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Sustainability Reporting: Has it Finally Arrived?

As investors, we require information about a company to evaluate its long-term prospects. For many, an inspection of a company's financial statements and an evaluation of management's future outlook is sufficient. To gain this information, analysts rely on a company's disclosure of material facts. This disclosure of financial information is mandated by the SEC under Regulation S-K; a rule requiring disclosure of business practices in a uniform manner for investors. These disclosures enable investors to make informed

decisions regarding stock selection.

Since 2009, the Forum for Responsible and Sustainable Investment (US SIF: <http://www.ussif.org/>), along with many other investor groups have petitioned the SEC for mandatory environmental, social, and governmental (ESG) disclosure as well. As socially responsible investors, this is important information to have to evaluate how companies are doing beyond a strictly profit and loss approach. Sustainability disclosure would differentiate those companies that use a long-term approach to integrating ESG practices into their businesses. Research shows that companies that integrate ESG measures may be more likely to avoid reputational, regulatory, and litigation risks; risks which can greatly impact financial performance. While many companies already provide sustainability reporting, mandatory disclosure of ESG measures would greatly enhance the ability of those seeking this information to gain it. So far, the SEC has been relatively mute on this issue.

Recently, however, the SEC has issued a "concept release" to assess disclosure requirements in Regulation S-K. A concept release is a report issued by the SEC outlining a proposed rule change in which public comments are solicited. While the concept release included only eight sustainability questions, a full 99% of respondents support expanded ESG disclosures. Of the major proposals the SEC has released since 2008, the median number of comments received was 45. So far, this new concept release on Regulation S-K has received 26,500! This is the first time the SEC has shown an interest in hearing from the public on sustainability and impact investing issues, and US SIF intends to make our voices heard!

Open Enrollment is Now!

Medicare open enrollment began October 15th and continues through December 7th, 2016. If you wish to make certain changes to your health plan, or have received notification from your current plan that you have been dropped, you must make these changes during this period. If you bypass this period, and barring certain exceptions, you will not be able to sign up till the next open

enrollment period in 2017. Note the open enrollment period applies only to private insurance plans. These include Medigap Plans, Medicare Advantage Plans (Part C), and Medicare Drug Plans (Part D).

These are the changes you can make during open enrollment:

- * Change from original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage plan
- * Change from a Medicare Advantage plan to original Medicare
- * Change from one Medicare Advantage plan to another Medicare Advantage plan
- * Join, switch, or drop your Medicare Prescription Drug plan

Note that if you fail to enroll in a new plan, and go without coverage for a period of time, you may be subject to permanent penalties upon re-enrollment, so be sure to stay fully covered at all times. In addition, beware of enrolling in a Part D drug plan if you are enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan that offers drug coverage. This could cause you to lose your Advantage plan, and be returned to original Medicare.

What to learn more? Go [here](#).

In the News....

Eaton Vance, a large global asset manager, announced on October 21st that it was purchasing the assets of Calvert Investment Management Inc. Calvert's board of trustees is recommending that fund shareholders approve this sale. The company, under the new ownership, will operate as Calvert Research and Management. Completion of this transfer is subject to shareholder acceptance, and is expected to occur around the end of this year. This transaction will give Eaton Vance an immediate market in the socially responsible realm, an area they see future promise in. For those of you invested in Calvert Funds, no changes are expected to your investments. Have questions or concerns? Give me a call..

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