of Options Contracts Open for Trading.” Specifically, the Exchange proposes to amend Options 4, Section 5(e) to allow for the interval between strike prices of series of options on Exchange-Traded Fund Shares of SPDR[®] Gold Shares or “GLD” to be \$1 or greater where the strike price is greater than \$200.

Currently Options 4, Section 5(d) provides that,

Except as otherwise provided in the Supplementary Material hereto, the interval between strike prices of series of options on individual stocks will be:

- (1) \$2.50 or greater where the strike price is \$25.00 or less;
- (2) \$5.00 or greater where the strike price is greater than \$25.00; and
- (3) \$10.00 or greater where the strike price is greater than \$200.00.

The interval between strike prices of series of options on Exchange-Traded Fund Shares approved for options trading pursuant to Section 3(h) of this Options 4 shall be fixed at a price per share which is reasonably close to the price per share at which the underlying security is traded in the primary market at or about the same time such series of options is first open for trading on the Exchange, or at such intervals as may have been established on another options exchange prior to the initiation of trading on the Exchange.

At this time, the Exchange proposes to amend Options 4, Section 5(d) to add rule text related to the interval between strike prices of series of options on Exchange-Traded Fund Shares to provide that the interval will be \$1 or greater where the strike price is \$200 or less and \$5.00 or greater where the strike price is greater than \$200. Today, Cboe Exchange, Inc. (“Cboe”) permits the interval between strike prices of series of options on Exchange-Traded Fund Shares to be \$1 or greater where the strike price is \$200 or less and \$5.00 or greater where the strike

price is greater than \$200.³ Today, ISE may fix the interval between strike prices of series of options on Exchange-Traded Fund Shares at such intervals as may have been established on another options exchange prior to the initiation of trading on the Exchange. ISE proposes to adopt Cboe's language to provide a strike interval for Exchange-Traded Fund Shares in the event a different interval is not elected at a price per share which is reasonably close to the price per share at which the underlying security is traded in the primary market at or about the same time such series of options is first open for trading on the Exchange, or at such intervals as may have been established on another options exchange prior to the initiation of trading on the Exchange.

Further, current Options 4, Section 5(e) allows for the interval between strike prices of series of options on Exchange-Traded Fund Shares of the SPDR S&P 500 ETF ("SPY"), iShares Core S&P 500 ETF ("IVV"), PowerShares QQQ Trust ("QQQ"), iShares Russell 2000 Index Fund ("IWM"), and the SPDR Dow Jones Industrial Average ETF ("DIA") to be \$1 or greater where the strike price is greater than \$200.

At this time, the Exchange proposes to modify the interval setting regime to be \$1 or greater where the strike price is greater than \$200 for GLD options, similar to SPY, IVV, QQQ, IWM and DIA. The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change would make GLD options easier for investors and traders to use and more tailored to their investment needs.

GLD is an Exchange-Traded Fund Share designed to closely track the price and performance of the price of gold bullion. GLD is widely quoted as an indicator of gold stock prices and is a significant indicator of overall economic health. Investors use GLD to diversify their portfolios and benefit from market trends. Additionally, GLD is a leading product in its asset class that trades within a "complex" where, in addition to the underlying security, there are

³ See Cboe Rule 4.5 at Interpretation and Policy .07(a).

multiple instruments available for hedging such as, COMEX Gold Futures; Gold Daily Futures; iShares GOLD Trust; SPDR GOLD Minishares Trust; Aberdeen Physical Gold Trust; and GraniteShares Gold Shares.

Accordingly, the Exchange believes that offering a wider base of GLD options affords traders and investors important hedging and trading opportunities, particularly in the midst of current price trends. The Exchange believes that not having the proposed \$1 strike price intervals above \$200 in GLD significantly constricts investors' hedging and trading possibilities. The Exchange therefore believes that by having smaller strike intervals in GLD, investors would have more efficient hedging and trading opportunities due to the lower \$1 interval ascension. The proposed \$1 interval above the \$200 strike price, will result in having at-the-money series based upon the underlying ETF moving less than 1%. The Exchange believes that the proposed strike setting regime is in line with the slower movements of broad-based indices. Considering the fact that \$1 intervals already exist below the \$200 price point and that GLD have consistently inclined in price toward the \$200 level, the Exchange believes that continuing to maintain the current \$200 level (above which intervals increase 500% to \$5), may have a negative effect on investing, trading and hedging opportunities, and volume. The Exchange believes that the investing, trading, and hedging opportunities available with GLD options far outweighs any potential negative impact of allowing GLD options to trade in more finely tailored intervals above the \$200 price point.

The proposed strike setting regime would permit strikes to be set to more closely reflect the increasing value in the underlying and allows investors and traders to roll open positions from a lower strike to a higher strike in conjunction with the price movements of the underlying ETF. Under the current rule, where the next higher available series would be \$5 away above a

\$200 strike price, the ability to roll such positions would be impaired. Accordingly, to move a position from a \$200 strike to a \$205 strike under the current rule, an investor would need for the underlying product to move 2.5%, and would not be able to execute a roll up until such a large movement occurred. The Exchange believes that with the proposed rule change, the investor would be in a significantly safer position of being able to roll his open options position from a \$200 to a \$201 strike price, which is only a 0.5% move for the underlying. As a result, the proposed rule change will allow the Exchange to better respond to customer demand for GLD strike price more precisely aligned with the smaller, longer-term incremental increases in the underlying ETF. The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change, like the other strike price programs currently offered by the Exchange, will benefit investors by providing investors the flexibility to more closely tailor their investment and hedging decisions using GLD options. Moreover, by allowing series of GLD options to be listed in \$1 intervals between strike prices over \$200, the proposal will moderately augment the potential total number of options series available on the Exchange. However, the Exchange believes it and the Options Price Reporting Authority (“OPRA”) have the necessary systems capacity to handle any potential additional traffic associated with this proposed rule change. The Exchange also believes that Members will not have a capacity issue due to the proposed rule change. In addition, the Exchange represents that it does not believe that this expansion will cause fragmentation of liquidity, but rather, believes that finer strike intervals will serve to increase liquidity available as well as price efficiency by providing more trading opportunities for all market participants.

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that its proposal is consistent with Section 6(b) of the Act,⁴ in general, and furthers the objectives of Section 6(b)(5) of the Act,⁵ in particular, in that it is designed to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system, and, in general to protect investors and the public interest.

In particular, the proposed rule change will allow investors to more easily use GLD options. Moreover, the proposed rule change would allow investors to better trade and hedge positions in GLD options where the strike price is greater than \$200, and ensure that investors in both options are not at a disadvantage simply because of the strike price.

The Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with Section 6(b)(1) of the Act, which provides that the Exchange be organized and have the capacity to be able to carry out the purposes of the Act and the rules and regulations thereunder, and the rules of the Exchange. The proposal allows the Exchange to respond to customer demand to allow GLD options to trade in \$1 intervals above a \$200 strike price. The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule would create additional capacity issues or affect market functionality. As noted above, ETF options trade in wider \$5 intervals above a \$200 strike price, whereby options at or below a \$200 strike price trade in \$1 intervals. This creates a situation where contracts on the same option class effectively may not be able to execute certain strategies such as, for example, rolling to a higher strike price, simply because of the \$200 strike price above which options intervals increase by 500%. This proposal remedies the situation by establishing an exception to the

⁴ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

⁵ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

current ETF interval regime for GLD options to allow such options to trade in \$1 or greater intervals at all strike prices.

The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change, like other strike price programs currently offered by the Exchange, will benefit investors by giving them increased flexibility to more closely tailor their investment and hedging decisions. By way of example, GLD is a leading product in its asset class and it trades within a “complex” where, in addition to the underlying security, there are multiple instruments available for hedging such as, COMEX Gold Futures; Gold Daily Futures; iShares GOLD Trust; SPDR GOLD Minishares Trust; Aberdeen Physical Gold Trust; and Granite Shares Gold Shares.

With regard to the impact of this proposal on system capacity, the Exchange believes it and OPRA have the necessary systems capacity to handle any potential additional traffic associated with this proposed rule change. The Exchange believes that its members will not have a capacity issue as a result of this proposal.

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

The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any burden on competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. Rather, the Exchange believes that the proposed rule change will result in additional investment options and opportunities to achieve the investment and trading objectives of market participants seeking efficient trading and hedging vehicles, to the benefit of investors, market participants, and the marketplace in general. Specifically, the Exchange believes that GLD options investors and traders will significantly benefit from the availability of finer strike price intervals above a \$200 price point. In addition, the interval setting regime the Exchange proposes to apply to GLD options is currently applied to SPY, IVV, QQQ, IWM and DIA options, which are similarly popular and widely traded ETF products and track indexes at similarly high price levels. Thus,

the proposed strike setting regime for GLD options will allow options on this an actively traded ETF with index levels at corresponding price levels to trade pursuant to the same strike setting regime. This will permit investors to employ similar investment and hedging strategies for each of these options.

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

No written comments were either solicited or received.

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

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

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

disapproved.

IV. Solicitation of Comments

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

Electronic Comments:

- Use the Commission’s internet comment form (<https://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>); or
- Send an email to rule-comments@sec.gov. Please include file number SR-ISE-2024-17 on the subject line.

Paper Comments:

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

All submissions should refer to file number SR-ISE-2024-17. This file number should be included on the subject line if email is used. To help the Commission process and review your comments more efficiently, please use only one method. The Commission will post all comments on the Commission's internet website (<https://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>). Copies of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the proposed rule change that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the proposed rule change between the Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the public in accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be available for website viewing and printing in the Commission's Public Reference Room, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549, on official business days between the hours of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Copies of the filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. Do not include personal identifiable information in submissions; you should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. We may redact in part or withhold entirely from publication submitted material that is obscene or subject to copyright

protection. All submissions should refer to file number SR-ISE-2024-17 and should be submitted on or before [INSERT DATE 21 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*].

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.⁶

Sherry R. Haywood,
Assistant Secretary.

⁶ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).