

Risk Factors Comparison 2024-04-01 to 2023-03-28 Form: 10-K

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

Investing in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. You should carefully consider the risks and uncertainties described below, together with all of the other information in this report, including our consolidated financial statements and related notes, as well as in our other filings with the SEC, in evaluating our business and before investing in our common stock. The risks and uncertainties described below are not the only ones we face. Additional risks and uncertainties that are not expressly stated, that we are unaware of, or that we currently believe are not material, may also become important factors that affect us. If any of the following risks occur, our business, operating results, financial condition and prospects could be materially harmed. In that event, the price of our common stock could decline, and you could lose part or all of your investment.

Summary of Material Risk Factors Our business is subject to numerous risks and uncertainties of which you should be aware. Among others, these risks relate to:

- our financial condition and results of operations could be materially adversely affected if we do not accurately assess our underwriting risk;
- competition for business in our industry is intense;
- because our business depends on insurance retail agents and brokers, wholesalers and program administrators, we are exposed to certain risks arising out of our reliance on these distribution channels that could adversely affect our results;
- we may be unable to purchase third-party reinsurance in amounts we desire on commercially acceptable terms or on terms that adequately protect us, and this inability may materially adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations;
- our losses and loss expense reserves may be inadequate to cover our actual losses, which could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition, results of operations and cash flows;
- a decline in our financial strength rating may adversely affect the amount of business we write;
- unexpected changes in the interpretation of our coverage or provisions, including loss limitations and exclusions, in our policies could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations;
- our reinsurers may not reimburse us for claims on a timely basis, or at all, which may materially adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations;
- our failure to accurately and timely pay claims could materially and adversely affect our business, financial condition, results of operations, and prospects;
- adverse economic factors, including recession, inflation, periods of high unemployment or lower economic activity could result in the sale of fewer policies than expected or an increase in the frequency of claims and premium defaults, and even the falsification of claims, or a combination of these effects, which, in turn, could affect our growth and profitability;
- the insurance business is historically cyclical in nature ~~and we believe we are currently experiencing a relatively hard market cycle~~, which may affect our financial performance and cause our operating results to vary from quarter to quarter and may not be indicative of future performance;
- we are subject to extensive regulation, which may adversely affect our ability to achieve our business objectives; failure to comply with these regulations could subject us to penalties, including fines and suspensions, which may adversely affect our financial condition and results of operations;
- we could be adversely affected by the loss of one or more key personnel or by an inability to attract and retain qualified personnel;
- if we fail to achieve and maintain effective internal controls, our operating results and financial condition could be impacted and the market price of our common stock may be negatively affected; and
- our costs will increase significantly as a result of operating as a public company, and our management will be required to devote substantial time to complying with public company regulations.

Risks Related to Our Business and Industry Our financial condition and results of operations could be materially adversely affected if we do not accurately assess our underwriting risk. Our underwriting success is dependent on our ability to accurately assess the risks associated with the business we write and retain. We rely on the experience of our underwriting staff in assessing those risks. If we misunderstand the nature or extent of the risks, we may fail to establish appropriate premium rates which could adversely affect our financial results. In addition, our employees, including members of management and underwriters, make decisions and choices in the ordinary course of business that involve exposing us to risk.

Competition for business in our industry is intense. We face competition from other specialty insurance companies, standard insurance companies and underwriting agencies. In particular, competition in the insurance industry is based on many factors, including price of coverage, the general reputation and perceived financial strength of the company, relationships with distribution partners, terms and conditions of products offered, ratings assigned by independent rating agencies, speed of claims payment and reputation, and the experience and reputation of the members of our underwriting team in the particular lines of insurance and reinsurance we seek to underwrite. In recent years, the insurance industry has undergone increasing consolidation, which may further increase competition. In addition, some of our competitors are larger and have greater financial, marketing, and other resources than we do, in addition to being able to absorb large losses more easily. Other competitors have longer operating history and more market recognition than we do in certain lines of business. A number of new, proposed or potential industry or legislative developments could further increase competition in our industry. For example, there has been an increase in capital-raising by companies with whom we compete, which could result in new entrants to our markets and an excess of capital in the industry. Additionally, the possibility of federal regulatory reform of the insurance industry could increase competition from standard carriers. We may not be able to continue to compete successfully in the insurance markets. Increased competition in these markets could result in a change in the supply and demand for insurance, affect our ability to price our products at risk-adequate rates and retain existing business, or underwrite new business on favorable terms. If this increased competition so limits our ability to transact business, our operating results could be adversely affected. Because our business depends on insurance retail agents, brokers, wholesalers and program administrators, we are exposed to certain risks arising out of our reliance on these distribution channels that could adversely affect our results. Substantially all of our products are ultimately distributed through independent retail agents and brokers who have the principal relationships with policyholders.

Retail agents and brokers generally own the “renewal rights,” and thus our business model is dependent on our relationships with, and the success of, the retail agents and brokers with whom we do business. Further, we are also dependent on the relationships our wholesalers and program administrators maintain with the agents and brokers from whom they source their business. Our relationship with our retail agents, brokers, wholesalers and program administrators may be discontinued at any time. Even if the relationships do continue, they may not be on terms that are profitable for us. For example, as insurance distribution firms continue to consolidate, their ability to influence commission rates may increase as may the concentration of business we have with a particular broker. Further, certain premiums from policyholders, where the business is produced by brokers, are collected directly by the brokers and remitted to us. In certain jurisdictions, when the insured pays its policy premium to its broker for payment on behalf of our insurance subsidiary, the premium might be considered to have been paid under applicable insurance laws and regulations. Accordingly, the insured would no longer be liable to us for those amounts, whether or not we have actually received the premium from that broker. Consequently, we assume a degree of credit risk associated with the brokers with which we work. Although the failure by any of our brokers to remit premiums to us has not been material to date, there may be instances where our brokers collect premiums but do not remit them to us and we may be required under applicable law to provide the coverage set forth in the policy despite the related premiums not being paid to us. Similarly, if we are limited in our ability to cancel policies for non-payment, our underwriting profits may decline and our financial condition and results of operations could be materially and adversely affected. We review the financial condition of potential new brokers before we agree to transact business with them, and we periodically review the agencies, brokers, wholesalers and program administrators with whom we do business to identify those that do not meet our profitability standards or are not aligned with our business objectives. Following these periodic reviews, we may restrict such distributors’ access to certain types of products or terminate our relationship with them, subject to applicable contractual and regulatory requirements that limit our ability to terminate agents or require us to renew policies. Even through the utilization of these measures, we may not achieve the desired results. Because we rely on these distributors as our sales channel, any deterioration in the relationships with our distributors or failure to provide competitive compensation could lead our distributors to place more premium with other carriers and less premium with us. In addition, we could be adversely affected if the distributors with whom we do business exceed their granted authority, fail to transfer collected premium to us or breach the obligations that they owe to us. Although we routinely monitor our distribution relationships, such actions could expose us to liability. Also, if insurance distribution firm consolidation continues at its current pace or increases in the future, our sales channels could be materially affected in a number of ways, including loss of market access or market share in certain geographic areas. Specifically, we could be negatively affected due to loss of talent as the people most knowledgeable about our products and with whom we have developed strong working relationships exit the business following an acquisition, or, increases in our commission costs as larger distributors acquire more negotiating leverage over their fees. Any such disruption that materially affects our sales channel could have a negative impact on our results of operations and financial condition. As the speed of digitization accelerates, we are subject to risks associated with both our distributors and their ability to keep pace. In an increasingly digital world, distributors who cannot provide a digital or technology-driven experience risk losing customers who demand such an experience, and such customers may choose to utilize more technology-driven distributors. We may be unable to purchase third-party reinsurance in amounts we desire on commercially acceptable terms or on terms that adequately protect us, and this inability may materially adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations. We strategically purchase reinsurance from third parties which enhances our business by protecting capital from severity events (either large single event losses or catastrophes) and reducing volatility in our earnings. Reinsurance involves transferring, or ceding, a portion of our risk exposure on policies that we write to another insurer, the reinsurer, in exchange for a cost. If we are unable to renew our expiring contracts, enter into new reinsurance arrangements on acceptable terms or expand our coverage, our loss exposure could increase, which would increase our potential losses related to loss events. If we are unwilling to bear an increase in loss exposure, we may need to reduce the level of our underwriting commitments, both of which could materially adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations. There are situations in which reinsurers may exclude certain coverages from, or alter terms in, the reinsurance contracts we enter into with them. As a result, we, like other insurance companies, could write insurance policies which to some extent do not have the benefit of reinsurance protection. These gaps in reinsurance protection expose us to greater risk and greater potential losses. Our losses and loss expense reserves may be inadequate to cover our actual losses, which could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition, results of operations and cash flows. Our success depends on our ability to accurately assess the risks related to the businesses and people that we insure. We establish losses and LAE reserves for the best estimate of the ultimate payment of all claims that have been incurred, or could be incurred in the future, and the related costs of adjusting those claims, as of the date of our financial statements. Reserves do not represent an exact calculation of liability. Rather, reserves represent an estimate of what we expect the ultimate settlement and administration of claims will cost us, and our ultimate liability may be greater or less than our estimate. As part of the reserving process, we review historical data and consider the impact of such factors as: • claims inflation, which is the sustained increase in cost of raw materials, labor, medical services and other components of claims cost; • claims development patterns by line of business, as well as frequency and severity trends; • pricing for our products; • legislative activity; • social and economic patterns; and • litigation, judicial and regulatory trends. These variables are affected by both internal and external events that could increase our exposure to losses, and we continually monitor our loss reserves using new information on reported claims and a variety of statistical techniques and modeling simulations. This process assumes that past experience, adjusted for the effects of current developments, anticipated trends and market conditions, is an appropriate basis for predicting future events. There is, however, no precise method for evaluating the impact of any specific factor on the adequacy of loss reserves, and actual results may deviate, perhaps substantially, from our reserve estimates. For instance, the following uncertainties may have an impact on the adequacy of our reserves: • When a claim is received, it may take considerable time to

appreciate fully the extent of the covered loss suffered by the insured and, consequently, estimates of loss associated with specific claims can increase over time. Consequently, estimates of loss associated with specified claims can change as new information emerges, which could cause the reserves for the claim to become inadequate. • New theories of liability are enforced retroactively from time to time by courts. The failure of any of the loss limitations or exclusions we employ, or changes in other claims or coverage issues, could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition or results of operations. • Volatility in the financial markets, economic events and other external factors may result in an increase in the number of claims and / or severity of the claims reported. In addition, elevated inflationary conditions would, among other things, cause loss costs to increase. Adverse economic factors, including recession, inflation, periods of high unemployment or lower economic activity could result in the sale of fewer policies than expected or an increase in frequency or severity of claims and premium defaults or both, which, in turn, could affect our growth and profitability. • **Increased cost due to “ social inflation, ” including continued increase of medical costs, more costly technology in vehicles, supply chain disruptions, more involvement of attorneys in claims matters, third- party financing of litigation, lawsuit abuse and other factors, all of which could increase the frequency and severity of claims and affect the adequacy of our loss reserves**. • If claims were to become more frequent, even if we had no liability for those claims, the cost of evaluating such potential claims could escalate beyond the amount of the reserves we have established. As we enter new lines of business, or as a result of new theories of claims, we may encounter an increase in claims frequency and greater claims handling costs than we had anticipated. If any of our reserves should prove to be inadequate, we will be required to increase our reserves resulting in a reduction in our net income and stockholders’ equity in the period in which the deficiency is identified. Future loss experience substantially in excess of established reserves could also have a material adverse effect on our future earnings and liquidity and our financial rating. A decline in our financial strength rating may adversely affect the amount of business we write. Participants in the insurance industry use ratings from independent ratings agencies, such as A. M. Best, as an important means of assessing the financial strength and quality of insurers. In setting its ratings, A. M. Best performs quantitative and qualitative analysis of a company’ s balance sheet strength, operating performance and business profile. A. M. Best financial strength ratings range from “ A ” (Superior) to “ F ” for insurance companies that have been publicly placed in liquidation. As of the date of this filing, A. M. Best has assigned a financial strength rating of “ A- ” (Excellent) with **positive a stable** outlook to us. A. M. Best assigns ratings that are intended to provide an independent opinion of an insurance company’ s ability to meet its obligations to policyholders and is not an evaluation directed to investors and is not a recommendation to buy, sell or hold our common stock or any other securities we may issue. A. M. Best’ s analysis includes comparisons to peers and industry standards as well as assessments of operating plans, philosophy and management. A. M. Best periodically reviews our financial strength rating and may revise it downward at their discretion based primarily on its analyses of our balance sheet strength, operating performance and business profile. There are specific building blocks A. M. Best reviews, including capital adequacy, operating performance, operating profile and **ERM Enterprise Risk Management**, as well as other factors that could affect their analyses such as: • **If if** we change our business practices from our organizational business plan in a manner that no longer supports A. M. Best’ s rating; • **If if** unfavorable financial, regulatory or market trends affect us, including excess market capacity; • **If if** our losses exceed our loss reserves; • **If if** we have unresolved issues with government regulators; • **If if** we are unable to retain our senior management or other key personnel; • **If if** our investment portfolio incurs significant losses or our liquidity is limited; or • **If if** A. M. Best alters its capital adequacy assessment methodology in a manner that would adversely affect our rating. These and other factors could result in a downgrade of our financial strength rating. A downgrade or withdrawal of our rating could result in any of the following consequences, among others: • **Causing causing** our current and future distribution partners and insureds to choose other, more highly- rated competitors; • **Increasing increasing** the cost or reducing the availability of reinsurance to us; or • **Severely severely** limiting or preventing us from writing new and renewal insurance contracts. In addition, in view of the earnings and capital pressures experienced by many financial institutions, including insurance companies, it is possible that rating organizations will heighten the level of scrutiny that they apply to such institutions, will increase the frequency and scope of their credit reviews, will request additional information from the companies that they rate or will increase the capital and other requirements employed in the rating organizations’ models for maintenance of certain ratings levels. We can offer no assurance that our rating will remain at its current level. It is possible that such reviews of us may result in adverse ratings consequences, which could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations. Unexpected changes in the interpretation of our coverage or provisions, including loss limitations and exclusions, in our policies could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations. There can be no assurances that loss limitations or exclusions in our policies will be enforceable in the manner we intend. As industry practices and legal, judicial, social, and other conditions change, unexpected and unintended issues related to claims and coverage may emerge. For example, many of our policies limit the period during which a policyholder may bring a claim, which may be shorter than the statutory period under which such claims can be brought against our policyholders. While these limitations and exclusions help us assess and mitigate our loss exposure, it is possible that a court or regulatory authority could nullify or void a limitation or exclusion or legislation could be enacted modifying or barring the use of such limitations or exclusions. These types of governmental actions could result in higher than anticipated losses and LAE, which could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition or results of operations. In addition, court decisions, such as the 1995 Montrose decision in California could read policy exclusions narrowly so as to expand coverage, thereby requiring insurers to create and write new exclusions. These issues may adversely affect our business by either broadening coverage beyond our underwriting intent or by increasing the frequency or severity of claims. In some instances, these changes may not become apparent until sometime after we have issued insurance contracts that are affected by the changes. As a result, the full extent of liability under our insurance contracts may not be known for many years after a contract is issued. Our reinsurers may not reimburse us for claims on a timely basis, or at all, which may materially adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations. The reinsurance contracts that we enter into to help

manage our risks require us to pay premiums to the reinsurance carriers who will in turn reimburse us for a portion of covered policy claims. In many cases, a reinsurer will be called upon to reimburse us for policy claims many years after we paid insurance premiums to the insurer. Although reinsurance makes the reinsurer liable to us to the extent the risk is transferred or ceded to the reinsurer, it does not relieve us (the ceding insurer) of our primary liability to our policyholders. Our current reinsurance program is designed to limit our financial risk. However, our reinsurers may not pay claims we incur on a timely basis, or they may not pay some or all of these claims. For example, reinsurers may default in their financial obligations to us as the result of insolvency, lack of liquidity, operational failure, political and / or regulatory prohibitions, fraud, asserted defenses based on agreement wordings or the principle of utmost good faith, asserted deficiencies in the documentation of agreements or other reasons. Any disputes with reinsurers regarding coverage under reinsurance contracts could be time consuming, costly, and uncertain of success. These risks could cause us to incur increased net losses, and, therefore, adversely affect our financial condition. As of December 31, ~~2022~~ **2023**, we had \$ ~~581-596.4~~ **596.4** million of aggregate reinsurance recoverables. Our failure to accurately and timely pay claims could materially and adversely affect our business, financial condition, results of operations, and prospects. We must accurately and timely evaluate and pay claims that are made under our policies. Many factors affect our ability to pay claims accurately and timely, including the training and experience of our claims representatives, including our TPAs, the effectiveness of our management, and our ability to develop or select and implement appropriate procedures and systems to support our claims functions and other factors. Our failure to pay claims accurately and timely could lead to regulatory and administrative actions or material litigation, undermine our reputation in the marketplace and materially and adversely affect our business, financial condition, results of operations, and prospects. In addition, if we do not manage our TPAs effectively, or if our TPAs are unable to effectively handle our volume of claims, our ability to handle an increasing workload could be adversely affected. In addition to potentially requiring that growth be slowed in the affected markets, our business could suffer from decreased quality of claims work which, in turn, could adversely affect our operating margins. Severe weather conditions, including the effects of climate change, catastrophes, pandemic, as well as man- made event events may adversely affect our business, results of operations and financial condition. Our business is exposed to the risk of severe weather conditions, earthquakes and man- made catastrophes. Catastrophes can be caused by various events, including natural events such as severe winter weather, **severe convective storms** / tornadoes, windstorms, earthquakes, hailstorms, severe thunderstorms and fires, or man- made events such as explosions, war, terrorist attacks and riots. Over the past several years, changing weather patterns and climatic conditions, such as global warming, have added to the unpredictability and frequency of natural disasters in certain parts of the world, including the markets in which we operate. Climate change may increase the frequency and severity of extreme weather events. This effect has led to conditions in the ocean and atmosphere, including warmer- than- average sea- surface temperatures and low wind shear that increase hurricane activity. The occurrence of a natural disaster or other catastrophe loss could materially adversely affect our business, financial condition, and results of operations. Additionally, any increased frequency and severity of such weather events, including hurricanes, could have a material adverse effect on our ability to predict, quantify, reinsure and manage catastrophe risk and may materially increase our losses resulting from such catastrophe events. The extent of losses from catastrophes is a function of both the frequency and severity of the insured events and the total amount of insured exposure in the areas affected. The incidence and severity of catastrophes and severe weather conditions are inherently unpredictable. We manage our exposure to losses by analyzing the probability and severity of the occurrence of loss events and the impact of such events on our overall underwriting and investment portfolio. In addition, our inability to obtain reinsurance coverage at reasonable rates and in amounts adequate to mitigate the risks associated with severe weather conditions and other catastrophes could have a material adverse effect on our business and results of operations. Our business is also exposed to the risk of pandemics, outbreaks, public health crises, and geopolitical and social events, and their related effects. While policy terms and conditions in the lines of business written by us would be expected to preclude coverage for virus- related claims, like the COVID- 19 pandemic, court decisions and governmental actions may challenge the validity of any exclusions or our interpretation of how such terms and conditions operate. Because we provide our program administrators with specific quoting and binding authority, if any of them fail to comply with pre- established guidelines, our results of operations could be adversely affected. We market and distribute certain of our insurance products through program administrators that have limited quoting and binding authority, and they in turn, sell our insurance products to insureds through retail agents and brokers. These program administrators can bind certain risks without our initial approval. If any of these program administrators fail to comply with our underwriting guidelines and the terms of their appointments, we could be bound on a particular risk or number of risks that were not anticipated when we developed the insurance products or estimated losses and LAE. Such actions could adversely affect our results of operations. If actual renewals of our existing contracts do not meet expectations, our written premium in future years and our future results of operations could be materially adversely affected. Most of our contracts are written for a one- year term. In our financial forecasting process, we make assumptions about the rates of renewal of our prior year' s contracts. The insurance and reinsurance industries have historically been cyclical businesses with intense competition, often based on price. If actual renewals do not meet expectations or if we choose not to write renewals because of pricing conditions, our written premium in future years and our future operations would be materially adversely affected. Increased public attention to environmental, social and governance matters may expose us to negative public perception, cause reputational harm, impose additional costs on our business or impact our stock price. Recently, more attention is being directed towards publicly traded companies regarding environmental, social and governance (“ ESG ”) matters. A failure, or perceived failure, to respond to investor or customer expectations related to ESG concerns could cause harm to our business and reputation. For example, our insureds include a wide variety of industries, including potentially controversial industries. Damage to our reputation as a result of our provision of policies to certain insureds could result in decreased demand for our insurance products and could have a material adverse effect on our business, operational results and financial results, as well as require additional resources to rebuild our reputation, competitive position and brand strength.

Changes in accounting practices and future pronouncements may materially affect our reported financial results. Developments in accounting practices may require us to incur considerable additional expenses to comply, particularly if we are required to prepare information relating to prior periods for comparative purposes or to apply the new requirements retroactively. The impact of changes in current accounting practices and future pronouncements cannot be predicted but may affect the calculation of net income, shareholder's equity and other relevant financial statement line items. Our insurance subsidiaries are required to comply with statutory accounting principles, or SAP. SAP and various components of SAP are subject to constant review by the ~~National Association of Insurance Commissioners ("NAIC")~~ and its task forces and committees, as well as state insurance departments, in an effort to address emerging issues and otherwise improve financial reporting. Various proposals are pending before committees and task forces of the NAIC, some of which, if enacted and adopted on a state level, could have negative effects on insurance industry participants. The NAIC continuously examines existing laws and regulations. We cannot predict whether or in what form such reforms will be enacted and, if so, whether the enacted reforms will positively or negatively affect us. Risks Related to the Market and Economic Conditions Adverse economic factors, including recession, inflation, periods of high unemployment or lower economic activity could result in the sale of fewer policies than expected or an increase in the frequency of claims and premium defaults, and even the falsification of claims, or a combination of these effects, which, in turn, could affect our growth and profitability. Factors, such as business revenue, economic conditions, the volatility and strength of the capital markets, and inflation can affect the business and economic environment. These same factors affect our ability to generate revenue and profits. In an economic downturn that is characterized by higher unemployment, declining spending, and reduced corporate revenue, the demand for insurance products is generally adversely affected, which directly affects our premium levels and profitability. Negative economic factors may also affect our ability to receive the appropriate rate for the risk we insure with our policyholders and may adversely affect the number of policies we can write, and our opportunities to underwrite profitable business. In an economic downturn, our customers may have less need for insurance coverage, cancel existing insurance policies, modify their coverage or not renew the policies they hold with us. Existing policyholders may exaggerate or even falsify claims to obtain higher claims payments. In addition, if certain segments of the economy, such as the construction or energy production and servicing segments (which would affect several of our underwriting divisions at one time) were to significantly collapse, it could adversely affect our results. These outcomes would reduce our underwriting profit to the extent these factors are not reflected in the rates we charge. The insurance business is historically cyclical in nature ~~and we believe we are currently experiencing a relatively hard market cycle~~, which may affect our financial performance and cause our operating results to vary from quarter to quarter and may not be indicative of future performance. Historically, insurance carriers have experienced significant fluctuations in operating results due to competition, frequency and severity of catastrophic events, levels of capacity, adverse litigation trends, regulatory constraints, general economic conditions, and other factors. The supply of insurance is related to prevailing prices, the level of insured losses and the level of capital available to the industry that, in turn, may fluctuate in response to changes in rates of return on investments being earned in the insurance industry. As a result, the insurance business historically has been a cyclical industry characterized by periods of intense price competition due to excessive underwriting capacity (soft market cycle) as well as periods when shortages of capacity increased premium levels (hard market cycle). Demand for insurance depends on numerous factors, including the frequency and severity of catastrophic events, levels of capacity, the introduction of new capital providers and general economic conditions. All of these factors fluctuate and may contribute to price declines generally in the insurance industry. Although an individual insurance company's financial performance depends on its own specific business characteristics, the profitability of most P & C insurance companies tends to follow this cyclical market pattern with higher gross written premium growth and improved profitability during hard market cycles. Further, this cyclical market pattern can be more pronounced in the E & S market than in the standard insurance market. When the standard insurance market hardens, the E & S market typically hardens, and growth in the E & S market can be significantly more rapid than growth in the standard insurance market. Similarly, when conditions begin to soften, many customers that were previously driven into the E & S market may return to the admitted market, exacerbating the effects of rate decreases on our financial results. At present, we believe we are experiencing a relatively hard market cycle, however, we cannot predict the timing or duration of changes in the market cycle because the cyclicity is due in large part to the actions of our competitors and general economic factors. As a result, our operating results are subject to fluctuation and have historically varied from quarter to quarter. We expect our quarterly results will continue to fluctuate in the future due to a number of factors, including the general economic conditions in the markets where we operate, the frequency of occurrence or severity of catastrophe or other insured events, fluctuating interest rates, claims exceeding our loss reserves, competition in our industry, deviations from expected premium retention rates of our existing policies and contracts, adverse investment performance, and the cost of reinsurance coverage. Performance of our investment portfolio is subject to a variety of investment risks that may adversely affect our financial results. Our results of operations depend, in part, on the performance of our investment portfolio. We seek to hold a diversified portfolio of investments that is managed by professional investment advisory management firms in accordance with our investment policy and routinely reviewed by our Investment Committee. However, our investments are subject to general economic conditions and market risks as well as risks inherent to specific securities. Our primary market risk exposures are to changes in interest rates and equity prices. See the section entitled "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations- Investments- Market Risk." A significant amount of our investment portfolio is invested in fixed maturity securities, or separately managed accounts and limited partnerships invested primarily in fixed maturity securities. ~~In recent years, interest rates have been at or near historic lows, however, for the year ended December 31, 2022 and 2023, interest rates have steadily risen.~~ **Interest rates rose materially during** ~~have been at or near historic lows, however, for the year ended December 31, 2022 and 2023, interest rates have steadily risen.~~ Should the recent rate increases ~~cease or decline, including as a result of steps taken by the federal government to slow inflation, such as the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, a low interest rate environment would~~ **continue to** place pressure on our net investment income, particularly as it relates to these securities and short-term investments, which, in turn, may adversely affect our operating

results. Recent and future increases in interest rates could cause the values of our fixed income securities portfolios to decline, with the magnitude of the decline depending on the duration of securities included in our portfolio and the amount by which interest rates increase. Some fixed income securities have call or prepayment options, which create possible reinvestment risk in declining rate environments. Other fixed income securities, such as mortgage-backed and **other** asset-backed securities, carry prepayment risk or, in a rising interest rate environment, may not prepay as quickly as expected. All of our fixed maturity securities, including those held in separately managed accounts and limited partnerships, are subject to credit risk. Credit risk is the risk that certain investments may default or become impaired due to deterioration in the financial condition of one or more issuers of the securities we hold, or due to deterioration in the financial condition of an insurer that guarantees an issuer's payments on such investments. Downgrades in the credit ratings of fixed maturity securities (where rated) could also have a significant negative effect on the market valuation of such securities. We also invest in marketable preferred and common equity securities and exchange traded funds. These securities are carried on the balance sheet at fair market value and are subject to potential losses and declines in market value. The above market and credit risks could reduce our net investment income and result in realized investment losses. Our investment portfolio is subject to increased valuation uncertainties when investment markets are illiquid, as is the case with our fixed maturity securities held to maturity, separately managed accounts, and limited partnership investments. The valuation of investments is more subjective when markets are illiquid, thereby increasing the risk that the estimated fair value (i. e., the carrying amount) of the securities we hold in our portfolio do not reflect prices at which actual transactions would occur. Risks for all types of securities are managed through the application of our investment policy, which establishes investment parameters that include but are not limited to, maximum percentages of investment in certain types of securities and minimum levels of credit quality, which we believe are within applicable guidelines established by the NAIC, the Texas Department of Insurance, and the Oklahoma Department of Insurance. In addition, our Investment Committee periodically reviews our Enterprise Based Asset Allocation models to assist in overall risk management. Although we seek to preserve our capital, we cannot be certain that our investment objectives will be achieved, and results may vary substantially over time. In addition, although we seek to employ investment strategies that are not correlated with our insurance and reinsurance exposures, losses in our investment portfolio may occur at the same time as underwriting losses and, therefore, exacerbate the adverse effect of the losses on us. We could be forced to sell investments to meet our liquidity requirements. We invest the premiums we receive from our insureds until they are needed to pay policyholder claims. Consequently, we seek to manage the duration of our investment portfolio based on the duration of our losses and LAE reserves to provide sufficient liquidity and avoid having to liquidate investments to fund claims. Risks such as inadequate losses and LAE reserves or unfavorable trends in litigation could potentially result in the need to sell investments to fund these liabilities. We may not be able to sell our investments at favorable prices or at all. Sales could result in significant realized losses depending on the conditions of the general market, interest rates and credit issues with individual securities. Risks Related to the Regulatory Environment We are subject to extensive regulation, which may adversely affect our ability to achieve our business objectives. In addition, if we fail to comply with these regulations, we may be subject to penalties, including fines and suspensions, which may adversely affect our financial condition and results of operations. Our primary insurance subsidiaries, HSIC, IIC, and GMIC, are subject to extensive regulation in Texas, their state of domicile, and to a lesser degree, the other states in which they operate. Most insurance regulations are designed to protect the interests of insurance policyholders, as opposed to the interests of investors or stockholders. These regulations generally are administered by a department of insurance in each state and relate to, among other things, capital and surplus requirements, investment and underwriting limitations, affiliate transactions, dividend limitations, changes in control, solvency and a variety of other financial and non-financial aspects of our business. Significant changes in these laws and regulations could further limit our discretion or make it more expensive to conduct our business. State insurance regulators also conduct periodic examinations of the affairs of insurance and reinsurance companies and require the filing of annual and other reports relating to financial condition, holding company issues and other matters. These regulatory requirements may impose timing and expense constraints that could adversely affect our ability to achieve some or all of our business objectives. Our insurance subsidiaries are part of an "insurance holding company system" within the meaning of applicable Texas statutes and regulations. As a result of such status, certain transactions between our insurance subsidiaries and one or more of their affiliates may not be effected unless the insurer has provided notice of that transaction to the Texas Department of Insurance. These prior notification requirements may result in business delays and additional business expenses. If our insurance subsidiaries fail to file a required notification or fail to comply with other applicable insurance regulations in Texas, we may be subject to significant fines and penalties and our working relationship with the Texas Department of Insurance may be impaired. In addition, state insurance regulators have broad discretion to deny or revoke licenses for various reasons, including the violation of regulations. In some instances, where there is uncertainty as to applicability, we follow practices based on our interpretations of regulations or practices that we believe generally to be followed by the industry. These practices may turn out to be different from the interpretations of regulatory authorities. If we do not have the requisite licenses and approvals or do not comply with applicable regulatory requirements, state insurance regulators could preclude or temporarily suspend us from carrying on some or all of our activities in their state or could otherwise penalize us. This could adversely affect our ability to operate our business. Further, changes in the level of regulation of the insurance industry or changes in laws or regulations themselves or interpretations by regulatory authorities could interfere with our operations and require us to bear additional costs of compliance, which could adversely affect our ability to operate our business. Our insurance subsidiaries are subject to risk-based capital requirements, based upon the "risk based capital model" adopted by the NAIC, and other minimum capital and surplus restrictions imposed under Texas law. These requirements establish the minimum amount of risk-based capital necessary for a company to support its overall business operations. It identifies property and casualty insurers that may be inadequately capitalized by looking at certain inherent risks of each insurer's assets and liabilities and its mix of net written premium. Insurers falling below a calculated threshold may be subject to varying degrees of regulatory action, including

supervision, rehabilitation or liquidation. Failure to maintain our risk-based capital at the required levels could adversely affect the ability of our insurance subsidiary to maintain regulatory authority to conduct our business and our A. M. Best Rating. We may become subject to additional government or market regulation, which may have a material adverse impact on our business. Our business could be adversely affected by changes in state laws, including those relating to asset and reserve valuation requirements, surplus requirements, limitations on investments and dividends, enterprise risk and risk-based capital requirements, and, at the federal level, by laws and regulations that may affect certain aspects of the insurance industry, including proposals for preemptive federal regulation. The U. S. federal government generally has not directly regulated the insurance industry except for certain areas of the market, such as insurance for flood, nuclear and terrorism risks. However, the federal government has undertaken initiatives or considered legislation in several areas that may affect the insurance industry, including tort reform, corporate governance and the taxation of reinsurance companies. Additionally, we currently derive revenues from customers in the cannabis industry. As such, any risks related to the cannabis industry, including but not limited to cannabis being deemed a controlled substance under federal laws, may adversely impact our clients, and potential clients, which may in turn, impact our services. The legality of cannabis could be reversed in one or more states, which might force businesses, including our customers, to cease operations in one or more states entirely. A change in the legal status of, or the enforcement of federal laws related to, the cannabis industry could negatively impact us and lead to a decrease in our revenue through the loss of current and potential customers. Our ability to utilize our net operating loss carryforwards and certain other tax attributes may be limited. As of December 31, 2022-2023, we had gross federal income tax net operating losses, or NOLs, of approximately \$ 71-49. 3-4 million available to offset our future taxable income, if any, prior to consideration of annual limitations that may be imposed under Section 382 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or the Code, or otherwise. The These NOLs will begin are set to expire beginning in 2033-2030. Under Section 382 of the Code, if a corporation undergoes an "ownership change" (very generally defined as a greater than 50 % change, by value, in the corporation's equity ownership by certain stockholders or groups of stockholders over a rolling three-year period), the corporation's ability to use its pre-ownership change NOLs to offset its post-ownership change income may be limited. We may experience ownership changes in the future as a result of subsequent shifts in our stock ownership, some of which may be outside of our control. Future regulatory changes could also limit our ability to utilize our NOLs. To the extent we are not able to offset future taxable income with our NOLs, our net income and cash flows may be adversely affected. Because we are a holding company and substantially all of our operations are conducted by our insurance subsidiaries, our ability to achieve liquidity at the holding company, including the ability to pay dividends and service our debt obligations, depends on our ability to obtain cash dividends or other permitted payments from our insurance subsidiaries. The continued operation and growth of our business will require substantial capital. Accordingly, we do not intend to declare and pay cash dividends on shares of our common stock in the foreseeable future. Because we are a holding company with no business operations of our own, our ability to pay dividends to stockholders and meet our debt payment obligations largely depends on dividends and other distributions from our primary insurance subsidiaries, HSIC, IIC and GMIC. State insurance laws, including the laws of Texas restrict the ability of HSIC, IIC and GMIC to determine how we declare stockholder dividends. State insurance regulators require insurance companies to maintain specified levels of statutory capital and surplus. Dividend payments are further limited to that part of available policyholder surplus that is derived from net profits on our business. State insurance regulators have broad powers to prevent the reduction of statutory surplus to inadequate levels, and there is no assurance that dividends up to the maximum amounts calculated under any applicable formula would be permitted. Moreover, state insurance regulators that have jurisdiction over the payment of dividends by our insurance subsidiaries may in the future adopt statutory provisions more restrictive than those currently in effect. Any determination to pay dividends in the future will be at the discretion of our Board of Directors and will depend upon results of operations, financial condition, contractual restrictions pursuant to our debt agreements, our indebtedness, restrictions imposed by applicable law and other factors our Board of Directors deems relevant. Consequently, investors may need to sell all or part of their holdings of our common stock after price appreciation, which may never occur, as the only way to realize any future gains on their investment. Investors seeking immediate cash dividends should not purchase our common stock. Applicable insurance laws may make it difficult to effect a change of control. Under applicable Texas insurance laws and regulations, no person may acquire control of a domestic insurer until written approval is obtained from the state insurance commissioner on the proposed acquisition. Such approval would be contingent upon the state insurance commissioner's consideration of a number of factors including, among others, the financial strength of the proposed acquiror, the acquiror's plans for the future operations of the domestic insurer and any anti-competitive results that may arise from the consummation of the acquisition of control. Texas insurance laws and regulations pertaining to changes of control apply to both the direct and indirect acquisition of ten percent or more of the voting stock of a Texas-domiciled insurer. Accordingly, the acquisition of ten percent or more of our common stock would be considered an indirect change of control of Skyward Specialty and would trigger the applicable change of control filing requirements under Texas insurance laws and regulations, absent a disclaimer of control filing and its acceptance by the Texas Insurance Department. These requirements may discourage potential acquisition proposals and may delay, deter or prevent a change of control of Skyward Specialty, including through transactions that some or all of the stockholders of Skyward Specialty might consider to be desirable. Risks Related to Our Liquidity and Access to Capital We may require additional capital in the future, which may not be available or may only be available on unfavorable terms. Our future capital requirements depend on many factors, including our ability to write new business successfully and to establish premium rates and reserves at levels sufficient to cover losses. To the extent that cash flows generated by our operations are insufficient to fund future operating requirements and cover claim losses, or that our capital position is adversely impacted by a decline in the fair value of our investment portfolio, losses from catastrophe events or otherwise, we may need to raise additional funds through financings or curtail our growth. Many factors will affect the amount and timing of our capital needs, including our growth rate and profitability, our claims experience, and the availability of

reinsurance, market disruptions, and other unforeseeable developments. If we need to raise additional capital, equity or debt financing may not be available at all or may be available only on terms that are not favorable to us. In the case of equity financings, dilution to our stockholders could result. In the case of debt financings, we may be subject to covenants that restrict our ability to freely operate our business. In any case, such securities may have rights, preferences and privileges that are senior to those of the shares of common stock offered hereby. If we cannot obtain adequate capital on favorable terms or at all, we may not have sufficient funds to implement our operating plans and our business, financial condition or results of operations could be materially adversely affected.

~~Our debt obligations could impair our financial condition and limit our operating flexibility. Our indebtedness under our credit agreement, (“ Credit Agreement ”), and our other financial obligations could: • impair our ability to obtain financing or additional debt in the future for working capital, capital expenditures, acquisitions or general corporate purposes; • impair our ability to access capital and credit markets on terms that are favorable to us; • have a material adverse effect on us if we fail to comply with financial and affirmative and restrictive covenants in our Credit Agreement and an event of default occurs as a result of a failure that is not cured or waived; • require us to dedicate a portion of our cash flow for interest payments on our indebtedness and other financial obligations, thereby reducing the availability of our cash flow to fund working capital and capital expenditures; and • limit our flexibility in planning for, or reacting to, changes in our business and the industry in which we operate. Our financial covenants in the Credit Agreement require us to maintain certain minimum fixed charges coverage ratio and total adjusted capital of our subsidiaries. If we breach these covenants, the lender will have the right to accelerate repayment of the outstanding amounts. In the event that the lender accelerates the repayment of our indebtedness, there can be no assurance that we will have sufficient cash on hand to satisfy such obligations and our business operations may be materially harmed. Furthermore, there is no guarantee that we will be able to pay the principal and interest under the Credit Agreement or that future working capital, borrowings or equity financing will be available to repay or refinance any amounts outstanding under the Credit Agreement. Our obligations under the Credit Agreement are secured by a perfected security interest in all of our tangible and intangible assets (including our intellectual property assets), except for certain customary excluded property, and all of our and our subsidiaries’ capital stock, with certain limited exceptions. In addition, we may enter into debt agreements in the future that may contain similar or more burdensome terms and covenants, including financial covenants.~~

Risks Related to Our Operations We could be adversely affected by the loss of one or more key personnel or by an inability to attract and retain qualified personnel. We depend on our ability to attract and retain experienced and seasoned personnel who are knowledgeable about our business. The pool of talent from which we actively recruit is limited and may fluctuate based on market dynamics specific to our industry and independent of overall economic conditions. As such, higher demand for employees having the desired skills and expertise could lead to increased compensation expectations for existing and prospective personnel, making it difficult for us to retain and recruit key personnel and maintain labor costs at desired levels. Should any of our key personnel terminate their employment with us, or if we are unable to retain and attract talented personnel, we may be unable to maintain our current competitive position in the specialized markets in which we operate, which could adversely affect our results of operations. Security breaches, loss of data, cyberattacks, and other information technology failures could disrupt our operations, damage our reputation, and adversely affect our business, operations, and financial results. Our business is highly dependent upon our information technology and telecommunications systems, including our underwriting systems. We rely on these systems to interact with brokers and insureds, to underwrite business, to prepare policies and process premiums, to perform actuarial and other modeling functions, to process claims and make claims payments, and to prepare internal and external financial statements. Some of these systems may include or rely on third- party systems not located on our premises or under our control. Events such as natural catastrophes, terrorist attacks, industrial accidents, computer viruses and other cyber- attacks may cause our systems to fail or be inaccessible for extended periods of time. While we have implemented business contingency plans and other reasonable plans to protect our systems, whether housed internally or through third- party cloud services, sustained or repeated system failures or service denials could severely limit our ability to write and process new and renewal business, provide customer service, pay claims in a timely manner or otherwise operate in the ordinary course of business. Computer viruses, hackers, employee misconduct, and other external hazards could expose our systems to security breaches, cyber- attacks or other disruptions. While we have implemented security measures designed to protect against breaches of security and other interference with our systems and networks, our systems and networks may be subject to breaches or interference and we, and our third- party service providers, will likely continue to experience cybersecurity incidents of varying degrees. Any such event may result in operational disruptions as well as unauthorized access to, the disclosure of, or loss of our proprietary information or our customers’ data and information, which in turn may result in legal claims, regulatory scrutiny and liability, reputational damage, the incurrence of costs to eliminate or mitigate further exposure, the loss of customers or affiliated advisors, or other damage to our business. In addition, the trend toward general public notification of such incidents could exacerbate the harm to our business, financial condition and results of operations. Even if we successfully protect our technology infrastructure and the confidentiality of sensitive data, we could suffer harm to our business and reputation if attempted security breaches are publicized. We cannot be certain that advances in criminal capabilities, discovery of new vulnerabilities, attempts to exploit vulnerabilities in our systems, data thefts, physical system or network break- ins or inappropriate access, or other developments will not compromise or breach the technology or other security measures protecting the networks and systems used in connection with our business. Third parties to whom we outsource certain of our functions are also subject to these risks. While we review and assess our third- party providers’ cybersecurity controls, as appropriate, and make changes to our business processes to manage these risks, we cannot ensure that our attempts to keep such information confidential will always be successful. Moreover, our increased use of third- party services (e. g. cloud technology and software as a service) can make it more difficult to identify and respond to cyberattacks in any of the above situations due to the dynamic nature of these technologies. These risks could increase as vendors adopt and use more cloud- based software services rather than software services which can be run within our data

centers. We may not be able to manage our growth effectively. We intend to grow our business in the future, which could require additional capital, systems development and skilled personnel. However, we must be able to meet our capital needs, expand our systems and our internal controls effectively, allocate our human resources optimally, identify, hire, train and develop qualified employees and effectively incorporate the components of any business we may acquire in our effort to achieve growth. The failure to manage our growth effectively could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations. The effects of litigation on our business are uncertain and could have an adverse effect on our business. As is typical in our industry, we continually face risks associated with litigation of various types, including disputes relating to insurance claims under our policies as well as other general commercial and corporate litigation. Although we are not currently involved in any out-of-the-ordinary litigation with our customers, other members of the insurance industry are the target of class action lawsuits and other types of litigation, some of which involve claims for substantial or indeterminate amounts, and the outcomes of which are unpredictable. This litigation is based on a variety of issues, including insurance and claim settlement practices. We cannot predict with any certainty whether we will be involved in such litigation in the future or what impact such litigation would have on our business. Loss of key vendor relationships or failure of a vendor to protect our data, confidential and proprietary information could affect our operations. We rely on services and products provided by many vendors in the United States and abroad. These include, for example, vendors of computer hardware and software, and vendors and / or outsourcing of services such as claim adjustment services, human resource benefits management services and investment management services. In the event that any vendor suffers a bankruptcy or otherwise becomes unable to continue to provide products or services, or fails to protect our confidential, proprietary, and other information, we may suffer operational impairments and financial losses. In addition, while we generally monitor vendor risk, including the security and stability of our critical vendors, we may fail to properly assess and understand the risks and costs involved in the third-party relationships, and our financial condition and results of operations could be materially and adversely affected. We anticipate that we will continue to rely on third-party software in the future. Although we believe that there are commercially reasonable alternatives to the third-party software we currently license, this may not always be the case, or it may be difficult or costly to replace. In addition, integration of new third-party software may require significant work and require substantial investment of our time and resources. Our use of additional or alternative third-party software would require us to enter into license agreements with third parties, which may not be available on commercially reasonable terms or at all. Many of the risks associated with the use of third-party software cannot be eliminated, and these risks could negatively affect our business. We may fail or be unable to protect our intellectual property rights for our proprietary technology platform and brand, or we may be sued by third parties for alleged infringement of their proprietary rights. Our success and ability to compete depend in part on our intellectual property, which includes our rights in our brand and our proprietary technology used in certain of our product lines. We primarily rely on copyright and trade secret laws, and confidentiality agreements with our employees, customers, service providers, partners and others to protect our intellectual property rights. However, the steps we take to protect our intellectual property may be inadequate. Our efforts to enforce our intellectual property rights may be met with defenses, counterclaims and countersuits attacking the validity and enforceability and scope of our intellectual property rights. Our failure to secure, protect and enforce our intellectual property rights could adversely affect our brand and adversely impact our business. Our success depends also in part on our not infringing on the intellectual property rights of others. Our competitors, as well as a number of other entities and individuals, may own or claim to own intellectual property relating to our industry or the Company. In the future, third parties may claim that we are infringing on their intellectual property rights, and we may be found to be infringing on such rights. Any claims or litigation could cause us to incur significant expenses and, if successfully asserted against us, could require that we pay substantial damages or ongoing royalty payments, prevent us from offering our services, or require that we comply with other unfavorable terms. Even if we were to prevail in such a dispute, any litigation could be costly and time-consuming and divert the attention of our management and key personnel from our business operations. Risks Related to Ownership of Our Common Stock We have and expect to continue to incur increased costs as a result of operating as a public company, and our management devotes substantial time to ~~new~~ compliance initiatives. We are subject to financial reporting and other requirements for which our accounting and other management systems and resources may not be adequately prepared. As a public company, and particularly after we are no longer an emerging growth company, we ~~have incur~~ **incurred** and will continue to incur significant legal, accounting and other expenses. In addition, the federal securities laws, including the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, the Dodd-Frank ~~Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010~~, and rules and regulations subsequently implemented by the SEC and Nasdaq have imposed various requirements on public companies, including requirements to file annual, quarterly and event-driven reports with respect to ~~their~~ **our** business and financial condition, and to establish and maintain effective disclosure and financial controls and corporate governance practices. These rules and regulations will increase our legal and financial compliance costs, make certain activities more time-consuming and costly, and require our management and other personnel to devote a substantial amount of time to compliance initiatives. Despite our best efforts, we may not be able to produce reliable financial statements or file such financial statements as part of a periodic report in a timely manner with the SEC or comply with Nasdaq listing requirements. We also expect that these rules and regulations may make it more difficult and more expensive for us to obtain director and officer liability insurance. Pursuant to Section 404 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, we will be required to furnish a report by our management on our internal control over financial reporting, including an attestation report on internal control over financial reporting issued by our independent registered public accounting firm, beginning **January 18** ~~with the first full year after July 1, 2019~~ **2024**. However, while we remain an emerging growth company, we will not be required to include an attestation report on internal control over financial reporting issued by our independent registered public accounting firm. To achieve compliance with Section 404 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, we will be engaged in a process to document and evaluate our internal control over financial reporting, which is both costly and challenging. We will need to continue to dedicate internal resources, ~~potentially~~ engage outside consultants, adopt a detailed

work plan to assess and document the adequacy of internal control over financial reporting, continue steps to improve control processes as appropriate, validate through testing that controls are functioning as documented and implement a continuous reporting and improvement process for internal control over financial reporting. Despite our efforts, there is a risk that neither we nor our independent registered public accounting firm will be able to conclude within the prescribed timeframe that our internal control over financial reporting is effective as required by Section 404 of the Sarbanes- Oxley Act. This could result in an adverse reaction in the financial markets due to a loss of confidence in the reliability of our financial statements. We could also become subject to investigations by the SEC or other regulatory authorities, which could require additional financial and management resources. As a public company, we are also required to maintain disclosure controls and procedures. Disclosure controls and procedures means our controls and other procedures that are designed to ensure that information required to be disclosed by us in the reports that we file or submit under the Exchange Act is recorded, processed, summarized and reported, within the time periods specified in the rules and forms of the SEC. We do not expect that our disclosure controls and procedures or our internal control over financial reporting will prevent or detect all errors and all fraud. We believe a control system, no matter how well- designed and operated, can provide only reasonable, not absolute, assurance that the control system's objectives will be met. Due to the inherent limitations in all control systems, no evaluation of controls can provide absolute assurance that misstatements due to error or fraud will not occur or that all control issues and instances of fraud, if any, have been detected. The design of any system of controls is based in part on certain assumptions about the likelihood of future events, and any design may not succeed in achieving its stated goals under all potential future conditions. Over time, controls may become inadequate because of changes in conditions or deterioration in the degree of compliance with policies or procedures. Accordingly, because of the inherent limitations in our control system, misstatements due to error or fraud may occur and not be detected. We are required by Section 404 of the Sarbanes - Oxley Act to evaluate the effectiveness of our internal control over financial reporting. If we are unable to achieve and maintain effective internal controls, our operating results and financial condition could be harmed and the market price of our common stock may be negatively affected. As a public company with SEC reporting obligations, we **are will be** required to document and test our internal control procedures to satisfy the requirements of Section 404 (a) of the Sarbanes- Oxley Act, which **will require requires** annual assessments by management of the effectiveness of our internal control over financial reporting **beginning with the annual report for our fiscal year ended December 31, 2023**. We are an emerging growth company, and thus we are exempt from the auditor attestation requirement of Section 404 (b) of Sarbanes- Oxley until such time as we no longer qualify as an emerging growth company. We qualify as an emerging growth company, and any decision on our part to comply with reduced reporting and disclosure requirements applicable to emerging growth companies could make our common stock less attractive to investors ~~Regardless of whether we qualify as an emerging growth company, we will still need to implement substantial internal control systems and procedures in order to satisfy the reporting requirements under the Exchange Act and applicable requirements. Our management is responsible for establishing and maintaining adequate internal control over financial reporting designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the reliability of financial reporting and the preparation of financial statements for external purposes in accordance with GAAP. In the course of preparing the consolidated financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2021, our management identified a material weakness in our internal control over financial reporting as we had not designed or maintained an effective control environment and associated control activities to meet our accounting and reporting requirements. The material weaknesses identified for the year ended December 31, 2021 were remediated for the year ended December 31, 2022. Neither we nor our independent registered public accounting firm have tested the effectiveness of our internal control over financial reporting, and we may not be able to conclude on an ongoing basis that we have effective internal control over financial reporting in accordance with Section 404 (a) of Sarbanes- Oxley. If we conclude that our internal control over financial reporting is not effective, we cannot be certain as to the timing of completion of our evaluation, testing and remediation actions or their effect on our operations. Even if we conclude that our internal control over financial reporting is effective, our independent registered public accounting firm may conclude that there are material weaknesses with respect to our internal control over financial reporting. Moreover, any material weaknesses or other deficiencies in our internal control over financial reporting may impede our ability to file timely and accurate reports with the SEC. Any of the above could cause investors to lose confidence in our reported financial information, we could become subject to litigation or investigations by Nasdaq, the SEC or other regulatory authorities, or our common stock listed on Nasdaq to be suspended or terminated, which could require additional financial and management resources, and could have a negative effect on the trading price of our common stock.~~ We are an " emerging growth company, " and, for as long as we continue to be an emerging growth company, we currently intend to take advantage of exemptions from various reporting requirements applicable to other public companies but not to " emerging growth companies, " including, but not limited to, not being required to have our independent registered public accounting firm audit our internal control over financial reporting under Section 404 of the Sarbanes- Oxley Act, reduced disclosure obligations regarding executive compensation in our registration statements, periodic reports and proxy statements and exemptions from the requirements of holding a nonbinding advisory vote on executive compensation and stockholder approval of any golden parachute payments not previously approved. We will cease to be an emerging growth company upon the earliest of: (i) the last day of the fiscal year in which we have total annual gross revenues of \$ 1. 235 billion or more; (ii) the last day of our fiscal year following the fifth anniversary of the date of the IPO; (iii) the date on which we have issued more than \$ 1 billion in nonconvertible debt during the previous three years; and (iv) the date on which we are deemed to be a large accelerated filer under the rules of the SEC. We cannot predict whether investors will find our common stock less attractive if we choose to rely on these exemptions while we are an emerging growth company. If some investors find our common stock less attractive as a result of any choices to reduce future disclosure, there may be a less active trading market for our common stock and the price of our common stock may be more volatile. Under the JOBS Act, emerging growth companies can also delay adopting new or revised accounting standards until such time as those standards apply to private companies. We have elected to avail ourselves of

this extended transition period and, as a result, we will not be required to adopt new or revised accounting standards on the relevant dates on which adoption of such standards is required for other public companies. Our operating results and stock price may be volatile, or may decline regardless of our operating performance, and you could lose all or part of your investment. **As** ~~We are a new~~ public company and the market price of our common stock has been and is likely to continue to be highly volatile and may fluctuate substantially due to many factors, many of which are beyond our control. In addition, securities markets worldwide have experienced, and are likely to continue to experience, significant price and volume fluctuations. This market volatility, as well as general economic, market or political conditions, could subject the market price of our shares to wide price fluctuations regardless of our operating performance. You should consider an investment in our common stock to be risky, and you should invest in our common stock only if you can withstand a significant loss and wide fluctuation in the market value of your investment. The market price of our common stock could be subject to significant fluctuations ~~after this offering~~ in response to the factors described in this “ Risk Factors ” section and other factors, many of which are beyond our control. Among the factors that could affect our stock price are: • market conditions in the broader stock market; • actual or anticipated fluctuations in our quarterly financial and operating results; • introduction of new products or services by us or our competitors; • issuance of new or changed securities analysts’ reports or recommendations; • results of operations that vary from expectations of securities analysts and investors; • short sales, hedging and other derivative transactions in our common stock; • guidance, if any, that we provide to the public, any changes in this guidance or our failure to meet this guidance; • strategic actions by us or our competitors; • announcement by us, our competitors or our acquisition targets; • sales, or anticipated sales, of large blocks of our stock, including by our directors, executive officers and principal stockholders; • additions or departures in our Board or Directors, senior management or other key personnel; • regulatory, legal or political developments; • public response to press releases or other public announcements by us or third parties, including our filings with the SEC; • litigation and governmental investigations; • changing economic conditions, **including social inflation**; • changes in accounting principles; • any indebtedness we may incur or securities we may issue in the future; • default under agreements governing our indebtedness; • exposure to capital and credit market risks that adversely affect our investment portfolio or our capital resources; • changes in our credit ratings; and • other events or factors, including those from natural disasters, war, acts of terrorism or responses to these events. The securities markets have from time to time experienced extreme price and volume fluctuations that often have been unrelated or disproportionate to the operating performance of particular companies. As a result of these factors, investors in our common stock may not be able to resell their shares at or above the ~~initial offering~~ **their purchase** price. These broad market fluctuations, as well as general market, economic and political conditions, such as recessions, loss of investor confidence or interest rate changes, may negatively affect the market price of our common stock. In addition, the stock markets, including Nasdaq, have experienced extreme price and volume fluctuations that have affected and continue to affect the market prices of equity securities of many companies. If any of the foregoing occurs, it could cause our stock price to fall and may expose us to securities class action litigation that, even if unsuccessful, could be costly to defend, divert management’ s attention and resources or harm our business. Substantial future sales of shares of our common stock by existing stockholders, or the perception that those sales may occur, could cause the market price of our common stock to decline. Sales of a substantial number of shares of our common stock in the public market, or the perception that these sales might occur, could depress the market price of our common stock and could impair our ability to raise capital through the sale of additional equity securities. We are unable to predict the effect that such sales may have on the prevailing market price of our common stock. We may change our underwriting guidelines or our strategy without stockholder approval. Our management has the authority to change our underwriting guidelines or our strategy without notice to our stockholders and without stockholder approval. As a result, we may make fundamental changes to our operations without stockholder approval, which could result in our pursuing a strategy or implementing underwriting guidelines that may be materially different from the strategy or underwriting guidelines described in the section entitled “ Business ” or elsewhere in this filing. Anti- takeover provisions in our organizational documents could delay a change in management and limit our share price. Provisions of our certificate of incorporation and bylaws could make it more difficult for a third party to acquire control of us even if such a change in control would increase the value of our common stock and prevent attempts by our stockholders to replace or remove our current Board of Directors or management. **Therefore, these provisions** ~~We have a number of anti- takeover devices that hinder takeover attempts and could reduce~~ **adversely affect** the ~~price market value~~ of our common stock. **Among other things, or our charter documents** ~~prevent sale at a premium. Our anti- takeover provisions~~: • permit the Board of Directors to establish the number of directors and fill any vacancies and newly created directorships; • provide that our Board of Directors will be classified into three classes with staggered, three- year terms and that directors may only be removed for cause; • require super- majority voting to amend provisions in our certificate of incorporation and bylaws; • include blank- check preferred stock, the preference rights and other terms of which may be set by the Board of Directors and could delay or prevent a transaction or a change in control that might involve a premium price for our common stock or otherwise benefit our stockholders; • eliminate the ability of our stockholders to call special meetings of stockholders; • specify that special meetings of our stockholders can be called only by our Board of Directors, the chairman of our Board of Directors, or our chief executive officer; • prohibit stockholder consent action by other than unanimous written consent; • provide that vacancies on our Board of Directors may be filled only by a majority of directors then in office, even though less than a quorum; • prohibit cumulative voting in the election of directors; and • establish advance notice requirements for nominations for election to our Board of Directors or for proposing matters that can be acted upon by stockholders at annual stockholder meetings. In addition, as a Delaware corporation, we are subject to Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law. These provisions may prohibit large stockholders, in particular those owning 15 % or more of our outstanding voting stock, from merging or combining with us for a period of time. Our certificate of incorporation and bylaws provide that the Court of Chancery of the State of Delaware will be the exclusive forum for substantially all disputes between us and our stockholders, which could limit our stockholders’ ability to obtain a favorable judicial forum for disputes with us or our

directors, officers or employees. Our certificate of incorporation and bylaws provide that the Court of Chancery of the State of Delaware is the exclusive forum for the following civil actions: • any derivative action or proceeding brought on our behalf; • any action asserting a claim of breach of a fiduciary duty by any of our directors, officers, employees or agents or our stockholders; • any action asserting a claim arising pursuant to any provision of the DGCL or our certificate of incorporation or bylaws or as to which the DGCL confers jurisdiction on the Court of Chancery of the State of Delaware; • any action to interpret, apply, enforce or determine the validity of our certificate of incorporation or our bylaws; or • any action asserting a claim governed by the internal affairs doctrine. Our certificate of incorporation and bylaws further provide that, unless we consent in writing to the selection of an alternative forum, the federal district courts of the United States of America shall, to the fullest extent permitted by law, be the sole and exclusive forum for the resolutions of any complaint asserting a cause of action arising under the Securities Act. Furthermore, this application to Securities Act claims and Section 22 of the Securities Act create concurrent jurisdiction for federal and state courts over all suits brought to enforce any duty or liability created by the Securities Act or the rules and regulations thereunder. Accordingly, there is uncertainty as to whether a court would enforce such provision, and our stockholders will not be deemed to have waived our compliance with the federal securities laws and the rules and regulations thereunder. However, this exclusive forum provision would not apply to suits brought to enforce a duty or liability created by the Exchange Act or any other claim for which the federal courts have exclusive jurisdiction. This choice of forum provision, if enforced, may limit a stockholder's ability to bring a claim in a judicial forum that it finds favorable for disputes with us or our directors, officers or other employees, which may discourage such lawsuits against us and our directors, officers and other employees, although our stockholders will not be deemed to have waived our compliance with federal securities laws and the rules and regulations thereunder. Alternatively, if a court were to find the choice of forum provision contained in our certificate of incorporation and bylaws to be inapplicable or unenforceable in an action, we may incur additional costs associated with resolving such action in other jurisdictions, which could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition or results of operations.