

ENCORE CAPITAL GROUP INC
Form S-3
December 21, 2009
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As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on December 21, 2009

Registration No. 333-_____

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM S-3
REGISTRATION STATEMENT
UNDER
THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

ENCORE CAPITAL GROUP, INC.

(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in Its Charter)

Delaware

48-1090909

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(State or Other Jurisdiction of
Incorporation or Organization)

(I.R.S. Employer
Identification Number)

8875 Aero Drive, Suite 200

San Diego, California 92123

(858) 445-4581

(Address, Including Zip Code, and Telephone Number, Including Area Code, of Registrant's Principal Executive Offices)

Ronald E. Naves, Jr.

Senior Vice President and General Counsel

ENCORE CAPITAL GROUP, INC.

8875 Aero Drive, Suite 200

San Diego, California 92123

(877) 445-4581

(Name, Address, Including Zip Code, and Telephone Number, Including Area Code, of Agent for Service)

Copies to:

David R. Snyder, Esq.

Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP

501 W. Broadway, Suite 1100

San Diego, CA 9101

(619) 234-5000

Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public: From time to time after this registration statement becomes effective, as determined by market conditions and other factors.

If the only securities being registered on this form are being offered pursuant to dividend or interest reinvestment plans, check the following box.

If any of the securities being registered on this form are to be offered on a delayed or continuous basis pursuant to Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, other than securities offered only in connection with dividend or interest reinvestment plans, check the following box.

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If this form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act, please check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering. "

If this form is a post-effective amendment filed pursuant to Rule 462(c) under the Securities Act, check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering. "

If this form is a registration statement pursuant to General Instruction I.D. or a post-effective amendment thereto that shall become effective upon filing with the Commission pursuant to Rule 462(e) under the Securities Act, check the following box. "

If this form is a post-effective amendment to a registration statement filed pursuant to General Instruction I.D. to register additional securities or additional classes of securities pursuant to Rule 413(b) under the Securities Act, check the following box. "

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of large accelerated filer, accelerated filer and smaller reporting company in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. (Check one):

Large accelerated filer	"	Accelerated filer	x
Non-accelerated filer	" (Do not check if a smaller reporting company)	Smaller reporting company	"

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

Title of Each Class of Securities To Be Registered	Proposed Maximum Aggregate Offering Price(1)(2)	Amount of Registration Fee
Debt Securities (2)		
Common Stock, par value \$0.01 per share (2)		
Preferred Stock, par value \$0.01 per share (2)		
Depository Shares (3)		
Warrants		
Total	\$150,000,000(3)	\$10,695.00(4)

- (1) Such indeterminate number or amount of debt securities, common stock, preferred stock, depository shares, and warrants to purchase any combination of the foregoing securities, as may from time to time be issued at indeterminate prices, with an aggregate initial offering price not to exceed \$150,000,000 or the equivalent thereof in one or more foreign currencies, foreign currency units or composite currencies. Securities registered hereunder may be sold separately, together or as units with other securities registered hereunder.
- (2) Subject to footnote (1), there are also being registered hereunder an indeterminate principal amount or number of shares of debt securities, preferred stock or common stock that may be issued upon conversion of, or in exchange for, debt securities or preferred stock registered hereunder or upon exercise of warrants registered hereunder, as the case may be.
- (3) Subject to footnote (1), there are being registered hereunder an indeterminate number of depository shares to be evidenced by depository receipts issued pursuant to a deposit agreement. If the Registrant elects to offer to the public fractional interests in shares of preferred stock registered hereunder, depository receipts will be distributed to those persons purchasing such fractional interests, and the shares of preferred stock will be issued to the depository under the deposit agreement.
- (4) Estimated solely for the purpose of calculating the registration fee for a primary offering pursuant to Rule 457(o) under the Securities Act of 1933. Pursuant to Rule 457(o) and General Instruction II.D. of Form S-3, which permits the registration fee to be calculated on the basis of the maximum offering price of all the securities listed for the primary offering, the table does not specify by each class information as to the amount to be registered or proposed maximum offering price per unit.

The Registrant hereby amends this registration statement on such date or dates as may be necessary to delay its effective date until the Registrant shall file a further amendment which specifically states that this registration statement shall thereafter become effective in accordance with Section 8(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 or until the registration statement shall become effective on such date as the Commission, acting pursuant to said Section 8(a), may determine.

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The information in this prospectus is not complete and may be changed. We may not sell these securities until the registration statement filed with Securities and Exchange Commission is effective. This prospectus is not an offer to sell these securities and is not soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any state where the offer or sale is not permitted.

Subject To Completion, Dated December 21, 2009

PROSPECTUS

\$150,000,000

ENCORE CAPITAL GROUP, INC.

Debt Securities

Common Stock

Preferred Stock

Depositary Shares

Warrants

We may, from time to time, offer and sell debt securities, preferred stock, either separately or represented by depositary shares, common stock or warrants, either separately or in units, in one or more offerings. The debt securities, preferred stock and warrants may be convertible into or exercisable or exchangeable for common or preferred stock or debt securities. We will specify in the accompanying prospectus supplement more specific information about any such offering. The aggregate initial offering price of all securities sold under this prospectus will not exceed \$150,000,000.

We may offer these securities independently or together in any combination for sale directly to investors or through underwriters, dealers or agents. We will set forth the names of any underwriters, dealers or agents and their compensation in the accompanying prospectus supplement.

This prospectus may not be used to sell any of these securities unless accompanied by a prospectus supplement.

Our common stock is traded on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol ECPG. On December 18, 2009, the closing price of our common stock on the NASDAQ Global Select Market was \$17.51 per share.

Investing in our securities involves risks. See the section entitled Risk Factors in the accompanying prospectus supplement and in the documents we incorporate by reference in this prospectus.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the adequacy or accuracy of this prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is _____, 2009.

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You should rely only on the information incorporated by reference or provided in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement and the registration statement. We have not authorized anyone else to provide you with different information. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. We are not making an offer to sell these securities in any state where the offer or sale is not permitted. You should assume that the information in this prospectus and any prospectus supplement, or incorporated by reference, is accurate only as of the dates of those documents. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates.

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ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or SEC, using a shelf registration, or continuous offering, process. Under this shelf registration process, we may, from time to time, issue and sell any combination of debt securities, preferred stock, either separately or represented by depositary shares, common stock or warrants, either separately or in units, in one or more offerings with a maximum aggregate offering price of \$150,000,000.

This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we sell securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering and the offered securities. Any prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. Any statement that we make in this prospectus will be modified or superseded by any inconsistent statement made by us in a prospectus supplement. The registration statement we filed with the SEC includes exhibits that provide more detail of the matters discussed in this prospectus. You should read this prospectus and the related exhibits filed with the SEC and any prospectus supplement, together with additional information described under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information**, before making your investment decision.

Unless the context otherwise requires, references in this prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement to **Encore**, **the Company**, **we**, **us** and **our** refer to Encore Capital Group, Inc. and its subsidiaries.

RISK FACTORS

Investing in our securities involves risk. The prospectus supplement relating to a particular offering will contain a discussion of risks applicable to an investment in the securities offered. Prior to making a decision about investing in our securities, you should carefully consider the specific factors discussed under the heading **Risk Factors** in the applicable prospectus supplement together with all of the other information contained in the prospectus supplement or appearing or incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

ENCORE CAPITAL GROUP, INC.

We are a systems-driven purchaser and manager of charged-off consumer receivable portfolios and, through our wholly owned subsidiary Ascension Capital Group, Inc. (**Ascension**), a provider of bankruptcy services to the finance industry. We acquire receivable portfolios at deep discounts from their face values using our proprietary valuation process that is based upon an analysis of the individual consumer attributes of the underlying accounts. Based upon our ongoing analysis of these accounts, we employ a dynamic mix of collection strategies to maximize our return on investment. The receivable portfolios we purchase consist primarily of unsecured, charged-off domestic consumer credit card, auto loan deficiency and telecom receivables purchased from national financial institutions, major retail credit corporations, telecom companies and resellers of such portfolios. From 2006 through August 2007, we also purchased healthcare receivables from hospitals and resellers of healthcare receivables. In September 2007, we exited our healthcare purchasing and internal collection activities, although we are still receiving collections from certain healthcare portfolios that we own. Acquisitions of receivable portfolios are financed from operating cash flows and borrowings from third parties. See Note 8 to our consolidated financial statements for further discussion of our debt. Encore is a Delaware holding company whose assets consist of investments in its subsidiaries.

We have been in the collection business for 55 years and started purchasing portfolios for our own account approximately 18 years ago. From our inception through December 31, 2008, we have invested approximately \$1.2 billion to acquire 25.5 million consumer accounts with a face value of approximately \$39.3 billion.

We have established certain relationships with credit card issuers, other lenders and resellers that allow us to purchase portfolios directly through negotiated transactions, and we participate in the auction-style purchase processes that typify our industry. In addition, we enter into **forward flow** arrangements in which we agree to buy receivables that meet agreed upon parameters over the course of the contract term.

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We evaluate each portfolio for purchase using the proprietary valuation and underwriting processes developed by our in-house team of statisticians. Unlike many of our competitors, which we believe primarily base their purchase decisions on numerous aggregated portfolio-level factors, including the lender/originator, the type of receivables to be purchased, or the number of collection agencies the accounts have been placed with previously, we base our purchase decisions primarily on our analysis of the specific accounts included in a portfolio. Based upon this analysis, we determine a value for each account, which we aggregate to produce a valuation of the entire portfolio. We believe this capability allows us to perform more accurate valuations of receivable portfolios. We have successfully applied this methodology to receivables across multiple asset classes.

After we purchase a portfolio, we continuously refine our analysis of the accounts to determine the best strategy for collection. As with our purchase decisions, our collection strategies are based on account level criteria. Our collection strategies include:

the use of a nationwide network of collection attorneys to pursue legal action where appropriate;

outbound calling, driven by proprietary, predictive software, by our own collection workforce located at our three domestic call centers and our international call center in India;

the use of multiple third party collection agencies;

direct mail campaigns coordinated by our in-house marketing group;

the transfer of accounts to a credit card provider, generating a payment to us; and

the sale of accounts where appropriate.

Encore was incorporated in Delaware in 1999. Our principal executive offices are located at 8875 Aero Drive, Suite 200, San Diego, California 92123, and our telephone number is (877) 445-4581.

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

When used in this prospectus, the words *expects*, *believes*, *anticipates*, *estimates*, *may*, *could*, *intends*, and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. These statements are subject to known and unknown risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from those projected or otherwise implied by the forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements speak only as of the date of this prospectus. Given these risks and uncertainties, you should not place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements. We will discuss many of these risks and uncertainties in greater detail in any prospectus supplement under the heading *Risk Factors*. Additional cautionary statements or discussions of risks and uncertainties that could affect our results or the achievement of the expectations described in forward-looking statements may also be contained in the documents we incorporate by reference into this prospectus.

These forward-looking statements speak only as of the date of this prospectus. We expressly disclaim any obligation or undertaking to release publicly any updates or revisions to any forward-looking statements contained herein to reflect any change in our expectations with regard thereto or any change in events, conditions or circumstances on which any such statement is based. You should, however, review additional disclosures we make in our Annual Report on Form 10-K, Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, and Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless we state otherwise in the accompanying prospectus supplement, we intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of the securities offered by this prospectus for general corporate purposes. General corporate purposes may include additions to working capital, financing of capital expenditures, repayment or redemption of existing indebtedness, and future acquisitions and strategic investment opportunities. Pending the

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application of net proceeds, we expect to invest the net proceeds in investment grade, interest-bearing securities.

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The ratio of earnings to fixed charges for each of the periods indicated are set forth in the following table. We have not included a ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends because we do not have any preferred stock outstanding as of the date of this prospectus.

	Year Ended December 31,				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Ratio of earnings to fixed charges ⁽¹⁾	2.09	2.48	2.02	1.53	2.08

- ⁽¹⁾ The ratio of earnings to fixed charges is computed by dividing earnings before taxes plus fixed charges by fixed charges. Fixed charges means the sum of the following: (i) interest expense (including interest expense from capital leases), (ii) amortized premiums, discounts and capitalized expenses related to indebtedness, and (iii) the estimated portion of rental expense deemed by us to be representative of the interest factor of rental payments under operating leases.

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

The following is a summary of the general terms of the debt securities. We will file a prospectus supplement that may contain additional terms when we issue debt securities. The terms presented here, together with the terms in a related prospectus supplement, will be a description of the material terms of the debt securities. You should also read the indenture under which the debt securities are to be issued. We have filed a form of indenture governing different types of debt securities with the SEC as an exhibit to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. All capitalized terms have the meanings specified in the indenture.

We may issue, from time to time, debt securities, in one or more series. The debt securities we offer will be issued under an indenture between us and the trustee named in the indenture. These debt securities that we may issue include senior debt securities, subordinated debt securities, convertible debt securities and exchangeable debt securities. The following is a summary of the material provisions of the indenture filed as an exhibit to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. For each series of debt securities, the applicable prospectus supplement for the series may change and supplement the summary below.

General Terms of the Indenture

The indenture does not limit the amount of debt securities that we may issue. It provides that we may issue debt securities up to the principal amount that we may authorize and they may be in any currency or currency unit that we may designate. Except for the limitations on consolidation, merger and sale of all or substantially all of our assets contained in the indenture, the terms of the indenture do not contain any covenants or other provisions designed to give holders of any debt securities protection against changes in our operations, financial condition or transactions involving us. For each series of debt securities, any restrictive covenants for those debt securities will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement for those debt securities.

We may issue the debt securities issued under the indenture as discount securities, which means they may be sold at a discount below their stated principal amount. These debt securities, as well as other debt securities that are not issued at a discount, may, for United States federal income tax purposes, be treated as if they were issued with original issue discount, or OID, because of interest payment and other characteristics. Special United States federal income tax considerations applicable to debt securities issued with original issue discount will be described in more detail in any applicable prospectus supplement.

You should refer to the prospectus supplement relating to a particular series of debt securities for a description of the following terms of the debt securities offered by that prospectus supplement and by this prospectus:

the title and authorized denominations of those debt securities;

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any limit on the aggregate principal amount of that series of debt securities;

the date or dates on which principal and premium, if any, of the debt securities of that series is payable;

interest rates, and the dates from which interest, if any, on the debt securities of that series will accrue, and the dates when interest is payable and the maturity;

the right, if any, to extend the interest payment periods and the duration of the extensions;

if the amount of payments of principal or interest is to be determined by reference to an index or formula, or based on a coin or currency other than that in which the debt securities are stated to be payable, the manner in which these amounts are determined and the calculation agent, if any, with respect thereto;

the place or places where and the manner in which principal of, premium, if any, and interest, if any, on the debt securities of that series will be payable and the place or places where those debt securities may be presented for transfer and, if applicable, conversion or exchange;

the period or periods within which, the price or prices at which, the currency or currencies in which, and other terms and conditions upon which those debt securities may be redeemed, in whole or in part, at our option or the option of a holder of those securities, if we or a holder is to have that option;

our obligation or right, if any, to redeem, repay or purchase those debt securities pursuant to any sinking fund or analogous provision or at the option of a holder of those securities, and the terms and conditions upon which the debt securities will be redeemed, repaid or purchased, in whole or in part, pursuant to that obligation;

the terms, if any, on which the debt securities of that series will be subordinate in right and priority of payment to our other debt;

the denominations in which those debt securities will be issuable;

if other than the entire principal amount of the debt securities when issued, the portion of the principal amount payable upon acceleration of maturity as a result of a default on our obligations;

whether those debt securities will be issued in fully registered form without coupons or in a form registered as to principal only with coupons or in bearer form with coupons;

whether any securities of that series are to be issued in whole or in part the form of one or more global securities and the depository for those global securities;

if other than United States dollars, the currency or currencies in which payment of principal of or any premium or interest on those debt securities will be payable;

if the principal of or any premium or interest on the debt securities of that series is to be payable, or is to be payable at our election or the election of a holder of those securities, in securities or other property, the type and amount of those securities or other property, or the manner of determining that amount, and the period or periods within which, and the terms and conditions upon which, any such election may be made;

the events of default and covenants relating to the debt securities that are in addition to, modify or delete those described in this prospectus;

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conversion or exchange provisions, if any, including conversion or exchange prices or rates and adjustments thereto;

whether and upon what terms the debt securities may be defeased, if different from the provisions set forth in the indenture;

the nature and terms of any security for any secured debt securities;

the terms applicable to any debt securities issued at a discount from their stated principal amount; and

any other specific terms of any debt securities.

The applicable prospectus supplement will present material United States federal income tax considerations for holders of any debt securities and the securities exchange or quotation system on which any debt securities are to be listed or quoted.

Conversion or Exchange Rights

Debt securities may be convertible into or exchangeable for shares of our equity securities or other securities. The terms and conditions of conversion or exchange will be stated in the applicable prospectus supplement. The terms will include, among others, the following:

the conversion or exchange price;

the conversion or exchange period;

provisions regarding our ability or the ability of any holder to convert or exchange the debt securities;

events requiring adjustment to the conversion or exchange price; and

provisions affecting conversion or exchange in the event of our redemption of the debt securities.

Consolidation, Merger or Sale

The terms of the indenture prevent us from (i) consolidating or merging with or into, or transferring or leasing all or substantially all of our assets to, any person, unless the successor corporation or person to which our assets are transferred or leased is organized under the laws of the United States, any state of the United States or the District of Columbia and it expressly assumes our obligations under the debt securities and the indenture or (ii) completing such a transaction unless immediately after completing the transaction, no event of default under the indenture, and no event that, after notice or lapse of time or both, would become an event of default under the indenture, has occurred and is continuing. When the person to whom our assets are transferred or leased has assumed our obligations under the debt securities and the indenture, we will be discharged from all our obligations under the debt securities and the indenture except in limited circumstances.

This covenant would not apply to any recapitalization transaction, a change of control affecting us or a highly leveraged transaction, unless the transaction or change of control were structured to include a merger or consolidation or transfer or lease of all or substantially all of our assets.

Events of Default

The indenture provides that the following will be events of default with respect to any series of debt securities:

failure to pay interest for 30 days after the date payment is due and payable;

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failure to pay principal or premium, if any, on any debt security when due, either at maturity, upon any redemption, by declaration or otherwise and, in the case of technical or administrative difficulties, only if such default persists for a period of more than three business days;

failure to make sinking fund payments when due and continuance of such default for a period of 30 days;

failure to perform other covenants for 60 days after notice that performance was required;

events in bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization relating to us; or

any other event of default provided in the applicable officer's certificate, resolution of our board of directors or the supplemental indenture under which we issue a series of debt securities.

An event of default for a particular series of debt securities does not necessarily constitute an event of default for any other series of debt securities issued under the indenture. For each series of debt securities, any modifications to the above events of default will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement for those debt securities.

The indenture provides that if an event of default specified in the first, second, third, fourth or sixth bullets above occurs and is continuing, either the trustee or the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series may declare the principal amount of all those debt securities (or, in the case of discount securities or indexed securities, that portion of the principal amount as may be specified in the terms of that series) to be due and payable immediately. If an event of default specified in the fifth bullet above occurs and is continuing, then the principal amount of all those debt securities (or, in the case of discount securities or indexed securities, that portion of the principal amount as may be specified in the terms of that series) will be due and payable immediately, without any declaration or other act on the part of the trustee or any holder. In certain cases, holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series may, on behalf of holders of all those debt securities, rescind and annul a declaration of acceleration.

The indenture imposes limitations on suits brought by holders of debt securities against us. Except for actions for payment of overdue principal or interest, no holder of debt securities of any series may institute any action against us under the indenture unless:

the holder has previously given to the trustee written notice of default and continuance of such default;

the holders of at least 25% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the affected series have requested that the trustee institute the action;

the requesting holders have offered the trustee indemnity for the reasonable expenses and liabilities that may be incurred by bringing the action;

the trustee has not instituted the action within 60 days of the request and offer of indemnity; and

the trustee has not received inconsistent direction by the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the affected series.

We will be required to file annually with the trustee a certificate, signed by one of our officers, stating whether or not the officer knows of any default by us in the performance, observance or fulfillment of any condition or covenant of the indenture.

Discharge, Defeasance and Covenant Defeasance

We can discharge or decrease our obligations under the indenture as stated below.

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We may discharge obligations to holders of any series of debt securities that have not already been delivered to the trustee for cancellation and that have either become due and payable or are by their terms to become due and payable, or are scheduled for redemption, within one year. We may effect a discharge by irrevocably depositing with the trustee cash or government obligations denominated in the currency of the debt securities, as trust funds, in an amount certified to be enough to pay when due, whether at maturity, upon redemption or otherwise, the principal of, and any premium and interest on, the debt securities and any mandatory sinking fund payments.

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, we may also discharge any and all of our obligations to holders of any series of debt securities at any time, which we refer to as defeasance. We may also be released from the obligations imposed by any covenants of any outstanding series of debt securities and provisions of the indenture, and we may omit to comply with those covenants without creating an event of default under the trust declaration, which we refer to as covenant defeasance. We may effect defeasance and covenant defeasance only if, among other things:

we irrevocably deposit with the trustee cash or government obligations denominated in the currency of the debt securities, as trust funds, in an amount certified to be enough to pay at maturity, or upon redemption, the principal (including any mandatory sinking fund payments) of, and any premium and interest on, all outstanding debt securities of the series; and

we deliver to the trustee an opinion of counsel from a nationally recognized law firm to the effect that the holders of the series of debt securities will not recognize income, gain or loss for U.S. federal income tax purposes as a result of the defeasance or covenant defeasance and that defeasance or covenant defeasance will not otherwise alter the holders' U.S. federal income tax treatment of principal, and any premium and interest payments on, the series of debt securities.

In the case of a defeasance by us, the opinion we deliver must be based on a ruling of the Internal Revenue Service issued, or a change in U.S. federal income tax law occurring, after the date of the indenture, since such a result would not occur under the U.S. federal income tax laws in effect on that date.

Although we may discharge or decrease our obligations under the indenture as described in the two preceding paragraphs, we may not avoid, among other things, our duty to register the transfer or exchange of any series of debt securities, to replace any temporary, mutilated, destroyed, lost or stolen series of debt securities or to maintain an office or agency in respect of any series of debt securities.

Modification of the Indenture

The indenture provides that we and the trustee may enter into supplemental indentures without the consent of the holders of debt securities to, among other things:

evidence the assumption by a successor entity of our obligations;

add to our covenants for the benefit of the holders of debt securities, or to surrender any rights or power conferred upon us;

add any additional events of default;

cure any ambiguity or correct any inconsistency or defect in the indenture;

add to, change or eliminate any of the provisions of the indenture in a manner that will become effective only when there is no outstanding debt security which is entitled to the benefit of the provision as to which the modification would apply;

secure any debt securities;

establish the forms or terms of debt securities of any series;

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evidence and provide for the acceptance of appointment by a successor trustee and add to or change any of the provisions of the indenture as is necessary for the administration of the trusts by more than one trustee;

modify, eliminate or add to the provisions of the indenture as shall be necessary to effect the qualification of the indenture under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939 or under any similar federal statute later enacted, and to add to the indenture such other provisions as may be expressly required by the Trust Indenture Act; and

make any other provisions with respect to matters or questions arising under the indenture that will not be inconsistent with any provision of the indenture as long as the new provisions do not adversely affect the interests of the holders of any outstanding debt securities of any series created prior to the modification.

The indenture also provides that we and the trustee may, with the consent of the holders of not less than a majority in aggregate principal amount of debt securities of each series of debt securities affected by such supplemental indenture then outstanding, add any provisions to, or change in any manner, eliminate or modify in any way the provisions of, the indenture or any supplemental indenture or modify in any manner the rights of the holders of the debt securities. We and the trustee may not, however, without the consent of the holder of each outstanding debt security affected thereby:

extend the final maturity of any debt security;

reduce the principal amount or premium, if any;

reduce the rate or extend the time of payment of interest;

reduce the amount of the principal of any debt security issued with an original issue discount that is payable upon acceleration;

change the currency in which the principal, and any premium or interest, is payable;

impair the right to institute suit for the enforcement of any payment on any debt security when due;

if applicable, adversely affect the right of a holder to convert or exchange a debt security; or

reduce the percentage of holders of debt securities of any series whose consent is required for any modification of the indenture or for waivers of compliance with or defaults under the indenture with respect to debt securities of that series.

The indenture provides that the holders of not less than a majority in aggregate principal amount of the then outstanding debt securities of any series, by notice to the relevant trustee, may on behalf of the holders of the debt securities of that series waive any default and its consequences under the indenture except:

a default in the payment of, any premium and any interest on, or principal of, any such debt security held by a nonconsenting holder;
or

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a default in respect of a covenant or provision of the indenture that cannot be modified or amended without the consent of the holder of each outstanding debt security of each series affected.

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Registered Global Securities and Book Entry System

The debt securities of a series may be issued in whole or in part in book-entry form and will be represented by one or more fully registered global securities. We will deposit any registered global securities with a depository or with a nominee for a depository identified in the applicable prospectus supplement and registered in the name of such depository or nominee. In such case, we will issue one or more registered global securities denominated in an amount equal to the aggregate principal amount of all of the debt securities of the series to be issued and represented by such registered global security or securities. This means that we will not issue certificates to each holder.

Unless and until it is exchanged in whole or in part for debt securities in definitive registered form, a registered global security may not be transferred except as a whole:

by the depository for the registered global security to its nominee;

by a nominee of the depository to the depository or another nominee of the depository; or

by the depository or its nominee to a successor of the depository or a nominee of the successor.

The prospectus supplement relating to a series of debt securities will describe the specific terms of the depository arrangement involving any portion of the series represented by a registered global security. We anticipate that the following provisions will apply to all depository arrangements for debt securities:

ownership of beneficial interests in a registered global security will be limited to persons that have accounts with the depository for such registered global security, these persons being referred to as participants, or persons that may hold interests through participants;

upon the issuance of a registered global security, the depository for the registered global security will credit, on its book-entry registration and transfer system, the participants' accounts with the respective principal amounts of the debt securities represented by the registered global security beneficially owned by the participants;

any dealers, underwriters, or agents participating in the distribution of the debt securities will designate the accounts to be credited; and

ownership of beneficial interest in the registered global security will be shown on, and the transfer of the ownership interest will be effected only through, records maintained by the depository for the registered global security for interests of participants, and on the records of participants for interests of persons holding through participants.

The laws of some states may require that specified purchasers of securities take physical delivery of the securities in definitive form. These laws may limit the ability of those persons to own, transfer or pledge beneficial interests in registered global securities.

So long as the depository for a registered global security, or its nominee, is the registered owner of the registered global security, the depository or such nominee, as the case may be, will be considered the sole owner or holder of the debt securities represented by the registered global security for all purposes under the indenture. Except as stated below, owners of beneficial interests in a registered global security:

will not be entitled to have the debt securities represented by a registered global security registered in their names;

will not receive or be entitled to receive physical delivery of the debt securities in the definitive form; and

will not be considered the owners or holders of the debt securities under the relevant indenture.

Accordingly, each person owning a beneficial interest in a registered global security must rely on the procedures of the depository for the registered global security and, if the person is not a participant, on the procedures of a participant through which the person owns its interest, to exercise any rights of a holder under the indenture.

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We understand that under existing industry practices, if we request any action of holders or if an owner of a beneficial interest in a registered global security desires to give or take any action that a holder is entitled to give or take under the indenture, the depository for the registered global security would authorize the participants holding the relevant beneficial interests to give or take the action, and the participants would authorize beneficial owners owning through the participants to give or take the action or would otherwise act upon the instructions of beneficial owners holding through them.

We will make payments of principal and premium, if any, and interest, if any, on debt securities represented by a registered global security registered in the name of a depository or its nominee to the depository or its nominee, as the case may be, as the registered owners of the registered global security. Neither we nor the trustee, or any other agent of ours or the trustee will be responsible or liable for any aspect of the records relating to, or payments made on account of, beneficial ownership interests in the registered global security or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any records relating to the beneficial ownership interests.

We expect that the depository for any debt securities represented by a registered global security, upon receipt of any payments of principal and premium, if any, and interest, if any, in respect of the registered global security, will immediately credit participants' accounts with payments in amounts proportionate to their respective beneficial interests in the registered global security as shown on the records of the depository. We also expect that standing customer instructions and customary practices will govern payments by participants to owners of beneficial interests in the registered global security held through the participants, as is now the case with the securities held for the accounts of customers in bearer form or registered in street name. We also expect that any of these payments will be the responsibility of the participants.

If the depository for any debt securities represented by a registered global security is at any time unwilling or unable to continue as depository or stops being a clearing agency registered under the Exchange Act, we will appoint an eligible successor depository. If we fail to appoint an eligible successor depository within 90 days, we will issue the debt securities in definitive form in exchange for the registered global security. In addition, we may at any time and in our sole discretion decide not to have any of the debt securities of a series represented by one or more registered global securities. In that event, we will issue debt securities of the series in a definitive form in exchange for all of the registered global securities representing the debt securities. The trustee will register any debt securities issued in definitive form in exchange for a registered global security in the name or names as the depository, based upon instructions from its participants, shall instruct the trustee.

We may also issue bearer debt securities of a series in the form of one or more global securities, referred to as bearer global securities. We will deposit these securities with a depository identified in the prospectus supplement relating to the series. The prospectus supplement relating to a series of debt securities represented by a bearer global security will describe the applicable terms and procedures. These will include the specific terms of the depository arrangement and any specific procedures for the issuance of debt securities in definitive form in exchange for a bearer global security, in proportion to the series represented by a bearer global security.

Concerning the Trustee

The indenture provides that there may be more than one trustee under the indenture, each for one or more series of debt securities. If there are different trustees for different series of debt securities, each trustee will be a trustee of a trust under the indenture separate and apart from the trust administered by any other trustee under that indenture. Except as otherwise indicated in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement, any action permitted to be taken by a trustee may be taken by such trustee only on the one or more series of debt securities for which it is the trustee under the indenture. Any trustee under the indenture may resign or be removed from one or more series of debt securities. All payments of principal of, and any premium and interest on, and all registration, transfer, exchange, authentication and delivery of, the debt securities of a series will be effected by the trustee for that series at an office designated by the trustee in New York, New York.

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The indenture provides that, except during the continuance of an event of default, the trustee will perform only such duties as are specifically set forth in the indenture. During the existence of an event of default, the trustee will exercise those rights and powers vested in it under the indenture and use the same degree of care and skill in its exercise as a prudent person would exercise under the circumstances in the conduct of such person's own affairs.

If the trustee becomes a creditor of ours, the indenture places limitations on the right of the trustee to obtain payment of claims or to realize on property received in respect of any such claim as security or otherwise. The trustee may engage in other transactions. If it acquires any conflicting interest relating to any duties concerning the debt securities, however, it