

Risk Factors Comparison 2023-05-25 to 2022-05-27 Form: 10-K

Legend: **New Text** ~~Removed Text~~ Unchanged Text **Moved Text Section**

Risks Related to Our Business. **Changing market conditions can adversely affect our business in many ways, including by reducing the volume of the transactions involving our business, which could materially reduce our revenue. As a financial services firm, we are materially affected by conditions in the global financial markets and economic conditions throughout the world. Unfavorable market or economic conditions may adversely** affect our businesses; in particular, where revenue generated is directly related to the volume and size of the transactions in which we are involved. For example, weak market or economic conditions may adversely affect our CF and FVA groups because, in an economic downturn, the volume and size of transactions may decrease, thereby reducing the demand for our M & A, capital raising and opinion advisory services and increasing price competition among financial services companies seeking such engagements. Moreover, in the period following an economic downturn, the volume and size of transactions typically takes time to recover and lags a recovery in market and economic conditions. ~~In particular, our clients engaging in M & A transactions often rely on access to the credit and / or capital markets to finance their transactions. The uncertainty of available credit and interest rates and the volatility of the capital markets and the fact that we do not provide financing or otherwise commit capital to clients can adversely affect the size, volume, timing and ability of such clients to successfully complete M & A transactions and adversely affect our CF and FVA groups. In addition, our profitability would be adversely affected due to our fixed costs and the possibility that we would be unable to reduce our variable costs without reducing revenue or within a timeframe sufficient to offset any decreases in revenue relating to changes in market and economic conditions.~~ On the other hand, strong market or economic conditions may adversely affect our FR group. In a strong **economic** environment, the volume and size of recapitalization and restructuring transactions may decrease, thereby reducing the demand for the services provided by our FR business segment and increasing price competition among financial services companies seeking such engagements. Changes in market and economic conditions are expected to impact our businesses in different ways, and we may not be able to benefit from such changes. Further, our business, financial condition and results of operations could be adversely affected by changing market or economic conditions. Our profitability may also be adversely affected by changes in market and economic conditions because we may not be able to reduce certain fixed costs within a time frame sufficient to match any decreases in revenue. The future market and economic climate may deteriorate because of many factors beyond our control, including rising interest rates or inflation, terrorism or political uncertainty. For example, the **U.S. Federal Reserve raised the federal funds interest rate in March 2022 and May 2022 and has signaled concerns with respect to inflation. In response, market interest rates have risen in recent periods. While the timing and impact of rising interest rates are unknown, a continued increase in market interest rates could have an adverse effect on our transaction volumes, results of operations and financial condition** A substantial portion of our revenue is derived from advisory engagements in our CF and FR business segments, including engagements under which our fees include a significant component based upon goals, such as the completion of a transaction. As a result, our revenue and profits are highly volatile on a quarterly basis and may cause the price of our Class A common stock to fluctuate and decline. Revenue and profits derived from our CF and FR business segments can be highly volatile. We derive a substantial portion of our revenue from advisory fees, which are mainly generated at key transaction milestones, such as closing, the timing of which is outside of our control. In many cases, for advisory engagements that do not result in the successful consummation of a transaction, we are not paid a fee other than the reimbursement of certain out-of-pocket expenses and, in some cases, a modest retainer, despite having devoted considerable resources to these transactions. The achievement of these contractually-defined goals is often impacted by factors outside of our control, such as market conditions and the decisions and actions of our clients and interested third parties. For example, a client could delay or terminate an acquisition transaction because of a failure to agree upon final terms with the counterparty, failure to obtain necessary regulatory consents or board or shareholder approvals, failure to secure necessary financing, adverse market conditions or because the target's business is experiencing unexpected financial problems. Anticipated bidders for client assets during a restructuring transaction may not materialize or our client may not be able to restructure its operations or indebtedness due to a failure to reach agreement with its principal creditors. Because these fees are contingent, revenue on such engagements, which is recognized when all revenue recognition criteria are met, is not certain and the timing of receipt is difficult to predict and may not occur evenly throughout the year. We expect that we will continue to rely on advisory fees, including fees based upon goals, such as the completion of a transaction, for a substantial portion of our revenue for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, a decline in our advisory engagements or the market for advisory services would adversely affect our business. In addition, our financial results will likely fluctuate from quarter to quarter based on when fees are earned, and high levels of revenue in one quarter will not necessarily be predictive of continued high levels of revenue in future periods. Should these contingent fee arrangements represent a greater percentage of our business in the future, we may experience increased volatility in our working capital requirements and greater variations in our quarter-to-quarter results, which could affect the price of our Class A common stock. Because advisory revenue can be volatile and represents a significant portion of our total revenue, we may experience greater variations in our revenue and profits than other larger, more diversified competitors in the financial services industry. Fluctuations in our quarterly financial results could, in turn, lead to large adverse movements in the price of our Class A common stock or increased volatility in our stock price generally. Our acquisitions, joint ventures, and strategic investments may result in additional risks and uncertainties in our businesses. In addition to recruiting and organic expansion, we have grown, and intend to continue to grow, our core businesses through acquisitions, joint ventures and strategic investments. We regularly evaluate opportunities to acquire other businesses. Unless and until acquisitions of other

businesses generate meaningful revenues, the purchase prices we pay to acquire such businesses could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations. If we acquire a business, we may be unable to manage it profitably or successfully integrate its operations with our own. Moreover, we may be unable to realize the financial, operational, and other benefits we anticipate from acquisitions. Competition for future acquisition opportunities in our markets could increase the price we pay for businesses we acquire and could reduce the number of potential acquisition targets. Further, acquisitions may involve a number of special financial and business risks, including expenses related to any potential acquisition from which we may withdraw, diversion of our management' s time, attention, and resources, decreased utilization during the integration process, loss of key acquired personnel, difficulties in integrating diverse corporate cultures, increased costs to improve or integrate personnel and financial, accounting, technology and other systems, including compliance with the Sarbanes- Oxley Act, dilutive issuances of equity securities, including convertible debt securities, incurrence of debt, the assumption of legal liabilities, amortization of acquired intangible assets, potential write- offs related to the impairment of goodwill, and additional conflicts of interest. For example, in October 2021 we acquired GCA Corporation for approximately \$ 589. 6 million, which significantly expanded our presence in Asia and Europe and there can be no assurance that we will be able to successfully integrate GCA Corporation with our business or otherwise realize the expected benefits of the acquisition. In addition, even if our operations are integrated successfully, we may not realize the full benefits of the acquisition, including the synergies, operating efficiencies, or sales or growth opportunities that are expected. If we are unable to successfully manage these risks, we will not be able to implement our growth strategy, which ultimately could materially adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations. In the case of joint ventures, we are subject to additional risks and uncertainties relating to governance and controls. For example, we may be dependent upon, and subject to, liability, losses or reputational damage relating to personnel, controls and systems that are not fully under our control. In addition, disagreements between us and our joint venture partners may negatively impact our business and profitability. Goodwill and other intangible assets represent a significant portion of our assets, and an impairment of these assets could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations. Goodwill and other intangible assets represent a significant portion of our assets, and totaled \$ 1. 32-29 billion as of March 31, 2022-2023. Goodwill is the excess of cost over the fair market value of net assets acquired in business combinations. We review goodwill and intangible assets at least annually for impairment. We may need to perform impairment tests more frequently if events occur or circumstances indicate that the carrying amount of these assets may not be recoverable. These events or circumstances could include a significant change in the business climate, attrition of key personnel, a prolonged decline in our stock price and market capitalization, legal factors, operating performance indicators, competition, sale or disposition of a significant portion of one of our businesses and other factors. Although we determined that it is not more likely than not that the fair values of our goodwill and intangible assets were less than their carrying values during fiscal 2023 and fiscal 2022 and fiscal 2021, annual impairment reviews of indefinite- lived intangible assets or any future impairment of goodwill or other intangible assets would result in a non- cash charge against earnings, which would adversely affect our results of operations. The valuation of the reporting units requires judgment in estimating future cash flows, discount rates and other factors. In making these judgments, we evaluate the financial health of our reporting units, including such factors as market performance, changes in our client base and projected growth rates. Because these factors are ever changing, due to market and general business conditions, our goodwill and indefinite- lived intangible assets may be impaired in future periods. Our international operations are subject to certain risks, which may affect our revenue. In fiscal 2022-2023, we earned approximately 26-29% of our revenue from our international operations. We intend to grow our non- United States business, including growth into new regions with which we have less familiarity and experience, and this growth is important to our overall success. For example, the acquisition of GCA Corporation has greatly expanded our international presence in Asia and Europe. In addition, many of our larger clients are non- United States entities. Our international operations carry special financial and business risks, which could include the following: • greater difficulties in managing and staffing foreign operations; • fluctuations in foreign currency exchange rates that could adversely affect our results; • unexpected and costly changes in trading policies, regulatory requirements, tariffs and other barriers; • cultural and language barriers and the need to adopt different business practices in different geographic areas; • longer transaction cycles; • higher operating costs; • local labor conditions and regulations; • adverse consequences or restrictions on the repatriation of earnings; • potentially adverse tax consequences, such as trapped foreign losses; • potentially less stable political and economic environments; • terrorism, political hostilities, war and other civil disturbances or other catastrophic events, such as the recent Russian invasion of Ukraine and the resulting war, that reduce business activity; and • difficulty collecting fees. As part of our day- to- day operations outside the United States, we are required to create compensation programs, employment policies, compliance policies and procedures and other administrative programs that comply with the laws of multiple countries. We also must communicate and monitor standards and directives across our global operations. Our failure to successfully manage and grow our geographically diverse operations could impair our ability to react quickly to changing business and market conditions and to enforce compliance with non- United States standards and procedures. Any payment of distributions, loans or advances to and from our subsidiaries could be subject to restrictions on, or taxation of, dividends or repatriation of earnings under applicable local law, monetary transfer restrictions, foreign currency exchange regulations in the jurisdictions in which our subsidiaries operate or other restrictions imposed by current or future agreements, including debt instruments, to which our non- United States subsidiaries may be a party. Our business, financial condition and / or results of operations could be adversely impacted, possibly materially, if we are unable to successfully manage these and other risks of international operations in a volatile environment. If our international business increases relative to our total business, these factors could have a more pronounced effect on our operating results or growth prospects. In recent years, the United States Department of Justice and the SEC have devoted greater resources to enforcement of the FCPA. In addition, the United Kingdom has significantly expanded the reach of its anti- bribery laws. While we have developed and implemented policies and procedures designed to ensure strict compliance by us and our personnel with

the FCPA and other anti-corruption laws, such policies and procedures may not be effective in all instances to prevent violations. Any determination that we have violated the FCPA or other applicable anti-corruption laws could subject us to, among other things, civil and criminal penalties, material fines, profit disgorgement, injunctions on future conduct, securities litigation and a general loss of investor confidence, any one of which could adversely affect our business prospects, financial condition, results of operations or the market value of our Class A common stock. Fluctuations in foreign currency exchange rates could adversely affect our results. Because our financial statements are denominated in United States dollars and we receive a portion of our net revenue in other currencies, we are exposed to fluctuations in foreign currencies. In addition, we pay certain of our expenses in such currencies. Fluctuations in foreign currency exchange rates led to a net loss in cash of \$ (12.1) million for fiscal 2023, compared to a net loss in cash of \$ (16.8) million for fiscal 2022, compared to a net gain in cash of \$ 13.2 million for fiscal 2021. In particular, we are exposed to the Euro and the pound sterling, and the weakening of the Euro and other currencies relative to the United States dollar has had, and may continue to have, an adverse effect on our revenue. From time to time, we have entered into transactions to hedge our exposure to certain foreign currency fluctuations through the use of derivative instruments or other methods. Notwithstanding our entry into such hedge transactions, a depreciation of any of the currencies to which we are exposed relative to the United States dollar could result in an adverse impact to our business, financial condition, results of operations and / or cash flows. The cost of compliance with international broker-dealer, employment, labor, benefits, and tax regulations may adversely affect our business and hamper our ability to expand internationally. Because we operate our business both in the United States and internationally, we are subject to many distinct securities, employment, labor, benefits and tax laws in each country in which we operate, including regulations affecting our employment practices and our relations with our employees and service providers. If we are required to comply with new regulations or new interpretations of existing regulations, or if we are unable to comply with these regulations or interpretations, our business could be adversely affected or the cost of compliance may make it difficult to expand into new international markets. Additionally, our competitiveness in international markets may be adversely affected by regulations requiring, among other things, the awarding of contracts to local contractors, the employment of local citizens and / or the purchase of services from local businesses or favoring or requiring local ownership. Our ability to retain our Managing Directors and our other senior professionals, as well as our ability to successfully identify, recruit and develop talent, is critical to the success of our business. We depend on the efforts and reputations of our senior management and financial professionals. Our Managing Directors' and other senior professionals' reputations and relationships with clients and potential clients are critical elements in the success of our business. Our future success depends to a substantial degree on our ability to retain qualified management and financial professionals within our organization, including our Managing Directors. In addition, our future growth will depend on, among other things, our ability to successfully identify and recruit individuals and teams to join our firm. It typically takes time for these financial professionals to become profitable and effective. During that time, we may incur significant expenses and expend significant time and resources toward training, integration and business development aimed at developing this new talent. However, we may not be successful in our efforts to identify, recruit, train and retain the required personnel as the market for qualified investment bankers is extremely competitive. Our investment bankers possess substantial experience and expertise and have strong relationships with our advisory clients. As a result, the loss of these financial professionals could jeopardize our relationships with clients and result in the loss of client engagements. For example, if our Managing Directors or other senior professionals, including our executive officers, or groups of professionals, were to join or form a competing firm, some of our current clients could choose to use the services of that competitor rather than our services. Managing Directors and other senior professionals have left Houlihan Lokey in the past and others may do so in the future, and the departure of any of these senior professionals may have an adverse impact on our business. Our compensation arrangements and post-employment restriction agreements with our Managing Directors and other professionals may not provide sufficient incentives or protections to prevent these professionals from resigning to join our competitors. In addition, some of our competitors have more resources than we do, which may allow them to attract some of our existing employees by offering superior compensation and benefits or otherwise. The departure of a number of Managing Directors or groups of senior professionals could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations. Changing market conditions can adversely affect....., results of operations and financial condition. We are subject to reputational and legal risk arising from, among other things, actual or alleged employee misconduct, conflicts of interest, failure to meet client expectations or other operational failures. As a professional services firm, our ability to secure new engagements is substantially dependent on our reputation and the individual reputations of our financial professionals. Any factor that diminishes our reputation or that of our financial professionals, including not meeting client expectations or actual or alleged misconduct by our financial professionals, including misuse of confidential information, could make it substantially more difficult for us to attract new engagements and clients. In addition, we face the possibility of an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest where we represent a client on a transaction in which an existing client is a party. We may be asked by two potential clients to act on their behalf on the same transaction, including by two clients as potential buyers in the same acquisition transaction. In each of these situations, we face the risk that our current policies, controls and procedures may not timely identify or appropriately manage such conflicts of interest. Conflicts may also arise from investments or activities of employees outside their business activities on behalf of the Company. It is possible that actual, potential or perceived conflicts could give rise to client dissatisfaction, litigation or regulatory enforcement actions. Appropriately identifying and managing actual or perceived conflicts of interest is complex and difficult, and our reputation could be damaged if we fail, or appear to fail, to deal appropriately with one or more potential or actual conflicts of interest. Regulatory scrutiny of, or litigation in connection with, conflicts of interest could have a material adverse effect on our reputation which could materially adversely affect our business in a number of ways, including a reluctance of some potential clients and counterparties to do business with us. Further, because we provide our services primarily in connection with significant or complex transactions, disputes or other matters that usually involve confidential and sensitive

information or are adversarial, and because our work is the product of myriad judgments of our financial professionals and other staff operating under significant time and other pressures, we may not always perform to the standards expected by our clients. In addition, we may face reputational damage from, among other things, litigation against us, our failure to protect confidential information. There is also a risk that our employees could engage in misconduct that could adversely affect our business. If our employees were to improperly use or disclose confidential information provided by our clients, we could be subject to regulatory sanctions and legal liability and suffer serious harm to our reputation, financial position, current client relationships and ability to attract future clients. It is not always possible to deter employee misconduct, and the precautions we take to detect and prevent misconduct may not be effective in all cases. In addition, our financial professionals and other employees are responsible for the security of the information in our systems or under our control and for ensuring that non-public information is kept confidential. Should any employee not follow appropriate security measures, the improper release or use of confidential information could result. If our employees engage in misconduct or fail to follow appropriate security measures, we could be subject to legal liability and reputational harm, which could impair our ability to attract and retain clients and in turn materially adversely affect our business. We may be unable to execute on our growth initiatives, business strategies, or operating plans. We are executing on a number of growth initiatives, strategies and operating plans designed to enhance our business. For example, we intend to continue to expand our platform into new industry and product sectors, both organically and through acquisitions, and to expand our existing expertise into new geographies. The anticipated benefits from these efforts are based on several assumptions that may prove to be inaccurate. Moreover, we may not be able to complete successfully these growth initiatives, strategies and operating plans and realize all of the benefits, including growth targets and cost savings, we expect to achieve or it may be more costly to do so than we anticipate. A variety of factors could cause us not to realize some or all of the expected benefits. These factors include, among others: delays in the anticipated timing of activities related to such growth initiatives, strategies and operating plans; difficulty in competing in certain industries, product areas and geographies in which we have less experience than others; negative attention from any failed initiatives; and increased or unexpected costs in implementing these efforts. In addition, sustaining growth will require us to commit additional management, operational and financial resources and to maintain appropriate operational and financial systems to adequately support expansion, especially in instances where we open new offices that may require additional resources before they become profitable. We may not be able to recruit and develop talent and manage our expanding operations effectively, and any failure to do so could materially adversely affect our ability to grow revenue and control our expenses. Moreover, our continued implementation of these programs may disrupt our operations and performance. As a result, we may not realize the expected benefits from these plans. If, for any reason, the benefits we realize are less than our estimates or the implementation of these growth initiatives, strategies and operating plans adversely affect our operations or cost more or take longer to effectuate than we expect, or if our assumptions prove inaccurate, we will not be able to implement our growth strategy, which ultimately could materially adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations. We may enter into new lines of business, which may result in additional risks and uncertainties in our business. We currently generate substantially all of our revenue from advisory services. However, while we have no current plans to do so, we may grow our business by entering into new lines of business other than advisory services. To the extent we enter into new lines of business, we will face numerous risks and uncertainties, including risks associated with actual or perceived conflicts of interest because we would no longer be limited to the advisory business, the possibility that we have insufficient expertise to engage in such activities profitably or without incurring inappropriate amounts of risk, the required investment of capital and other resources and the loss of clients due to the perception that we are no longer focusing on a core business. Entry into certain lines of business may subject us to new laws and regulations with which we are not familiar, or from which we are currently exempt, and may lead to increased litigation and regulatory risk. In addition, certain aspects of our cost structure, such as costs for compensation, occupancy and equipment rentals, communication and information technology services, and depreciation and amortization will be largely fixed, and we may not be able to timely adjust these costs to match fluctuations in revenue related to our entering into new lines of business. If a new business generates insufficient revenue or if we are unable to efficiently manage our expanded operations, our business, financial condition and results of operations could be materially adversely affected. We are subject to risks relating to our operations, including our information and technology, which could harm our business. We operate a business that is highly dependent on information systems and technology to securely process, transmit and store such information and to communicate among our locations around the world and with our employees, clients and vendors. Any failure to keep accurate books and records can render us liable to disciplinary action by governmental and self-regulatory authorities, as well as to claims by our clients. We rely on third-party service providers for certain aspects of our business. Although we have yet to suffer any significant losses or other damages as a result of operational risks, any interruption or deterioration in the performance of these third parties or failures of their information systems and technology could impair our operations, affect our reputation and adversely affect our business. Our clients typically provide us with sensitive and confidential information. We may be subject to attempted security breaches and cyber-attacks and, while none have had a material impact to date, a successful breach could lead to shutdowns or disruptions of our systems or third-party systems on which we rely and potential unauthorized disclosure of sensitive or confidential information. Breaches of our security systems or third-party network security systems on which we rely could involve attacks that are intended to obtain unauthorized access to our proprietary information, client and third party information, destroy data or disable, degrade or sabotage our systems, often through the introduction of computer viruses, cyber-attacks and other means and could originate from a wide variety of sources, including unknown third parties outside the Company. If our systems or third-party systems on which we rely are compromised, do not operate properly or are disabled, we could suffer a disruption of our business, financial losses, liability to clients, regulatory sanctions and damage to our reputation. In addition, a disaster or other business continuity problem, such as a pandemic, other man-made or natural disaster or disruption involving electronic communications or other services used by us or third parties with whom we conduct business, could lead us to experience operational challenges. The

incidence and severity of catastrophes and other disasters are inherently unpredictable, and our inability to timely and successfully recover could materially disrupt our business and cause material financial loss, regulatory actions, reputational harm or legal liability. Our revenue in any given period is dependent on the number of fee-paying clients in such period and the size of transactions on which we are advising, and a significant reduction in the number of fee-paying clients in any given period could reduce our revenue and adversely affect our operating results in such period. Our revenue in any given period is dependent on the number of fee-paying clients in such period and the size of transactions on which we are advising. We may lose clients as a result of the sale or merger of a client, a change in a client's senior management, competition from other financial advisors and financial institutions and other causes. A significant reduction in the number of fee-paying clients and / or the size of transactions on which we are advising in any given period could reduce our revenue and adversely affect our operating results in such period. Our clients may be unable to pay us for our services. We face the risk that certain clients may not have the financial resources to pay our agreed-upon advisory fees, including in the bankruptcy or insolvency context. Our clients include some companies that may from time to time encounter financial difficulties. If a client's financial difficulties become severe, the client may be unwilling or unable to pay our invoices in the ordinary course of business, which could adversely affect collections of both our accounts receivable and unbilled services. On occasion, some of our clients have entered bankruptcy, which has prevented us from collecting amounts owed to us. The bankruptcy of a number of our clients that, in the aggregate, owe us substantial accounts receivable could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations. In addition, if a number of clients declare bankruptcy after paying us certain invoices, courts may determine that we are not properly entitled to those payments and may require repayment of some or all of the amounts we received, which could adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations. In addition, some fees earned from certain activities in our FR business segment are subject to approval by the United States Bankruptcy Courts and other interested parties, including United States Trustees, which have the ability to challenge the payment of those fees. Fees earned and reflected in our revenue may from time to time be subject to successful challenges, which could result in a reduction of revenue. Finally, certain clients may also be unwilling to pay our advisory fees in whole or in part, in which case we may have to incur significant costs to bring legal action to enforce our engagement agreements to obtain our advisory fees. We accrued net bad debt expense of \$ 6.4 million and \$ 3.7 million and \$ 7.3 million in fiscal 2023 and 2022 and 2021, respectively, related to uncollectible or doubtful accounts receivable and unbilled work in progress. We may not be able to generate sufficient cash in the future to service any future indebtedness. As of March 31, 2022-2023, we only had \$ 75-60.4-1 million of other liabilities and loans payable to former shareholders, but may incur additional debt in the future. Our ability to make scheduled payments on or to refinance our debt obligations will depend on our business, financial condition and results of operations. We cannot provide assurance that we will maintain a level of cash flows from operating activities sufficient to permit us to pay the principal of, and interest on, our indebtedness. If our cash flows and capital resources are insufficient to fund our debt service obligations, we may be forced to reduce or delay investments and capital expenditures, or to sell assets, seek additional capital or restructure or refinance such indebtedness. We may be adversely affected by the effects of inflation. Inflation has the potential to adversely affect our liquidity, business, financial condition and results of operations by increasing our overall cost structure, particularly if we are unable to achieve commensurate increases in the fees we charge our clients or if increased prices may lead to our clients requesting fewer services. The existence of inflation in the economy has resulted in, and may continue to result in, higher interest rates and capital costs, increased costs of labor, weakening exchange rates and other similar effects. Although we may take measures to mitigate the impact of this inflation, if these measures are not effective our business, financial condition, results of operations and liquidity could be materially adversely affected. Even if such measures are effective, there could be a difference between the timing of when these beneficial actions impact our results of operations and when the cost of inflation is incurred. Risks Related to our Industry We face strong competition from other financial advisory firms, many of which have the ability to offer clients a wider range of products and services than those we offer, which could cause us to lose engagements to competitors and subject us to pricing pressures that could materially adversely affect our revenue and profitability. The financial services industry is intensely competitive, highly fragmented and subject to rapid change, and we expect it to remain so. Our competitors are other investment banking and financial advisory firms. We compete on both a global and a regional basis, and on the basis of a number of factors, including depth of client relationships, industry knowledge, transaction execution skills, our range of products and services, innovation, reputation and price. In addition, in our business, there are usually no long-term contracted sources of revenue. Each revenue-generating engagement typically is separately solicited, awarded and negotiated. If we are unable to compete successfully with our existing competitors or with any new competitors, we will not be able to implement our growth strategy, which ultimately could materially adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations. Our primary competitors include bulge-bracket institutions, many of which have far greater financial and other resources and greater name recognition than we do and have a greater range of products and services, more extensive marketing resources, larger customer bases, more managing directors to serve their clients' needs, as well as greater global reach and more established relationships with their customers than we have. These larger and better capitalized competitors may be better able to respond to changes in the investment banking market, to compete for skilled professionals, to finance acquisitions, to fund internal growth and to compete for market share generally, which puts us at a competitive disadvantage and could result in pricing pressures or loss of opportunities, which could materially adversely affect our revenue and profitability. In particular, we may be at a competitive disadvantage with regard to certain of our competitors who are able to, and often do, provide financing or market making services that are often a crucial component of the types of transactions on which we advise. In addition to our larger competitors, over the last few years, a number of independent investment banks that offer independent advisory services have emerged, with several showing rapid growth. As these independent firms or new entrants into the market seek to gain market share there could be pricing pressures, which would adversely affect our revenue and earnings. We have experienced intense competition over obtaining advisory engagements in recent years, and we may experience further pricing pressures in

our business in the future as some of our competitors may seek to obtain increased market share by reducing fees. In particular, when making proposals for fixed-fee engagements, we estimate the costs and timing for completing the engagements. These estimates reflect our best judgment regarding the efficiencies of our methodologies and financial professionals as we plan to deploy them on engagements. Any increased or unexpected costs or unanticipated delays in connection with the performance of fixed-fee engagements, including delays caused by factors outside our control, could make these contracts less profitable or unprofitable, which would have an adverse effect on our profit margin. We face substantial litigation risks. Our role as advisor to our clients involves complex analysis and the exercise of professional judgment, including rendering fairness opinions in connection with mergers and other transactions. Our activities, and particularly those of our FVA group, may subject us to the risk of significant legal liabilities to our clients and affected third parties, including shareholders of our clients who could bring securities class actions against us. In recent years, the volume of claims and amount of damages claimed in litigation and regulatory proceedings against financial services companies have been increasing. Litigation alleging that we performed below our agreed standard of care or breached any other obligations to a client or other parties could expose us to significant legal liabilities, particularly with respect to our FVA group, and, regardless of outcome, is often very costly, could distract our management and could damage our reputation. These risks often may be difficult to assess or quantify and their existence and magnitude often remain unknown for substantial periods of time. Our engagements typically include broad indemnities from our clients and provisions to limit our exposure to legal claims relating to our services, but these provisions may not protect us in all cases, including when we perform below our agreed standard of care or a client does not have the financial capacity to pay under the indemnity. As a result, we may incur significant legal expenses in defending against or settling litigation. In addition, we may have to spend a significant amount to adequately insure against these potential claims, or insurance coverage may not be available on commercial terms or at all. Substantial legal liability or significant regulatory action against us could have material adverse financial effects or cause significant reputational harm to us, which could seriously harm our business prospects, financial condition and results of operations. Extensive and evolving regulation of our business and the businesses of our clients exposes us to the potential for significant penalties and fines due to compliance failures, increases our costs and may result in limitations on the manner in which our business is conducted. As a participant in the financial services industry, we are subject to extensive regulation in the United States and internationally. We are subject to regulation by governmental and self-regulatory organizations in **many of** the jurisdictions in which we operate. As a result of market volatility and disruption in recent years, the United States and other governments have taken unprecedented steps to try to stabilize the financial system, including providing assistance to financial institutions and taking certain regulatory actions. The full extent of the effects of these actions and of legislative and regulatory initiatives (including the Dodd- Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (the “Dodd- Frank Act ”)) implemented in connection with, and as a result of, such extraordinary disruption and volatility is uncertain, both as to the financial markets and participants in general, and as to us in particular. Our ability to conduct business and our operating results, including compliance costs, may be adversely affected as a result of any new requirements imposed by the SEC, FINRA or other United States or foreign governmental regulatory authorities or self-regulatory organizations that regulate financial services firms or supervise financial markets. We may be adversely affected by changes in the interpretation or enforcement of existing laws and rules by these governmental authorities and self-regulatory organizations. In addition, some of our clients or prospective clients may adopt policies that exceed regulatory requirements and impose additional restrictions affecting their dealings with us. Accordingly, we may incur significant costs to comply with United States and international regulations. Our expenses incurred in complying with these regulatory requirements, including legal fees and fees paid to the SEC, FINRA and United States or foreign governmental regulatory authorities or self-regulatory organizations, have increased in recent years. **For example, on May 10, 2023, the staff of the SEC's Division of Enforcement proposed a potential settlement with the Company to resolve an investigation of the Company's compliance with records preservation requirements related to business communications sent over off-channel electronic messaging platforms. The SEC has conducted similar investigations of other financial institutions as part of a widely publicized industry sweep that has included publicly announced settlements with 14 firms to date. The Company is cooperating fully with the SEC and has notified the SEC's Division of Enforcement of its present intention to agree to a settlement to resolve the investigation that includes a \$ 15 million civil penalty.** We maintain an internal team that works full-time to develop and implement regulatory compliance policies and procedures, monitor business activities to ensure compliance with such policies and procedures and reports to senior management. This team also uses various software tracking and reporting systems and confers regularly with internal and outside legal counsel in the performance of its responsibilities. In addition, new laws or regulations or changes in enforcement of existing laws or regulations applicable to our clients may adversely affect our business. For example, changes in antitrust enforcement could affect the level of M & A activity and changes in applicable regulations could restrict the activities of our clients and their need for the types of advisory services that we provide to them. Our failure to comply with applicable laws or regulations could result in adverse publicity and reputational harm as well as fines, suspensions of personnel or other sanctions, including revocation of any required registration of us or any of our subsidiaries and could impair executive retention or recruitment. In addition, any changes in the regulatory framework under which we operate could impose additional expenses or capital requirements on us, result in limitations on the manner in which our business is conducted, have an adverse impact upon our business, financial condition and results of operations and require substantial attention by senior management. In addition, our business is subject to periodic examination by various regulatory authorities, and we cannot predict the outcome of any such examinations.

Risks Related to Our Organizational Structure

The dual class structure of our common stock and the ownership of our Class B common stock by the HL Holders through the HL Voting Trust have the effect of concentrating voting control with the HL Voting Trust for the foreseeable future, which limits the ability of our Class A common stockholders to influence corporate matters. We are controlled by the HL Voting Trust, whose interests may differ from those of our Class A common stockholders. Each share of our Class B common stock is

entitled to ten votes per share, and each share of our Class A common stock is entitled to one vote per share. As of March 31, 2022-2023, the HL Holders through the HL Voting Trust beneficially owned 18, 866, 058 shares of common stock representing approximately 27.3 % of the economic interest, and controlled 78.79.91 % of the voting power of our outstanding capital stock. The HL Voting Trust will, for the foreseeable future, have significant influence over our corporate management and affairs, and will be able to control virtually all matters requiring stockholder approval. The HL Voting Trust is able to elect a majority of the members of our board of directors and control actions to be taken by us and our board of directors, including amendments to our amended and restated certificate of incorporation and bylaws and approval of significant corporate transactions, including mergers and sales of substantially all of our assets. The directors so elected will have the authority, subject to the terms of our indebtedness and applicable rules and regulations, to issue additional stock, implement stock repurchase programs, declare dividends and make other decisions. This concentrated control will limit the ability of holders of our Class A common stock to influence corporate matters for the foreseeable future and may materially adversely affect the market price of our Class A common stock. It is possible that the interests of the HL Voting Trust may in some circumstances conflict with our interests and the interests of our other stockholders. For example, the HL Voting Trust may have different tax positions or other differing incentives from other stockholders that could influence their decisions regarding whether and when to cause us to dispose of assets, incur new or refinance existing indebtedness or take other actions. Additionally, the holders of our Class B common stock may cause us to make strategic decisions or pursue acquisitions that could involve risks to holders of our Class A common stock or may not be in the best interests of holders of our Class A common stock. The holders of our Class B common stock will also be entitled to a separate vote in the event we seek to amend our amended and restated certificate of incorporation to increase or decrease the par value of a class of our common stock or in a manner that alters or changes the powers, preferences or special rights of the Class B common stock in a manner that affects its holders adversely. Future transfers by holders of Class B common stock will generally result in those shares converting on a one-for-one basis to Class A common stock, which will have the effect, over time, of increasing the relative voting power of those holders of Class B common stock who retain their shares in the long-term. We are a “controlled company” within the meaning of the New York Stock Exchange listing standards and, as a result, qualify for, and rely on, exemptions from certain corporate governance requirements. Holders of Class A common stock do not have the same protections afforded to stockholders of companies that are subject to such requirements. The HL Voting Trust controls a majority of the voting power of our outstanding common stock. As a result, we qualify as a “controlled company” within the meaning of the corporate governance standards of the New York Stock Exchange. Under these rules, a listed company of which more than 50 % of the voting power is held by an individual, group or another company is a “controlled company” and may elect not to comply with certain corporate governance requirements, including the requirement that a majority of the board of directors consist of independent directors, the requirement that we have a nominating and corporate governance committee that is composed entirely of independent directors, and the requirement that we have a compensation committee that is composed entirely of independent directors. We intend to continue to rely on some or all of these exemptions. **While As a result, at the present time, a majority of our board of directors consists of independent directors and** our compensation and nominating and corporate governance committees ~~do not~~ consist entirely of independent directors, **that may not continue to be the case** although a majority of our board of directors consists of independent directors. Accordingly, our stockholders do not have the same protections afforded to stockholders of companies that are subject to all of the corporate governance requirements of the New York Stock Exchange. Our anti-takeover provisions could prevent or delay a change in control of our Company, even if such change in control would be beneficial to our stockholders. Provisions of our amended and restated certificate of incorporation and amended and restated bylaws, as well as provisions of Delaware law could discourage, delay or prevent a merger, acquisition or other change in control of our company, even if such change in control would be beneficial to our stockholders. Certain provisions of our amended and restated certificate of incorporation and our amended and restated bylaws that could prevent or delay a change in control of our company include: • the ability to issue “blank check” preferred stock, which could increase the number of outstanding shares and thwart a takeover attempt; • a classified board of directors so that not all members of our board of directors are elected at one time; • the ability to remove directors only for cause; • no use of cumulative voting for the election of directors; • no ability of stockholders to call special meetings; • supermajority voting provisions for stockholder approval of amendments to our certificate of incorporation and bylaws; • the requirement that, to the fullest extent permitted by law and unless we agree otherwise, certain proceedings against or involving us or our directors, officers or employees be brought exclusively in the Court of Chancery in the State of Delaware; • the ability of stockholders to take action by written consent; and • advance notice and duration of ownership requirements for nominations for election to the board of directors or for proposing matters that can be acted upon by stockholders at stockholder meetings. These provisions could also discourage proxy contests and make it more difficult for our stockholders to elect directors of their choosing and cause us to take other corporate actions they desire. In addition, because our board of directors is responsible for appointing the members of our management team, these provisions could in turn affect any attempt by our stockholders to replace current members of our management team. In addition, the General Corporation Law of the State of Delaware (the “DGCL”), to which we are subject, prohibits us, except under specified circumstances, from engaging in any mergers, significant sales of stock or assets or business combinations with any stockholder or group of stockholders who owns at least 15 % of our common stock. The provision of our amended and restated certificate of incorporation requiring exclusive venue in the Court of Chancery in the State of Delaware for certain types of lawsuits may have the effect of discouraging lawsuits against our directors, officers and stockholders. Our amended and restated certificate of incorporation requires, to the fullest extent permitted by law, that (i) any derivative action or proceeding brought on our behalf, (ii) any action asserting a claim of breach of a fiduciary duty owed by any of our directors, officers or stockholders to us or our stockholders, (iii) any action asserting a claim arising pursuant to any provision of the DGCL or as to which the DGCL confers jurisdiction in the Court of Chancery of the State of Delaware or (iv) any action asserting a claim governed by the internal affairs doctrine will

have to be brought only in the Court of Chancery in the State of Delaware, unless we agree otherwise. Although we believe this provision benefits us by providing increased consistency in the application of Delaware law in the types of lawsuits to which it applies, the provision may have the effect of discouraging lawsuits against our directors, officers and stockholders.

Risks Related to Our Class A Common Stock Our share price may decline due to the large number of shares eligible for future sale. The market price of our Class A common stock could decline as a result of sales of a large number of shares of Class A common stock available for sale upon conversion of Class B common stock or the perception that such sales could occur. These sales, or the possibility that these sales may occur, also might make it more difficult for us to sell equity securities in the future at a time and at a price that we deem appropriate. ~~Certain former employees that own 723,834 shares of Class B common stock are subject to lock-up agreements that restrict their ability to transfer shares of our capital stock until August 18, 2022.~~ As of March 31, ~~2022~~ **2023**, 18,866,058 shares of our Class A common stock issuable upon conversion of outstanding Class B common stock (including restricted stock units) are eligible for sale, subject to ~~the restrictions under the lock-up agreements described in the preceding sentence, and subject to~~ certain restrictions under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the “Securities Act”): ~~Stockholders who are subject to any of the lock-up agreements described above may be permitted to sell shares prior to the expiration of the applicable lock-up agreement in certain circumstances or as a result of a waiver approved by the Board of Directors.~~ While we currently pay a quarterly cash dividend to our stockholders, we may change our dividend policy at any time and we may not continue to declare cash dividends. Although we currently pay a quarterly cash dividend to our stockholders, we have no obligation to do so, and our dividend policy may change at any time. Returns on stockholders' investments will primarily depend on the appreciation, if any, in the price of our Class A common stock. The amount and timing of dividends, if any, are subject to capital availability and periodic determinations by our board of directors that cash dividends are in the best interest of our stockholders and are in compliance with all applicable laws and any other contractual agreements limiting our ability to pay dividends. Under our current debt obligations (as described herein) we are restricted from paying cash dividends in certain circumstances, and we expect these restrictions to continue in the future. Our ability to pay dividends may also be restricted by the terms of any future credit agreement or any future debt or preferred equity securities of ours or of our subsidiaries. Future dividends, including their timing and amount, may be affected by, among other factors: general economic and business conditions; our financial condition and operating results; our available cash and current anticipated cash needs; capital requirements; contractual, legal, tax and regulatory restrictions and implications on the payment of dividends by us to our stockholders; and such other factors as our board of directors may deem relevant. Our dividend payments may change from time to time, and we may not continue to declare dividends in any particular amounts or at all. The reduction in or elimination of our dividend payments could have a negative effect on our stock price. The trading price of our Class A common stock may be volatile or may decline regardless of our operating performance, which could cause the value of our Class A common stock to decline. The market price for our Class A common stock is volatile, in part because of the limited number of shares of Class A common stock outstanding, and the limited trading history of the Class A common stock. In addition, the market price of our Class A common stock may fluctuate significantly in response to a number of factors, most of which we cannot control, including:

- our operating and financial performance and prospects;
- our quarterly or annual earnings or those of other companies in our industry;
- the public's reaction to our press releases, our other public announcements and our filings with the SEC;
- quarterly variations in our operating results compared to market expectations;
- changes in, or failure to meet, earnings estimates or recommendations by research analysts who track our common shares or the stock of other companies in our industry;
- adverse publicity about us, the industries we participate in or individual scandals;
- announcements of new offerings by us or our competitors;
- stock price performance of our competitors;
- changes in the evaluations of our Class A common stock by research analysts
- fluctuations in stock market prices and volumes;
- default on our indebtedness;
- actions by competitors;
- changes in senior management or key personnel;
- changes in financial estimates by securities analysts;
- our status as a “controlled company”;
- negative earnings or other announcements by us or other financial services companies;
- publication of negative or inaccurate research reports about us or our industry or the failure of securities analysts to provide adequate coverage of the Class A common stock in the future;
- downgrades in our credit ratings or the credit ratings of our competitors;
- incurrence of indebtedness or issuances of capital stock;
- global economic, legal and regulatory factors unrelated to our performance; and
- the other factors listed in this “Risk Factors” section.

In addition, stock markets have experienced extreme price and volume fluctuations that have affected and continue to affect the market prices of equity securities of many companies in our industry. In the past, stockholders have instituted securities class action litigation following periods of market volatility. If we were involved in securities litigation, we could incur substantial costs and our resources and the attention of management could be diverted from our business. We may issue shares of preferred stock in the future, which could make it difficult for another company to acquire us or could otherwise adversely affect holders of our Class A common stock, which could depress the price of our Class A common stock. Our amended and restated certificate of incorporation authorizes us to issue one or more series of preferred stock. Our board of directors has the authority to determine the preferences, limitations and relative rights of the shares of preferred stock and to fix the number of shares constituting any series and the designation of such series, without any further vote or action by our stockholders. Our preferred stock could be issued with voting, liquidation, dividend and other rights superior to the rights of our common stock. The potential issuance of preferred stock may delay or prevent a change in control of us, discourage bids for our Class A common stock at a premium to the market price, and materially and adversely affect the market price and the voting and other rights of the holders of our Class A common stock.

General Risks ~~The scale, scope, and duration of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our business are unpredictable and depend on a number of factors outside of our control. The rapid, worldwide spread of a novel strain of coronavirus and the pandemic caused thereby (collectively, “COVID-19”) has created global economic disruption and uncertainty. While COVID-19 did not have a material adverse impact on our business in fiscal 2022, the scale, scope, and duration of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic are unpredictable and the prolonged impact of COVID-19 could heighten the impact of one or more~~

other risk factors described herein. As a financial services firm, we are materially affected by conditions in the global financial markets and economic conditions throughout the world. During periods of unfavorable market or economic conditions, the volume and value of M & A and capital markets transactions decreases, thereby reducing the demand for our M & A and capital markets advisory services and increasing price competition among financial services companies seeking such engagements. The continued impact of the pandemic on our business is largely dependent on efforts to stem the spread of COVID-19, including governmental efforts to distribute vaccines and overall vaccination rates in the areas in which we operate. We have implemented various initiatives to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on our firm, such as employees working remotely from home, while also seeking to maintain business continuity. We face various cybersecurity and other operational risks related to our business on a day to day basis, which are heightened by COVID-19. We rely heavily on financial, accounting, communication, and other information technology systems, including, without limitation, cloud based storage systems, and the people who operate them. These systems, including the systems of third parties on whom we rely, may experience a disruption as a result of COVID-19 or increased cybersecurity threats. If we were unable to timely and successfully recover from such a disruption, our business could be materially impacted and could cause material financial loss, regulatory actions, reputational harm or legal liability. An extended period of remote working by our employees could strain our technology resources and introduce operational risks, including heightened cybersecurity risk. Remote working environments may be less secure and more susceptible to hacking attacks, including phishing and social engineering attempts that seek to exploit the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 presents a threat to our employees' well-being. While we have implemented a business continuity plan to protect the health of our employees, such plans cannot anticipate all scenarios, and we may experience a potential loss of productivity. As shelter-in-place restrictions have been lifted, we have implemented plans in connection with our employees' return to office. These plans need to comply with federal, state and local regulations and take into account local conditions, which may result in increased operational and compliance costs. There is no guarantee that the measures implemented will protect the health of our employees and could negatively impact employee sentiment and productivity. While we have implemented a business continuity plan to protect the health of our employees, such plans cannot anticipate all scenarios, and we may experience a potential loss of productivity. Consequences of the current conflict between Russia and Ukraine could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, liquidity and results of operations. Credit and financial markets have experienced volatility and disruptions due to the current conflict between Russia and Ukraine and the sanctions that the United States and other countries have imposed on Russia and various related parties in response to Russia's actions in Ukraine. The conflict and the sanctions that have been or may be imposed may have further global economic and other consequences, including diminished liquidity and credit availability, reduced consumer confidence, disruptions to energy and food supplies, decreased economic growth, higher unemployment rates, increased inflation and political and social upheaval. Expansion of the military conflict beyond Ukraine or other retaliatory action, such as cyberattacks, by Russia and its allies in response to sanctions and other measures that the United States and its allies have taken or may take in support of Ukraine, could broaden and intensify the negative impact of the conflict on financial markets, economic conditions and geopolitical stability. The impact of the conflict is currently unknown and could intensify other risks described herein, including cybersecurity-related risks, and otherwise have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.