AETNA INC /PA/
Form S-4/A
August 28, 2015
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As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on August 27, 2015

Registration No. 333-206289

UNITED STATES

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

AMENDMENT NO. 1

TO

FORM S-4

REGISTRATION STATEMENT

UNDER

THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

Aetna Inc.

(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in Its Charter)

Pennsylvania	6324	23-2229683
(State or Other Jurisdiction of Incorporation or Organization)	(Primary Standard Industrial Classification Code Number)	(I.R.S. Employer Identification Number)

151 Farmington Avenue Hartford, CT 06156 (860) 273-0123

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

William J. Casazza Executive Vice President and General Counsel Aetna Inc. 151 Farmington Avenue Hartford, CT 06156 (860) 273-0123

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

	Copies to:	
David L. Caplan **H. Oliver Smith** **Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP** **450 Lexington Avenue** **New York, NY 10017** **(212) 450-4000**	**Christopher M. Todoroff** **Senior Vice President and General Counsel** **Humana Inc.** **500 West Main Street** **Louisville, KY 40202** **(502) 580-1000**	**Jeffrey Bagner** **Brian Mangino** **Philip Richter** **Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP** **One New York Plaza** **New York, NY 10004** **(212) 859-8000**

Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale of the securities to the public: As soon as practicable after the effective date of this registration statement and completion of the merger of Echo Merger Sub, Inc. (**Merger Sub 1**), a wholly owned subsidiary of Aetna Inc. (**Aetna**), with and into Humana Inc. (**Humana**), as described in the Agreement and Plan of Merger, dated as of July 2, 2015, among Aetna, Humana, Merger Sub 1, and Echo Merger Sub, LLC.

If the securities being registered on this form are being offered in connection with the formation of a holding company and there is compliance with General Instruction G, check the following box. ¨

If this form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the **Securities Act**), check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering. ¨

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

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of large accelerated filer, accelerated filer and smaller reporting

company in Rule 12b-2 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the **Exchange Act**).

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

If applicable, place an X in the box to designate the appropriate rule provision relied upon in conducting this transaction:

Exchange Act Rule 13e-4(i) (Cross-Border Issuer Tender Offer) ¨

Exchange Act Rule 14d-l(d) (Cross-Border Third-Party Tender Offer) ¨

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

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Information contained herein is subject to completion or amendment. A registration statement relating to these securities has been filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission. These securities may not be sold nor may offers to buy be accepted prior to the time the registration statement becomes effective. This joint proxy statement/prospectus shall not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy nor shall there be any sale of these securities in any jurisdiction in which such offer, solicitation or sale would be unlawful.

PRELIMINARY SUBJECT TO COMPLETION DATED AUGUST 27, 2015

MERGER PROPOSAL YOUR VOTE IS VERY IMPORTANT

[ ], 2015

Dear Aetna Inc. Shareholders and Humana Inc. Stockholders:

On behalf of the boards of directors of Aetna and Humana, we are pleased to enclose the joint proxy statement/prospectus relating to the merger of Humana with a wholly owned subsidiary of Aetna pursuant to the terms of a merger agreement entered into by Aetna and Humana on July 2, 2015.

If the merger is completed, Humana stockholders will receive 0.8375 of an Aetna common share and $125.00 in cash for each share of Humana common stock, as described in more detail in the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus under the heading The Merger Agreement Merger Consideration. Based on the closing price of an Aetna common share on August 27, 2015, the most recent trading day prior to the date of the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus for which this information was available, the merger consideration represented approximately $223.64 in value per share of Humana common stock. The value of the consideration to be received by Humana stockholders will fluctuate with changes in the price of the Aetna common shares. We urge you to obtain current market quotations for Aetna common shares and Humana common stock. Aetna common shares and shares of Humana common stock are traded on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) under the symbols AET and HUM , respectively.

In connection with the merger, Aetna shareholders are cordially invited to attend a special meeting of the shareholders of Aetna to be held on October 19, 2015 at the Hilton Garden Inn at 85 Glastonbury Blvd., Glastonbury, Connecticut 06033, at 1:30 p.m., Eastern Time, and Humana stockholders are cordially invited to attend a special meeting of the stockholders of Humana to be held on October 19, 2015 at the offices of Fried Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP on the 36th floor of 375 Park Avenue, New York, New York 10152 at 3:30 p.m., Eastern Time.

Your vote is very important, regardless of the number of shares you own. We cannot complete the merger and the merger consideration will not be paid unless (i) Aetna shareholders approve the stock issuance and (ii) Humana stockholders adopt the merger agreement. Adoption of the merger agreement requires the affirmative vote of holders of at least three-fourths of the outstanding shares of Humana common stock entitled

to vote thereon. Every vote counts.

At the special meeting of the shareholders of Aetna, Aetna shareholders will be asked to vote on (i) a proposal to approve the issuance of Aetna common shares in the merger and (ii) a proposal to adjourn Aetna s special meeting if necessary to solicit additional proxies if there are not sufficient votes at the time of the special meeting to approve the issuance of Aetna common shares.

Aetna s board of directors unanimously determined that the merger agreement, the merger and the other transactions contemplated by the merger agreement, including the issuance of Aetna common shares in the merger, are advisable and fair to and in the best interests of Aetna shareholders and unanimously recommends that Aetna shareholders vote (i) FOR the approval of the issuance of Aetna common shares in the merger, and (ii) FOR the adjournment of Aetna s special meeting if necessary to solicit additional proxies if there are not sufficient votes at the time of the special meeting to approve the issuance of Aetna common shares.

At the special meeting of the stockholders of Humana, Humana stockholders will be asked to vote on (i) a proposal to adopt the merger agreement, (ii) a proposal to adjourn from time to time Humana s special meeting if necessary to solicit additional proxies if there are not sufficient votes at the time of the special meeting, or any adjournment or postponement thereof, to adopt the merger agreement, and (iii) a proposal to approve, on an advisory (non-binding) basis, compensation that will or may be paid or provided by Humana to its named executive officers in connection with the merger.

Humana s board of directors unanimously determined that the merger agreement, the merger and the other transactions contemplated by the merger agreement are advisable and fair to and in the best interests of Humana stockholders and unanimously recommends that Humana stockholders vote (i) FOR the adoption of the merger agreement, (ii) FOR the adjournment from time to time of the Humana special meeting if necessary to solicit additional proxies if there are not sufficient votes at the time of the special meeting, or any adjournment or postponement thereof, to adopt the merger agreement, and (iii) FOR the non-binding advisory proposal to approve compensation that will or may be paid or provided by Humana to its named executive officers in connection with the merger.

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We estimate that Aetna may issue up to approximately 127.0 million of its common shares to Humana stockholders in the merger. Based on the number of Aetna common shares outstanding as of August 25, 2015, and the number of shares of Humana common stock outstanding as of August 25, 2015, the most recent practicable date for which such information was available, immediately following completion of the merger, Aetna shareholders immediately prior to the merger are expected to own approximately 73% of Aetna s outstanding common shares and former Humana stockholders are expected to own approximately 27% of Aetna s outstanding common shares.

The accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus provides important information regarding the Aetna and Humana special meetings and a detailed description of the merger agreement, the merger, the stock issuance, the adjournment proposals and non-binding advisory proposal to approve compensation that will or may be paid or provided by Humana to its named executive officers in connection with the merger. We urge you to read the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus (and any documents incorporated by reference into the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus) carefully. **Please pay particular attention to the section entitled Risk Factors beginning on page 61 of the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus.** You can also obtain information about Aetna and Humana from documents that Aetna and Humana previously have filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

For a discussion of the material U.S. federal income tax consequences of the mergers, see Humana Proposal I: Adoption of the Merger Agreement and Aetna Proposal I: Approval of the Stock Issuance Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Consequences beginning on page 149 of the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus.

Whether or not you expect to attend your company s special meeting, the details of which are described in the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus, please immediately submit your proxy by telephone, by the Internet or by completing, signing, dating and returning your signed proxy card(s) in the enclosed prepaid return envelope so that your shares may be represented at the applicable special meeting.

If Aetna shareholders have any questions or require assistance in voting their shares, they should call MacKenzie Partners, Inc., Aetna s proxy solicitors for its special meeting, toll-free at (800) 322-2885 or collect at (212) 929-5500. If Humana stockholders have any questions or require assistance in voting their shares, they should call D.F. King & Co., Inc., Humana s proxy solicitor for its special meeting, toll-free at (800) 676-7437 or collect at (212) 269-5550.

We hope to see you at the applicable special meeting and look forward to the successful completion of the merger.

Sincerely,

Mark T. Bertolini

Chairman and

Chief Executive Officer of

Sincerely,

Kurt J. Hilzinger

Chairman of the Board of Directors of

Humana Inc.

Aetna Inc.

Bruce D. Broussard

President and

Chief Executive Officer of

Humana Inc.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of the securities to be issued under the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus or determined that the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus is accurate or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus is dated [ ], 2015 and is first being mailed to stockholders on or about September 1, 2015.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The accompanying document is the proxy statement of Humana Inc. for its special meeting of stockholders, the proxy statement of Aetna Inc. for its special meeting of shareholders and the prospectus of Aetna Inc. for its common shares to be issued in the merger. The accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus incorporates by reference important business and financial information about Aetna Inc. and Humana Inc. from documents that are not included in or delivered with the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus. You can obtain these documents incorporated by reference into the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus (other than certain exhibits or schedules to these documents), without charge, by requesting them in writing or by telephone from Aetna Inc. or Humana Inc. at the following addresses and telephone numbers, or through the Securities and Exchange Commission website at www.sec.gov:

Aetna Inc.	Humana Inc.
151 Farmington Avenue	500 West Main Street
Hartford, CT 06156	Louisville, KY 40202
Attention: Investor Relations	Attention: Investor Relations
Telephone: (860) 273-2402	Telephone: (502) 580-3622

In addition, if you have questions about the merger or the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus, would like additional copies of the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus or need to obtain proxy cards or other information related to the proxy solicitation, please contact MacKenzie Partners, Inc., the proxy solicitor for Aetna Inc., toll-free at (800) 322-2885 or collect at (212) 929-5500, or D.F. King & Co., Inc., the proxy solicitor for Humana Inc., toll-free at (800) 676-7437 or collect at (212) 269-5550. You will not be charged for any of these documents that you request.

If you would like to request documents, please do so by October 13, 2015, in order to receive them before the Aetna Inc. or Humana Inc. special meeting.

See Where You Can Find More Information beginning on page 229 of the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus for further information.

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Aetna Inc.

151 Farmington Avenue

Hartford, CT 06156

(860) 273-0123

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING OF SHAREHOLDERS

OF AETNA INC.

TO BE HELD ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2015

1:30 p.m., Eastern Time

To the Shareholders of Aetna Inc.:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a special meeting of shareholders of Aetna Inc., a Pennsylvania corporation, will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn at 85 Glastonbury Blvd., Glastonbury, Connecticut 06033 on Monday, October 19, 2015, at 1:30 p.m., Eastern Time, for the following purposes:

1. to consider and vote on a proposal to approve the issuance of Aetna common shares, par value $0.01 per share, in the first of the two mergers contemplated by the Agreement and Plan of Merger, as it may be amended from time to time (which is referred to in this notice as the merger agreement), dated as of July 2, 2015, among Aetna, Echo Merger Sub, Inc., a Delaware corporation and wholly owned subsidiary of Aetna, Echo Merger Sub, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company and wholly owned subsidiary of Aetna, and Humana Inc., a Delaware corporation (a copy of the merger agreement is attached as Annex A to the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus); and

2. to consider and vote on a proposal to approve the adjournment of the Aetna special meeting if necessary to solicit additional proxies if there are not sufficient votes to approve the issuance of Aetna common shares at the time of the Aetna special meeting.

The holders of record of Aetna common shares, par value $0.01 per share, at the close of business on September 16, 2015, are entitled to notice of and to vote at the Aetna special meeting or any adjournment or postponement thereof. Aetna is commencing its solicitation of proxies on or about September 1, 2015, which is before the September 16, 2015 record date. Aetna will continue to solicit proxies until the date of the Aetna special meeting. Each shareholder of record on September 16, 2015 who did not receive the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus prior to the record date will receive a copy of the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus as soon as practicable after the record date and have the opportunity to vote on the matters described in the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus. Proxies delivered prior to the record date will be valid and effective so long as the shareholder providing the proxy is a shareholder on the record date. If you are not a holder of record on the record date, any proxy you deliver will be ineffective. If you deliver a proxy prior to the record date and remain a holder on the record date, you do not need to deliver another proxy after the record date. If you deliver a proxy prior to the record date and do

not revoke that proxy, your proxy will be deemed to cover the number of Aetna common shares you own on the record date even if that number is different from the number of Aetna common shares you owned when you executed and delivered your proxy. Proxies received from persons who are not holders of record on the record date will not be effective.

If you hold Aetna common shares in your name at the record date and plan to attend the Aetna special meeting, because of security procedures, you will need to obtain an admission ticket in advance. In addition to obtaining an admission ticket in advance, you will be required to provide valid government-issued photo identification (e.g., a driver s license or a passport) to be admitted to the Aetna special meeting. You may apply for an admission ticket by mail to Office of the Corporate Secretary, 151 Farmington Avenue, RW61, Hartford, CT 06156 or by facsimile to (860) 293-1361. Ticket requests will not be accepted by phone or email. Aetna s Corporate Secretary must receive your request for an admission ticket on or before October 13, 2015.

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If you are a beneficial owner of Aetna common shares held in street name, meaning that your shares are held by a broker, bank or other nominee holder of record at the record date, and you plan to attend the Aetna special meeting, in addition to following the security procedures described above, you will also need to provide proof of beneficial ownership at the record date to obtain your admission ticket for the Aetna special meeting. A brokerage statement or letter from a bank or broker are examples of proof of beneficial ownership. If you wish to vote your Aetna common shares held in street name in person at the Aetna special meeting, you will have to obtain a written legal proxy in your name from the broker, bank or other nominee holder of record who holds your shares.

Approval of the issuance of Aetna common shares requires the affirmative vote of a majority of the votes cast at the Aetna special meeting by holders of Aetna common shares (assuming a quorum, as defined under Pennsylvania law, is present). Approval of the adjournment proposal requires the affirmative vote of a majority of the votes cast at the Aetna special meeting by holders of Aetna common shares (whether or not a quorum, as defined under Pennsylvania law, is present). If the Aetna special meeting is adjourned for at least 15 days because a quorum was not present at the Aetna special meeting when initially convened, those shareholders entitled to vote at the special meeting who attend the adjourned meeting will constitute a quorum for acting upon any matter set forth in this notice even though the number of holders present at such adjourned meeting constitutes less than a quorum as defined under Pennsylvania law.

Aetna s board of directors unanimously determined that the merger agreement, the merger and the other transactions contemplated by the merger agreement, including the issuance of Aetna common shares in the merger, are advisable and fair to and in the best interests of Aetna shareholders and unanimously recommends that Aetna shareholders vote FOR the approval of the issuance of Aetna common shares in the merger and FOR the adjournment of the Aetna special meeting if necessary to solicit additional proxies if there are not sufficient votes at the time of the special meeting to approve the issuance of Aetna common shares.

By Order of the Board of Directors,

Judith H. Jones

Vice President and Corporate Secretary

Hartford, Connecticut

[ ], 2015

IMPORTANT INFORMATION IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND THE AETNA SPECIAL MEETING IN PERSON:

Don t forget your admission ticket and government-issued ID (e.g., a driver s license or passport).

You must request an admission ticket in advance by following the instructions on pages 12 and 75 of the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus. Aetna s Corporate Secretary must receive your written request for an admission ticket on or before October 13, 2015.

If you hold your Aetna common shares through a brokerage account (in street name), your request for an admission ticket must include a copy of a brokerage statement reflecting stock ownership as of the record date.

Please leave all weapons, cameras, audio and video recording devices and other electronic devices at home.

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YOUR VOTE IS IMPORTANT!

WHETHER OR NOT YOU EXPECT TO ATTEND THE AETNA SPECIAL MEETING IN PERSON, WE URGE YOU TO SUBMIT YOUR PROXY AS PROMPTLY AS POSSIBLE (1) VIA THE INTERNET, (2) BY TELEPHONE OR (3) BY COMPLETING, SIGNING AND DATING THE ENCLOSED AETNA PROXY CARD AND RETURNING IT IN THE POSTAGE-PAID ENVELOPE PROVIDED. IF YOU ATTEND THE AETNA SPECIAL MEETING IN PERSON AND WISH TO VOTE YOUR SHARES AT THE AETNA SPECIAL MEETING, YOU MAY DO SO AT ANY TIME PRIOR TO THE CLOSING OF THE POLLS AT THE AETNA SPECIAL MEETING. You may revoke your proxy or change your vote for shares you hold directly in your name by (i) signing another proxy card with a later date and delivering it to Broadridge Financial Solutions, Inc. before the date of the Aetna special meeting, (ii) submitting revised votes over the Internet or by telephone before 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on October 18, 2015, or (iii) attending the Aetna special meeting in person and voting your shares at the Aetna special meeting. If your shares are held in the name of a bank, broker or other nominee holder of record, please follow the instructions on the voting instruction form furnished to you by such record holder.

We urge you to read the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus, including all documents incorporated by reference into the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus, and its annexes carefully and in their entirety. If you have any questions concerning the merger agreement, the merger, the stock issuance, the adjournment vote, the Aetna special meeting or the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus, would like additional copies of the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus or need help voting your Aetna common shares, please contact:

105 Madison Avenue

New York, NY 10016

Telephone (Toll-Free): (800) 322-2885

Telephone (Collect): (212) 929-5500

Email: proxy@mackenziepartners.com

or

Aetna Inc.

151 Farmington Avenue

Hartford, CT 06156

Attention: Investor Relations

Telephone: (860) 273-2402

Email: investorrelations@aetna.com

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Humana Inc.

500 West Main Street

Louisville, KY 40202

(502) 580-1000

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS OF

HUMANA INC.

TO BE HELD ON OCTOBER 19, 2015

3:30 p.m., Eastern Time

To the Stockholders of Humana Inc.:

A special meeting of stockholders of Humana Inc., a Delaware corporation, will be held on October 19, 2015 at the offices of Fried Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP on the 36th floor of 375 Park Avenue, New York, New York 10152 at 3:30 p.m., Eastern Time for the following purposes:

1. to consider and vote on a proposal to adopt the Agreement and Plan of Merger, dated as of July 2, 2015, as it may be amended from time to time (which is referred to in this notice as the merger agreement), among Aetna Inc., a Pennsylvania corporation, Echo Merger Sub, Inc., a Delaware corporation and wholly owned subsidiary of Aetna, Echo Merger Sub, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company and wholly owned subsidiary of Aetna, and Humana, pursuant to which Echo Merger Sub, Inc. will be merged with and into Humana, and Humana will continue as the surviving corporation and a wholly owned subsidiary of Aetna, and, immediately thereafter, Humana will be merged with and into Echo Merger Sub, LLC, and Echo Merger Sub, LLC will continue as the surviving company and a wholly owned subsidiary of Aetna (a copy of the merger agreement is attached as Annex A to the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus);

2. to consider and vote on a proposal to approve the adjournment from time to time of the Humana special meeting if necessary to solicit additional proxies if there are not sufficient votes to adopt the merger agreement at the time of the Humana special meeting or any adjournment or postponement thereof; and

3. to consider and vote on a proposal to approve, on an advisory (non-binding) basis, compensation that will or may be paid or provided by Humana to its named executive officers in connection with the merger.

The holders of record of Humana common stock, par value $0.01 per share, at the close of business on September 16, 2015 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the Humana special meeting or any adjournment or postponement thereof. Humana is commencing its solicitation of proxies on or about September 1, 2015, which is before the September 16, 2015 record date. Humana will continue to solicit proxies until the date of the Humana special meeting. Each stockholder of record on September 16, 2015 who did not receive the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus

prior to the record date will receive a copy of the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus as soon as practicable after the record date and have the opportunity to vote on the matters described in the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus. Proxies delivered prior to the record date will be valid and effective so long as the stockholder providing the proxy is a stockholder on the record date. If you are not a holder of record on the record date, any proxy you deliver will be ineffective. If you deliver a proxy prior to the record date and remain a holder on the record date, you do not need to deliver another proxy after the record date. If you deliver a proxy prior to the record date and do not revoke that proxy, your proxy will be deemed to cover the number of shares of Humana common stock you own on the record date even if that number is different from the number of shares of Humana common stock you owned when you executed and delivered your proxy. Proxies received from persons who are not holders of record on the record date will not be effective.

If you hold shares of Humana common stock in your name at the record date and plan to attend the Humana special meeting, please be prepared to provide valid government-issued photo identification (e.g., a driver s license or a passport) to gain admission to the Humana special meeting.

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If you are a beneficial owner of Humana common stock held in street name, meaning that your shares of Humana common stock are held by a broker, bank or other nominee holder of record at the record date and you plan to attend the Humana special meeting, in addition to proper identification, you will also need to provide proof of beneficial ownership at the record date to be admitted to the Humana special meeting. A brokerage statement or letter from a bank or broker are examples of proof of beneficial ownership. If you wish to vote your shares of Humana common stock held in street name in person at the Humana special meeting, you will have to obtain a written legal proxy in your name from the broker, bank or other nominee holder of record who holds your shares.

Adoption of the merger agreement requires the affirmative vote of holders of at least three-fourths of the outstanding shares of Humana common stock entitled to vote thereon. Adoption of the other proposals to be presented at the Humana special meeting requires the affirmative vote of holders of a majority of the votes cast affirmatively or negatively on such proposal. The Humana board of directors unanimously determined that the merger agreement, the merger and the other transactions contemplated by the merger agreement are advisable and fair to and in the best interests of Humana stockholders and unanimously recommends that Humana stockholders vote FOR the adoption of the merger agreement, FOR the adjournment from time to time of the Humana special meeting if necessary to solicit additional proxies if there are not sufficient votes to adopt the merger agreement at the time of the Humana special meeting or any adjournment or postponement thereof and FOR the non-binding advisory proposal to approve compensation that will or may be paid or provided by Humana to its named executive officers in connection with the merger.

By order of the Board of Directors,

Joan O. Lenahan

Vice President and Corporate Secretary

Louisville, Kentucky

[ ], 2015

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YOUR VOTE IS IMPORTANT!

WHETHER OR NOT YOU EXPECT TO ATTEND THE HUMANA SPECIAL MEETING IN PERSON, WE URGE YOU TO SUBMIT YOUR PROXY AS PROMPTLY AS POSSIBLE (1) VIA THE INTERNET, (2) BY TELEPHONE OR (3) BY COMPLETING, SIGNING AND DATING THE ENCLOSED HUMANA PROXY CARD AND RETURNING IT IN THE POSTAGE-PAID ENVELOPE PROVIDED. IF YOU ATTEND THE HUMANA SPECIAL MEETING IN PERSON AND WISH TO VOTE YOUR SHARES AT THE HUMANA SPECIAL MEETING, YOU MAY DO SO AT ANY TIME PRIOR TO THE CLOSING OF THE POLLS AT THE HUMANA SPECIAL MEETING. You may revoke your proxy or change your vote at any time before the Humana special meeting. If your shares are held in the name of a bank, broker or other nominee holder of record, please follow the instructions on the voting instruction form furnished to you by such record holder.

We urge you to read the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus, including all documents incorporated by reference into the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus, and its annexes carefully and in their entirety. If you have any questions concerning the merger agreement, the merger, the vote on the merger agreement, the adjournment vote, the non-binding advisory proposal to approve compensation that will or may be paid or provided by Humana to its named executive officers in connection with the merger, the Humana special meeting or the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus, would like additional copies of the accompanying joint proxy statement/prospectus or need help voting your shares of Humana common stock, please contact:

D.F. King & Co., Inc.

48 Wall Street, 22nd Floor

New York, NY 10005

Telephone (Collect): (212) 269-5550

Telephone (Toll-Free): (800) 676-7437

Email: webmaster@dfking.com

or

Humana Inc.

500 West Main Street

Louisville, KY 40202

Attention: Investor Relations

Telephone: (502) 580-3622

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE MERGERS AND THE SPECIAL MEETINGS

The following are some questions that you, as a shareholder of Aetna Inc., which is referred to in this joint proxy statement/prospectus as Aetna, or a stockholder of Humana Inc., which is referred to in this joint proxy statement/prospectus as Humana, may have regarding the mergers, the stock issuance, the adjournment proposals, the non-binding advisory proposal to approve compensation that will or may be paid or provided by Humana to its named executive officers in connection with the merger and the special meetings as well as brief answers to those questions. You are urged to read carefully this joint proxy statement/prospectus, including all documents incorporated by reference into this joint proxy statement/prospectus, and its annexes, in their entirety because this section may not provide all of the information that is important to you with respect to the mergers, the stock issuance, the adjournment proposals, the non-binding advisory proposal to approve compensation that will or may be paid or provided by Humana to its named executive officers in connection with the merger and the special meetings. Additional important information is contained in the annexes to, and the documents incorporated by reference into, this joint proxy statement/prospectus. See Where You Can Find More Information starting on page 229 of this joint proxy statement/prospectus.

Q: Why am I receiving this document and why am I being asked to vote on the merger agreement?

A: Aetna and Humana have agreed to a merger, pursuant to which Humana will become a wholly owned subsidiary of Aetna and will no longer be a publicly held corporation in a transaction that is referred to in this joint proxy statement/prospectus as the merger. In order to complete the merger, Aetna shareholders must vote to approve the issuance of Aetna common shares to Humana stockholders in the merger, which issuance is referred to in this joint proxy statement/prospectus as the stock issuance, and Humana stockholders must vote to adopt the Agreement and Plan of Merger, dated as of July 2, 2015, among Aetna, Humana Echo Merger Sub, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Aetna that is referred to in this joint proxy statement/prospectus as Merger Sub 1, and Echo Merger Sub, LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Aetna that is referred to in this joint proxy statement/prospectus as Merger Sub 2, and together with Merger Sub 1, Merger Subs. This merger agreement, as it may be amended from time to time, is referred to in this joint proxy statement/prospectus as the merger agreement.

Humana is holding a special meeting of stockholders, which is referred to in this joint proxy statement/prospectus as the Humana special meeting, in order to obtain the stockholder approval necessary to adopt the merger agreement. **Adoption of the merger agreement requires the affirmative vote of holders of at least three-fourths of the outstanding shares of Humana common stock entitled to vote thereon.** Humana stockholders will also be asked to approve the adjournment from time to time of the Humana special meeting if necessary to solicit additional proxies if there are not sufficient votes to adopt the merger agreement at the time of the Humana special meeting or any adjournment or postponement thereof, and to approve, on an advisory (non-binding) basis, compensation that will or may be paid or provided by Humana to its named executive officers, who are referred to in this joint proxy statement/prospectus as the named executive officers, in connection with the merger. **It is important that Humana s stockholders vote their shares on each of these matters, regardless of the number of shares owned.**

Aetna is holding a special meeting of shareholders, which is referred to in this joint proxy statement/prospectus as the Aetna special meeting, in order to obtain the shareholder approval necessary to approve the stock issuance. Aetna shareholders will also be asked to approve the adjournment of the Aetna special meeting if necessary to solicit additional proxies if there are not sufficient votes to approve the stock issuance at the time of the Aetna special meeting.

This document is being delivered to you as both a joint proxy statement of Humana and Aetna and a prospectus of Aetna in connection with the merger. It is the proxy statement by which Humana s board of directors is soliciting proxies from Humana stockholders to vote at the Humana special meeting, or at any adjournment or postponement of the Humana special meeting, on the adoption of the merger agreement, the

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approval of the adjournment of the Humana special meeting under certain circumstances and the approval, on an advisory (non-binding) basis, of compensation that will or may be paid or provided by Humana to its named executive officers in connection with the merger. It is also the proxy statement by which Aetna s board of directors is soliciting proxies from Aetna shareholders to vote at the Aetna special meeting, or at any adjournment or postponement of the Aetna special meeting, on the approval of the stock issuance and the approval of the adjournment of the Aetna special meeting under certain circumstances. In addition, this document is the prospectus of Aetna pursuant to which Aetna will issue Aetna common shares to Humana stockholders as part of the merger consideration.

Q: Is my vote important?

A: **Yes, your vote is very important**. For Humana stockholders, an abstention or failure to vote will have the same effect as a vote **AGAINST** the adoption of the merger agreement. If you hold your shares of Humana common stock through a broker, bank or other nominee holder of record and you do not give voting instructions to that broker, bank or other nominee holder of record, that broker, bank or other nominee holder of record will not be able to vote your shares on the adoption of the merger agreement, and your failure to give those instructions will have the same effect as a vote **AGAINST** the adoption of the merger agreement. Humana s board of directors unanimously recommends that you vote **FOR** the adoption of the merger agreement, and Aetna s board of directors unanimously recommends that Aetna shareholders vote **FOR** the approval of the stock issuance.

Q: What will happen in the mergers?

A: In the merger, Merger Sub 1 will be merged with and into Humana. Humana will be the surviving corporation in the merger and will be a wholly owned subsidiary of Aetna following completion of the merger and will no longer be a publicly held corporation. Immediately after the merger, Humana will be merged with and into Merger Sub 2. Merger Sub 2, which will be re-named Humana LLC , and will be the surviving company in the second merger, which is referred to in this joint proxy statement/prospectus as the subsequent merger, and together with the merger, the mergers. Humana LLC will be a wholly owned subsidiary of Aetna following completion of the subsequent merger.

Q: What will Humana stockholders receive in the merger?

A: If the merger is completed, each share of Humana common stock automatically will be cancelled and converted into the right to receive $125.00 in cash, without interest, and 0.8375 of an Aetna common share, which, together with cash payable in lieu of any fractional shares as described below, are collectively referred to in this joint proxy statement/prospectus as the merger consideration. Each Humana stockholder will receive cash for any fractional Aetna common share that the stockholder would otherwise receive in the merger.

Based on the closing price of Aetna common shares on the New York Stock Exchange, which is referred to in this joint proxy statement/prospectus as the NYSE, on July 2, 2015, the last trading day before the public announcement of the merger agreement, the merger consideration represented approximately $230.11 in value for each share of Humana common stock. Based on the closing price of Aetna common shares on the NYSE on August 27, 2015, the most recent trading day prior to the date of this joint proxy statement/prospectus for which this information was

available, the merger consideration represented approximately $223.64 in value for each share of Humana common stock. **Because Aetna will issue a fixed fraction of an Aetna common share in exchange for each share of Humana common stock, the value of the stock portion of the merger consideration that Humana stockholders will receive in the merger will depend on the market price of Aetna common shares at the time the merger is completed. The market price of Aetna common shares when Humana stockholders receive those shares after the merger is completed could be greater than, less than or the same as the market price of Aetna common shares on the date of this joint proxy statement/prospectus or at the time of the Humana special meeting or any adjournment or postponement thereof.**

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Q: What happens if the merger is not completed?

A: If the merger agreement is not adopted by Humana stockholders, the stock issuance is not approved by Aetna shareholders or if the merger is not completed for any other reason, Humana stockholders will not receive any payment for their shares of Humana common stock in connection with the merger. Instead, Humana will remain an independent public company and its common stock will continue to be listed and traded on the NYSE. If the merger agreement is terminated under specified circumstances, Humana may be required to pay Aetna a termination fee of $1.314 billion, and if the merger agreement is terminated under certain other circumstances, Aetna may be required to pay Humana a termination fee of $1 billion or $1.691 billion, depending on the circumstances of the termination. See The Merger Agreement Termination Fees and Expenses beginning on page 185 of this joint proxy statement/prospectus for a more detailed discussion of the termination fees.

Q: What are Humana stockholders being asked to vote on?

A: Humana stockholders are being asked to vote on the following three proposals:

to adopt the merger agreement, a copy of which is attached as Annex A to this joint proxy statement/prospectus;

to approve the adjournment from time to time of the Humana special meeting if necessary to solicit additional proxies if there are not sufficient votes to adopt the merger agreement at the time of the Humana special meeting or any adjournment or postponement thereof; and

to approve, on an advisory (non-binding) basis, the payments that will or may be paid by Humana to its named executive officers in connection with the merger.

The adoption of the merger agreement by Humana stockholders is a condition to the obligations of Humana and Aetna to complete the mergers. Neither the approval of the adjournment proposal nor the approval of the non-binding advisory proposal to approve compensation that will or may be paid or provided by Humana to its named executive officers in connection with the merger is a condition to the obligations of Humana or Aetna to complete the mergers.

Q: What are Aetna shareholders being asked to vote on?

A: Aetna shareholders are being asked to vote on the following proposals:

to approve the stock issuance; and

103.000%

to approve the adjournment of the Aetna special meeting if necessary to solicit additional proxies

25.000% N/A 103.000%
0.000% N/A 103.000%

If, for example, a barrier event has occurred and the final underlier level were determined to be 150.000% of the initial underlier level, the cash settlement amount that we would deliver on your notes at maturity would be 103.000% for each $1,000 face amount of your notes, as shown in the table above. Additionally, if the final underlier level were determined to be 50.000% of the initial underlier level, the cash settlement amount that we would deliver on your notes at maturity would be 103.000% for each $1,000 face amount of your notes, as shown in the table above.
If, for example, a barrier event has not occurred and the final underlier level were determined to be 90.000% of the initial underlier level, the absolute underlier return would be 10.000% and the cash settlement amount that we would deliver on your notes at maturity would be 110.000% for each $1,000

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face amount of your notes, as shown in the table above. However, you will benefit from the absolute underlier return only if a barrier event has not occurred. Because a barrier event will occur if, on any trading day during the measurement period (including the determination date), the closing level of the underlier is below the lower barrier (78.000% of the initial underlier level) or above the upper barrier (122.000% of the initial underlier level), the cash settlement amount that we will deliver at maturity if a barrier event has not occurred will be limited to between 100.000% and 122.000% (representing a return of between 0.000% and 22.000%) for each $1,000 face amount. As a result, you would not benefit from a final underlier level on the determination date (or a closing level of the underlier on any other trading day during the measurement period) that is above the upper barrier or below the lower barrier. In fact, a final underlier level on the determination date (or a closing level of the underlier on any other trading day during the measurement period) that is above the upper barrier or below the lower barrier will cause the cash settlement amount that we will deliver at maturity to be limited to 103.000% (representing a contingent return of 3.000%) for each $1,000 face amount. Further, you should be aware that, even if a barrier event has not occurred, the cash settlement amount that we will deliver at maturity will be less than 103.000% (representing less than the contingent return of 3.000%) for each $1,000 face amount if the final underlier level is less than 103.000%, but greater than 97.000% of the initial underlier, as shown in the table above.

The following chart also shows a graphical illustration of the hypothetical cash settlement amounts (expressed as a percentage of the face amount of your notes) that we would pay on your notes on the stated maturity date, if the final underlier level (expressed as a percentage of the initial underlier level) were any of the hypothetical levels shown on the horizontal axis. The chart shows that, if a barrier event occurs at any time during the measurement period, any hypothetical final underlier level (expressed as a percentage of the initial underlier level) would result in a hypothetical payment amount of 103.000% for each $1,000 face amount of the note (the horizontal line that crosses the 103.000% marker on the vertical axis). The chart also shows that, if a barrier event does not occur at any time during the measurement period, any hypothetical final underlier level between 78.000% and 122.000% (expressed as a percentage of the initial underlier level) (the section between the 78.000% and 122.000% markers on the horizontal axis) would result in a hypothetical payment amount that is greater than or equal to 100.000%, but less than or equal to 122.000%, for each $1,000 face amount of the note (the section on or above the 100.000% marker on the vertical axis but on or below the 122.000% marker on the vertical axis).

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The cash settlement amounts shown above are entirely hypothetical; they are based on market prices for the underlier stocks that may not be achieved on the determination date and on assumptions that may prove to be erroneous. The actual market value of your notes on the stated maturity date or at any other time, including any time you may wish to sell your notes, may bear little relation to the hypothetical cash settlement amounts shown above, and these amounts should not be viewed as an indication of the financial return on an investment in the offered notes. The hypothetical cash settlement amounts on notes held to the stated maturity date in the examples above assume you purchased your notes at their face amount and have not been adjusted to reflect the actual issue price you pay for your notes. The return on your investment (whether positive or negative) in your notes will be affected by the amount you pay for your notes. If you purchase your notes for a price other than the face amount, the return on your investment will differ from, and may be significantly lower than, the hypothetical returns suggested by the above examples. Please read "Additional Risk Factors Specific to the Your Notes — The Market Value of Your Notes May Be Influenced by Many Unpredictable Factors" on page PS-15.

Payments on the notes are economically equivalent to the amounts that would be paid on a combination of other instruments. For example, payments on the notes are economically equivalent to a combination of an interest-bearing bond bought by the holder and one or more options entered into between the holder and us (with one or more implicit option premiums paid over time). The discussion in this paragraph does not modify or affect the terms of the notes or the U.S. federal income tax treatment of the notes, as described elsewhere in this pricing supplement.

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We cannot predict the actual final underlier level or what the market value of your notes will be on any particular trading day, nor can we predict the relationship between the underlier level and the market value of your notes at any time prior to the stated maturity date. The actual amount that you will receive at maturity and the rate of return on the offered notes will depend on the actual initial underlier level, which we will set on the trade date, the actual closing levels of the underlier during the measurement period and the actual final underlier level determined by the calculation agent as described above. Moreover, the assumptions on which the hypothetical returns are based may turn out to be inaccurate. Consequently, the amount of cash to be paid in respect of your notes on the stated maturity date may be very different from the information reflected in the examples above.

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ADDITIONAL RISK FACTORS SPECIFIC TO YOUR NOTES

An investment in your notes is subject to the risks described below, as well as the risks and considerations described in the accompanying prospectus, in the accompanying prospectus supplement and under "Additional Risk Factors Specific to the Notes" in the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734. You should carefully review these risks and considerations as well as the terms of the notes described herein and in the accompanying prospectus, the accompanying prospectus supplement and the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734. Your notes are a riskier investment than ordinary debt securities. Also, your notes are not equivalent to investing directly in the underlier stocks, i.e., the stocks comprising the underlier to which your notes are linked. You should carefully consider whether the offered notes are suited to your particular circumstances.

The Estimated Value of Your Notes At the Time the Terms of Your Notes Are Set On the Trade Date (as Determined By Reference to Pricing Models Used By GS&Co.) Is Less Than the Original Issue Price Of Your Notes

The original issue price for your notes exceeds the estimated value of your notes as of the time the terms of your notes are set on the trade date, as determined by reference to GS&Co.'s pricing models and taking into account our credit spreads. Such estimated value on the trade date is set forth above under "Estimated Value of Your Notes"; after the trade date, the estimated value as determined by reference to these models will be affected by changes in market conditions, the creditworthiness of GS Finance Corp., as issuer, the creditworthiness of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., as guarantor, and other relevant factors. The price at which GS&Co. would initially buy or sell your notes (if GS&Co. makes a market, which it is not obligated to do), and the value that GS&Co. will initially use for account statements and otherwise, also exceeds the estimated value of your notes as determined by reference to these models. As agreed by GS&Co. and the distribution participants, this excess (i.e., the additional amount described under "Estimated Value of Your Notes") will decline to zero on a straight line basis over the period from the date hereof through the applicable date set forth above under "Estimated Value of Your Notes". Thereafter, if GS&Co. buys or sells your notes it will do so at prices that reflect the estimated value determined by reference to such pricing models at that time. The price at which GS&Co. will buy or sell your notes at any time also will reflect its then current bid and ask spread for similar sized trades of structured notes.

In estimating the value of your notes as of the time the terms of your notes are set on the trade date, as disclosed above under "Estimated Value of Your Notes", GS&Co.'s pricing models consider certain variables, including principally our credit spreads, interest rates (forecasted, current and historical rates), volatility, price-sensitivity analysis and the time to maturity of the notes. These pricing models are proprietary and rely in part on certain assumptions about future events, which may prove to be incorrect. As a result, the actual value you would receive if you sold your notes in the secondary market, if any, to others may differ, perhaps materially, from the estimated value of your notes determined by reference to our models due to, among other things, any differences in pricing models or assumptions used by others. See "The Market Value of Your Notes May Be Influenced by Many Unpredictable Factors" below.

The difference between the estimated value of your notes as of the time the terms of your notes are set on the trade date and the original issue price is a result of certain factors, including principally the underwriting discount and commissions, the expenses incurred in creating, documenting and marketing the notes, and an estimate of the difference between the amounts we pay to GS&Co. and the amounts GS&Co. pays to us in connection with your notes. We pay to GS&Co. amounts based on what we would pay to holders of a non-structured note with a similar maturity. In return for such payment, GS&Co. pays to us the amounts we owe under your notes.

In addition to the factors discussed above, the value and quoted price of your notes at any time will reflect many factors and cannot be predicted. If GS&Co. makes a market in the notes, the price quoted by GS&Co. would reflect any changes in market conditions and other relevant factors, including any deterioration in our creditworthiness or perceived creditworthiness or the creditworthiness or perceived creditworthiness of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. These changes may adversely affect the value of your notes, including the price you may receive for your notes in any market making transaction. To the extent that GS&Co. makes a market in the notes, the quoted price will reflect the estimated value

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determined by reference to GS&Co.'s pricing models at that time, plus or minus its then current bid and ask spread for similar sized trades of structured notes (and subject to the declining excess amount described above).

Furthermore, if you sell your notes, you will likely be charged a commission for secondary market transactions, or the price will likely reflect a dealer discount. This commission or discount will further reduce the proceeds you would receive for your notes in a secondary market sale.

There is no assurance that GS&Co. or any other party will be willing to purchase your notes at any price and, in this regard, GS&Co. is not obligated to make a market in the notes. See "Additional Risk Factors Specific to the Your Notes — Your Notes May Not Have an Active Trading Market" on page S-7 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734.

The Underwriting Discount and Commissions, Including the Structuring Fee and Marketing Fee, and Other Expenses, Result in Less Favorable Economic Terms of the Notes and Could Adversely Affect Any Secondary Market Price for the Notes

The economic terms of the notes, as well as the difference between the estimated value of your notes as of the time the terms of your notes are set on the trade date and the original issue price, take into consideration, among other expenses, the underwriting discount and commissions, including the structuring fee and marketing fee, paid in connection with the notes. Therefore, the economic terms of the notes are less favorable to you than they would have been if these expenses had not been paid or had been lower. Further, the price, if any, at which GS&Co. will buy or sell your notes (if GS&Co. makes a market, which it is not obligated to do) at any time will reflect, among other things, the economic terms of the notes. Therefore, the secondary market price for the notes could also be adversely affected by the underwriting discount and commissions, including the structuring fee and marketing fee, and other expenses paid in connection with the notes. See "The Estimated Value of Your Notes At the Time the Terms of Your Notes Are Set On the Trade Date (as Determined By Reference to Pricing Models Used By GS&Co.) Is Less Than the Original Issue Price Of Your Notes" above.

The Notes Are Subject to the Credit Risk of the Issuer and the Guarantor

Although the return on the notes will be based on the performance of the underlier, the payment of any amount due on the notes is subject to the credit risk of GS Finance Corp., as issuer of the notes, and the credit risk of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. as guarantor of the notes. The notes are our unsecured obligations. Investors are dependent on our ability to pay all amounts due on the notes, and therefore investors are subject to our credit risk and to changes in the market's view of our creditworthiness. Similarly, investors are dependent on the ability of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., as guarantor of the notes, to pay all amounts due on the notes, and therefore are also subject to its credit risk and to changes in the market's view of its creditworthiness. See "Description of the Notes We May Offer — Information About Our Medium-Term Notes, Series E Program — How the Notes Rank Against Other Debt" on page S-4 of the accompanying prospectus supplement and "Description of Debt Securities We May Offer — Guarantee by The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc." on page 42 of the accompanying prospectus.

The Potential for the Value of Your Notes to Increase Will Be Limited

If a barrier event has not occurred, the cash settlement amount at maturity for each $1,000 face amount of your notes will be limited to between $1,000, on the lower end of the range, and $1,220, on the higher end of the range, depending on the absolute underlier return. If a barrier event has occurred, the cash settlement amount at maturity for each $1,000 face amount of your notes will be limited to $1,030 (representing the contingent return of 3%), regardless of the underlier return.

You will benefit from the absolute underlier return only if a barrier event has not occurred. Because a barrier event will occur if, on any trading day during the measurement period (including the determination date), the closing level of the underlier is below the lower barrier (expected to be 78% of the initial underlier level) or above the upper barrier (expected to be 122% of the initial underlier level), the cash settlement amount that we will deliver at maturity if a barrier event has not occurred will be limited to between 100%, on the lower end of the range, and 122%, on the higher end of the range (representing a return of between 0%, on the lower end of the range, and 22%, on the higher end of the range) for each $1,000 face amount. As a result, you would not benefit from a final underlier level on the determination date (or a closing level of the underlier on any other trading day during the measurement period) that is

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above the upper barrier or below the lower barrier. In fact, a final underlier level on the determination date (or a closing level of the underlier on any other trading day during the measurement period) that is above the upper barrier or below the lower barrier will cause the cash settlement amount that we will deliver at maturity to be limited to 103% (representing a contingent return of 3%) for each $1,000 face amount. Further, you should be aware that, even if a barrier event has not occurred, the cash settlement amount that we will deliver at maturity will be less than 103% (representing less than the contingent return of 3%) for each $1,000 face amount if the final underlier level is less than 103% but greater than 97% of the initial underlier.

The Return on Your Notes May Change Significantly Despite Only a Small Change in the Underlier Level

Your ability to participate in any change in the level of the underlier over the life of your notes will be limited and the return on your notes may change significantly despite only a small change in the underlier level. If a barrier event occurs and the final underlier level is greater than the initial underlier level, your return on the notes is limited to the contingent return no matter how much the final underlier level may increase above the initial underlier level. This means that, assuming an upper barrier of 122% of the initial underlier level, while an increase in the level of the underlier of 22% will not cause a barrier event to occur, an increase of greater than 22% will cause a barrier event to occur and your return on the notes will be limited to the contingent return. Accordingly, if a barrier event occurs and the underlier return is positive, the amount payable for each of your notes may be significantly less than it would have been had you invested directly in the underlier stocks.

Similarly, if a barrier event occurs and the final underlier level is less than the initial underlier level, your return will be limited to the contingent return and you will not receive the benefit of the absolute underlier return. This means that, assuming a lower barrier of 78% of the initial underlier level, while a decrease in the level of the underlier of 22% will not cause a barrier event to occur, a decrease of greater than 22% will cause a barrier event to occur and your return on the notes will be limited to the contingent return. Accordingly, if a barrier event occurs and the underlier return is negative, you will not receive the benefit of the absolute underlier return.

Further, if a barrier event does not occur and the final underlier level is less than the initial underlier level but greater than 97% of the initial underlier level, your return on the notes will be less than the contingent return notwithstanding the benefit from the absolute underlier return.

Your Notes Do Not Bear Interest

You will not receive any interest payments on your notes. As a result, even if the cash settlement amount payable for your notes on the stated maturity date exceeds the face amount of your notes, the overall return you earn on your notes may be less than you would have earned by investing in a non-indexed debt security of comparable maturity that bears interest at a prevailing market rate.

You Have No Shareholder Rights or Rights to Receive Any Underlier Stock

Investing in your notes will not make you a holder of any of the underlier stocks. Neither you nor any other holder or owner of your notes will have any rights with respect to the underlier stocks, including any voting rights, any right to receive dividends or other distributions, any rights to make a claim against the underlier stocks or any other rights of a holder of the underlier stocks. Your notes will be paid in cash and you will have no right to receive delivery of any underlier stocks.

We May Sell an Additional Aggregate Face Amount of the Notes at a Different Issue Price

At our sole option, we may decide to sell an additional aggregate face amount of the notes subsequent to the date of this pricing supplement. The issue price of the notes in the subsequent sale may differ substantially (higher or lower) from the original issue price you paid as provided on the cover of this pricing supplement.

If You Purchase Your Notes at a Premium to Face Amount, the Return on Your Investment Will Be Lower Than the Return on Notes Purchased at Face Amount and the Impact of Certain Key Terms of the Notes Will be Negatively Affected

The cash settlement amount will not be adjusted based on the issue price you pay for the notes. If you purchase notes at a price that differs from the face amount of the notes, then the return on your

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investment in such notes held to the stated maturity date will differ from, and may be substantially less than, the return on notes purchased at face amount. If you purchase your notes at a premium to face amount and hold them to the stated maturity date the return on your investment in the notes will be lower than it would have been had you purchased the notes at face amount or a discount to face amount.

The Market Value of Your Notes May Be Influenced by Many Unpredictable Factors

When we refer to the market value of your notes, we mean the value that you could receive for your notes if you chose and are able to sell them in the open market before the stated maturity date. A number of factors, many of which are beyond our control and impact the value of bonds and options generally, will influence the market value of your notes, including:

- whether a barrier event has occurred;
- the level of the underlier;
- the volatility — i.e., the frequency and magnitude of changes — in the level of the underlier;
- the dividend rates of the underlier stocks;
- economic, financial, regulatory, political, military and other events that affect stock markets generally and the underlier stocks, and which may affect the level of the underlier;
- interest rates and yield rates in the market;
- the time remaining until your notes mature; and
- our creditworthiness and the creditworthiness of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., whether actual or perceived, including actual or anticipated upgrades or downgrades in our credit ratings or the credit ratings of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. or changes in other credit measures.

These factors will influence the price you will receive if you sell your notes before maturity, including the price you may receive for your notes in any market-making transaction. If you sell your notes before maturity, you may receive less than the face amount of your notes.

You cannot predict the future levels of the underlier based on its historical fluctuations. The actual level of the underlier over the life of the notes may bear little or no relation to the historical closing level of the underlier or to the hypothetical examples shown elsewhere in this prospectus supplement.

If the Level of the Underlier Changes, the Market Value of Your Notes May Not Change in the Same Manner

Your notes may trade quite differently from the performance of the underlier. Changes in the level of the underlier may not result in a comparable change in the market value of your notes. Even if the level of the underlier increases above the initial underlier level during the life of the notes, the market value of your notes may not increase by the same amount. We discuss some of the reasons for this disparity under “— The Market Value of Your Notes May Be Influenced by Many Unpredictable Factors” above.

Your Notes Will Be Treated as Debt Instruments Subject to Special Rules Governing Contingent Payment Debt Instruments for U.S. Federal Income Tax Purposes

The notes will be treated as debt instruments subject to special rules governing contingent payment debt instruments for U.S. federal income tax purposes. If you are a U.S. individual or taxable entity, you generally will be required to pay taxes on ordinary income from the notes over their term based on the comparable yield for the notes, even though you will not receive any payments from us until maturity. This comparable yield is determined solely to calculate the amount on which you will be taxed prior to maturity and is neither a prediction nor a guarantee of what the actual yield will be. In addition, any gain you may recognize on the sale, exchange or maturity of the notes will be taxed as ordinary interest income. If you are a secondary purchaser of the notes, the tax consequences to you may be different. Please see "Supplemental Discussion of Federal Income Tax Consequences" below for a more detailed discussion. Please also consult your tax advisor concerning the U.S. federal income tax and any other applicable tax consequences to you of owning your notes in your particular circumstances.

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Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) Withholding May Apply to Payments on Your Notes, Including as a Result of the Failure of the Bank or Broker Through Which You Hold the Notes to Provide Information to Tax Authorities

Please see the discussion under "United States Taxation — Taxation of Debt Securities — Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) Withholding" in the accompanying prospectus for a description of the applicability of FATCA to payments made on your notes.

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THE UNDERLIER

The S&P 500® Index includes a representative sample of 500 leading companies in leading industries of the U.S. economy. The S&P 500® Index is calculated, maintained and published by S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC ("S&P"). As of July 31, 2017, companies with multiple share class lines are no longer eligible for inclusion in the S&P 500® Index. Constituents of the S&P 500® Index prior to July 31, 2017 with multiple share class lines will be grandfathered in and continue to be included in the S&P 500® Index. If an S&P 500® Index constituent reorganizes into a multiple share class line structure, that company will be reviewed for continued inclusion in the S&P 500® Index at the discretion of the S&P Index Committee. Also as of July 31, 2017, the criteria employed by S&P for purposes of making additions to the S&P 500® Index were changed as follows:

- with respect to the "U.S. company" criterion, (i) the IEX was added as an "eligible exchange" for the primary listing of the relevant company's common stock and (ii) the former "corporate governance structure consistent with U.S. practice" requirement was removed; and
- with respect to constituents of the S&P MidCap 400® Index and the S&P SmallCap 600® Index that are being considered for addition to the S&P 500® Index, the financial viability, public float and/or liquidity eligibility criteria no longer need to be met if the S&P Index Committee decides that such an addition will enhance the representativeness of the S&P 500® Index as a market benchmark.

As of December 3, 2018, the 500 companies included in the S&P 500® Index were divided into eleven Global Industry Classification Sectors. The Global Industry Classification Sectors include (with the approximate percentage currently included in such sectors indicated in parentheses): Communication Services (9.78%), Consumer Discretionary (9.97%), Consumer Staples (7.32%), Energy (5.58%), Financials (13.62%), Health Care (15.48%), Industrials (9.37%), Information Technology (20.24%), Materials (2.63%), Real Estate (2.88%) and Utilities (3.13%). (Sector designations are determined by the index sponsor using criteria it has selected or developed. Index sponsors may use very different standards for determining sector designations. In addition, many companies operate in a number of sectors, but are listed in only one sector and the basis on which that sector is selected may also differ. As a result, sector comparisons between indices with different index sponsors may reflect differences in methodology as well as actual differences in the sector composition of the indices.) As of the close of business on September 21, 2018, S&P and MSCI, Inc. updated the Global Industry Classification Sector structure. Among other things, the update broadened the Telecommunications Services sector and renamed it the Communication Services sector. The renamed sector includes the previously existing Telecommunication Services Industry group, as well as the Media Industry group, which was moved from the Consumer Discretionary sector and renamed the Media & Entertainment Industry group. The Media & Entertainment Industry group contains three industries: Media, Entertainment and Interactive Media & Services. The Media industry continues to consist of the Advertising, Broadcasting, Cable & Satellite and Publishing sub-industries. The Entertainment industry contains the Movies & Entertainment sub-industry (which includes online entertainment streaming companies in addition to companies previously classified in such industry prior to September 21, 2018) and the Interactive Home Entertainment sub-industry (which includes companies previously classified in the Home Entertainment Software sub-industry prior to September 21, 2018 (when the Home Entertainment Software sub-industry was a sub-industry in the Information Technology sector)), as well as producers of interactive gaming products, including mobile gaming applications). The Interactive Media & Services industry and sub-industry includes companies engaged in content and information creation or distribution through proprietary platforms, where revenues are derived primarily through pay-per-click advertisements, and includes search engines, social media and networking platforms, online classifieds and online review companies. The Global Industry Classification Sector structure changes are effective for the S&P 500® Index as of the open of business on September 24, 2018 to coincide with the September 2018 quarterly rebalancing.

The above information supplements the description of the underlier found in the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734. This information was derived from information prepared by the underlier sponsor, however, the percentages we have listed above are approximate and may not match the information available on the underlier sponsor's website due to subsequent corporate actions or other activity relating to a particular stock. For more details about the underlier, the underlier sponsor and

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license agreement between the underlier sponsor and the issuer, see "The Underliers — S&P 500® Index" on page S-40 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734.

The S&P 500® Index is a product of S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC, and has been licensed for use by GS Finance Corp. ("Goldman"). Standard & Poor's® and S&P® are registered trademarks of Standard & Poor's Financial Services LLC; Dow Jones® is a registered trademark of Dow Jones Trademark Holdings LLC ("Dow Jones") and these trademarks have been licensed for use by S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC and sublicensed for certain purposes by Goldman. Goldman's notes are not sponsored, endorsed, sold or promoted by S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC, Dow Jones, Standard & Poor's Financial Services LLC or any of their respective affiliates and neither S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC, Dow Jones, Standard & Poor's Financial Services LLC or any of their respective affiliates make any representation regarding the advisability of investing in such notes.

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Historical Closing Levels of the Underlier

The closing level of the underlier has fluctuated in the past and may, in the future, experience significant fluctuations. Any historical upward or downward trend in the closing level of the underlier during the period shown below is not an indication that the underlier is more or less likely to increase or decrease at any time during the life of your notes.

You should not take the historical levels of the underlier as an indication of the future performance of the underlier. We cannot give you any assurance that the future performance of the underlier or the underlier stocks will result in your receiving an amount greater than the outstanding face amount of your notes on the stated maturity date.

Neither we nor any of our affiliates make any representation to you as to the performance of the underlier. Before investing in the offered notes, you should consult publicly available information to determine the levels of the underlier between the date of this pricing supplement and the date of your purchase of the offered notes. The actual performance of the underlier over the life of the offered notes, as well as the cash settlement amount, may bear little relation to the historical closing levels shown below.

The graph below shows the daily historical closing levels of the underlier from December 13, 2008 through December 13, 2018. We obtained the closing levels in the graph below from Bloomberg Financial Services, without independent verification.

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Historical Performance of the S&P 500® Index

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SUPPLEMENTAL DISCUSSION OF FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES

The following section supplements the discussion of U.S. federal income taxation in the accompanying prospectus. The following section is the opinion of Sidley Austin llp, counsel to GS Finance Corp. and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. It applies to you only if you hold your notes as a capital asset for tax purposes. This section does not apply to you if you are a member of a class of holders subject to special rules, such as:

- a dealer in securities or currencies;
- a trader in securities that elects to use a mark-to-market method of accounting for your securities holdings;
- a bank;
- a regulated investment company;
- a life insurance company;
- a tax-exempt organization;
- a partnership;
- a person that owns the notes as a hedge or that is hedged against interest rate risks;
- a person that owns the notes as part of a straddle or conversion transaction for tax purposes; or
- a United States holder (as defined below) whose functional currency for tax purposes is not the U.S. dollar.

This section is based on the U.S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, its legislative history, existing and proposed regulations under the Internal Revenue Code, published rulings and court decisions, all as currently in effect. These laws are subject to change, possibly on a retroactive basis.

You should consult your tax advisor concerning the U.S. federal income tax and other tax consequences of your investment in the notes, including the application of state, local or other tax laws and the possible effects of changes in federal or other tax laws.

United States Holders

This subsection describes the tax consequences to a United States holder. You are a United States holder if you are a beneficial owner of notes and you are:

- a citizen or resident of the United States;
- a domestic corporation;
- an estate whose income is subject to U.S. federal income tax regardless of its source; or
- a trust if a United States court can exercise primary supervision over the trust's administration and one or more United States persons are authorized to control all substantial decisions of the trust.

If you are not a United States holder, this section does not apply to you and you should refer to "— United States Alien Holders" below.

Your notes will be treated as debt instruments subject to special rules governing contingent payment debt instruments for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Under those rules, and subject to the discussion below regarding fixed but deferred contingent payments, the amount of interest you are required to take into account for each accrual period will be determined by constructing a projected payment schedule for your notes and applying rules similar to those for accruing original issue discount on a hypothetical noncontingent debt instrument with that projected payment schedule. This method is applied by first determining the yield at which we would issue a noncontingent fixed rate debt instrument with terms and conditions similar to your notes (the "comparable yield") and then determining as of the issue date a payment schedule that would produce the comparable yield. These rules will generally have the effect of requiring you to include amounts in income in respect of your notes prior to your receipt of cash attributable to such income.

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We have determined that the comparable yield for the notes is equal to % per annum, compounded semi-annually, with a projected payment at maturity of $ based on an investment of $1,000.

Based on this comparable yield, if you are an initial holder that holds a note until maturity and you pay your taxes on a calendar year basis, we have determined that you would be required to report the following amounts as ordinary income, not taking into account any positive or negative adjustments you may be required to take into account based on the actual payments on the notes, from the note each year:

Accrual Period	Interest Deemed to Accrue During Accrual Period (per $1,000 note)	Total Interest Deemed to Have Accrued from Original Issue Date (per $1,000 note) as of End of Accrual Period
through December 31, 2018		
January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019		
January 1, 2020 through		

You are required to use the comparable yield and projected payment schedule that we compute in determining your interest accruals in respect of your notes, unless you timely disclose and justify on your U.S. federal income tax return the use of a different comparable yield and projected payment schedule.

The comparable yield and projected payment schedule are not provided to you for any purpose other than the determination of your interest accruals in respect of your notes, and we make no representation regarding the amount of contingent payments with respect to your notes.

If you purchase your notes at a price other than their adjusted issue price determined for tax purposes, you must determine the extent to which the difference between the price you paid for your notes and their adjusted issue price is attributable to a change in expectations as to the projected payment schedule, a change in interest rates, or both, and reasonably allocate the difference accordingly. The adjusted issue price of your notes will equal your notes' original issue price plus any interest deemed to be accrued on your notes (under the rules governing contingent payment debt instruments) as of the time you purchase your notes. The original issue price of your notes will be the first price at which a substantial amount of the notes is sold to persons other than bond houses, brokers or similar persons or organizations acting in the capacity of underwriters, placement agents or wholesalers. Therefore, you may be required to make the adjustments described above even if you purchase your notes in the initial offering if you purchase your notes at a price other than the issue price.

If the adjusted issue price of your notes is greater than the price you paid for your notes, you must make positive adjustments increasing (i) the amount of interest that you would otherwise accrue and include in income each year, and (ii) the amount of ordinary income (or decreasing the amount of ordinary loss) recognized upon maturity by the amounts allocated under the previous paragraph to each of interest and the projected payment schedule; if the adjusted issue price of your notes is less than the price you paid for your notes, you must make negative adjustments, decreasing (i) the amount of interest that you must include in income each year, and (ii) the amount of ordinary income (or increasing the amount of ordinary loss) recognized upon maturity by the amounts allocated under the previous paragraph to each of interest and the projected payment schedule. Adjustments allocated to the interest amount are not made until the date the daily portion of interest accrues.

Because any Form 1099-OID that you receive will not reflect the effects of positive or negative adjustments resulting from your purchase of notes at a price other than the adjusted issue price determined for tax purposes, you are urged to

consult with your tax advisor as to whether and how adjustments should be made to the amounts reported on any Form 1099-OID.

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You will recognize income or loss upon the sale, exchange or maturity of your notes in an amount equal to the difference, if any, between the cash amount you receive at such time and your adjusted basis in your notes. In general, your adjusted basis in your notes will equal the amount you paid for your notes, increased by the amount of interest you previously accrued with respect to your notes (in accordance with the comparable yield and the projected payment schedule for your notes) and increased or decreased by the amount of any positive or negative adjustment, respectively, that you are required to make if you purchase your notes at a price other than the adjusted issue price determined for tax purposes.

In addition except as described below with respect to certain fixed but deferred contingent payments, any income you recognize upon the sale, exchange or maturity of your notes will be ordinary interest income. Any loss you recognize at such time will be ordinary loss to the extent of interest you included as income in the current or previous taxable years in respect of your notes, and, thereafter, capital loss. If you are a noncorporate holder, you would generally be able to use such ordinary loss to offset your income only in the taxable year in which you recognize the ordinary loss and would generally not be able to carry such ordinary loss forward or back to offset income in other taxable years.

Pursuant to recently enacted legislation, for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2018, with respect to a debt instrument issued with original issue discount, such as the notes, an accrual method taxpayer that reports revenues on an applicable financial statement generally must recognize income for U.S. federal income tax purposes no later than the taxable year in which such income is taken into account as revenue in an applicable financial statement of the taxpayer. For this purpose, an "applicable financial statement" generally means a financial statement certified as having been prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles or that is made on the basis of international financial reporting standards and which is used by the taxpayer for various specified purposes. This rule could potentially require such a taxpayer to recognize income for U.S. federal income tax purposes with respect to the notes prior to the time such income would be recognized pursuant to the rules described above. Potential investors in the notes should consult their tax advisors regarding the potential applicability of these rules to their investment in the notes.

Fixed but deferred contingent payments

Notwithstanding the rules described above, special rules apply to a contingent payment debt instrument where all the remaining contingent payments on such instrument become fixed more than six months before all of the contingent payments on such instrument become due. This rule would apply to your notes, for example, if on a date that is more than six months prior to maturity a barrier event occurs. Although not entirely clear, we think that in such a case it would be reasonable for an initial holder of the notes to recognize an ordinary loss equal to any interest previously accrued on the notes in excess of the contingent return, and to cease accruing interest over the remainder of the notes. Thereafter, any gain or loss you recognize from a subsequent sale of the notes should generally be characterized as capital gain or loss.

The application to your notes of the rules governing contingent payments that become fixed are not clear, and the Internal Revenue Service could assert that the tax consequences to you should be different than described above. You are urged to consult your tax advisor regarding the application of these rules to your particular circumstances.

United States Alien Holders

If you are a United States alien holder, please see the discussion under "United States Taxation" in the accompanying prospectus for a description of the tax consequences relevant to you. You are a United States alien holder if you are the beneficial owner of the notes and are, for U.S. federal income tax purposes:

- a nonresident alien individual;
- a foreign corporation; or
- an estate or trust that in either case is not subject to U.S. federal income tax on a net income basis on income or gain from the notes.

The Treasury Department has issued regulations under which amounts paid or deemed paid on certain financial instruments ("871(m) financial instruments") that are treated as attributable to U.S.-source dividends could be treated, in whole or in part depending on the circumstances, as a "dividend equivalent"

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payment that is subject to tax at a rate of 30% (or a lower rate under an applicable treaty), which in the case of amounts you receive upon the sale, exchange or maturity of your notes, could be collected via withholding. If these regulations were to apply to the notes, we may be required to withhold such taxes if any U.S.-source dividends are paid on the stocks included in the underlier during the term of the notes. We could also require you to make certifications (e.g., an applicable Internal Revenue Service Form W-8) prior to the maturity of the notes in order to avoid or minimize withholding obligations, and we could withhold accordingly (subject to your potential right to claim a refund from the Internal Revenue Service) if such certifications were not received or were not satisfactory. If withholding was required, we would not be required to pay any additional amounts with respect to amounts so withheld. These regulations generally will apply to 871(m) financial instruments (or a combination of financial instruments treated as having been entered into in connection with each other) issued (or significantly modified and treated as retired and reissued) on or after January 1, 2021, but will also apply to certain 871(m) financial instruments (or a combination of financial instruments treated as having been entered into in connection with each other) that have a delta (as defined in the applicable Treasury regulations) of one and are issued (or significantly modified and treated as retired and reissued) on or after January 1, 2017. In addition, these regulations will not apply to financial instruments that reference a "qualified index" (as defined in the regulations). We have determined that, as of the issue date of your notes, your notes will not be subject to withholding under these rules. In certain limited circumstances, however, you should be aware that it is possible for United States alien holders to be liable for tax under these rules with respect to a combination of transactions treated as having been entered into in connection with each other even when no withholding is required. You should consult your tax advisor concerning these regulations, subsequent official guidance and regarding any other possible alternative characterizations of your notes for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) Withholding

Pursuant to Treasury regulations, Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) withholding (as described in "United States Taxation—Taxation of Debt Securities—Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) Withholding" in the accompanying prospectus) will generally apply to obligations that are issued on or after July 1, 2014; therefore, the notes will generally be subject to the FATCA withholding rules.

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We have not authorized anyone to provide any information or to make any representations other than those contained or incorporated by reference in this pricing supplement, the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734, the accompanying prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. We take no responsibility for, and can provide no assurance as to the reliability of, any other information that others may give you. This pricing supplement, the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734, the accompanying prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus is an offer to sell only the notes offered hereby, but only under circumstances and in jurisdictions where it is lawful to do so. The information contained in this pricing supplement, the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734, the accompanying prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus is current only as of the respective dates of such documents.

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Pricing Supplement

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GS Finance Corp.

Absolute Return Trigger S&P 500® Index-Linked Notes due

guaranteed by

The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.

Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC