

American Capital Agency Corp
Form FWP
May 15, 2012

Filed Pursuant to Rule 433
Registration Statement No. 333-170374
Issuer Free Writing Prospectus dated May 15, 2012
Relating to Prospectus, dated November 4, 2010,
and Prospectus Supplement, dated December 1, 2011
AMERICAN CAPITAL AGENCY CORP.
FREE WRITING PROSPECTUS

This free writing prospectus is being filed pursuant to Rule 433 under the Securities Act of 1933 (the "Securities Act") with respect to Registration Statement No. 333-170374 (the "Registration Statement") filed by American Capital Agency Corp., a Delaware corporation (the "Company"), with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") on November 4, 2010, and the prospectus supplement, dated December 1, 2011 (the "Prospectus Supplement"), to the prospectus, dated November 4, 2010 (the "Base Prospectus"), included therein (the Prospectus Supplement together with the Base Prospectus, the "Prospectus"). To review the Prospectus, please click on the following link to the SEC's web site:

<http://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1423689/000119312511327538/d258386d424b2.htm>

The Company has filed the Registration Statement with the SEC for the offering to which this communication relates. Before you invest, you should read the Prospectus in the Registration Statement and other documents that the Company has filed with the SEC for more complete information about the Company and this offering. You may get these documents for free by visiting EDGAR on the SEC web site at www.sec.gov. Alternatively, the Company, any underwriter or any dealer participating in the offering will arrange to send you the Prospectus if you request it by calling 212-829-4846 or 1-877-649-6848.

This free writing prospectus reflects the following updates to the Prospectus.

SUPPLEMENT TO FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSIDERATIONS

The following summary of certain U.S. Federal income tax considerations supersedes the discussion set forth under the heading "Federal Income Tax Considerations" in the Base Prospectus and "Supplement to Federal Income Tax Considerations" in the Prospectus Supplement and is for general information only and is not tax advice.

The following is a summary of the material U.S. federal income tax consequences of an investment in common stock of American Capital Agency Corp. For purposes of this section under the heading "Federal Income Tax Considerations," references to "American Capital Agency Corp.," "we," "our" and "us" mean only American Capital Agency Corp. and not its subsidiaries or other lower-tier entities, except as otherwise indicated. This summary is based upon the Internal Revenue Code, the regulations promulgated by the U.S. Treasury Department ("Treasury"), rulings and other administrative pronouncements issued by the IRS, and judicial decisions, all as currently in effect, and all of which are subject to differing interpretations or to change, possibly with retroactive effect. No assurance can be given that the IRS would not assert, or that a court would not sustain, a position contrary to any of the tax consequences described below. The summary is also based upon the assumption that we will operate American Capital Agency Corp. and its subsidiaries and affiliated entities in accordance with their applicable organizational documents or partnership agreements. This summary is for general information only and is not tax advice. It does not purport to discuss all aspects of U.S. federal income taxation that may be important to a particular investor in light of its investment or tax circumstances or to investors subject to special tax rules, such as:

- 1 financial institutions;
- 1 insurance companies;
- 1 broker-dealers;

1 regulated investment companies;

1 partnerships and trusts;

1 persons who hold our stock on behalf of other persons as nominees;

1 persons who receive American Capital Agency Corp. stock through the exercise of employee stock options or otherwise as compensation;

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1 persons holding American Capital Agency Corp. stock as part of a “straddle,” “hedge,” “conversion transaction,”
1 “synthetic security” or other integrated investment;

and, except to the extent discussed below:

1 tax-exempt organizations; and

1 foreign investors.

This summary assumes that investors will hold their common stock as a capital asset, which generally means as property held for investment.

THE FEDERAL INCOME TAX TREATMENT OF HOLDERS OF OUR COMMON STOCK DEPENDS IN SOME INSTANCES ON DETERMINATIONS OF FACT AND INTERPRETATIONS OF COMPLEX PROVISIONS OF U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX LAW FOR WHICH NO CLEAR PRECEDENT OR AUTHORITY MAY BE AVAILABLE. IN ADDITION, THE TAX CONSEQUENCES TO ANY PARTICULAR STOCKHOLDER OF HOLDING OUR COMMON STOCK WILL DEPEND ON THE STOCKHOLDER'S PARTICULAR TAX CIRCUMSTANCES. YOU ARE URGED TO CONSULT YOUR TAX ADVISOR REGARDING THE FEDERAL, STATE, LOCAL, AND FOREIGN INCOME AND OTHER TAX CONSEQUENCES TO YOU IN LIGHT OF YOUR PARTICULAR INVESTMENT OR TAX CIRCUMSTANCES OF ACQUIRING, HOLDING, EXCHANGING, OR OTHERWISE DISPOSING OF OUR COMMON STOCK.

Taxation of American Capital Agency Corp.

We have elected to be taxed as a REIT, commencing with our initial taxable year ended December 31, 2008. We believe that we have been organized and have operated in such a manner that permits us to satisfy the requirements for taxation as a REIT under the applicable provisions of the Internal Revenue Code.

The law firm of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP has acted as our tax counsel in connection with this offering of our common stock. In connection with this offering of our common stock, we expect to receive an opinion of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP to the effect that, commencing with our initial taxable year, we have been organized and operated in conformity with the requirements for qualification and taxation as a REIT under the Internal Revenue Code, and that our actual method of operation has enabled, and our proposed method of operation will continue to enable, us to meet the requirements for qualification and taxation as a REIT for our taxable year ending 2012 and subsequent years. It must be emphasized that the opinion of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP will be based on various assumptions relating to our organization and operation and will be conditioned upon fact-based representations and covenants made by our management regarding our organization, assets, and income, and the present and future conduct of our business operations. While we intend to operate so that we continue to qualify as a REIT, given the highly complex nature of the rules governing REITs, the ongoing importance of factual determinations, and the possibility of future changes in our circumstances, no assurance can be given by Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP or by us that we will qualify as a REIT for any particular year. The opinion will be expressed as of the date issued and will not cover subsequent periods. Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP will have no obligation to advise us or our stockholders of any subsequent change in the matters stated, represented or assumed, or of any subsequent change in the applicable law. You should be aware that opinions of counsel are not binding on the IRS, and no assurance can be given that the IRS will not challenge the conclusions set forth in such opinions.

While we intend to operate so that we will continue to qualify as a REIT, given the highly complex nature of the rules governing REITs, the ongoing importance of factual determinations, and the possibility of future changes in our circumstances, no assurance can be given by us that we will qualify as a REIT for any particular year. Qualification and taxation as a REIT depends on our ability to meet on a continuing basis, through actual operating results, distribution levels, and diversity of stock and asset ownership, various qualification requirements imposed upon REITs by the Internal Revenue Code. Our ability to qualify as a REIT also requires that we satisfy certain asset tests, some of which depend upon the fair market values of assets that we own directly or indirectly. Such values may not be susceptible to a precise determination. Accordingly, no assurance can be given that the actual results of our operations for any taxable year will satisfy such requirements for qualification and taxation as a REIT.

Taxation of REITs in General

As indicated above, our qualification and taxation as a REIT depends upon our ability to meet, on a continuing basis, various qualification requirements imposed upon REITs by the Internal Revenue Code. The material qualification requirements are summarized below under “—Requirements for Qualification—General.” While we intend to operate so that we continue to qualify as a REIT, no assurance can be given that the IRS will not challenge our qualification, or that we will be able to operate

in accordance with the REIT requirements in the future. See “—Failure to Qualify.”

Provided that we qualify as a REIT, generally we will be entitled to a deduction for dividends that we pay and therefore will not be subject to federal corporate income tax on our taxable income that is currently distributed to our stockholders. This treatment substantially eliminates the “double taxation” at the corporate and stockholder levels that generally results from investment in a corporation. In general, the income that we generate is taxed only at the stockholder level upon a distribution of dividends to our stockholders.

For tax years through 2012, most domestic stockholders that are individuals, trusts or estates are taxed on corporate dividends at a maximum rate of 15% (the same as long-term capital gains). With limited exceptions, however, dividends from us or from other entities that are taxed as REITs are generally not eligible for this rate and will continue to be taxed at rates applicable to ordinary income, which will be as high as 35% through 2012, and as high as 39.6% thereafter. See “—Taxation of Stockholders—Taxation of Taxable Domestic Stockholders—Distributions.”

Any net operating losses, foreign tax credits and other tax attributes generally do not pass through to our stockholders, subject to special rules for certain items such as the capital gains that we recognize. See “—Taxation of Stockholders—Taxation of Taxable Domestic Stockholders—Distributions.”

In any year in which we qualify as a REIT, we will nonetheless be subject to federal tax in the following circumstances:

1 We will be taxed at regular corporate rates on any undistributed taxable income, including undistributed net capital gains.

1 We may be subject to the “alternative minimum tax” on our items of tax preference, including any deductions of net operating losses.

1 If we have net income from prohibited transactions, which are, in general, sales or other dispositions of inventory or property held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business, other than foreclosure property, such income will be subject to a 100% tax. See “—Prohibited Transactions,” and “—Foreclosure Property,” below.

1 If we elect to treat property that we acquire in connection with a foreclosure of a mortgage loan or certain leasehold terminations as “foreclosure property,” we may thereby avoid the 100% tax on gain from a resale of that property (if the sale would otherwise constitute a prohibited transaction), but the income from the sale or operation of the property may be subject to corporate income tax at the highest applicable rate (currently 35%).

1 If we should fail to satisfy the 75% gross income test or the 95% gross income test, as discussed below, but nonetheless maintain our qualification as a REIT because we satisfy other requirements, we will be subject to a 100% tax on an amount based on the magnitude of the failure, as adjusted to reflect the profit margin associated with our gross income.

1 If we should violate the asset tests (other than certain de minimis violations) or other requirements applicable to REITs, as described below, and yet maintain our qualification as a REIT because there is reasonable cause for the failure and other applicable requirements are met, we may be subject to a penalty tax. In that case, the amount of the penalty tax will be at least \$50,000 per failure, and, in the case of certain asset test failures, will be determined as the amount of net income generated by the assets in question multiplied by the highest corporate tax rate (currently 35%) if that amount exceeds \$50,000 per failure.

1 If we should fail to distribute during each calendar year at least the sum of (a) 85% of our REIT ordinary income for such year, (b) 95% of our REIT capital gain net income for such year, and (c) any undistributed taxable income from prior periods, we would be subject to a nondeductible 4% excise tax on the excess of the required distribution over the sum of (i) the amounts that we actually distributed and (ii) the amounts we retained and upon which we paid income tax at the corporate level.

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We may be required to pay monetary penalties to the IRS in certain circumstances, including if we fail to meet record keeping requirements intended to monitor our compliance with rules relating to the composition of a REIT's stockholders, as described below in “—Requirements for Qualification—General.”

1 A 100% tax may be imposed on transactions between us and a taxable REIT subsidiary (“TRS”) (as described below) that do not reflect arm's-length terms.

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1 If we acquire appreciated assets from a corporation that is not a REIT (i.e., a corporation taxable under subchapter C of the Internal Revenue Code) in a transaction in which the adjusted tax basis of the assets in our hands is determined by reference to the adjusted tax basis of the assets in the hands of the subchapter C corporation, we may be subject to tax on such appreciation at the highest corporate income tax rate then applicable if we subsequently recognize gain on a disposition of any such assets during the ten-year period following their acquisition from the subchapter C corporation.

1 The earnings of our subsidiaries, including American Capital Agency TRS, LLC (“our TRS”), are subject to federal corporate income tax to the extent that such subsidiaries are subchapter C corporations.

In addition, we and our subsidiaries may be subject to a variety of taxes, including payroll taxes and state, local, and foreign income, property and other taxes on our assets and operations. We could also be subject to tax in situations and on transactions not presently contemplated.

Requirements for Qualification—General

The Internal Revenue Code defines a REIT as a corporation, trust or association:

- (1) that is managed by one or more trustees or directors;
- (2) the beneficial ownership of which is evidenced by transferable shares, or by transferable certificates of beneficial interest;
- (3) that would be taxable as a domestic corporation but for its election to be subject to tax as a REIT;
- (4) that is neither a financial institution nor an insurance company subject to specific provisions of the Internal Revenue Code;
- (5) the beneficial ownership of which is held by 100 or more persons;

in which, during the last half of each taxable year, not more than 50% in value of the outstanding stock is
- (6) owned, directly or indirectly, by five or fewer “individuals” (as defined in the Internal Revenue Code to include specified tax-exempt entities); and

- (7) which meets other tests described below, including with respect to the nature of its income and assets.

The Internal Revenue Code provides that conditions (1) through (4) must be met during the entire taxable year, and that condition (5) must be met during at least 335 days of a taxable year of 12 months, or during a proportionate part of a shorter taxable year. Conditions (5) and (6) need not be met during a corporation's initial tax year as a REIT (which, in our case, was 2008). Our amended and restated articles of incorporation provides restrictions regarding the ownership and transfers of our stock, which are intended to assist us in satisfying the stock ownership requirements described in conditions (5) and (6) above.

To monitor compliance with the stock ownership requirements, we generally are required to maintain records regarding the actual ownership of our stocks. To do so, we must demand written statements each year from the record holders of significant percentages of our stock pursuant to which the record holders must disclose the actual owners of the stock (i.e., the persons required to include our dividends in their gross income). We must maintain a list of those persons failing or refusing to comply with this demand as part of our records. We could be subject to monetary penalties if we fail to comply with these record-keeping requirements. If you fail or refuse to comply with the demands, you will be required by Treasury regulations to submit a statement with your tax return disclosing your actual ownership of our stock and other information.

In addition, a corporation generally may not elect to become a REIT unless its taxable year is the calendar year. We have adopted December 31 as our year-end, and thereby satisfy this requirement.

The Internal Revenue Code provides relief from violations of the REIT gross income requirements, as described below under “—Income Tests,” in cases where a violation is due to reasonable cause and not to willful neglect, and other requirements are met, including the payment of a penalty tax that is based upon the magnitude of the violation. In addition, certain provisions of the Internal Revenue Code extend similar relief in the case of certain violations of the REIT asset requirements (see “—Asset Tests” below) and other REIT requirements, again provided that the violation is due to reasonable cause and not willful neglect, and other conditions are met, including the payment of a penalty tax. If we fail to satisfy any of the various REIT

requirements, there can be no assurance that these relief provisions would be available to enable us to maintain our qualification as a REIT, and, if such relief provisions are available, the amount of any resultant penalty tax could be substantial.

Effect of Subsidiary Entities

Ownership of Partnership Interests. If we are a partner in an entity that is treated as a partnership for federal income tax purposes, Treasury regulations provide that we are deemed to own our proportionate share of the partnership's assets, and to earn our proportionate share of the partnership's income, for purposes of the asset and gross income tests applicable to REITs. Our proportionate share of a partnership's assets and income is based on our capital interest in the partnership (except that for purposes of the 10% value test, described below, our proportionate share of the partnership's assets is based on our proportionate interest in the equity and certain debt securities issued by the partnership). In addition, the assets and gross income of the partnership are deemed to retain the same character in our hands. Thus, our proportionate share of the assets and items of income of any of our subsidiary partnerships will be treated as our assets and items of income for purposes of applying the REIT requirements.

Disregarded Subsidiaries. If we own a corporate subsidiary that is a “qualified REIT subsidiary,” that subsidiary is generally disregarded for federal income tax purposes, and all of the subsidiary's assets, liabilities and items of income, deduction and credit are treated as our assets, liabilities and items of income, deduction and credit, including for purposes of the gross income and asset tests applicable to REITs. A qualified REIT subsidiary is any corporation, other than a TRS (as described below), that is directly or indirectly wholly-owned by a REIT. Other entities that are wholly-owned by us, including single member limited liability companies that have not elected to be taxed as corporations for federal income tax purposes, are also generally disregarded as separate entities for federal income tax purposes, including for purposes of the REIT income and asset tests. Disregarded subsidiaries, along with any partnerships in which we hold an equity interest, are sometimes referred to herein as “pass-through subsidiaries.” In the event that a disregarded subsidiary of ours ceases to be wholly-owned—for example, if any equity interest in the subsidiary is acquired by a person other than us or another disregarded subsidiary of ours—the subsidiary's separate existence would no longer be disregarded for federal income tax purposes. Instead, the subsidiary would have multiple owners and would be treated as either a partnership or a taxable corporation. Such an event could, depending on the circumstances, adversely affect our ability to satisfy the various asset and gross income requirements applicable to REITs, including the requirement that REITs generally may not own, directly or indirectly, more than 10% of the securities of another corporation. See “—Asset Tests” and “—Income Tests.”

Taxable Subsidiaries. In general, we may jointly elect with a subsidiary corporation, whether or not wholly-owned, to treat such subsidiary corporation as a TRS. We generally may not own more than 10% of the securities of a taxable corporation, as measured by voting power or value, unless we and such corporation elect to treat such corporation as a TRS. The separate existence of a TRS or other taxable corporation is not ignored for federal income tax purposes. Accordingly, our TRS or other taxable corporation generally is subject to corporate income tax on its earnings, which may reduce the cash flow that we and our subsidiaries generate in the aggregate, and may reduce our ability to make distributions to our stockholders.

We are not treated as holding the assets of our TRS or other taxable subsidiary corporation or as receiving any income that the subsidiary earns. Rather, the stock issued by a taxable subsidiary to us is an asset in our hands, and we treat the dividends paid to us from such taxable subsidiary, if any, as income. This treatment can affect our income and asset test calculations, as described below. Because we do not include the assets and income of TRSs or other taxable subsidiary corporations in determining our compliance with the REIT requirements, we may use such entities to undertake indirectly activities that the REIT rules might otherwise preclude us from doing directly or through pass-through subsidiaries. For example, we may use TRSs or other taxable subsidiary corporations to conduct activities that give rise to certain categories of income such as management fees or to conduct activities that, if conducted by us directly, would be treated in our hands as prohibited transactions.

The TRS rules limit the deductibility of interest paid or accrued by a TRS to its parent REIT to assure that the TRS is subject to an appropriate level of corporate taxation. Further, the rules impose a 100% excise tax on transactions between a TRS and its parent REIT or the REIT's tenants that are not conducted on an arm's-length basis. We intend that all of our transactions with our TRSs will be conducted on an arm's-length basis.

Income Tests

In order to continue to qualify as a REIT, we must satisfy two gross income requirements on an annual basis. First, at least 75% of our gross income for each taxable year, excluding gross income from sales of inventory or dealer property in “prohibited transactions” and certain hedging transactions, generally must be derived from investments relating to real property or mortgages on real property, including interest income derived from mortgage loans secured by real property (including, generally, agency securities and certain types of mortgage-backed securities), “rents from real property,” dividends received

from other REITs, and gains from the sale of real estate assets, as well as specified income from temporary investments. Second, at least 95% of our gross income in each taxable year, excluding gross income from prohibited transactions and certain hedging transactions, must be derived from some combination of income that qualifies under the 75% gross income test described above, as well as other dividends, interest, and gain from the sale or disposition of stock or securities, which need not have any relation to real property. Income and gain from certain hedging transactions entered into after July 30, 2008 will be excluded from both the numerator and the denominator for purposes of both the 75% and 95% gross income tests.

Interest income constitutes qualifying mortgage interest for purposes of the 75% gross income test (as described above) to the extent that the obligation upon which such interest is paid is secured by a mortgage on real property. If we receive interest income with respect to a mortgage loan that is secured by both real property and other property, and the highest principal amount of the loan outstanding during a taxable year exceeds the fair market value of the real property on the date that we acquired or originated the mortgage loan, the interest income will be apportioned between the real property and the other collateral, and our income from the arrangement will qualify for purposes of the 75% gross income test only to the extent that the interest is allocable to the real property. Even if a loan is not secured by real property, or is undersecured, the income that it generates may nonetheless qualify for purposes of the 95% gross income test.

We intend to continue to invest primarily in agency securities that are either pass-through certificates or collateralized mortgage obligations (“CMOs”). We expect that the agency securities will be treated either as interests in a grantor trust or as interests in a real estate mortgage investment conduit (“REMIC”) for federal income tax purposes and that all interest income from our agency securities will be qualifying income for the 95% gross income test. In the case of an agency securities treated as interests in grantor trusts, we would be treated as owning an undivided beneficial ownership interest in the mortgage loans held by the grantor trust. The interest on such mortgage loans would be qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test to the extent that the obligation is secured by real property, as discussed above. In the case of agency securities treated as interests in a REMIC, income derived from REMIC interests will generally be treated as qualifying income for purposes of the 75% and 95% gross income tests. If less than 95% of the assets of the REMIC are real estate assets, however, then only a proportionate part of our interest in the REMIC and income derived from the interest will qualify for purposes of the 75% gross income test. In addition, some REMIC securitizations include imbedded interest swap or cap contracts or other derivative instruments that potentially could produce non-qualifying income for the holder of the related REMIC securities. We expect that substantially all of our income from agency securities will be qualifying income for purposes of the REIT gross income tests.

We purchase and sell agency securities through “to-be-announced” forward contracts (“TBAs”) and recognize income or gains from the disposition of those TBAs, through dollar roll transactions or otherwise, and may continue to do so in the future. While there is no direct authority with respect to the qualification of income or gains from dispositions of TBAs as gains from the sale of real property (including interests in real property and interests in mortgages on real property) or other qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test, we treat income and gains from our TBAs as qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test, based on an opinion of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP substantially to the effect that, for purposes of the 75% REIT gross income test, any gain recognized by us in connection with the settlement of our TBAs should be treated as gain from the sale or disposition of the underlying agency securities. Opinions of counsel are not binding on the IRS, and no assurance can be given that the IRS will not successfully challenge the conclusions set forth in such opinions. In addition, as noted above, the opinion of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP is based on various assumptions relating to our TBAs and is conditioned upon fact-based representations and covenants made by our management regarding our TBAs. No assurance can be given that the IRS would not assert that such income is not qualifying income. If the IRS were to successfully challenge the opinion of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, we could be subject to a penalty tax or we could fail to qualify as a REIT if a sufficient portion of our income consists of income or gains from the disposition of TBAs.

Rents received by us, if any, will qualify as “rents from real property” in satisfying the gross income requirements described above only if several conditions are met. If rent is partly attributable to personal property leased in connection with a lease of real property, the portion of the rent that is attributable to the personal property will not qualify as “rents from real property” unless it constitutes 15% or less of the total rent received under the lease. In addition, the amount of rent must not be based in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person. Amounts received as rent, however, generally will not be excluded from rents from real property solely by reason of being based on fixed percentages of gross receipts or sales. Also, rental income will qualify as rents from real property only to the extent that we do not directly or constructively hold a 10% or greater interest, as measured by vote or value, in the lessee's equity.

We may directly or indirectly receive distributions from our TRS or other corporations that are not REITs or qualified REIT subsidiaries. These distributions generally are treated as dividend income to the extent of the earnings and profits of the distributing corporation. Such distributions will generally constitute qualifying income for purposes of the 95% gross income test, but not for purposes of the 75% gross income test. Any dividends that we receive from a REIT, however, will be qualifying

income for purposes of both the 95% and 75% gross income tests.

Fees will generally be qualifying income for purposes of both the 75% and 95% gross income tests if they are received in consideration for entering into an agreement to make a loan secured by real property and the fees are not determined by income and profits. Other fees generally will not be qualifying income for purposes of either gross income test and will not be favorably counted for purposes of either gross income test. Any fees earned by our TRS will not be included for purposes of the gross income tests. Any income or gain that we or our pass-through subsidiaries derive from instruments that hedge certain risks, such as the risk of changes in interest rates, will be excluded from gross income for purposes of both the 75% and 95% gross income tests, provided that specified requirements are met, including the requirement that the instrument is entered into during the ordinary course of our business, the instrument hedges risks associated with indebtedness issued by us or our pass-through subsidiary that is incurred to acquire or carry “real estate assets” (as described below under “—Asset Tests”), and the instrument is properly identified as a hedge along with the risk that it hedges within prescribed time periods. Income and gain from all other hedging transactions will not be qualifying income for either the 95% or 75% gross income test.

If we fail to satisfy one or both of the 75% or 95% gross income tests for any taxable year, including as a result of income and gains from the disposition of TBAs being treated as nonqualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test, we may still qualify as a REIT for such year if we are entitled to relief under applicable provisions of the Internal Revenue Code. These relief provisions will be generally available if (1) our failure to meet these tests was due to reasonable cause and not due to willful neglect and (2) following our identification of the failure to meet the 75% or 95% gross income test for any taxable year, we file a schedule with the IRS setting forth each item of our gross income for purposes of the 75% or 95% gross income test for such taxable year in accordance with Treasury regulations yet to be issued. It is not possible to state whether we would be entitled to the benefit of these relief provisions in all circumstances. If these relief provisions are inapplicable to a particular set of circumstances, we will not qualify as a REIT. As discussed above under “—Taxation of REITs in General,” even where these relief provisions apply, the Internal Revenue Code imposes a tax based upon the amount by which we fail to satisfy the particular gross income test.

Under The Housing and Economic Recovery Tax Act of 2008, the Secretary of the Treasury has been given broad authority to determine whether particular items of gain or income recognized after July 30, 2008, qualify or not under the 75% and 95% gross income tests, or are to be excluded from the measure of gross income for such purposes.

Asset Tests

At the close of each calendar quarter, we must also satisfy four tests relating to the nature of our assets. First, at least 75% of the value of our total assets must be represented by some combination of “real estate assets,” cash, cash items, U.S. government securities, and, under some circumstances, stock or debt instruments purchased with new capital. For this purpose, real estate assets include some kinds of mortgage-backed securities and mortgage loans, as well as interests in real property and stock of other corporations that qualify as REITs. Assets that do not qualify for purposes of the 75% asset test are subject to the additional asset tests described below.

Second, the value of any one issuer's securities that we own may not exceed 5% of the value of our total assets.

Third, we may not own more than 10% of any one issuer's outstanding securities, as measured by either voting power or value. The 5% and 10% asset tests do not apply to securities of TRSs and qualified REIT subsidiaries and the 10% asset test does not apply to “straight debt” having specified characteristics and to certain other securities described below. Solely for purposes of the value prong of the 10% asset test, the determination of our interest in the assets of a partnership or limited liability company in which we own an interest will be based on our proportionate interest in any securities issued by the partnership or limited liability company, excluding for this purpose certain securities described in the Internal Revenue Code. Fourth, the aggregate value of all securities of TRSs that we hold may not exceed 25% (20% with respect to taxable years commencing prior to July 31, 2008) of the value of our total assets.

Notwithstanding the general rule, as noted above, that for purposes of the REIT income and asset tests we are treated as owning our proportionate share of the underlying assets of a subsidiary partnership, if we hold indebtedness issued by a partnership, the indebtedness will be subject to, and may cause a violation of, the asset tests unless the indebtedness is a qualifying mortgage asset or other conditions are met. Similarly, although stock of another REIT is a qualifying asset for purposes of the REIT asset tests, any non-mortgage debt that is issued by another REIT may not

so qualify (such debt, however, will not be treated as “securities” for purposes of the 10% asset test, as explained below).

Certain securities will not cause a violation of the 10% asset test described above. Such securities include instruments that constitute “straight debt,” which includes, among other things, securities having certain contingency features. A security does not qualify as “straight debt” where a REIT (or a controlled TRS of the REIT) owns other securities of the same issuer which do not qualify as straight debt, unless the value of those other securities constitute, in the aggregate, 1% or less of the total value of that issuer's outstanding securities. In addition to straight debt, the Internal Revenue Code provides that certain

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other securities will not violate the 10% asset test. Such securities include (1) any loan made to an individual or an estate, (2) certain rental agreements pursuant to which one or more payments are to be made in subsequent years (other than agreements between a REIT and certain persons related to the REIT under attribution rules), (3) any obligation to pay rents from real property, (4) securities issued by governmental entities that are not dependent in whole or in part on the profits of (or payments made by) a non-governmental entity, (5) any security (including debt securities) issued by another REIT, and (6) any debt instrument issued by a partnership if the partnership's income is of a nature that it would satisfy the 75% gross income test described above under “—Income Tests.” In applying the value prong of the 10% asset test, a debt security issued by a partnership is not taken into account to the extent, if any, of the REIT's proportionate interest in the equity and certain debt securities issued by that partnership.

We intend to continue to invest primarily in agency securities that are either pass-through certificates or CMOs. We expect that the agency securities will be treated either as interests in grantor trusts or as interests in REMICs for federal income tax purposes. In the case of an agency securities treated as interests in grantor trusts, we would be treated as owning an undivided beneficial ownership interest in the mortgage loans held by the grantor trust. Such mortgage loans will generally qualify as real estate assets to the extent that they are secured by real property. We expect that substantially all of our agency securities treated as interests in grantor trust will qualify as real estate assets. In the case of agency securities treated as interests in a REMIC, such interests will generally qualify as real estate assets and income derived from REMIC interests will generally be treated as qualifying income for purposes of the REIT income tests described above. If less than 95% of the assets of a REMIC are real estate assets, however, then only a proportionate part of our interest in the REMIC and income derived from the interest will qualify for purposes of the REIT asset and income tests.

We intend to enter into sale and repurchase agreements under which we would nominally sell certain of our agency securities to a counterparty and simultaneously enter into an agreement to repurchase the sold assets in exchange for a purchase price that reflects a financing charge. We believe that we would be treated for REIT asset and income test purposes as the owner of the agency securities that are the subject of any such agreement notwithstanding that such agreements may transfer record ownership of the assets to the counterparty during the term of the agreement. It is possible, however, that the IRS could assert that we did not own the agency securities during the term of the sale and repurchase agreement, in which case we could fail to qualify as a REIT.

We purchase and sell agency securities through TBAs and may continue to do so in the future. While there is no direct authority with respect to the qualification of TBAs as real estate assets or Government securities for purposes of the 75% asset test, we treat our TBAs as qualifying assets for purposes of the REIT asset tests, based on an opinion of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP substantially to the effect that, for purposes of the REIT asset tests, our ownership of a TBA should be treated as ownership of the underlying agency securities. Opinions of counsel are not binding on the IRS, and no assurance can be given that the IRS will not successfully challenge the conclusions set forth in such opinions. In addition, as noted above, the opinion of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP is based on various assumptions relating to our TBAs and is conditioned upon fact-based representations and covenants made by our management regarding our TBAs. No assurance can be given that the IRS would not assert that such assets are not qualifying assets. If the IRS were to successfully challenge the opinion of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, we could be subject to a penalty tax or we could fail to qualify as a REIT if a sufficient portion of our assets consists of TBAs.

No independent appraisals have been obtained to support our conclusions as to the value of our total assets or the value of any particular security or securities. Moreover, values of some assets, including instruments issued in securitization transactions, may not be susceptible to a precise determination, and values are subject to change in the future. Furthermore, the proper classification of an instrument as debt or equity for federal income tax purposes may be uncertain in some circumstances, which could affect the application of the REIT asset requirements. Accordingly, there can be no assurance that the IRS will not contend that our interests in our subsidiaries or in the securities of other issuers will not cause a violation of the REIT asset tests.

However, certain relief provisions are available to allow REITs to satisfy the asset requirements or to maintain REIT qualification notwithstanding certain violations of the asset and other requirements. One such provision allows a REIT which fails one or more of the asset requirements to nevertheless maintain its REIT qualification if (1) the REIT

provides the IRS with a description of each asset causing the failure, (2) the failure is due to reasonable cause and not willful neglect, (3) the REIT pays a tax equal to the greater of (a) \$50,000 per failure, and (b) the product of the net income generated by the assets that caused the failure multiplied by the highest applicable corporate tax rate (currently 35%), and (4) the REIT either disposes of the assets causing the failure within six months after the last day of the quarter in which it identifies the failure, or otherwise satisfies the relevant asset tests within that time frame.

In the case of de minimis violations of the 10% and 5% asset tests, a REIT may maintain its qualification despite a violation of such requirements if (1) the value of the assets causing the violation does not exceed the lesser of 1% of the REIT's total assets and \$10,000,000, and (2) the REIT either disposes of the assets causing the failure within six months after the last

day of the quarter in which it identifies the failure, or the relevant tests are otherwise satisfied within that time frame. If we should fail to satisfy the asset tests at the end of a calendar quarter, including any failure to satisfy the 75% asset test as a result of any investments in TBAs, such a failure would not cause us to lose our REIT qualification if we (1) satisfied the asset tests at the close of the preceding calendar quarter and (2) the discrepancy between the value of our assets and the asset requirements was not wholly or partly caused by an acquisition of non-qualifying assets, but instead arose from changes in the market value of our assets. If the condition described in (2) were not satisfied, we still could avoid disqualification by eliminating any discrepancy within 30 days after the close of the calendar quarter in which it arose or by making use of relief provisions described below.

Annual Distribution Requirements

In order to qualify as a REIT, we are required to distribute dividends, other than capital gain dividends, to our stockholders in an amount at least equal to:

(a) the sum of

(1) 90% of our “REIT taxable income,” computed without regard to our net capital gains and the deduction for dividends paid, and

(2) 90% of our net income, if any, (after tax) from foreclosure property (as described below), minus

(b) the sum of specified items of non-cash income.

We generally must make these distributions in the taxable year to which they relate, or in the following taxable year if declared before we timely file our tax return for the year and if paid with or before the first regular dividend payment after such declaration. In order for distributions to be counted as satisfying the annual distribution requirements for REITs, and to provide us with a tax deduction for us, the distributions must not be “preferential dividends.” A dividend is not a preferential dividend if the distribution is (1) pro rata among all outstanding shares of stock within a particular class, and (2) in accordance with the preferences among different classes of stock as set forth in our organizational documents.

To the extent that we distribute at least 90%, but less than 100%, of our “REIT taxable income,” as adjusted, we will be subject to tax at ordinary corporate tax rates on the retained portion. We may elect to retain, rather than distribute, our net long-term capital gains and pay tax on such gains. In this case, we could elect for our stockholders to include their proportionate shares of such undistributed long-term capital gains in income, and to receive a corresponding credit for their share of the tax that we paid. Our stockholders would then increase their adjusted basis of their stock by the difference between (a) the amounts of capital gain dividends that we designated and that they include in their taxable income, minus (b) the tax that we paid on their behalf with respect to that income.

To the extent that in the future we may have available net operating losses carried forward from prior tax years, such losses may reduce the amount of distributions that we must make in order to comply with the REIT distribution requirements. Such losses, however, will generally not affect the character, in the hands of our stockholders, of any distributions that are actually made as ordinary dividends or capital gains. See “—Taxation of Stockholders—Taxation of Taxable Domestic Stockholders—Distributions.”

If we should fail to distribute during each calendar year at least the sum of (a) 85% of our REIT ordinary income for such year, (b) 95% of our REIT capital gain net income for such year, and (c) any undistributed taxable income from prior periods, we would be subject to a non-deductible 4% excise tax on the excess of such required distribution over the sum of (x) the amounts actually distributed, plus (y) the amounts of income we retained and on which we have paid corporate income tax.

It is possible that, from time to time, we may not have sufficient cash to meet the distribution requirements due to timing differences between (a) our actual receipt of cash, including receipt of distributions from any subsidiaries, and (b) our inclusion of items in income for federal income tax purposes. Other potential sources of non-cash taxable income include:

- 1 loans or mortgage-backed securities held as assets that are issued at a discount and require the accrual of taxable economic interest in advance of receipt in cash; and

1 loans on which the borrower is permitted to defer cash payments of interest, and distressed loans on which we may be required to accrue taxable interest income even though the borrower is unable to make current servicing payments in cash.

In the event that such timing differences occur, in order to meet the distribution requirements, it might be necessary for us to arrange for short-term, or possibly long-term, borrowings, or to pay dividends in the form of taxable in-kind distributions of property.

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We may be able to rectify a failure to meet the distribution requirements for a year by paying “deficiency dividends” to stockholders in a later year, which may be included in our deduction for dividends paid for the earlier year. In this case, we may be able to avoid losing REIT qualification or being taxed on amounts distributed as deficiency dividends. We will be required to pay interest and a penalty based on the amount of any deduction taken for deficiency dividends.

Prohibited Transactions

Net income that we derive from a prohibited transaction is subject to a 100% tax. The term “prohibited transaction” generally includes a sale or other disposition of property (other than foreclosure property, as discussed below) that is held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business by us or by a borrower that has issued a shared appreciation mortgage or similar debt instrument to us. We intend to conduct our operations so that no asset that we own (or are treated as owning) will be treated as, or as having been, held for sale to customers, and that a sale of any such asset will not be treated as having been in the ordinary course of our business. Whether property is held “primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business” depends on the particular facts and circumstances. No assurance can be given that any property that we sell will not be treated as property held for sale to customers, or that we can comply with certain safe-harbor provisions of the Internal Revenue Code that would prevent such treatment. The 100% tax does not apply to gains from the sale of property that is held through a TRS or other taxable corporation, although such income will be subject to tax in the hands of the corporation at regular corporate rates. We intend to continue to structure our activities to avoid prohibited transaction characterization.

Foreclosure Property

Foreclosure property is real property and any personal property incident to such real property (1) that we acquire as the result of having bid in the property at foreclosure, or having otherwise reduced the property to ownership or possession by agreement or process of law, after a default (or upon imminent default) on a lease of the property or a mortgage loan held by us and secured by the property, (2) for which we acquired the related loan or lease at a time when default was not imminent or anticipated, and (3) with respect to which we made a proper election to treat the property as foreclosure property. We generally will be subject to tax at the maximum corporate rate (currently 35%) on any net income from foreclosure property, including any gain from the disposition of the foreclosure property, other than income that would otherwise be qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test. Any gain from the sale of property for which a foreclosure property election has been made will not be subject to the 100% tax on gains from prohibited transactions described above, even if the property would otherwise constitute inventory or dealer property. Because we will invest primarily in agency securities, we do not anticipate receiving any income from foreclosure property that does not qualify for purposes of the 75% gross income test.

Derivatives and Hedging Transactions

We and our subsidiaries may enter into hedging transactions with respect to interest rate exposure on one or more of our assets or liabilities. Any such hedging transactions could take a variety of forms, including the use of derivative instruments such as interest rate swap contracts, interest rate cap or floor contracts, futures or forward contracts, and options. Except to the extent provided by Treasury regulations, any income from a hedging transaction we enter into (1) in the normal course of our business primarily to manage risk of interest rate or price changes or currency fluctuations with respect to borrowings made or to be made, or ordinary obligations incurred or to be incurred, to acquire or carry real estate assets, which is clearly identified as specified in Treasury regulations before the close of the day on which it was acquired, originated, or entered into, including gain from the sale or disposition of such a transaction, and (2) primarily to manage risk of currency fluctuations with respect to any item of income or gain that would be qualifying income under the 75% or 95% gross income tests which is clearly identified as such before the close of the day on which it was acquired, originated, or entered into, will not constitute gross income for purposes of the 75% or 95% gross income test. To the extent that we enter into other types of hedging transactions, the income from those transactions is likely to be treated as non-qualifying income for purposes of both of the 75% and 95% gross income tests. We intend to structure any hedging transactions in a manner that does not jeopardize our qualification as a REIT. We may conduct some or all of our hedging activities (including hedging activities relating to currency risk) through our TRS or other corporate entity, the income from which may be subject to federal income tax, rather than by participating in the arrangements directly or through pass-through subsidiaries. No assurance can

be given, however, that our hedging activities will not give rise to income that does not qualify for purposes of either or both of the REIT gross income tests, or that our hedging activities will not adversely affect our ability to satisfy the REIT qualification requirements.

Failure to Qualify

If we fail to satisfy one or more requirements for REIT qualification other than the income or asset tests, we could avoid disqualification if our failure is due to reasonable cause and not to willful neglect and we pay a penalty of \$50,000 for each such failure. Relief provisions are available for failures of the income tests and asset tests, as described above in “—Income Tests” and “—Asset Tests.”

If we fail to qualify for taxation as a REIT in any taxable year, and the relief provisions described above do not apply, we would be subject to tax, including any applicable alternative minimum tax, on our taxable income at regular corporate rates. We cannot deduct distributions to stockholders in any year in which we are not a REIT, nor would we be required to make distributions in such a year. In this situation, to the extent of current and accumulated earnings and profits, distributions to most domestic stockholders that are individuals, trusts and estates will generally be taxable at capital gains rates (through 2012). In addition, subject to the limitations of the Internal Revenue Code, corporate distributees may be eligible for the dividends received deduction. Unless we are entitled to relief under specific statutory provisions, we would also be disqualified from re-electing to be taxed as a REIT for the four taxable years following the year during which we lost qualification. It is not possible to state whether, in all circumstances, we would be entitled to this statutory relief.

Taxation of Stockholders

Taxation of Taxable Domestic Stockholders

Distributions. So long as we qualify as a REIT, the distributions that we make to our taxable domestic stockholders out of current or accumulated earnings and profits that we do not designate as capital gain dividends will generally be taken into account by stockholders as ordinary income and will not be eligible for the dividends received deduction for corporations. With limited exceptions, our dividends are not eligible for taxation at the preferential income tax rates (i.e., the 15% maximum federal rate through 2012) for qualified dividends received by most domestic stockholders that are individuals, trusts and estates from taxable C corporations. Such stockholders, however, are taxed at the preferential rates on dividends designated by and received from REITs to the extent that the dividends are attributable to:

- 1 income retained by the REIT in the prior taxable year on which the REIT was subject to corporate level income tax (less the amount of tax);
- 1 dividends received by the REIT from TRSs or other taxable C corporations; or
- 1 income in the prior taxable year from the sales of “built-in gain” property acquired by the REIT from C corporations in carryover basis transactions (less the amount of corporate tax on such income).

Distributions that we designate as capital gain dividends will generally be taxed to our stockholders as long-term capital gains, to the extent that such distributions do not exceed our actual net capital gain for the taxable year, without regard to the period for which the stockholder that receives such distribution has held its stock. We may elect to retain and pay taxes on some or all of our net long-term capital gains, in which case provisions of the Internal Revenue Code will treat our stockholders as having received, solely for tax purposes, our undistributed capital gains, and the stockholders will receive a corresponding credit for taxes that we paid on such undistributed capital gains. See “—Taxation of American Capital Agency Corp.—Annual Distribution Requirements.” Corporate stockholders may be required to treat up to 20% of some capital gain dividends as ordinary income. Long-term capital gains are generally taxable at maximum federal rates of 15% (through 2012) in the case of stockholders that are individuals, trusts and estates, and 35% in the case of stockholders that are corporations. Capital gains attributable to the sale of depreciable real property held for more than 12 months are subject to a 25% maximum federal income tax rate for taxpayers who are taxed as individuals, to the extent of previously claimed depreciation deductions.

Distributions in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits will generally represent a return of capital and will not be taxable to a stockholder to the extent that the amount of such distributions does not exceed the adjusted basis of the stockholder's shares in respect of which the distributions were made. Rather, the distribution will reduce the adjusted basis of the stockholder's shares. To the extent that such distributions exceed the adjusted basis of a stockholder's shares, the stockholder generally must include such distributions in income as long-term capital gain, or short-term capital gain if the shares have been held for one year or less. In determining the extent to which a distribution will be treated as being made from our earnings and profits, our earnings and profits will be allocated on a pro rata basis, first to distributions with respect to our Series A Preferred Stock, and then to our common stock. In

addition, any dividend that we declare in October, November or December of any year and that is payable to a stockholder of record on a specified date in any such month will be treated as both paid by us and received by the stockholder on December 31 of such year, provided that we actually pay the dividend before the end of January of the following calendar year.

To the extent that we have available net operating losses and capital losses carried forward from prior tax years, such losses may reduce the amount of distributions that we must make in order to comply with the REIT distribution requirements. See “—Taxation of American Capital Agency Corp.—Annual Distribution Requirements.” Such losses, however, are not passed through to stockholders and do not offset income of stockholders from other sources, nor would such losses affect the character of any distributions that we make, which are generally subject to tax in the hands of stockholders to the extent that we have current or accumulated earnings and profits.

Dispositions of American Capital Agency Corp. Stock. In general, capital gains recognized by individuals, trusts and estates upon the sale or disposition of our stock will be subject to a maximum federal income tax rate of 15% (through 2012) if the stock is held for more than one year, and will be taxed at ordinary income rates (of up to 35% through 2012) if the stock is held for one year or less. Gains recognized by stockholders that are corporations are subject to federal income tax at a maximum rate of 35%, whether or not such gains are classified as long-term capital gains. Capital losses recognized by a stockholder upon the disposition of our stock that was held for more than one year at the time of disposition will be considered long-term capital losses, and are generally available only to offset capital gain income of the stockholder but not ordinary income (except in the case of individuals, who may offset up to \$3,000 of ordinary income each year). In addition, any loss upon a sale or exchange of shares of our stock by a stockholder who has held the shares for six months or less, after applying holding period rules, will be treated as a long-term capital loss to the extent of distributions that we make that are required to be treated by the stockholder as long-term capital gain.

If an investor recognizes a loss upon a subsequent disposition of our stock or other securities in an amount that exceeds a prescribed threshold, it is possible that the provisions of Treasury regulations involving “reportable transactions” could apply, with a resulting requirement to separately disclose the loss-generating transaction to the IRS. These regulations, though directed towards “tax shelters,” are broadly written and apply to transactions that would not typically be considered tax shelters. The Internal Revenue Code imposes significant penalties for failure to comply with these requirements. You should consult your tax advisor concerning any possible disclosure obligation with respect to the receipt or disposition of our stock or securities or transactions that we might undertake directly or indirectly. Moreover, you should be aware that we and other participants in the transactions in which we are involved (including their advisors) might be subject to disclosure or other requirements pursuant to these regulations.

Passive Activity Losses and Investment Interest Limitations. Distributions that we make and gain arising from the sale or exchange by a domestic stockholder of our stock will not be treated as passive activity income. As a result, stockholders will not be able to apply any “passive losses” against income or gain relating to our stock. To the extent that distributions we make do not constitute a return of capital, they will be treated as investment income for purposes of computing the investment interest limitation.

Medicare Tax. For taxable years beginning after December 31, 2012, certain U.S. holders who are individuals, estates or trusts and whose income exceeds certain thresholds will be required to pay a 3.8% Medicare tax on dividend and other income, including capital gains from the sale or other disposition of our common stock.

Taxation of Foreign Stockholders

The following is a summary of certain U.S. federal income and estate tax consequences of the ownership and disposition of our stock applicable to non-U.S. holders. A “non-U.S. holder” is any person other than:

- 1 a citizen or resident of the United States;
- 1 a corporation (or entity treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes) created or organized in the United States or under the laws of the United States, or of any state thereof, or the District of Columbia;
- 1 an estate, the income of which is includable in gross income for U.S. federal income tax purposes regardless of its source; or
- 1 a trust if a United States court is able to exercise primary supervision over the administration of such trust and one or more United States fiduciaries have the authority to control all substantial decisions of the trust.

If a partnership, including for this purpose any entity that is treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes, holds our common stock, the tax treatment of a partner in the partnership will generally depend upon the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. An investor that is a partnership and the partners in such partnership should consult their tax advisors about the U.S. federal income tax consequences of the acquisition, ownership and disposition of our common stock.

The following discussion is based on current law, and is for general information only. It addresses only selected, and not all, aspects of U.S. federal income and estate taxation.

Ordinary Dividends. The portion of dividends received by non-U.S. holders that is (1) payable out of our earnings and profits, (2) which is not attributable to our capital gains and (3) which is not effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business of the non-U.S. holder, will be subject to U.S. withholding tax at the rate of 30%, unless reduced or eliminated by treaty.

In general, non-U.S. holders will not be considered to be engaged in a U.S. trade or business solely as a result of their ownership of our stock. In cases where the dividend income from a non-U.S. holder's investment in our stock is, or is treated as, effectively connected with the non-U.S. holder's conduct of a U.S. trade or business, the non-U.S. holder generally will be subject to U.S. federal income tax at graduated rates, in the same manner as domestic stockholders are taxed with respect to such dividends. Such income must generally be reported on a U.S. income tax return filed by or on behalf of the non-U.S. holder. The income may also be subject to the 30% branch profits tax in the case of a non-U.S. holder that is a corporation.

Non-Dividend Distributions. Unless our stock constitutes a U.S. real property interest (a "USRPI"), distributions that we make which are not dividends out of our earnings and profits will not be subject to U.S. income tax. If we cannot determine at the time a distribution is made whether or not the distribution will exceed current and accumulated earnings and profits, the distribution will be subject to withholding at the rate applicable to dividends. The non-U.S. holder may seek a refund from the IRS of any amounts withheld if it is subsequently determined that the distribution was, in fact, in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits. If our stock constitutes a USRPI, as described below, distributions that we make in excess of the sum of (a) the stockholder's proportionate share of our earnings and profits, plus (b) the stockholder's basis in its stock, will be taxed under the Foreign Investment in Real Property Tax Act of 1980 ("FIRPTA"), at the rate of tax, including any applicable capital gains rates, that would apply to a domestic stockholder of the same type (e.g., an individual or a corporation, as the case may be), and the collection of the tax will be enforced by a refundable withholding at a rate of 10% of the amount by which the distribution exceeds the stockholder's share of our earnings and profits.

Capital Gain Dividends. Under FIRPTA, a distribution that we make to a non-U.S. holder, to the extent attributable to gains from dispositions of USRPIs that we held directly or through pass-through subsidiaries, or USRPI capital gains, will, except as described below, be considered effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business of the non-U.S. holder and will be subject to U.S. income tax at the rates applicable to U.S. individuals or corporations, without regard to whether we designate the distribution as a capital gain dividend. See above under "—Taxation of Foreign Stockholders—Ordinary Dividends," for a discussion of the consequences of income that is effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business. In addition, we will be required to withhold tax equal to 35% of the maximum amount that could have been designated as USRPI capital gains dividends. Distributions subject to FIRPTA may also be subject to a 30% branch profits tax in the hands of a non-U.S. holder that is a corporation. A distribution is not a USRPI capital gain if we held an interest in the underlying asset solely as a creditor. Capital gain dividends received by a non-U.S. holder that are attributable to dispositions of our assets other than USRPIs are not subject to U.S. federal income or withholding tax, unless (1) the gain is effectively connected with the non-U.S. holder's U.S. trade or business, in which case the non-U.S. holder would be subject to the same treatment as U.S. holders with respect to such gain, or (2) the non-U.S. holder is a nonresident alien individual who was present in the United States for 183 days or more during the taxable year and has a "tax home" in the United States, in which case the non-U.S. holder will incur a 30% tax on his capital gains.

A capital gain dividend that would otherwise have been treated as a USRPI capital gain will not be so treated or be subject to FIRPTA, and generally will not be treated as income that is effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business, and instead will be treated in the same manner as an ordinary dividend (see "—Taxation of Foreign Stockholders—Ordinary Dividends"), if (1) the capital gain dividend is received with respect to a class of stock that is regularly traded on an established securities market located in the United States, and (2) the recipient non-U.S. holder does not own more than 5% of that class of stock at any time during the year ending on the date on which the capital gain dividend is received. We anticipate that our common stock will continue to be "regularly traded" on an established securities market.

Dispositions of American Capital Agency Corp. Stock. Unless our stock constitutes a USRPI, a sale of our stock by a non-U.S. holder generally will not be subject to U.S. taxation under FIRPTA. Our stock will not be treated as a USRPI if less than 50% of our assets throughout a prescribed testing period consist of interests in real property located within the United States, excluding, for this purpose, interests in real property solely in a capacity as a creditor. It is not currently anticipated that our stock will constitute a USRPI. However, we cannot assure you that our stock will not

become a USRPI.

Even if the foregoing 50% test is not met, our stock nonetheless will not constitute a USRPI if we are a “domestically controlled qualified investment entity.” A domestically controlled qualified investment entity includes a REIT, less than 50% of value of which is held directly or indirectly by non-U.S. holders at all times during a specified testing period. We believe that we are, and we will be, a domestically controlled qualified investment entity, and that a sale of our stock should not be subject to taxation under FIRPTA. However, no assurance can be given that we are or will remain a domestically controlled qualified investment entity.

In the event that we are not a domestically controlled qualified investment entity, but our stock is “regularly traded,” as defined by applicable Treasury regulations, on an established securities market, a non-U.S. holder's sale of our common stock nonetheless would not be subject to tax under FIRPTA as a sale of a USRPI, provided that the selling non-U.S. holder held 5% or less of our outstanding common stock any time during the one-year period ending on the date of the sale. We expect that our

common stock will continue to be regularly traded on an established securities market.

If gain on the sale of our stock were subject to taxation under FIRPTA, the non-U.S. holder would be required to file a U.S. federal income tax return and would be subject to the same treatment as a domestic stockholder with respect to such gain, subject to applicable alternative minimum tax and a special alternative minimum tax in the case of non-resident alien individuals, and the purchaser of the stock could be required to withhold 10% of the purchase price and remit such amount to the IRS.

Gain from the sale of our stock that would not otherwise be subject to FIRPTA will nonetheless be taxable in the United States to a non-U.S. holder in two cases: (1) if the non-U.S. holder's investment in our stock is effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business conducted by such non-U.S. holder, the non-U.S. holder will be subject to the same treatment as a domestic stockholder with respect to such gain, or (2) if the non-U.S. holder is a nonresident alien individual who was present in the United States for 183 days or more during the taxable year and has a "tax home" in the United States, the nonresident alien individual will be subject to a 30% tax on the individual's capital gain. In addition, even if we are a domestically controlled qualified investment entity, upon disposition of our stock (subject to the 5% exception applicable to "regularly traded" stock described above), a non-U.S. holder may be treated as having gain from the sale or exchange of a USRPI if the non-U.S. holder (1) disposes of our common stock within a 30-day period preceding the ex-dividend date of a distribution, any portion of which, but for the disposition, would have been treated as gain from the sale or exchange of a USRPI and (2) acquires, or enters into a contract or option to acquire, other shares of our common stock within 30 days after such ex-dividend date.

Other Withholding Rules. After December 31, 2013, withholding at a rate of 30% will be required on dividends in respect of, and after December 31, 2014, withholding at a rate of 30% will be required on gross proceeds from the sale of, shares of our stock held by or through certain foreign financial institutions (including investment funds), unless such institution enters into an agreement with the Secretary of the Treasury to report, on an annual basis, information with respect to shares in, and accounts maintained by, the institution to the extent such shares or accounts are held by certain U.S. persons or by certain non-U.S. entities that are wholly or partially owned by U.S. persons. Accordingly, the entity through which our shares are held will affect the determination of whether such withholding is required. Similarly, after December 31, 2013, dividends in respect of, and after December 31, 2014, gross proceeds from the sale of, our shares held by an investor that is a non-financial non-U.S. entity will be subject to withholding at a rate of 30%, unless such entity either (i) certifies to us that such entity does not have any "substantial U.S. owners" or (ii) provides certain information regarding the entity's "substantial U.S. owners," which we will in turn provide to the Secretary of the Treasury. Non-U.S. holders are encouraged to consult with their tax advisers regarding the possible implications of these rules on their investment in our common stock.

Estate Tax. If our stock is owned or treated as owned by an individual who is not a citizen or resident (as specially defined for U.S. federal estate tax purposes) of the United States at the time of such individual's death, the stock will be includable in the individual's gross estate for U.S. federal estate tax purposes, unless an applicable estate tax treaty provides otherwise, and may therefore be subject to U.S. federal estate tax.

Taxation of Tax-Exempt Stockholders

Tax-exempt entities, including qualified employee pension and profit sharing trusts and individual retirement accounts, generally are exempt from federal income taxation. However, they may be subject to taxation on their unrelated business taxable income ("UBTI"). While some investments in real estate may generate UBTI, the IRS has ruled that dividend distributions from a REIT to a tax-exempt entity do not constitute UBTI. Based on that ruling, and provided that (1) a tax-exempt stockholder has not held our stock as "debt financed property" within the meaning of the Internal Revenue Code (i.e., where the acquisition or holding of the property is financed through a borrowing by the tax-exempt stockholder), and (2) our stock is not otherwise used in an unrelated trade or business, distributions that we make and income from the sale of our stock generally should not give rise to UBTI to a tax-exempt stockholder. Tax-exempt stockholders that are social clubs, voluntary employee benefit associations, supplemental unemployment benefit trusts, and qualified group legal services plans exempt from federal income taxation under sections 501(c)(7), (c)(9), (c)(17) and (c)(20) of the Internal Revenue Code are subject to different UBTI rules, which generally require such stockholders to characterize distributions that we make as UBTI.

In certain circumstances, a pension trust that owns more than 10% of our stock could be required to treat a percentage of the dividends as UBTI if we are a “pension-held REIT.” We will not be a pension-held REIT unless (1) we are required to “look through” one or more of our pension trust stockholders in order to satisfy the REIT “closely-held” test, and (2) either (i) one pension trust owns more than 25% of the value of our stock, or (ii) one or more pension trusts, each individually holding more than 10% of the value of our stock, collectively owns more than 50% of the value of our stock. Certain restrictions on ownership and transfer of our stock generally should prevent a tax-exempt entity from owning more than 10% of the value of our stock and generally should prevent us from becoming a pension-held REIT.

Tax-exempt stockholders are urged to consult their tax advisors regarding the federal, state, local and foreign income and other tax consequences of owning American Capital Agency Corp. stock.

Other Tax Considerations

Legislative or Other Actions Affecting REITs

The present federal income tax treatment of REITs may be modified, possibly with retroactive effect, by legislative, judicial or administrative action at any time. The REIT rules are constantly under review by persons involved in the legislative process and by the IRS and the U.S. Treasury Department which may result in statutory changes as well as revisions to regulations and interpretations. Changes to the federal tax laws and interpretations thereof could adversely affect an investment in our common stock.

State, Local and Foreign Taxes

We and our subsidiaries and stockholders may be subject to state, local or foreign taxation in various jurisdictions including those in which we or they transact business, own property or reside. We may own properties located in numerous jurisdictions, and may be required to file tax returns in some or all of those jurisdictions. Our state, local or foreign tax treatment and that of our stockholders may not conform to the federal income tax treatment discussed above. We may pay foreign property taxes, and dispositions of foreign property or operations involving, or investments in, foreign property may give rise to foreign income or other tax liability in amounts that could be substantial. Any foreign taxes that we incur do not pass through to stockholders as a credit against their U.S. federal income tax liability. Prospective investors should consult their tax advisors regarding the application and effect of state, local and foreign income and other tax laws on an investment in our stock.