GOLDMAN SACHS GROUP INC
Form FWP
December 27, 2018

January 2019
Free Writing Prospectus pursuant to Rule 433 dated December 27, 2018/ Registration Statement No. 333-219206

GS Finance Corp.	STRUCTURED INVESTMENTS Opportunities in U.S. Equities

Contingent Income Auto-Callable Securities Based on the Performance of the Common Stock of Amazon.com, Inc. due January 7, 2022
Principal at Risk Securities
The Contingent Income Auto-Callable Securities are unsecured notes issued by GS Finance Corp. and guaranteed by The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. The amount that you will be paid on your securities is based on the performance of the common stock of Amazon.com, Inc. The securities will mature on the stated maturity date (January 7, 2022) unless they are automatically called on any call observation date (each of the first eleven coupon determination dates). If the final share price on January 4, 2022 is greater than or equal to the downside threshold level ($, which represents 50.00% of the initial share price on the pricing date (January , 2019)), you will receive your $10 principal amount of your securities plus a coupon payment of $0.205. You will not participate in any appreciation of the underlying stock. If the final share price is less than the downside threshold level, you will not receive a coupon payment and you will lose a significant portion or all of your investment.
Your securities will be automatically called if the closing price of the underlying stock on any call observation date is greater than or equal to the initial share price, resulting in a payment on the corresponding call payment date equal to the principal amount of your securities plus the contingent quarterly coupon (defined below) then due.
The securities will not pay a fixed coupon and may pay no coupon on a coupon payment date. On each coupon determination date, subject to the automatic call feature, if the closing price of the underlying stock is greater than or equal to the downside threshold level, you will receive on the corresponding coupon payment date a contingent quarterly coupon payment of $0.205 for each $10 principal amount of your securities. If the closing price of the underlying stock on any coupon determination date is less than the downside threshold level, you will not receive a coupon payment on the applicable coupon payment date.
On the stated maturity date, for each $10 principal amount of your securities you will receive an amount in cash equal to:

- if the final share price is greater than or equal to the downside threshold level, $10 plus the final coupon; or
- if the final share price is less than the downside threshold level, the product of (i) $10 times (ii) the quotient of (a) the final share price divided by (b) the initial share price.

The securities are for investors who seek to earn a coupon at an above current market rate in exchange for the risk of receiving few or no contingent quarterly coupons and the risk of losing all or a portion of the principal of their securities.
SUMMARY TERMS (continued on page S-2)

Issuer / Guarantor:	GS Finance Corp. / The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.
Underlying stock:	the common stock of Amazon.com, Inc.
Pricing date:	January , 2019 (expected to price on or about January 4, 2019)
Original issue date:	January , 2019 (expected to be January 9, 2019)
Coupon determination dates:	as set forth under "Coupon determination dates" below
Coupon payment dates:	as set forth under "Coupon payment dates" below
Stated maturity date:	January 7, 2022
Stated principal amount/Original issue price:	$10 per security / 100% of the principal amount
Estimated value range:	$9.40 to $9.70. See the following page for more information.

Your investment in the securities involves certain risks, including the credit risk of GS Finance Corp. and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. See page S-12. You should read the disclosure herein to better understand the terms and risks of your investment.

Original issue date:	January , 2019	Original issue price:	100.00% of the principal amount
Underwriting discount:	2.675% ($ in total)*	Net proceeds to the issuer:	97.325% ($ in total)

*Morgan Stanley Wealth Management, acting as dealer for the offering, will receive a selling concession of $0.25 for each security it sells. It has informed us that it intends to internally allocate $0.05 of the selling concession for each security as a structuring fee. Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC will receive an underwriting discount of $0.0175 for each security.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any other regulatory body has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the accuracy or adequacy of this document, the accompanying prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The securities are not bank deposits and are not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other governmental agency, nor are they obligations of, or guaranteed by, a bank.

Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC

The issue price, underwriting discount and net proceeds listed on the cover page relate to the securities we sell initially. We may decide to sell additional securities after the date of this document, at issue prices and with underwriting discounts and net proceeds that differ from the amounts set forth above. The return (whether positive or negative) on your investment in the securities will depend in part on the issue price you pay for such securities.

GS Finance Corp. may use this document in the initial sale of the securities. In addition, Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC or any other affiliate of GS Finance Corp. may use this document in a market-making transaction in a security after its initial sale. Unless GS Finance Corp. or its agent informs the purchaser otherwise in the confirmation of sale, this document is being used in a market-making transaction.

ADDITIONAL SUMMARY TERMS

Payment at maturity:	· if the final share price is greater than or equal to the downside threshold level, $10.00 plus the final coupon; or · if the final share price is less than the downside threshold level, $10 × the share performance factor
Initial share price:	$, which is equal to the closing price of the underlying stock on the pricing date
Final share price:	the closing price of the underlying stock on the determination date
Call observation dates:	each of the first eleven coupon determination dates
Call payment dates:	each of the first eleven coupon payment dates
Determination date:	the last coupon determination date, expected to be January 4, 2022
Downside threshold level:	$, which represents 50.00% of the initial share price
Automatic call feature:	if, as measured on any call observation date, the closing price of the underlying stock is greater than or equal to the initial share price, your securities will be automatically called
Contingent quarterly coupon:	· if the closing price of the underlying stock on the applicable coupon determination date is greater than or equal to the downside threshold level, $0.205; or · if the closing price of the underlying stock on the applicable coupon determination date is less than the downside threshold level, $0.00
Share performance factor:	final share price / initial share price
CUSIP / ISIN:	36257D105 / US36257D1054
Listing:	the securities will not be listed on any securities exchange
Underwriter:	Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC

Coupon determination dates*	Coupon payment dates**
April 4, 2019	April 9, 2019
July 5, 2019	July 10, 2019
October 4, 2019	October 9, 2019
January 6, 2020	January 9, 2020
April 6, 2020	April 9, 2020
July 6, 2020	July 9, 2020
October 5, 2020	October 8, 2020
January 4, 2021	January 7, 2021
April 5, 2021	April 8, 2021
July 6, 2021	July 9, 2021
October 4, 2021	October 7, 2021
January 4, 2022 (determination date)	January 7, 2022 (stated maturity date)

*Subject to postponement for non-trading days and market disruption events as described under “Specific Terms of Your Securities —Coupon Determination Dates” on page S-22 of this document

**Subject to postponement as described under “Specific Terms of Your Securities —Contingent Quarterly Coupon and Coupon Payment Dates” on

page S-22 of this document

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Estimated Value of Your Securities

The estimated value of your securities at the time the terms of your securities are set on the pricing date (as determined by reference to pricing models used by Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC (GS&Co.) and taking into account our credit spreads) is expected to be in the range (the estimated value range) specified on the cover of this document (per $10 principal amount), which is less than the original issue price. The value of your securities at any time will reflect many factors and cannot be predicted; however, the price (not including GS&Co.'s customary bid and ask spreads) at which GS&Co. would initially buy or sell securities (if it makes a market, which it is not obligated to do) and the value that GS&Co. will initially use for account statements and otherwise is equal to approximately the estimated value of your securities at the time of pricing, plus an additional amount (initially equal to $ per $10 principal amount).

Prior to , the price (not including GS&Co.'s customary bid and ask spreads) at which GS&Co. would buy or sell your securities (if it makes a market, which it is not obligated to do) will equal approximately the sum of (a) the then-current estimated value of your securities (as determined by reference to GS&Co.'s pricing models) plus (b) any remaining additional amount (the additional amount will decline to zero on a straight-line basis from the time of pricing through). On and after , the price (not including GS&Co.'s customary bid and ask spreads) at which GS&Co. would buy or sell your securities (if it makes a market) will equal approximately the then-current estimated value of your securities determined by reference to such pricing models.

About Your Securities

GS Finance Corp. and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. have filed a registration statement (including a prospectus, as supplemented by the prospectus supplement listed below) with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) for the offering to which this communication relates. Before you invest, you should read the prospectus and prospectus supplement and any other documents relating to this offering that GS Finance Corp. and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. have filed with the SEC for more complete information about us and this offering. You may get these documents without cost by visiting EDGAR on the SEC web site at sec.gov. Alternatively, we will arrange to send you the prospectus and prospectus supplement if you so request by calling (212) 357-4612.

The securities are notes that are part of the Medium-Term Notes, Series E program of GS Finance Corp. and are fully and unconditionally guaranteed by The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. This document should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Prospectus supplement dated July 10, 2017
- Prospectus dated July 10, 2017

The information in this document supersedes any conflicting information in the documents listed above. In addition, some of the terms or features described in the listed documents may not apply to your securities.

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We refer to the securities we are offering by this document as the "offered securities" or the "securities". Each of the securities has the terms described under "Summary Terms" and "Specific Terms of Your Securities" in this document. Please note that in this document, references to "GS Finance Corp.", "we", "our" and "us" mean only GS Finance Corp. and do not include its subsidiaries or affiliates, references to "The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.", our parent company, mean only The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. and do not include its subsidiaries or affiliates and references to "Goldman Sachs" mean The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. together with its consolidated subsidiaries and affiliates, including us. Also, references to the "accompanying prospectus" mean the accompanying prospectus, dated July 10, 2017, and references to the "accompanying prospectus supplement" mean the accompanying prospectus supplement, dated July 10, 2017, for Medium-Term Notes, Series E, in each case of GS Finance Corp. and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. References to the "indenture" in this document mean the senior debt indenture, dated as of October 10, 2008, as supplemented by the First Supplemental Indenture, dated as of February 20, 2015, each among us, as issuer, The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., as guarantor, and The Bank of New York Mellon, as trustee. This indenture, as so supplemented and as further supplemented thereafter, is referred to as the "GSFC 2008 indenture" in the accompanying prospectus supplement.

Investment Summary

Contingent Income Auto-Callable Securities Based on the Performance of the Common Stock of Amazon.com, Inc. due January 7, 2022

The Contingent Income Auto-Callable Securities Based on the Performance of the Common Stock of Amazon.com, Inc. due January 7, 2022, which we refer to as the securities, provide an opportunity for investors to earn a contingent quarterly coupon of $0.205 for each $10 principal amount of their securities with respect to each quarterly coupon determination date on which the closing price of the underlying stock is greater than or equal to the downside threshold level. It is possible that the closing price of the underlying stock could remain below the downside threshold level for extended periods of time or even throughout the term of the securities so that you may receive few or no contingent quarterly coupons.

If the closing price of the underlying stock is greater than or equal to the initial share price on any call observation date, the securities will be automatically called for an amount equal to the principal amount plus the contingent quarterly coupon then due. If the securities have not previously been automatically called and the final share price is greater than or equal to the downside threshold level, the payment at maturity will be $10 plus the final coupon. However, if the securities have not previously been automatically called and the final share price is less than the downside threshold level, investors will be exposed to the decline in the closing price of the underlying stock, as compared to the initial share price, on a 1 to 1 basis. In this case, the payment at maturity will be less than 50.00% of the principal amount of the securities and could be zero. Investors in the securities must be willing to accept the risk of losing their entire principal and also the risk of not receiving any contingent quarterly coupon. In addition, investors will not participate in any appreciation of the underlying stock.

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Key Investment Rationale

The securities offer investors an opportunity to earn a contingent quarterly coupon of $0.205 with respect to each coupon determination date on which the closing price of the underlying stock is greater than or equal to $ (representing 50.00% of the initial share price), which we refer to as the downside threshold level. The securities may be automatically called prior to maturity for the principal amount per security plus the coupon then due, and the payment at maturity will vary depending on the final share price, as follows:

Scenario 1	On any of the call observation dates, the closing price of the underlying stock is greater than or equal to the initial share price. § The securities will be automatically called for (i) the principal amount plus (ii) the contingent quarterly coupon then due. § Investors will not participate in any appreciation of the underlying stock from the initial share price.
Scenario 2	The securities are not automatically called prior to maturity, and the final share price is greater than or equal to the downside threshold level. § The payment due at maturity will be $10.00 plus the final coupon. § Investors will not participate in any appreciation of the underlying stock from the initial share price.
Scenario 3	The securities are not automatically called prior to maturity, and the final share price is less than the downside threshold level. § The payment due at maturity will be equal to the product of (i) the stated principal amount times (ii) the share performance factor. § Investors will lose a significant portion, and may lose all, of their principal in this scenario.

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How the Securities Work

The following diagrams illustrate the potential outcomes for the securities depending on (1) the closing price of the underlying stock on the applicable call observation date and (2) the final share price.

Diagram #1: Call Observation Dates

Diagram #2: Payment at Maturity if the Securities are Not Automatically Called

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Hypothetical Examples

The below examples are based on the following terms:

Hypothetical initial share price:	$1,500.00
Hypothetical downside threshold level:	$750, which is 50.00% of the hypothetical initial share price
Contingent quarterly coupon:	$0.205 per security
Principal amount:	$10 per security

In Examples 1 and 2, the closing price of the underlying stock fluctuates over the term of the securities and the closing price of the underlying stock is greater than or equal to the hypothetical initial share price of $1,500 on one of the call observation dates. Because the closing price of the underlying stock is greater than or equal to the hypothetical initial share price on one of the call observation dates, the securities are automatically called on the applicable call observation date. In Examples 3 and 4, the closing price of the underlying stock on all of the call observation dates is less than the hypothetical initial share price, and, consequently, the securities are not automatically called prior to, and remain outstanding until, maturity.

	Example 1			Example 2		
Date	Hypothetical Closing Price on Corresponding Date	Contingent Quarterly Coupon	Amount Payable on the Call Payment Date*	Hypothetical Closing Price on Corresponding Date	Contingent Quarterly Coupon	Amount Payable on the Call Payment Date*
Coupon Determination Date / Call Observation Date #1	$1,700.00	$0.205	$10.205	$1,200.00	$0.205	N/A
Coupon Determination Date / Call Observation Date #2	N/A	N/A	N/A	$600.00	$0	N/A
Coupon Determination Date / Call Observation Date #3	N/A	N/A	N/A	$1,400.00	$0.205	N/A
Coupon Determination Date / Call Observation Date #4	N/A	N/A	N/A	$650.00	$0	N/A
Coupon Determination Date / Call Observation Date #5	N/A	N/A	N/A	$550.00	$0	N/A
Coupon Determination Date / Call Observation Date #6	N/A	N/A	N/A	$450.00	$0	N/A
Coupon Determination Date / Call Observation Date #7	N/A	N/A	N/A	$500.00	$0	N/A
Coupon Determination Date / Call Observation Date #8	N/A	N/A	N/A	$550.00	$0	N/A
Coupon Determination Date / Call Observation Date #9	N/A	N/A	N/A	$700.00	$0	N/A
Coupon Determination Date / Call Observation Date #10	N/A	N/A	N/A	$2,100.00	$0.205	$10.205
Coupon Determination Date / Call Observation Date #11	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Coupon Determination Date #12
/ Determination Date

* The amount payable on a call payment date includes the unpaid contingent quarterly coupon with respect to the coupon determination date on which the closing price of the underlying stock is greater than or equal to the initial share price and the securities are automatically called as a result.

§ In Example 1, the securities are automatically called on the first call observation date as the closing price of the underlying stock on such date is greater than the initial share price. You receive an amount on the corresponding call payment date, calculated as follows:

principal amount + contingent quarterly coupon = $10.00 + $0.205 = $10.205

In this example, the automatic call feature limits the term of your investment to approximately 3 months, and you may not be able to reinvest at comparable terms or returns. If the securities are automatically called, you will stop receiving contingent coupons.

§ In Example 2, the securities are automatically called on the tenth call observation date as the closing price of the underlying stock on such date is greater than the initial share price. As the closing prices of the underlying stock on the first, third and tenth coupon determination dates are greater than the downside threshold level, you receive the contingent coupon of $0.205 with respect to each such coupon determination date. Following the tenth call observation date, you receive an amount on the corresponding call payment date of $10.205, which includes the contingent quarterly coupon with respect to the tenth coupon determination date.

In this example, the automatic call feature limits the term of your investment to approximately 30 months, and you may not be able to reinvest at comparable terms or returns. If the securities are automatically called, you will stop receiving contingent coupons. Further, although the underlying stock has appreciated by 40.00% from its initial share price as of the tenth call observation date, on the call payment date you receive only $10.205 per security and do not benefit from such appreciation.

	Example 3			Example 4		
Date	Hypothetical Closing Price on Corresponding Date	Contingent Quarterly Coupon	Amount Payable on the Call Payment Date	Hypothetical Closing Price on Corresponding Date	Contingent Quarterly Coupon	Amount Payable on the Call Payment Date
Coupon Determination Date / Call Observation Date #1	$600.00	$0.00	N/A	$450.00	$0.00	N/A
Coupon Determination Date / Call Observation Date #2	$500.00	$0.00	N/A	$500.00	$0.00	N/A
Coupon Determination Date / Call Observation Date #3	$400.00	$0.00	N/A	$500.00	$0.00	N/A
Coupon Determination Date / Call Observation Date #4	$500.00	$0.00	N/A	$600.00	$0.00	N/A