

American Capital Agency Corp
Form S-3/A
May 06, 2010
Table of Contents

As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on May 6, 2010.

Registration No. 333 166199

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

PRE-EFFECTIVE AMENDMENT NO. 1
TO
FORMS 3
REGISTRATION STATEMENT
UNDER
THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

AMERICAN CAPITAL AGENCY CORP.

(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in its Charter)

Edgar Filing: American Capital Agency Corp - Form S-3/A

Delaware
(State or other jurisdiction of
incorporation or organization)

26-1701984
(I.R.S. Employer
Identification No.)

2 Bethesda Metro Center

14th Floor

Bethesda, Maryland 20814

(301) 968-9300

(Address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of registrant's principal executive offices)

Samuel A. Flax, Esq.

Executive Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary

American Capital Agency Corp.

2 Bethesda Metro Center, 14th Floor

Bethesda, Maryland 20814

(301) 968-9300

(Name, address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of agent for service)

Copy to:

David J. Goldschmidt, Esq.

Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP

Four Times Square

New York, New York 10036

(212) 735-3000

Edgar Filing: American Capital Agency Corp - Form S-3/A

Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public: From time to time after the effective date of the Registration Statement, as the Registrant may determine.

If the only securities being registered on this Form are being offered pursuant to dividend or interest reinvestment plans, please check the following box: "

If any of the securities being registered on this Form are to be offered on a delayed or continuous basis pursuant to Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, other than securities offered only in connection with dividend or interest reinvestment plans, check the following box: x

Table of Contents

If this Form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act, please 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(c) 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 "

If this Form is a registration statement pursuant to General Instruction I.D. or a post-effective amendment thereto that shall become effective upon filing with the Commission pursuant to Rule 462(e) under the Securities Act, check the following box: "

If this Form is a post-effective amendment to a registration statement filed pursuant to General Instruction I.D. filed to register additional securities or additional classes of securities pursuant to Rule 413(b) under the Securities Act, check the following box: "

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 definitions of large accelerated filer, accelerated filer and smaller reporting company in Rule 12b-2 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. (Check One):

Large accelerated filer " Accelerated filer Non-accelerated filer " Smaller reporting company "

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 or until the registration statement shall become effective on such date as the Securities and Exchange Commission, acting pursuant to said Section 8(a), may determine.

Table of Contents

The information in this prospectus is not complete and may be changed or supplemented. The securities described in this prospectus cannot be sold until the registration statement that we have filed to cover the securities has become effective under the rules of the Securities Act of 1933. This prospectus is not an offer to sell the securities, nor is it a solicitation of an offer to buy the securities, in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale thereof not permitted.

SUBJECT TO COMPLETION, DATED MAY 6, 2010

PRELIMINARY PROSPECTUS

Amended and Restated Dividend Reinvestment and Direct Stock Purchase Plan

13,000,000 shares of Common Stock

This prospectus relates to 13,000,000 shares of common stock, \$0.01 par value per share (Common Stock), of American Capital Agency Corp. registered for purchase under the American Capital Agency Corp. Amended and Restated Dividend Reinvestment and Direct Stock Purchase Plan (the Plan).

The Plan provides our stockholders with a simple and convenient method of reinvesting cash dividends and distributions and purchasing shares of our common stock. By participating in the Plan, you may purchase shares of our common stock by reinvesting some or all of the cash dividends and distributions that you receive on your shares of our common stock. You may also make optional cash purchases of shares of our common stock of between \$50 and \$10,000 per month and, with our prior approval, in excess of \$10,000 per month. Highlights of the Plan include:

Any registered stockholder may elect to participate in the Plan.

Interested prospective investors who are not currently holders of our common stock may make their initial purchase through the Plan, subject to a minimum purchase of \$250.

Up to a 5% discount on shares of our common stock purchased under the Plan for purchases, with our prior approval, in excess of \$10,000 per month.

Optional full or partial dividend reinvestment options.

Optional cash purchases of between \$50 and \$10,000 per month and, with our prior approval, in excess of \$10,000 per month.

Certificate safekeeping in book-entry form available at no charge to participants.

Edgar Filing: American Capital Agency Corp - Form S-3/A

Detailed record keeping and reporting will be provided at no charge to participants.

Optional automatic investment withdrawals from your bank account.

Our common stock is quoted on The NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol AGNC. We suggest that you retain this prospectus for future reference.

Investing in our Common Stock involves a high degree of risk. You should carefully consider the risks described under Risk Factors in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and any subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q (which descriptions are incorporated by reference herein), as well as the other information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus before making a decision to invest in our Common Stock. See Risk Factors beginning on page 28 of this prospectus.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined that this prospectus is accurate or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this Prospectus is _____, 2010

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>THE COMPANY</u>	Page 3
<u>RISK FACTORS</u>	28
<u>USE OF PROCEEDS</u>	28
<u>AMENDED AND RESTATED DIVIDEND REINVESTMENT AND DIRECT STOCK PURCHASE PLAN</u>	29
<u>PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION</u>	41
<u>LEGAL MATTERS</u>	41
<u>EXPERTS</u>	41
<u>WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION</u>	41
<u>INDEMNIFICATION</u>	42

When used in this prospectus, the terms AGNC, we, our, or us or other similar terms mean American Capital Agency Corp., unless we state otherwise or the context indicates otherwise.

We have not authorized any person to give you any information or to make any representation not contained in this prospectus, and, if given or made, you should not rely upon such information or representation as having been authorized by us. This prospectus is not an offer to sell, or a solicitation of an offer to buy, in any state in which it is unlawful to make such an offer or solicitation. Neither the delivery of this prospectus nor any sale in connection with it means or implies that our affairs or the facts described in this prospectus have not changed since the date of this prospectus.

Information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus or prospectus summary may contain forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, which can be identified by the use of forward-looking terminology such as may, will, expect, intend, plans, anticipate, estimate or continue or the negative thereof or other variations or comparable terminology. The matters described throughout this prospectus and in any exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part, constitute cautionary statements identifying important factors with respect to any such forward-looking statements, including certain risks and uncertainties, that could cause actual results to differ materially from those in such forward-looking statements.

Table of Contents

THE COMPANY

Business

American Capital Agency Corp. (AGNC , we , us and our) was organized on January 7, 2008, and commenced operations on May 20, 2008 following the completion of our initial public offering (IPO). In connection with the IPO, we sold ten million shares of our common stock at \$20.00 per share for net proceeds of \$186 million, net of the underwriters' commission and other offering expenses. Concurrent with our IPO, American Capital, Ltd. (American Capital) purchased five million shares of our common stock in a private placement at \$20.00 per share for aggregate proceeds of \$100 million. In July 2009, through a public secondary offering, American Capital sold 2.5 million shares of our common stock that it had purchased in the private placement. In 2009, we completed two follow-on public offerings of a total of 9.3 million shares of our common stock for proceeds, net of the underwriters' discount and other offering costs, of approximately \$222 million. Our common stock is traded on The NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol AGNC .

We earn income primarily from investing in residential mortgage pass-through securities and collateralized mortgage obligations on a leveraged basis. These investments consist of securities for which the principal and interest payments are guaranteed by U.S. government-sponsored entities such as the Federal National Mortgage Association, or Fannie Mae, and the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, or Freddie Mac, or by a U.S. Government agency such as the Government National Mortgage Association, or Ginnie Mae. We refer to these types of securities as agency securities and the specific agency securities in which we invest as our investment portfolio.

Our principal goal is to generate net income for distribution to our stockholders through regular quarterly dividends from our net interest income, which is the spread between the interest income earned on our interest earning assets and the interest costs of our borrowings and hedging activities, and realized gains on our investments. We fund our investments primarily through short-term borrowings structured as repurchase agreements. Since our IPO through the date hereof, we have paid or declared dividends of \$171 million in the aggregate.

We have elected to be taxed as a real estate investment trust, or REIT, under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the Code), commencing with our tax year ended December 31, 2008. As such, we are required to distribute annually 90% of our taxable net income. As long as we qualify as a REIT, we will generally not be subject to U.S. federal or state corporate taxes on our taxable net income to the extent that we distribute all of our annual taxable net income to our stockholders. We are externally managed by American Capital Agency Management, LLC (our Manager), a subsidiary of a wholly-owned portfolio company of American Capital, Ltd.

Our Investment Strategy

Our investment strategy is designed to:

manage an investment portfolio consisting exclusively of agency securities that seeks to generate attractive risk-adjusted returns;

capitalize on discrepancies in the relative valuations in the agency securities market;

manage financing, interest and prepayment rate risks;

provide regular quarterly distributions to our stockholders;

qualify as a REIT; and

remain exempt from the requirements of the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (the Investment Company Act).

Table of Contents

Our Targeted Investments

The agency securities in which we invest consist of residential pass-through certificates and collateralized mortgage obligations (CMOs), for which the principal and interest payments are guaranteed by a U.S. Government agency or U.S. Government-sponsored entity.

Residential Pass-Through Certificates. Residential pass-through certificates are securities representing interests in pools of mortgage loans secured by residential real property where payments of both interest and principal, plus pre-paid principal, on the securities are made monthly to holders of the securities, in effect passing through monthly payments made by the individual borrowers on the mortgage loans that underlie the securities, net of fees paid to the issuer/guarantor and servicers of the securities. Holders of the securities also receive guarantor advances of principal and interest for delinquent loans in the mortgage pools.

Collateralized Mortgage Obligations. CMOs are structured instruments representing interests in residential pass-through certificates. CMOs consist of multiple classes of securities, with each class having specified characteristics, including stated maturity dates, weighted average lives and rules governing principal and interest distribution. Monthly payments of interest and principal, including prepayments, are typically returned to different classes based on rules described in the trust documents. Principal and interest payments may also be divided between holders of different securities in the CMO and some securities may only receive interest payments while others receive only principal payments.

The agency securities that we acquire provide funds for mortgage loans made to residential homeowners. These securities generally represent interests in pools of mortgage loans made by savings and loan institutions, mortgage bankers, commercial banks and other mortgage lenders. These pools of mortgage loans are assembled for sale to investors, such as us, by various government-related or private organizations.

Agency securities differ from other forms of traditional debt securities, which normally provide for periodic payments of interest in fixed amounts with principal payments at maturity or on specified call dates. Instead, agency securities provide for a monthly payment, which may consist of both interest and principal. In effect, these payments are a pass-through of the monthly interest and scheduled and unscheduled principal payments (referred to as prepayments) made by the individual borrower on the mortgage loans, net of any fees paid to the issuer, servicer or guarantor of the securities.

The investment characteristics of agency securities differ from those of traditional fixed-income securities. The major differences include the payment of interest and principal on the securities on a more frequent schedule, as described above, and the possibility that principal may be prepaid at par at any time due to prepayments on the underlying mortgage loans. These differences can result in significantly greater price and yield volatility than is the case with traditional fixed-income securities.

Various factors affect the rate at which mortgage prepayments occur, including changes in the level and directional trends in housing prices, interest rates, general economic conditions, defaults on the underlying mortgages, the age of the mortgage loan, the location of the property and other social and demographic conditions. Generally, prepayments on agency securities increase during periods of falling mortgage interest rates and decrease during periods of rising mortgage interest rates. However, this may not always be the case. We may reinvest principal repayments at a yield that is higher or lower than the yield on the repaid investment, thus affecting our net interest income by altering the average yield on our assets.

When interest rates are declining, the value of agency securities with prepayment options may not increase as much as other fixed income securities. The rate of prepayments on underlying mortgages will affect the price and volatility of agency securities and may have the effect of shortening or extending the duration of the security beyond what was anticipated at the time of purchase. When interest rates rise, our holdings of agency securities may experience reduced returns if the owners of the underlying mortgages pay off their mortgages slower than anticipated. This is generally referred to as extension risk.

Table of Contents

Payments of principal and interest on agency securities, although not the market value of the securities themselves, are guaranteed either by the full faith and credit of the United States, such as those issued by Ginnie Mae, or by a U.S. Government-sponsored entity, such as Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac.

Agency securities are collateralized by either fixed-rate mortgages, or FRMs, adjustable-rate mortgages, or ARMs, or hybrid ARMs. Hybrid ARMs are mortgage loans that have interest rates that are fixed for an initial period (typically three, five, seven or 10 years) and thereafter reset at regular intervals subject to interest rate caps. Our allocation between securities collateralized by FRMs, ARMs or hybrid ARMs will depend on various factors including, but not limited to, relative value, expected future prepayment trends, supply and demand, costs of hedging, costs of financing, expected future interest rate volatility and the overall shape of the U.S. Treasury and interest rate swap yield curves. We take all of these factors into account when we consider our allocation between these types of investments.

The types of residential pass-through certificates in which we invest, or which may comprise the CMOs in which we invest, are described below.

Freddie Mac Certificates

Freddie Mac is a stockholder-owned, federally-chartered corporation created pursuant to an act of the U.S. Congress on July 24, 1970. The principal activity of Freddie Mac currently consists of purchasing residential mortgage loans and mortgage-related securities in the secondary mortgage market and securitizing them into mortgage backed securities sold to investors. On September 6, 2008, the Federal Housing Finance Agency, or FHFA, placed Freddie Mac into conservatorship and appointed FHFA as the conservator. As the conservator of Freddie Mac, the FHFA now controls and directs the operations of Freddie Mac and may (i) take over the assets of and operate Freddie Mac with all the powers of the stockholders, the directors, and the officers of Freddie Mac and conduct all business of Freddie Mac; (ii) collect all obligations and money due to Freddie Mac; (iii) perform all functions of Freddie Mac that are consistent with the conservator's appointment; (iv) preserve and conserve the assets and property of Freddie Mac; and (v) contract for assistance in fulfilling any function, activity, action or duty of the conservator. In the event the conservator were to repudiate Freddie Mac's guarantee obligations, the ability of holders of Freddie Mac certificates to enforce the guarantee obligation would be limited to actual direct compensatory damages. The rights of holders of Freddie Mac certificates to bring proceedings against the U.S. Treasury are limited if Freddie Mac fails to pay under its guarantee.

Freddie Mac guarantees to each holder of Freddie Mac certificates the timely payment of interest at the applicable pass-through rate and principal on the holder's pro rata share of the unpaid principal balance of the related mortgage loans. The obligations of Freddie Mac under its guarantees are solely those of Freddie Mac and are not backed by the full faith and credit of the United States or any federal agency or instrumentality other than Freddie Mac. If Freddie Mac were unable to satisfy these obligations, distributions to holders of Freddie Mac certificates would consist solely of payments and other recoveries on the underlying mortgage loans and, accordingly, defaults and delinquencies on the underlying mortgage loans would adversely affect monthly distributions to holders of Freddie Mac certificates.

Freddie Mac certificates are backed by pools of single-family mortgage loans or multi-family mortgage loans. These underlying mortgage loans may have original terms to maturity of up to 40 years. Freddie Mac certificates may be issued under cash programs (composed of mortgage loans purchased from a number of sellers) or guarantor programs (composed of mortgage loans acquired from one seller in exchange for certificates representing interests in the mortgage loans purchased). Freddie Mac certificates may pay interest at a fixed rate or an adjustable rate. The interest rate paid on adjustable-rate Freddie Mac certificates (Freddie Mac ARMs) adjusts periodically within 60 days prior to the month in which the interest rates on the underlying mortgage loans adjust. The interest rates paid on certificates issued under Freddie Mac's standard ARM programs adjust in relation to the Treasury index. Other specified indices used in Freddie Mac ARM programs include the 11th District Cost of Funds Index published by the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco, LIBOR and other

Table of Contents

indices. Interest rates paid on fully-indexed Freddie Mac ARM certificates equal the applicable index rate plus a specified number of basis points. The majority of series of Freddie Mac ARM certificates issued to date have pools of mortgage loans with monthly, semi-annual or annual interest adjustments. Adjustments in the interest rates paid are generally limited to an annual increase or decrease of either 100 or 200 basis points and to a lifetime cap of 500 or 600 basis points over the initial interest rate. Certain Freddie Mac programs include mortgage loans which allow the borrower to convert the adjustable mortgage interest rate to a fixed rate. Adjustable-rate mortgages which are converted into fixed-rate mortgage loans are repurchased by Freddie Mac or by the seller of the loan to Freddie Mac at the unpaid principal balance of the loan plus accrued interest to the due date of the last adjustable rate interest payment.

Fannie Mae Certificates

Fannie Mae is a stockholder owned, federally-chartered corporation organized and existing under the Federal National Mortgage Association Charter Act, created in 1938 and rechartered in 1968 by Congress as a stockholder owned company. Fannie Mae provides funds to the mortgage market primarily by purchasing home mortgage loans from local lenders, thereby replenishing their funds for additional lending. On September 6, 2008, the FHFA placed Fannie Mae into conservatorship and appointed FHFA as the conservator. As the conservator of Fannie Mae, the FHFA now controls and directs the operations of Fannie Mae and may (i) take over the assets of and operate Fannie with all the powers of the stockholders, the directors, and the officers of Fannie Mae and conduct all business of Fannie Mae; (ii) collect all obligations and money due to Fannie Mae; (iii) perform all functions of Fannie Mae which are consistent with the conservator's appointment; (iv) preserve and conserve the assets and property of Fannie Mae; and (v) contract for assistance in fulfilling any function, activity, action or duty of the conservator. In the event the conservator were to repudiate Fannie Mae's guarantee obligations, the ability of holders of Fannie Mae certificates to enforce the guarantee obligation would be limited to actual direct compensatory damages. The rights of holders of Fannie Mae certificates to bring proceedings against the U.S. Treasury are limited if Fannie Mae fails to pay under its guarantee.

Fannie Mae guarantees to each MBS trust that issues Fannie Mae certificates that it will supplement the amounts received by the MBS trust from the underlying mortgage loans as required to make the timely payment of monthly principal and interest on the certificates it has issued. The obligations of Fannie Mae under its guarantees are solely those of Fannie Mae and are not backed by the full faith and credit of the United States or any federal agency or instrumentality other than Fannie Mae. If Fannie Mae were unable to satisfy its obligations, distributions to holders of Fannie Mae certificates would consist solely of payments and other recoveries on the underlying mortgage loans and, accordingly, defaults and delinquencies on the underlying mortgage loans would adversely affect monthly distributions to holders of Fannie Mae.

Fannie Mae certificates may be backed by pools of single-family or multi-family mortgage loans. The original term to maturity of any such mortgage loan generally does not exceed 40 years. Fannie Mae certificates may pay interest at a fixed rate or an adjustable rate. Each series of Fannie Mae ARM certificates bears an initial interest rate and margin tied to an index based on all loans in the related pool, less a fixed percentage representing servicing compensation and Fannie Mae's guarantee fee. The specified index used in different series has included the Treasury Index, the 11th District Cost of Funds Index published by the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco, LIBOR and other indices. Interest rates paid on fully-indexed Fannie Mae ARM certificates equal the applicable index rate plus a specified number of percentage points. The majority of series of Fannie Mae ARM certificates issued to date have pools of mortgage loans with monthly, semi-annual or annual interest rate adjustments. Adjustments in the interest rates paid are generally limited to an annual increase or decrease of either 100 basis points or 200 basis points and to a lifetime cap of 500 basis points or 600 basis points over the initial interest rate.

Table of Contents

Ginnie Mae Certificates

Ginnie Mae is a wholly-owned corporate instrumentality of the United States within the Department of Housing and Urban Development, or HUD. The National Housing Act of 1934 authorizes Ginnie Mae to guarantee the timely payment of the principal of and interest on certificates which represent an interest in a pool of mortgages insured by the Federal Housing Administration, or FHA, or partially guaranteed by the Department of Veterans Affairs and other loans eligible for inclusion in mortgage pools underlying Ginnie Mae certificates. Section 306(g) of the Housing Act provides that the full faith and credit of the United States is pledged to the payment of all amounts which may be required to be paid under any guaranty by Ginnie Mae.

At present, most Ginnie Mae certificates are backed by single-family mortgage loans. The interest rate paid on Ginnie Mae certificates may be a fixed rate or an adjustable rate. The interest rate on Ginnie Mae certificates issued under Ginnie Mae's standard ARM program adjusts annually in relation to the Treasury index. Adjustments in the interest rate are generally limited to an annual increase or decrease of 100 basis points and to a lifetime cap of 500 basis points over the initial coupon rate.

Investment Methods

We may utilize to-be-announced forward contracts (TBAs), in order to invest in agency securities. Pursuant to these TBAs, we agree to purchase, for future delivery, agency securities with certain principal and interest terms and certain types of underlying collateral, but the particular agency securities to be delivered would not be identified until shortly, generally two days, before the TBA settlement date. Our ability to purchase agency securities through TBAs may be limited by the 75% asset test applicable to REITs and the 55% asset test to qualify for exemption from the Investment Company Act.

Investment Committee and Investment Guidelines

Our Manager has established an investment committee, which consists of Messrs. Malon Wilkus, John R. Erickson, Samuel A. Flax and Thomas A. McHale, each of whom are officers of our Manager. The investment committee meets monthly to discuss diversification of our investment portfolio, hedging and financing strategies and compliance with the investment guidelines. Our Board of Directors receives an investment report and reviews our investment portfolio and related compliance with the investment guidelines on at least a quarterly basis. Our Board of Directors does not review or approve individual investments but receives notice if the Company is operating outside of our operating policies or investment guidelines.

Our Board of Directors has approved the following investment guidelines:

no investment shall be made in any non-agency securities;

no investment shall be made that would cause us to fail to qualify as a REIT for federal income tax purposes;

no investment shall be made that would cause us to be regulated as an investment company under the Investment Company Act; and

prior to entering into any proposed investment transaction with American Capital or any of its affiliates, a majority of our independent directors must approve the terms of the transaction.

The investment committee may change these investment guidelines at any time with the approval of our Board of Directors, but without any approval from our stockholders.

In February 2010, our Board of Directors approved the removal of a guideline that limited our leverage to not greater than 10 times our stockholders' equity (as computed in accordance with GAAP).

Table of Contents

Agency securities consist of residential pass-through certificates and collateralized mortgage obligations for which the principal and interest are guaranteed by a U.S. Government agency or a U.S. Government sponsored entity.

Residential Pass-Through Certificates. Residential pass-through certificates are securities representing interests in pools of mortgage loans secured by residential real property where payments of both interest and principal, plus pre-paid principal, on the securities are made monthly to holders of the securities, in effect passing through monthly payments made by the individual borrowers on the mortgage loans that underlie the securities, net of fees paid to the issuer/guarantor and servicers of the securities. Holders of the securities also receive guarantor advances of principal and interest for delinquent loans in the mortgage pools.

Collateralized Mortgage Obligations. CMOs are structured instruments representing interests in residential pass-through certificates. CMOs consist of multiple classes of securities, with each class having specified characteristics, including stated maturity dates, weighted average lives and rules governing principal and interest distribution. Monthly payments of interest and principal, including prepayments, are typically returned to different classes based on rules described in the trust documents. Principal and interest payments may also be divided between holders of different securities in the CMO and some securities may only receive interest payments while others receive only principal payments.

These securities are collateralized by pools of fixed-rate mortgage loans (FRMs), adjustable-rate mortgage loans (ARMs) or hybrid ARMs. Hybrid ARMs are mortgage loans that have interest rates that are fixed for an initial period (typically three, five, seven or 10 years) and, thereafter, reset at regular intervals subject to interest rate caps. Our allocation of investments among securities collateralized by FRMs, ARMs or hybrid ARMs will depend on our assessment of the relative value of the securities, which will be based on numerous factors including, but not limited to, expected future prepayment trends, supply and demand, costs of financing, costs of hedging, expected future interest rate volatility and the overall shape of the U.S. Treasury and interest rate swap yield curves.

As of March 31, 2010, our \$5.2 billion investment portfolio was financed with \$4.7 billion of repurchase agreements and \$0.6 billion of equity capital, resulting in a leverage ratio of approximately 7.6 times our stockholders' equity. When adjusted for the net payable for agency securities purchased but not yet settled, the leverage ratio was approximately 7.9 times our stockholders' equity as of March 31, 2010. Financing spreads (the difference between yields on our investments and rates on related borrowings, including amortization expense related to terminated swaps) averaged 216 basis points during the three months ended March 31, 2010.

The size and composition of our investment portfolio depends on investment strategies being implemented by management, the availability of investment capital and overall market conditions, including the availability of attractively priced investments and suitable financing to appropriately leverage our investment portfolio. Market conditions are influenced by, among other things, current levels of and expectations for future levels of, short-term interest rates, mortgage prepayments, market liquidity and government participation in the market.

Our Financing Strategy

As part of our investment strategy, we leverage our investment portfolio pursuant to master repurchase agreements. A repurchase transaction acts as a financing arrangement under which we effectively pledge our agency securities as collateral to secure a short-term loan. Our borrowings pursuant to these repurchase transactions generally have maturities that range from 30 to 90 days, but may have maturities of less than 30 days or up to 364 days. Our leverage may vary periodically depending on market conditions and our Manager's assessment of risk and returns. We generally would expect our leverage to be within six to eleven times the amount of our stockholders' equity. However, under certain market conditions, we may operate at leverage levels outside of this range for extended periods of time. We also cannot assure you that we will continue to be successful in borrowing sufficient amounts to fund our intended acquisitions of agency securities.

Table of Contents

We have entered into master repurchase agreements with 18 financial institutions as of December 31, 2009. The terms of the repurchase transaction borrowings under our master repurchase agreements generally conform to the terms in the standard master repurchase agreement as published by the Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association (SIFMA) as to repayment, margin requirements and the segregation of all securities we have initially sold under the repurchase transaction. In addition, each lender typically requires that we include supplemental terms and conditions to the standard master repurchase agreement. Typical supplemental terms and conditions include changes to the margin maintenance requirements, required haircuts, purchase price maintenance requirements, requirements that all controversies related to the repurchase agreement be litigated in a particular jurisdiction and cross default provisions. These provisions differ for each of our lenders and certain of these terms are not determined until we engage in a specific repurchase transaction.

While repurchase agreements are our primary source of financing, we may seek to obtain other sources of financing depending on market conditions.

To the extent that we invest in agency securities through TBAs, we may finance the acquisition of agency securities by entering into dollar roll transactions using TBAs in which we would sell a TBA and simultaneously purchase a similar, but not identical, TBA. Our ability to enter into dollar-roll transactions with respect to TBAs may be limited by the 75% gross income test applicable to REITs.

Our Hedging Strategy

As part of our risk management strategy, we may hedge some of our exposure to interest rate and prepayment risk as our Manager determines is in our best interest given our investment strategy, the cost of the hedging transactions and our intention to qualify as a REIT. As a result, we may elect to bear a level of interest rate or prepayment risk that could otherwise be hedged when our Manager believes, based on all relevant facts, that bearing the risk enhances our risk/return profile. Our Manager designs an interest rate risk management program consistent with its outlook for the market to attempt to mitigate the impact of changes in interest rates on our investment portfolio and related borrowings. We may enter into interest rate swap agreements, interest rate swaptions, TBA agency securities, caps, collars, floors, forward contracts, options or futures to attempt to manage the overall interest rate risk of the portfolio, reduce fluctuations in book value and generate additional income distributable to stockholders. See Item 1. Business in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K for further discussion on our hedging strategy.

We have built a balance sheet and undertaken an interest rate and prepayment risk management program which seeks to generate net interest income and maintain liquidity sufficient to continue operations given a variety of potentially adverse circumstances. Accordingly, we expect our interest rate and prepayment risk management program to address both income preservation, as discussed above, and capital preservation. Since borrowers whose mortgages collateralize the agency securities in which we invest are able to prepay their mortgage loans at par at any time, we face the risk that we will experience a return of principal earlier than anticipated and be left to invest that principal at potentially lower prevailing yields. Because prepayments on agency securities generally accelerate when interest rates decrease and slow when interest rates increase, agency securities typically have negative convexity. In other words, certain agency securities may increase in price more slowly than most bonds, or even fall in value, as interest rates decline. Conversely, certain agency securities may decrease in value more quickly than most bonds as interest rates increase. For capital preservation, we monitor our duration. This is the expected percentage change in market value of our assets that would be caused by a 1% change in short and long-term interest rates. To monitor weighted average duration and the related risks of fluctuations in the liquidation value of our investment portfolio, our Manager models the impact of various economic scenarios on the market value of our agency securities and liabilities. We believe that our interest rate and prepayment risk management program allows us to maintain operations throughout a wide variety of potentially adverse circumstances. Nevertheless, in order to further preserve our capital base (and lower our duration) during periods when we believe a trend of rising interest rates has been established, we may decide to increase hedging activities or to sell assets. Each of these actions may lower our earnings and dividends in the short term to further our objective of maintaining attractive levels of earnings and dividends over the long term.

Table of Contents

Under the gross income tests applicable to REITs, income from a hedging transaction that we enter into to manage risk of interest rate changes with respect to borrowings made to acquire or carry real estate assets does not constitute REIT gross income, and such income is ignored for purposes of the gross income tests applicable to REITs. Therefore, we may have to limit our use of advantageous hedging techniques, which could expose us to greater risks associated with changes in interest rates than we would otherwise want to bear or implement those hedges through our taxable REIT subsidiary, American Capital Agency TRS, LLC, or our TRS. Implementing our hedges through our TRS could increase the cost of our hedging activities because our TRS would be subject to tax on income and gains. We may, in the future, implement part of our hedging strategy through our TRS. To comply with the asset tests applicable to us as a REIT, we could own 100% of the stock of such subsidiary, provided that the value of the stock that we own in all such TRSs does not exceed 25% of the value of our total assets at the close of any calendar quarter.

Our Option Strategy

As part of our risk management strategy, we may write put or call options on TBA securities as a method of insulating our stockholders' equity and enhancing our risk/return profile. Our Manager implements this strategy based upon overall market conditions, the level of volatility in the mortgage market, size of our agency securities portfolio, notional value of our swap positions outstanding and our intention to qualify as a REIT.

Other Investment Strategies

We may enter into other short or long term investment strategies as the opportunities arise.

Our Manager

We are externally managed and advised by our Manager pursuant to the terms of a management agreement. Because we have no employees or separate facilities, we rely on our Manager to administer our business activities and day-to-day operations, subject to the supervision and oversight of our Board of Directors. Our Manager is a subsidiary of a wholly-owned portfolio company of American Capital. American Capital is a publicly traded private equity firm and global asset manager. American Capital, both directly and through its asset management business, originates, underwrites and manages investments in middle market private equity, leveraged finance, real estate and structured products. Founded in 1986, American Capital has \$12 billion in capital resources under management, as of September 30, 2009, and eight offices in the U.S., Europe and Asia.

Gary Kain is the President of our Manager and also serves as our Senior Vice President and Chief Investment Officer. Mr. Kain joined American Capital in January 2009, succeeding Russell Jeffrey who had previously served as our Chief Investment Officer since our IPO. Prior to joining American Capital, Mr. Kain most recently served as Senior Vice President of Investments and Capital Markets of Freddie Mac. He also served as Senior Vice President of Mortgage Investments & Structuring of Freddie Mac from February 2005 to April 2008. Mr. Kain's group was responsible for managing all of Freddie Mac's mortgage investment activities for the company's \$700 billion retained portfolio. Mr. Kain joined Freddie Mac in 1988.

Effective July 2009, Mr. Kain and several other American Capital employees became full-time employees of our Manager. These organizational changes provide our Manager with a dedicated investment team and support personnel. Our Manager has also entered into an administrative services agreement with American Capital, pursuant to which our Manager has access to American Capital's employees, infrastructure, business relationships, management expertise and capital raising capabilities, which allow it to fulfill all of its responsibilities under the management agreement. Certain of our Manager's officers are also members of American Capital's senior management.

Table of Contents

The Management Agreement

We have entered into a management agreement with our Manager with an initial term ending May 20, 2011. The management agreement may only be terminated without cause, as defined in the management agreement, after the completion of its initial term on May 20, 2011, or the expiration of each automatic annual renewal term. We are required to provide 180-days prior notice of non-renewal of the management agreement and must pay a termination fee on the last day of the initial term or any automatic renewal term, equal to three times the average annual management fee earned by our Manager during the prior 24-month period immediately preceding the most recently completed month prior to the effective date of termination. We may only not renew the management agreement with or without cause with the consent of the majority of our independent directors. Our Manager is responsible for, among other things, performing all of our day-to-day functions, determining investment criteria in conjunction with our Board of Directors, sourcing, analyzing and executing investments, asset sales and financings and performing asset management duties.

We pay our Manager a base management fee payable monthly in arrears in an amount equal to one twelfth of 1.25% of our Equity. Our Equity is defined as our month-end stockholders' equity, adjusted to exclude the effect of any unrealized gains or losses included in either retained earnings or other comprehensive income (OCI) (a separate component of stockholders' equity), each as computed in accordance with GAAP. There is no incentive compensation payable to our Manager pursuant to the management agreement.

In addition, we also reimburse our Manager for expenses directly related to our operations incurred by our Manager, but excluding employment-related expenses of our Manager's officers and employees and any American Capital employees who provide services to us pursuant to the management agreement.

Exemption from Regulation Under the Investment Company Act

We conduct our business so as not to become regulated as an investment company under the Investment Company Act in reliance on the exemption provided by Section 3(c)(5)(C) of the Investment Company Act. Section 3(c)(5)(C), as interpreted by the staff of the SEC, requires us to invest at least 55% of our assets in mortgages and other liens on and interest in real estate, or qualifying real estate interests, and a least 80% of our assets in qualifying real estate interests plus real estate-related assets. In satisfying this 55% requirement, we may treat agency securities issued with respect to an underlying pool of mortgage loans in which we hold all of the certificates issued by the pool as qualifying real estate interests. Therefore, the agency securities that we acquire are limited by the provisions of the Investment Company Act and the rules and regulations promulgated there under. We also may be required at times to adopt less efficient methods of financing certain of our agency securities and we may be precluded from acquiring certain types of higher yielding agency securities. This exemption also prohibits us from issuing redeemable securities. If we fail to qualify for an exemption from registration as an investment company under the Investment Company Act or an exclusion from the definition of an investment company, our ability to use leverage would be substantially reduced.

Federal Income Tax Considerations

The following is a summary of the material U.S. federal income tax consequences of an investment in common stock of American Capital Agency Corp. For purposes of this section under the heading Federal Income Tax Considerations, references to American Capital Agency Corp., we, our and us mean only American Capital Agency Corp. and not its subsidiaries or other lower-tier entities, except as otherwise indicated. This summary is based upon the Internal Revenue Code, the regulations promulgated by the U.S. Treasury Department (Treasury), rulings and other administrative pronouncements issued by the IRS, and judicial decisions, all as currently in effect, and all of which are subject to differing interpretations or to change, possibly with retroactive effect. No assurance can be given that the IRS would not assert, or that a court would not sustain, a position contrary to any of the tax consequences described below. We have not sought and will not seek an advance ruling from the IRS regarding any matter discussed in this prospectus. The summary is also

Table of Contents

based upon the assumption that we will operate American Capital Agency Corp. and its subsidiaries and affiliated entities in accordance with their applicable organizational documents or partnership agreements. This summary is for general information only and is not tax advice. It does not purport to discuss all aspects of U.S. federal income taxation that may be important to a particular investor in light of its investment or tax circumstances or to investors subject to special tax rules, such as:

financial institutions;

insurance companies;

broker-dealers;

regulated investment companies;

partnerships and trusts;

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

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

persons holding American Capital Agency Corp. stock as part of a straddle, hedge, conversion transaction, synthetic security or other integrated investment;
and, except to the extent discussed below:

tax-exempt organizations; and

foreign investors.

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

The federal income tax treatment of holders of our common stock depends in some instances on determinations of fact and interpretations of complex provisions of U.S. federal income tax law for which no clear precedent or authority may be available. In addition, the tax consequences to any particular stockholder of holding our common stock will depend on the stockholder's particular tax circumstances. You are urged to consult your tax advisor regarding the federal, state, local, and foreign income and other tax consequences to you in light of your particular investment or tax circumstances of acquiring, holding, exchanging, or otherwise disposing of our common stock.

Taxation of American Capital Agency Corp.

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

Edgar Filing: American Capital Agency Corp - Form S-3/A

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

Table of Contents

Taxation of REITs in General

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

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

For tax years through 2010, most domestic stockholders that are individuals, trusts or estates are taxed on corporate dividends at a maximum rate of 15% (the same as long-term capital gains). With limited exceptions, however, dividends from us or from other entities that are taxed as REITs are generally not eligible for this rate and will continue to be taxed at rates applicable to ordinary income, which will be as high as 35% through 2010. See Taxation of Stockholders Taxation of Taxable Domestic Stockholders Distributions.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Table of Contents

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

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

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

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

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

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

Requirements for Qualification General

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

- (1) that is managed by one or more trustees or directors;
- (2) the beneficial ownership of which is evidenced by transferable shares, or by transferable certificates of beneficial interest;
- (3) that would be taxable as a domestic corporation but for its election to be subject to tax as a REIT;
- (4) that is neither a financial institution nor an insurance company subject to specific provisions of the Internal Revenue Code;
- (5) the beneficial ownership of which is held by 100 or more persons;
- (6) in which, during the last half of each taxable year, not more than 50% in value of the outstanding stock is owned, directly or indirectly, by five or fewer individuals (as defined in the Internal Revenue Code to include specified tax-exempt entities); and
- (7) which meets other tests described below, including with respect to the nature of its income and assets.

Edgar Filing: American Capital Agency Corp - Form S-3/A

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

Table of Contents

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

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

The Internal Revenue Code provides relief from violations of the REIT gross income requirements, as described below under *Income Tests*, in cases where a violation is due to reasonable cause and not to willful neglect, and other requirements are met, including the payment of a penalty tax that is based upon the magnitude of the violation. In addition, certain provisions of the Internal Revenue Code extend similar relief in the case of certain violations of the REIT asset requirements (see *Asset Tests* below) and other REIT requirements, again provided that the violation is due to reasonable cause and not willful neglect, and other conditions are met, including the payment of a penalty tax. If we fail to satisfy any of the various REIT requirements, there can be no assurance that these relief provisions would be available to enable us to maintain our qualification as a REIT, and, if such relief provisions are available, the amount of any resultant penalty tax could be substantial.

Effect of Subsidiary Entities

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

Disregarded Subsidiaries. If we own a corporate subsidiary that is a qualified REIT subsidiary, that subsidiary is generally disregarded for federal income tax purposes, and all of the subsidiary's assets, liabilities and items of income, deduction and credit are treated as our assets, liabilities and items of income, deduction and credit, including for purposes of the gross income and asset tests applicable to REITs. A qualified REIT subsidiary is any corporation, other than a TRS (as described below), that is directly or indirectly wholly-owned by a REIT. Other entities that are wholly-owned by us, including single member limited liability companies that have not elected to be taxed as corporations for federal income tax purposes, are also generally disregarded as separate entities for federal income tax purposes, including for purposes of the REIT income and asset tests. Disregarded subsidiaries, along with any partnerships in which we hold an equity interest, are sometimes referred to herein as *pass-through subsidiaries*.

In the event that a disregarded subsidiary of ours ceases to be wholly-owned—for example, if any equity interest in the subsidiary is acquired by a person other than us or another disregarded subsidiary of ours—the subsidiary's separate existence would no longer be disregarded for federal income tax purposes. Instead, the subsidiary would have multiple owners and would be treated as either a partnership or a taxable corporation. Such an event could, depending on the circumstances, adversely affect our ability to satisfy the various asset and gross income requirements applicable to REITs, including the requirement that REITs generally may not own, directly or indirectly, more than 10% of the securities of another corporation. See *Asset Tests* and *Income Tests*.

Table of Contents

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

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

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

Income Tests

In order to continue to qualify as a REIT, we must satisfy two gross income requirements on an annual basis. First, at least 75% of our gross income for each taxable year, excluding gross income from sales of inventory or dealer property in prohibited transactions and certain hedging transactions, generally must be derived from investments relating to real property or mortgages on real property, including interest income derived from mortgage loans secured by real property (including, generally, agency securities and certain types of mortgage-backed securities), rents from real property, dividends received from other REITs, and gains from the sale of real estate assets, as well as specified income from temporary investments. Second, at least 95% of our gross income in each taxable year, excluding gross income from prohibited transactions and certain hedging transactions, must be derived from some combination of income that qualifies under the 75% gross income test described above, as well as other dividends, interest, and gain from the sale or disposition of stock or securities, which need not have any relation to real property. Income and gain from hedging transactions entered into after July 30, 2008 will be excluded from both the numerator and the denominator for purposes of both the 75% and 95% gross income tests.

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

We intend to continue to invest exclusively in agency securities that are either pass-through certificates or collateralized mortgage obligations (CMOs). We expect that the agency securities will be treated either as

Table of Contents

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

We may purchase agency securities through to-be-announced forward contracts (TBAs) and may recognize income or gains from the disposition of those TBAs, through dollar roll transactions or otherwise. There is no direct authority with respect to the qualification of income or gains from dispositions of TBAs as gains from the sale of real property (including interests in real property and interests in mortgages on real property) or other qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test and we would not treat these items as such unless we receive a reasoned, written opinion (within the meaning of applicable Treasury regulations) of our counsel that such income and gains should be treated as such. Consequently, our ability to enter into dollar roll transactions and other dispositions of TBAs could be limited. Moreover, even if we were to receive the opinion of counsel described above, it is possible that the IRS could assert that such income is not qualifying income. In the event that such income were determined not to be qualifying for the 75% gross income test, we could be subject to a penalty tax or we could fail to qualify as a REIT if such income when added to any other non-qualifying income exceeded 25% of our gross income.

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

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

Fees will generally be qualifying income for purposes of both the 75% and 95% gross income tests if they are received in consideration for entering into an agreement to make a loan secured by real property and the fees are not determined by income and profits. Other fees generally will not be qualifying income for purposes of either gross income test and will not be favorably counted for purposes of either gross income test. Any fees earned by our TRS will not be included for purposes of the gross income tests. Any income or gain that we or our pass-through subsidiaries derive from instruments that hedge certain risks, such as the risk of changes in interest rates, will be excluded from gross income for purposes of the 95% gross income test, provided that specified requirements are met, including the requirement that the instrument is entered into during the ordinary course of

Table of Contents

our business, the instrument hedges risks associated with indebtedness issued by us or our pass-through subsidiary that is incurred to acquire or carry real estate assets (as described below under *Asset Tests*), and the instrument is properly identified as a hedge along with the risk that it hedges within prescribed time periods. Income and gain from such transactions will not be qualifying income for the 75% gross income test, and income and gain from all other hedging transactions will not be qualifying income for either the 95% or 75% gross income test.

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

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

Asset Tests

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

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

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

Notwithstanding the general rule, as noted above, that for purposes of the REIT income and asset tests we are treated as owning our proportionate share of the underlying assets of a subsidiary partnership, if we hold indebtedness issued by a partnership, the indebtedness will be subject to, and may cause a violation of, the asset tests unless the indebtedness is a qualifying mortgage asset or other conditions are met. Similarly, although stock of another REIT is a qualifying asset for purposes of the REIT asset tests, any non-mortgage debt that is issued by another REIT may not so qualify (such debt, however, will not be treated as securities for purposes of the 10% asset test, as explained below).

Table of Contents

Certain securities will not cause a violation of the 10% asset test described above. Such securities include instruments that constitute straight debt, which includes, among other things, securities having certain contingency features. A security does not qualify as straight debt where a REIT (or a controlled TRS of the REIT) owns other securities of the same issuer which do not qualify as straight debt, unless the value of those other securities constitute, in the aggregate, 1% or less of the total value of that issuer's outstanding securities. In addition to straight debt, the Internal Revenue Code provides that certain other securities will not violate the 10% asset test. Such securities include (1) any loan made to an individual or an estate, (2) certain rental agreements pursuant to which one or more payments are to be made in subsequent years (other than agreements between a REIT and certain persons related to the REIT under attribution rules), (3) any obligation to pay rents from real property, (4) securities issued by governmental entities that are not dependent in whole or in part on the profits of (or payments made by) a non-governmental entity, (5) any security (including debt securities) issued by another REIT, and (6) any debt instrument issued by a partnership if the partnership's income is of a nature that it would satisfy the 75% gross income test described above under Income Tests. In applying the 10% asset test, a debt security issued by a partnership is not taken into account to the extent, if any, of the REIT's proportionate interest in the equity and certain debt securities issued by that partnership.

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

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

We may, in the future, purchase agency securities through TBAs. There is no direct authority with respect to the qualification of TBAs as real estate assets or Government securities for purposes of the 75% asset test and we would not treat TBAs as such unless we receive a reasoned, written opinion (within the meaning of applicable Treasury regulations) of our counsel that TBAs should be treated as such. Consequently, our ability to purchase TBAs could be limited. Moreover, even if we were to receive the opinion of counsel described above, it is possible that the IRS could assert that TBAs are not qualifying assets. In the event that TBAs were determined not to be qualifying for the 75% asset test, we could be subject to a penalty tax or we could fail to qualify as a REIT if such assets when added to any other non-qualifying assets exceeded 25% of our gross assets.

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

Table of Contents

However, certain relief provisions are available to allow REITs to satisfy the asset requirements or to maintain REIT qualification notwithstanding certain violations of the asset and other requirements. One such provision allows a REIT which fails one or more of the asset requirements to nevertheless maintain its REIT qualification if (1) the REIT provides the IRS with a description of each asset causing the failure, (2) the failure is due to reasonable cause and not willful neglect, (3) the REIT pays a tax equal to the greater of (a) \$50,000 per failure, and (b) the product of the net income generated by the assets that caused the failure multiplied by the highest applicable corporate tax rate (currently 35%), and (4) the REIT either disposes of the assets causing the failure within six months after the last day of the quarter in which it identifies the failure, or otherwise satisfies the relevant asset tests within that time frame.

In the case of *de minimis* violations of the 10% and 5% asset tests, a REIT may maintain its qualification despite a violation of such requirements if (1) the value of the assets causing the violation does not exceed the lesser of 1% of the REIT's total assets and \$10,000,000, and (2) the REIT either disposes of the assets causing the failure within six months after the last day of the quarter in which it identifies the failure, or the relevant tests are otherwise satisfied within that time frame.

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

Annual Distribution Requirements

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

(a) the sum of

- (1) 90% of our REIT taxable income, computed without regard to our net capital gains and the deduction for dividends paid, and
- (2) 90% of our net income, if any, (after tax) from foreclosure property (as described below), minus

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

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

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

Table of Contents

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Prohibited Transactions

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

Foreclosure Property

Foreclosure property is real property and any personal property incident to such real property (1) that we acquire as the result of having bid in the property at foreclosure, or having otherwise reduced the property to

Table of Contents

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

Derivatives and Hedging Transactions

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

Failure to Qualify

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

If we fail to qualify for taxation as a REIT in any taxable year, and the relief provisions described above do not apply, we would be subject to tax, including any applicable alternative minimum tax, on our taxable income at regular corporate rates. We cannot deduct distributions to stockholders in any year in which we are not a REIT, nor would we be required to make distributions in such a year. In this situation, to the extent of current and accumulated earnings and profits, distributions to domestic stockholders that are individuals, trusts and estates will generally be taxable at capital gains rates (through 2010). In addition, subject to the limitations of the Internal Revenue Code, corporate distributees may be eligible for the dividends received deduction. Unless we are entitled to relief under specific statutory provisions, we would also be disqualified from re-electing to be taxed as a REIT for the four taxable years following the year during which we lost qualification. It is not possible to state whether, in all circumstances, we would be entitled to this statutory relief.

Table of Contents

Taxation of Stockholders

Taxation of Taxable Domestic Stockholders

Distributions. So long as we qualify as a REIT, the distributions that we make to our taxable domestic stockholders out of current or accumulated earnings and profits that we do not designate as capital gain dividends will generally be taken into account by stockholders as ordinary income and will not be eligible for the dividends received deduction for corporations. With limited exceptions, our dividends are not eligible for taxation at the preferential income tax rates (i.e., the 15% maximum federal rate through 2010) for qualified dividends received by domestic stockholders that are individuals, trusts and estates from taxable C corporations. Such stockholders, however, are taxed at the preferential rates on dividends designated by and received from REITs to the extent that the dividends are attributable to:

income retained by the REIT in the prior taxable year on which the REIT was subject to corporate level income tax (less the amount of tax);

dividends received by the REIT from TRSs or other taxable C corporations; or

income in the prior taxable year from the sales of built-in gain property acquired by the REIT from C corporations in carryover basis transactions (less the amount of corporate tax on such income).

Distributions that we designate as capital gain dividends will generally be taxed to our stockholders as long-term capital gains, to the extent that such distributions do not exceed our actual net capital gain for the taxable year, without regard to the period for which the stockholder that receives such distribution has held its stock. We may elect to retain and pay taxes on some or all of our net long-term capital gains, in which case provisions of the Internal Revenue Code will treat our stockholders as having received, solely for tax purposes, our undistributed capital gains, and the stockholders will receive a corresponding credit for taxes that we paid on such undistributed capital gains. See *Taxation of American Capital Agency Corp. Annual Distribution Requirements*. Corporate stockholders may be required to treat up to 20% of some capital gain dividends as ordinary income. Long-term capital gains are generally taxable at maximum federal rates of 15% (through 2010) in the case of stockholders that are individuals, trusts and estates, and 35% in the case of stockholders that are corporations. Capital gains attributable to the sale of depreciable real property held for more than 12 months are subject to a 25% maximum federal income tax rate for taxpayers who are taxed as individuals, to the extent of previously claimed depreciation deductions.

Distributions in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits will generally represent a return of capital and will not be taxable to a stockholder to the extent that the amount of such distributions does not exceed the adjusted basis of the stockholder's shares in respect of which the distributions were made. Rather, the distribution will reduce the adjusted basis of the stockholder's shares. To the extent that such distributions exceed the adjusted basis of a stockholder's shares, the stockholder generally must include such distributions in income as long-term capital gain, or short-term capital gain if the shares have been held for one year or less. In addition, any dividend that we declare in October, November or December of any year and that is payable to a stockholder of record on a specified date in any such month will be treated as both paid by us and received by the stockholder on December 31 of such year, provided that we actually pay the dividend before the end of January of the following calendar year.

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

Dispositions of American Capital Agency Corp. Stock. In general, capital gains recognized by individuals, trusts and estates upon the sale or disposition of our stock will be subject to a maximum federal income tax rate

Table of Contents

of 15% (through 2010) if the stock is held for more than one year, and will be taxed at ordinary income rates (of up to 35% through 2010) if the stock is held for one year or less. Gains recognized by stockholders that are corporations are subject to federal income tax at a maximum rate of 35%, whether or not such gains are classified as long-term capital gains. Capital losses recognized by a stockholder upon the disposition of our stock that was held for more than one year at the time of disposition will be considered long-term capital losses, and are generally available only to offset capital gain income of the stockholder but not ordinary income (except in the case of individuals, who may offset up to \$3,000 of ordinary income each year). In addition, any loss upon a sale or exchange of shares of our stock by a stockholder who has held the shares for six months or less, after applying holding period rules, will be treated as a long-term capital loss to the extent of distributions that we make that are required to be treated by the stockholder as long-term capital gain.

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

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

Taxation of Foreign Stockholders

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

a citizen or resident of the United States;

a corporation (or entity treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes) created or organized in the United States or under the laws of the United States, or of any state thereof, or the District of Columbia;

an estate, the income of which is includable in gross income for U.S. federal income tax purposes regardless of its source; or

a trust if a United States court is able to exercise primary supervision over the administration of such trust and one or more United States fiduciaries have the authority to control all substantial decisions of the trust.

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

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

Table of Contents

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

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

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

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

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

Table of Contents

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

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

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

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

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

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

Taxation of Tax-Exempt Stockholders

Tax-exempt entities, including qualified employee pension and profit sharing trusts and individual retirement accounts, generally are exempt from federal income taxation. However, they may be subject to taxation on their unrelated business taxable income (UBTI). While some investments in real estate may generate UBTI, the IRS has ruled that dividend distributions from a REIT to a tax-exempt entity do not constitute

Table of Contents

UBTI. Based on that ruling, and provided that (1) a tax-exempt stockholder has not held our stock as debt financed property within the meaning of the Internal Revenue Code (i.e., where the acquisition or holding of the property is financed through a borrowing by the tax-exempt stockholder), and (2) our stock is not otherwise used in an unrelated trade or business, distributions that we make and income from the sale of our stock generally should not give rise to UBTI to a tax-exempt stockholder.

Tax-exempt stockholders that are social clubs, voluntary employee benefit associations, supplemental unemployment benefit trusts, and qualified group legal services plans exempt from federal income taxation under sections 501(c)(7), (c)(9), (c)(17) and (c)(20) of the Internal Revenue Code are subject to different UBTI rules, which generally require such stockholders to characterize distributions that we make as UBTI.

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

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

Other Tax Considerations

Legislative or Other Actions Affecting REITs

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

State, Local and Foreign Taxes

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

Corporate Information

Our executive offices are located at Two Bethesda Metro Center, 14th Floor, Bethesda, MD 20814 and our telephone number is (301) 968-9300.

We make available all of our Annual Reports on Form 10-K, quarterly reports on Form 10-Q, current reports on Form 8-K and amendments to such reports as well as our Code of Ethics and Conduct free of charge

Table of Contents

on our internet website at *www.AGNC.com* as soon as reasonably practical after such material is electronically filed with or furnished to the SEC. These reports are also available on the Securities and Exchange Commission's (SEC) internet website at *www.sec.gov*.

Competition

Our success depends, in large part, on our ability to acquire assets at favorable spreads over our borrowing costs. In acquiring agency securities, we compete with other mortgage REITs, mortgage finance and specialty finance companies, savings and loan associations, banks, mortgage banks, insurance companies, mutual funds, institutional investors, investment banking firms, other lenders, governmental bodies and other entities. In addition, there are numerous other mortgage REITs with similar asset acquisition objectives and others may be organized in the future. The effect of the existence of additional mortgage REITs may increase competition for the available supply of mortgage assets suitable for purchase. Additionally, our investment strategy is dependent on the amount of financing available to us in the repurchase agreement market. Our investment strategy will be adversely impacted if we are not able to secure financing on favorable terms, if at all.

Employees

We have no employees. We are managed by our Manager pursuant to the management agreement between our Manager and us.

RISK FACTORS

Investing in our Common Stock involves a high degree of risk. You should carefully consider the risks described under "Risk Factors" in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and any subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q (which descriptions are incorporated by reference herein), as well as the other information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus before making a decision to invest in our Common Stock. Please also see the section entitled "Where You Can Find More Information" below.

USE OF PROCEEDS

We cannot determine precisely the number of shares of common stock that ultimately may be sold pursuant to the Plan, the extent to which shares will be purchased directly from us rather than in the open market, or the prices at which shares will be sold. The net proceeds from any purchases of common stock directly from us under the Plan would provide us with funds that we would expect to use for general corporate purposes. We will receive no proceeds from any shares of our common stock purchased in open market transactions.

Table of Contents

**AMENDED AND RESTATED DIVIDEND REINVESTMENT AND
DIRECT STOCK PURCHASE PLAN**

Details of the Plan are set forth below in question and answer format. Further questions and correspondence should be directed to either American Capital Agency Corp. (Attention: Investor Relations) or the plan administrator at the following address:

Computershare Trust Company, N.A.
P.O. Box 43078
Providence, RI 02940-3078
(800) 733-5001 (U.S and Canada)
(781) 575-4238 (Outside U.S. and Canada)
www.computershare.com/investor

Purpose

1. What is the purpose of the Plan?

The purpose of the dividend reinvestment component of the Plan is to provide our stockholders with a simple and convenient method of investing cash dividends and distributions in additional shares of our common stock. The optional cash purchase component of the Plan permits current stockholders and new investors to purchase shares of our common stock on a monthly basis in amounts, subject to certain exceptions, ranging from \$50 to \$10,000 or, with our prior approval, in excess of \$10,000 (see Question 15). Participants in the Plan may have cash dividends and distributions automatically reinvested without charges for recordkeeping, and may take advantage of the custodial and reporting services provided by Computershare Trust Company, N.A. (the Plan Administrator or Computershare), at no additional cost. The Plan is intended to benefit long-term investors who want to increase their investment in our common stock over time.

2. What are the advantages of participating in the Plan?

The Plan provides participants with the opportunity to purchase additional shares of common stock, if desired, by automatically reinvesting all or a portion of cash dividends on our common stock in the Plan.

The Plan also provides participants with the opportunity to purchase additional shares of common stock directly from us, if desired, by investing additional cash on a monthly basis from \$50 to \$10,000, or, with our prior approval, in excess of \$10,000, with or without enrolling in dividend reinvestment.

There are no transaction or processing fees, expenses or service charges on shares of stock purchased under the Plan with reinvested dividends. Participants will, however, pay a transaction and processing fee on purchases made with optional cash payments. See Question 4.

Funds invested in the Plan are fully invested through the purchase of fractional shares, as well as whole shares, and proportionate cash dividends on fractional shares are used to purchase additional shares.

Edgar Filing: American Capital Agency Corp - Form S-3/A

There is a share safekeeping service that allows participants to deposit common stock certificates with the Plan Administrator and have their share ownership maintained on the Plan Administrator's records as part of the Plan account. There is no charge for this service.

Participants will receive statements containing year-to-date information on all Plan transactions in their account within a reasonable time after a transaction occurs, designed to simplify their record keeping.

Table of Contents

3. What are the disadvantages of participating in the Plan?

For Federal income tax purposes, participants will be treated as having received dividend income on the dividend payment date; such dividend will generally give rise to a tax liability even though no cash was actually paid. See the section entitled "Federal Income Tax Considerations" below.

No interest will be paid by us or the Plan Administrator on dividends held pending reinvestment or on optional cash purchase payments held pending investment. See Question 16.

Participants bear the risk of loss and the benefits of gain from market price changes for all of their shares of common stock. NEITHER WE NOR THE PLAN ADMINISTRATOR CAN GUARANTEE THAT SHARES OF COMMON STOCK PURCHASED UNDER THE PLAN WILL, AT ANY PARTICULAR TIME, BE WORTH MORE OR LESS THAN THEIR PURCHASE PRICE.

The price of our shares of common stock may fluctuate in the interim between your investment decision and the time of the actual purchase and may decline between the time you decide to sell and the time at which your shares of common stock are actually sold.

We may, in our sole discretion and without prior notice to participants, change our determination as to whether shares of our common stock will be purchased by the Plan Administrator directly from us or through market purchases. This determination will be made by us based upon general market conditions, the relationship between purchase price and book value per share, regulatory requirements and other factors.

4. Is there a cost to participate in the Plan?

We will pay all administrative costs associated with the reinvestment of dividends under the Plan. There are no transaction or processing fees, expenses or service charges under the Plan in connection with such purchases; however, if you enroll in the plan through a broker, bank or other nominee, they may charge you a fee for participating on your behalf. If the Plan purchases shares with reinvested dividends in market transactions instead of directly from us, we will pay any brokerage fees or commissions on such purchases.

For the optional cash purchase part of the Plan, the Plan Administrator will charge participants a processing fee of \$0.05 per share in connection with any optional cash payments made under the Plan. The processing fee includes any brokerage commissions the Plan Administrator is required to pay. In addition, the Plan Administrator will charge participants a \$5 transaction fee for optional cash payments made by check or one-time online ACH, and a \$2.50 transaction fee for each optional cash payment made by recurring debit from a U.S. bank account.

Administration

5. What does the Plan Administrator do?

The Plan Administrator administers the Plan for participants, keeps records, sends statement of accounts to participants, and performs other duties relating to the Plan, including the safekeeping of the shares purchased for each participant. The Plan Administrator also acts as the dividend disbursing agent, transfer agent and registrar for our common stock.

Participation and Enrollment

6. Who is eligible to participate?

Edgar Filing: American Capital Agency Corp - Form S-3/A

You may participate in the Plan if: (a) you are a registered holder; that is, your shares are registered in your name on our stock transfer books, (b) you are a beneficial owner; that is, your shares are registered in a name other than your name (for example, in the name of a broker, bank or other nominee) (see Question 8), or (c) you are a new investor.

Table of Contents

If you live outside the United States, you should first determine if there are any laws or governmental regulations that would prohibit your participation in the Plan, or affect the terms of the Plan. We have the right to terminate participation of any stockholder if we deem it advisable under any foreign laws or regulations. Tax consequences of Plan participation may vary under foreign laws or regulations, and you should determine the tax treatment of Plan features before you decide to invest through the Plan.

The Plan is intended for the benefit of our investors and not for persons or entities who engage in transactions that cause or are designed to cause aberrations in the price or trading volume of our common stock. Notwithstanding anything in the Plan to the contrary, we reserve the right to exclude from participation in the Plan at any time any persons or entities, as determined in our sole discretion.

7. How do I enroll in the Plan?

The Plan is an opt-in plan. If you are a registered holder of our common stock, you may join the Plan by signing an enrollment form and returning it to the Plan Administrator or by going online to the Plan Administrator's website, www.computershare.com/investor. If you are enrolling for dividend reinvestment, the enrollment form must be received by the Plan Administrator prior to the dividend record date in order to take effect as of the related dividend payment. A dividend record date is, with respect to any dividend or distribution declared by our Board of Directors, the date set by our Board of Directors for determining stockholders of record entitled to receive the dividend or distribution.

If you are a new investor, that is, you do not currently own shares of our common stock, you may join the Plan in either of the following ways:

- (a) Going to the Plan Administrator's website at www.computershare.com/investor, and following the instructions provided for opening a Plan account online. You will be asked to complete an Online Initial Enrollment Form and to submit an initial optional cash purchase between \$250 and \$10,000. To make an initial optional cash purchase you may authorize a one-time online bank debit from your U.S. bank account or you may authorize a minimum of five (5) consecutive monthly automatic deductions of at least \$50 each from your U.S. bank account.
- (b) Completing and signing an Initial Enrollment Form and submitting an initial investment in the amount between \$250 and \$10,000. To make an initial optional cash purchase in this manner, you may enclose a check, payable in U.S. funds and drawn against a U.S. bank, to Computershare American Capital Agency Corp. or you may complete the direct debit authorization form enclosed with the Initial Enrollment Form and authorize a minimum of five consecutive monthly automatic deductions of at least \$50 each from your U.S. bank account by following the instructions provided.

If you are enrolling by making an optional cash purchase of less than \$10,000, the enrollment form and investment funds must be received by the Plan Administrator at least two (2) business days before the date such funds are to be invested for a particular month (see Question 12). Enrollment forms may be obtained at any time by telephonic, Internet or written request to the Plan Administrator.

8. How do I enroll in the Plan if I am a beneficial owner?

If you are a beneficial owner, that is your shares are held on the books of the Plan Administrator in the name of a broker, bank or other nominee (a Nominee), your distributions will be reinvested automatically by the Nominee in additional shares under the Plan only if your Nominee provides such a service and you elect to participate in the Plan. Many Nominees do not provide such a service and routinely request dividends and distributions to be paid in cash on all shares registered in their names. Therefore, if your shares are held for your account by a Nominee and you would like to participate in the Plan, then, in addition to enrolling in the Plan as provided in Question 7, you must either make appropriate arrangements for your Nominee to participate on your behalf, or you must become a stockholder of record by having a part or all of your shares transferred to your own name. If your shares are held in the name of a Nominee, you should contact the Nominee for details.

Table of Contents

9. How does reinvestment of dividends under Plan work?

As a participant, when our Board of Directors declares a dividend or distribution, on the distribution date for such dividend or distribution you will have credited to your Plan account the number of whole and fractional shares (computed to six decimal places) that could be obtained, at the price determined in accordance with the answer to Question 18, with the cash, net of any applicable withholding taxes, that would have been paid to you if you were not a participant. Such shares will be acquired by the Plan Administrator for participants either (i) through receipt of newly issued or treasury shares of common stock from us or (ii) by purchase of outstanding shares of common stock on the open market (see Question 17).

10. What if a stockholder would rather receive cash instead of reinvesting their dividends?

If you would rather receive a cash dividend, you should not enroll in the Plan or, if you are enrolled in the Plan, you must notify the Plan Administrator through the Internet, by telephone or in writing that you would like to terminate your participation in the Plan. You may terminate your participation in the Plan at any time. The procedure for terminating participation in the Plan is explained in the answer to Question 29.

11. What if a stockholder wishes to receive cash as a dividend on only some of his or her shares?

If participants wish to receive dividends and distributions in cash on some of their shares, and have the remaining dividends and distributions reinvested, the Plan Administrator must be notified to that effect. This may be done by completing and submitting an enrollment form and choosing the *Partial Dividends Paid In Cash* option, by calling the Plan Administrator or by accessing your Plan account at the Plan Administrator's website, www.computershare.com/investor. A partial participant will receive dividends and distributions in cash only with respect to the number of whole shares that have been specified. On any other shares registered in the participant's name or other shares credited to their Plan account on the books of the Plan Administrator, the corresponding dividends and distributions will be reinvested.

12. How can I make an optional cash payment?

Participants may make an optional cash payment for the purchase of additional shares of common stock at any time, subject to the limitations listed in the response to Question 14 below.

Participants may do so in one of three ways:

(a) **By Check.** Participants can make additional cash investments by sending a check (\$50-\$10,000), payable to Computershare American Capital Agency Corp., in U.S. dollars drawn on a U.S. bank. Cash, traveler's checks, money orders or third party checks are not acceptable. Optional cash investments may be mailed to the Plan Administrator with the tear-off portion of the account statement or via detailed written instructions and enclosed in the return envelope with each statement, or mailed to the address specified on the statement. Checks must be received by the Plan Administrator at least two (2) business days before an investment date in order to be invested on that date. When investing by check, participants do not need to invest the same amount each time and are under no obligation to make investments in any month or at any particular time.

(b) **By One-Time Online Bank Debit.** A registered holder of our common stock can make an investment online (\$50-\$10,000) by logging on to www.computershare.com/investor, selecting Investor Centre, and following the online instructions. Registered holders should refer to the online confirmation for their bank account debit date and investment date. When investing by one-time online bank debit, registered holders do not need to invest the same amount each time and are under no obligation to make investments in any month or at any particular time.

(c) **By Recurring Automatic Debits from a U.S. Bank Account.** A registered holder may also authorize the Plan Administrator, on a direct debit authorization form or the Plan Administrator's website, www.computershare.com/investor, to make recurring monthly purchases of a specified dollar amount (\$50-\$10,000) paid for by automatic withdrawal from the registered holder's U.S. bank account. Funds will

Table of Contents

be withdrawn from the bank account, via electronic funds transfer, on the 20th day of each month (or the next business day if the 20th day is not a business day). Requests will be processed and will become effective as promptly as practicable; however, registered holders should allow four to six weeks for the first investment to be initiated. Automatic deductions will continue at the level set until a registered holder changes his or her instructions by notifying the Plan Administrator. To terminate monthly purchases by automatic withdrawal, written, signed instructions must be sent to the Plan Administrator. Alternatively, you can terminate monthly deductions through www.computershare.com/investor. It is the responsibility of the registered holder to notify the Plan Administrator if any direct debit information changes.

13. Are funds held in my Plan account insured?

No. Funds held in your Plan account pending investment or return are not treated as a bank deposit or account and are not insured by the FDIC or any other governmental agency or instrumentality.

14. What are the limitations on the amount of cash payments?

Participants may make optional cash payments of \$50 to \$10,000 or, with our prior approval, in excess of \$10,000 per month.

If any check, draft or electronic funds transfer that is tendered or ordered by a participant as payment to the Plan Administrator to purchase common stock is dishonored, refused or returned, such participant agrees that the purchased shares when credited to the participant's account may be sold, on the Plan Administrator's order, without the participant's consent or approval, to satisfy the amount owing on the purchase. The amount owing will include the purchase price paid, any purchase and sale transaction fees, any brokerage commissions and the Plan Administrator's returned check or failed electronic payment fee of \$25.00. If the sale proceeds of purchased shares are insufficient to satisfy the amount owing, such participant authorizes the Plan Administrator to sell additional shares then credited to the participant's account as necessary to cover the amount owing, without the participant's further consent or authorization. The Plan Administrator may sell shares to cover an amount owing as a result of the participant's order in any manner consistent with applicable securities laws. Any sale for that purpose on a national securities market will be considered to be commercially reasonable. A participant grants the Plan Administrator a security interest in all shares credited to such participant's account, including securities subsequently acquired and held or tendered for deposit, for purposes of securing any amount owing as described in this paragraph.

15. How do I make monthly optional cash purchases in excess of \$10,000?

Request for Waiver. Cash purchases of more than \$10,000 per month may be made only pursuant to our acceptance of a request to make such a purchase. If participants wish to make an optional cash purchase in excess of \$10,000 (or other maximum amount established by us) for any month, participants must obtain our prior written approval with a form (Request for Waiver) and a copy of such written approval must accompany any such optional cash purchase. We have sole discretion to grant any approval for optional cash purchases in excess of the allowable maximum amount. Unless the participant has complied with these procedures, any amount submitted for investment over \$10,000 will be returned without interest.

We expect to approve requests for optional cash purchases in excess of \$10,000 from financial intermediaries, including brokers and dealers, and other participants from time to time. Participants may ascertain whether we are accepting Requests for Waivers in any given month, and certain other important information, by contacting us on the first business day of each month at (301) 968-9302 or such other number as we may establish from time to time. In addition, participants may ascertain whether we are accepting requests in the first month that the Plan is activated by calling the number above on or about the date of this prospectus. When participants call this number we will inform such participants (by a prerecorded message) of one of the three following pieces of information:

that we will not be accepting requests for waivers that month

Table of Contents

that we will be accepting requests for waivers that month. In that case, we will provide relevant information such as the date on which a Pricing Period (defined below) will begin; the number of days in the Pricing Period; the Waiver Discount (as defined below), if applicable; the Threshold Price (as defined below), if applicable; and whether or not the Pricing Period Extension Feature (as defined below) will be activated; or

that we have not yet determined whether we will be accepting waivers. If this is the case, we will inform participants of a date later in the month when they can call to ascertain whether we will be accepting Requests for Waivers.

Participants may make a Request for Waiver by contacting Investor Relations at IR@agnc.com or by downloading the Request for Waiver form on our website, www.AGNC.com. Completed Request for Waiver forms should be submitted to us via facsimile at (301) 968-9301 no later than three business days prior to the applicable Pricing Period (defined below). We will notify the participant as to whether the Request for Waiver has been granted or denied, either in whole or in part, within one business day of the receipt of the request. If the Request for Waiver is granted in part, we will advise the participant of the maximum amount that will be accepted in connection with the purchase. If the request is approved, the Plan Administrator must receive the funds for the purchase prior to or on the applicable date specified by the Plan Administrator for the relevant Pricing Period (which typically will be one business day prior to the applicable Pricing Period). If a response is not received in connection with the Request for Waiver, the participant should assume that the request has been denied. We may alter, amend, supplement or waive, in our sole discretion, the time periods and/or other parameters relating to optional cash purchases in excess of \$10,000 made by one or more participants in the Plan or new investors, at any time and from time to time, prior to the granting of any Request for Waiver. For more information regarding a particular Pricing Period (including applicable Pricing Period start dates), please contact us at (301) 968-9302.

Purchase Price of Shares for Optional Cash Purchases in Excess of \$10,000. Shares purchased pursuant to an approved Request for Waiver will be purchased directly from us as described herein, including the establishment of a Threshold Price as more fully described below. The Purchase Price may be reduced by the Waiver Discount that we have provided for optional cash purchases in excess of \$10,000 on each Investment Date. If we grant the request to purchase shares pursuant to a Request for Waiver, there will be a Pricing Period, which will generally consist of one to 12 separate days during which our common stock is quoted on The NASDAQ Global Select Market during the applicable Pricing Period. Each of these separate days will be an Investment Date, and an equal proportion of your optional cash purchase will be invested on each trading day during such Pricing Period, subject to the qualifications listed below. The purchase price for shares acquired on a particular Investment Date will be equal to 100% (subject to change as provided below) of the volume weighted average price, rounded to four decimal places, of our common stock as quoted on The NASDAQ Global Select Market only, obtained from Bloomberg, LP for the trading hours from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Eastern time, for that Investment Date. The Plan Administrator will apply all optional cash purchases made pursuant to a Request for Waiver for which good funds are received on or before the first business day before the Pricing Period to the purchase of shares of our common stock on each Investment Date of the applicable Pricing Period.

Threshold Price. We may establish for a Pricing Period a minimum price (or the Threshold Price) applicable to optional cash purchases made pursuant to a Request for Waiver. At least three business days prior to the first day of the applicable Pricing Period, we will determine whether to establish a Threshold Price, and if the Threshold Price is established, its amount, and will so notify the Plan Administrator. This determination will be made by us in our discretion after a review of current market conditions, the level of participation in the Plan, and current and projected capital needs. If established for any Pricing Period, the Threshold Price will be stated as a dollar amount that the volume weighted average price, rounded to four decimal places, of our common stock as quoted on The NASDAQ Global Select Market, obtained from Bloomberg, LP for the trading hours from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Eastern time, for each trading day of such Pricing Period (not adjusted for discounts, if any) must equal or exceed. Except as provided below, we will exclude from the

Table of Contents

Pricing Period any trading day that the unsolicited volume weighted average price is less than the Threshold Price. We also will exclude from the Pricing Period and from the determination of the purchase price any day in which no shares of common stock are quoted on The NASDAQ Global Select Market. For example, if the Threshold Price is not met for two of the trading days in a 10 day Pricing Period, then we will return 20% of the funds you submitted in connection with your Request for Waiver unless we have activated the pricing period extension feature for the Pricing Period which is described below.

Pricing Period Extension Feature. We may elect to activate for any particular Pricing Period the pricing period extension feature which will provide that the initial Pricing Period will be extended by the number of days that the Threshold Price is not satisfied, or on which no shares of our common stock are quoted on The NASDAQ Global Select Market, subject to a maximum of five trading days. If we elect to activate the pricing period extension feature and the Threshold Price is satisfied for any additional day that has been added to the initial Pricing Period, that day will be included as one of the trading days for the Pricing Period in lieu of the day on which the Threshold Price was not met or trades of our common stock were not reported. For example, if the determined Pricing Period is 10 days, and the Threshold Price is not satisfied for three out of those 10 days in the initial Pricing Period, and we had previously announced at the time of the Request for Waiver acceptance that the pricing period extension feature was activated, then the Pricing Period will automatically be extended, and if the Threshold Price is satisfied on the next three trading days (or a subset thereof), then those three days (or a subset thereof) will become Investment Days in lieu of the three days on which the Threshold Price was not met. As a result, because there were 10 trading days during the initial and extended Pricing Period on which the Threshold Price was satisfied, all of the optional cash purchase will be invested.

Return of Unsubscribed Funds. We will return a portion of each optional cash purchase in excess of \$10,000 for each trading day of a Pricing Period or extended Pricing Period, if applicable, for which the Threshold Price is not met or for each day in which no shares of common stock are quoted on The NASDAQ Global Select Market (unsubscribed funds). Any unsubscribed funds will be returned within five business days after the last day of the Pricing Period, or if applicable, the extended Pricing Period, without interest. The amount returned will be based on the number of days during which the Threshold Price was not met with compared to the number of days in the Pricing Period or extended Pricing Period. For example, the returned amount in a 10 day Pricing Period will equal one-tenth (1/10) of the total amount of such optional cash purchase (not just the amount exceeding \$10,000) for each trading day that the Threshold Price is not met or for each trading day in which sales are not reported. The establishment of the Threshold Price and the possible return of a portion of the investment applies only to optional cash purchases in excess of \$10,000. Setting a Threshold Price for a Pricing Period will not affect the setting of a Threshold Price for any other Pricing Period. We may waive our right to set a Threshold Price for any particular Pricing Period. Neither we nor the Plan Administrator is required to give you notice of the Threshold Price for any Pricing Period.

Waiver Discount. Each month, at least three business days prior to the first day of the applicable Pricing Period, at the same time the Threshold Price is determined, we may establish a discount from the market price applicable to optional cash purchases made pursuant to a Request for Waiver. This discount (or the Waiver Discount) may be between 0% and 5% of the purchase price, and may vary each month and for each Pricing Period. The Waiver Discount will be established at our sole discretion after a review of current market conditions, the level of participation in the Plan, the attractiveness of obtaining such additional funds through the sale of common stock as compared to other sources of funds and current and projected capital needs. You may obtain the Waiver Discount applicable to the next month by contacting us via email at IR@agnc.com. Setting a Waiver Discount for a particular month shall not affect the setting of a Waiver Discount for any subsequent month. The Waiver Discounts will apply only to optional cash purchases of more than \$10,000 (or other applicable maximum monthly amount). The Waiver Discounts will apply to the entire optional cash purchase and not just the portion of the optional cash purchase that exceeds \$10,000.

16. Will I earn interest on funds in my Plan account prior to investment or return to me?

No. Interest will not be paid on funds deposited by you in your Plan account pending investment or return to you.

Table of Contents

Purchase of Shares under the Plan

17. What is the source of shares purchased under the Plan?

All dividends reinvested through the Plan and all optional cash purchases will be used to purchase, in our sole discretion, either newly issued or treasury shares directly from us or shares on the open market or a combination thereof. Open market purchases may be made on any securities exchange where the shares of our common stock are traded, in the over-the-counter market or in privately negotiated transactions with third persons, and may be on such terms as to price, delivery and otherwise as we may determine.

18. At what price will shares be purchased under the Plan?

The purchase price of shares purchased directly from us will be the volume weighted average price, rounded to four decimal places, of our common stock as quoted on The NASDAQ Global Select Market on the date the shares are purchased. The purchase price of shares purchased in the open market will be the weighted average price per share of all shares purchased for a particular investment. See Question 15 for the purchase price for optional cash purchases in excess of \$10,000 per month.

19. When will shares of our common stock be purchased under the Plan?

Dividend Reinvestments. In the months in which dividends are paid, dividends will be invested beginning on the dividend or distribution payment date. If the shares of our common stock are to be newly issued or treasury shares, such shares will be issued or delivered on the dividend or distribution payment date. If our shares of common stock are to be purchased by the Plan Administrator in the open market, the Plan Administrator will make every effort to invest any dividends it receives promptly beginning on each dividend or distribution payment date, and in no event later than thirty days from such date, except where necessary under any applicable federal securities laws.

Initial and Optional Cash Purchases up to \$10,000. For common stock acquired directly from us, the purchase date will generally be on the 25th calendar day of each month, or the next trading day if the 25th day is not a trading day. For common stock acquired in market transactions, purchases will begin on the 25th calendar day of each month, or the next trading day if the 25th day is not a trading day, and will be completed no later than thirty-five (35) days following such date, except where reinvestment of such funds at a later date is necessary or advisable under applicable securities laws. The Plan Administrator will commingle all funds received from participants. Once a participant has placed an order, he or she may not request a cash refund or otherwise change the order.

No interest will be paid on funds pending investment held by the Plan Administrator.

Reports to Participants

20. What accounts are maintained for participants and what reports on these accounts do participants receive?

The Plan Administrator will maintain a separate Plan account for each participant. All shares issued to participants under the Plan will be credited to their Plan account. The Plan Administrator will mail to each participant a statement confirming the issuance of shares within fifteen days after the allocation of shares is made. The statement will show the amount of the dividend or distribution, the price at which shares were credited, the number of full and fractional shares credited, the number of shares previously credited and the cumulative total of shares credited. For market order sales the time of sale will be provided. In addition, participants will receive copies of our annual and quarterly reports to stockholders, proxy statements and dividend income information for tax purposes. Participants may also view year-to-date transaction activity in their Plan account under the Plan for the current year, as well as activity in prior years, by accessing their Plan account at www.computershare.com/investor.

Table of Contents

Voting of Shares

21. How will a participant's shares be voted at meetings of stockholders?

Participants will receive a proxy card covering the total number of shares held, including shares credited to their Plan account. If a proxy card is returned properly signed, but without indicating instructions as to the manner in which shares are to be voted with respect to any item thereon, the corresponding shares will be voted in accordance with the recommendation of our board of directors. If the proxy card is not returned, or it is unexecuted or improperly executed, the corresponding shares will not be voted unless the participant or their duly appointed representative votes in person at the meeting.

Certificates for Shares/Safekeeping

22. Will certificates be issued for shares issued under the Plan?

No. Certificates for shares issued under the Plan will not be furnished until the Plan account is terminated or unless the participant requests certificates through the Internet, by telephone or in writing for a specified number of shares credited to their Plan account. All written requests for certificates should be directed to the Plan Administrator, allowing two weeks for processing. The issuance of certificates for shares credited to a Plan account will not terminate participation in the Plan. No certificate for a fractional share will be issued. If the participant terminates participation in the Plan (see Question 29), the Plan Administrator will sell for the account any fractional share and send a check for the proceeds, valued at the then current market price for our common stock, less a service charge of \$15, any applicable processing fees and any other costs of sale.

23. In whose name will certificates be registered when issued?

The Plan account will be maintained in the name in which the share certificates were registered at the time you became a participant. Certificates for whole shares issued at your request from your Plan account will be similarly registered.

24. Can stock certificates be deposited into a stockholder's Plan account for safekeeping?

Yes. A participant can deposit certificate(s) for shares of our common stock into their Plan account. To deposit shares, send the certificate(s) to the Plan Administrator, at the address provided on page 8 of this prospectus, by registered or certified mail, with return receipt requested, or some other form of traceable mail, and properly insured. Do not sign the certificate(s) or complete the assignment section. When submitting certificate(s) for deposit into the Plan account, be sure to include a written request to have the certificate(s) deposited. Shares that are deposited will be credited in book-entry form to the Plan account. The advantages of holding shares in book-entry form include protection against certificate loss, theft, and damage.

25. How do I sell or transfer shares in my account?

Participants may sell or transfer shares in their account by contacting the Plan Administrator. Shares may be sold through a market order or a batch order, depending on how the sale request is submitted.

Market Order: A market order is a request to sell shares promptly at the current market price. Market order sales are only available at www.computershare.com/investor through Investor Centre or by calling the Plan Administrator directly at 800-733-5001 (within the United States and Canada) or 781-575-4238 (outside the United States and Canada). Market order sale requests received at www.computershare.com/investor through Investor Centre or by telephone will be placed promptly upon receipt during market hours (normally 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Any orders received after 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time will be placed promptly on the next day the market is open. The price shall be the market price of the sale obtained by the Plan Administrator's broker, less a service charge of \$25 and applicable processing fees, currently \$0.12 per share.

Table of Contents

Batch Order: A batch order is an accumulation of all sales requests for a security submitted together as a collective request. Batch orders are submitted on each market day, assuming there are sale requests to be processed. Sale instructions for batch orders received by the Plan Administrator will be processed no later than five business days after the date on which the order is received (except where deferral is required under applicable federal or state laws or regulations), assuming the applicable market is open for trading and sufficient market liquidity exists. Batch order sales are available at www.computershare.com/investor through Investor Centre, by calling Computershare directly at 800-733-5001 (within the United States and Canada) or 781-575-4238 (outside the United States and Canada) or in writing. All sales requests received in writing will be submitted as batch order sales. The Plan Administrator will cause a Participant's shares to be sold on the open market within five business days of receipt of a request. To maximize cost savings for batch order sale requests, the Plan Administrator will seek to sell shares in round lot transactions. For this purpose the Plan Administrator may combine each selling participant's shares with those of other selling participants. In every case of a batch order sale, the price to each selling program participant shall be the weighted average sale price obtained by the Plan Administrator's broker for each aggregate order placed by the Plan Administrator and executed by the broker, less a service charge of \$15 and applicable processing fees, currently \$0.12 per share. Proceeds are normally paid by check, which are distributed within 24 hours after a Participant's sale transaction has settled.

The Plan Administrator may, for various reasons, require a transaction request to be submitted in writing. Participants should contact the Plan Administrator to determine if their particular request, including any sales request, must be submitted in writing. The Plan Administrator reserves the right to decline to process a sale if it determines, in its sole discretion, that supporting legal documentation is required. In addition, no one will have any authority or power to direct the time or price at which shares for the Plan are sold and no one, other than the Plan Administrator, will select the broker(s) or dealer(s) through or from whom sales are to be made.

Participants should be aware that the price of the Company's Common Stock may rise or fall during the period between a request for sale, its receipt by the Plan Administrator and the ultimate sale on the open market. Instructions sent to the Plan Administrator to sell shares are binding and may not be rescinded. If a participant prefers to have complete control as to the exact timing and sales prices, participants can request to transfer the shares to a broker.

Dividends and Stock Splits

26. What happens if we issue a stock dividend or declare a stock split?

Any stock dividends or split shares we distribute on shares of our common stock with respect to both certificated and book-entry (whole and fractional) shares will be credited automatically to the participant's Plan account in book-entry form.

Federal Tax Consequences of Acquiring Shares under the Plan

The summary set forth in Questions 27 and 28 below is intended only as a general discussion of the current United States federal income tax consequences of participation in the Plan. This discussion does not purport to deal with all aspects of taxation that may be relevant to a particular participant in light of its personal investment circumstances, or to certain types of participants (including insurance companies, tax-exempt organizations, financial institutions, broker-dealers or foreign persons) subject to special treatment under the federal income tax laws. This discussion is based on various rulings of the Internal Revenue Service (the "IRS") regarding several types of dividend reinvestment plans. No ruling, however, has been issued or requested regarding the Plan. Additionally, this discussion is not binding upon, nor considered authority by, the IRS or any court, and no assurance can be provided that the tax treatment discussed below or claimed by any participant in the Plan will not be successfully challenged by the IRS. **THEREFORE, YOU ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO CONSULT YOUR OWN TAX ADVISOR IN THIS REGARD.** For a discussion of the federal income tax consequences of holding stock in a REIT generally, see the section entitled "Federal Income Tax Considerations - Taxation of Stockholders" above.

Table of Contents

27. What is the tax treatment of a participant that acquires shares in lieu of cash dividends under the Plan?

Participants who, pursuant to the Plan, receive shares in lieu of the cash distributions to which they would have otherwise been entitled will be treated for federal income tax purposes as having received, on the distribution payment date, a taxable distribution in an amount equal to the fair market value of such shares as determined by the Board of Directors on the Closing Date. For a discussion of the federal income tax consequences of receiving a cash distribution, see the section entitled "Federal Income Tax Considerations - Taxation of Stockholders" above. The tax basis of the shares issued pursuant to the Plan will equal the amount included in income as a result of the participant's receipt of such shares.

Distribution payments to a Plan participant will be subject to U.S. withholding tax to the same extent as a cash distribution. For a discussion of the federal income tax consequences of receiving a distribution, see the section entitled "Federal Income Tax Considerations - Taxation of Stockholders" above. In that case, the amount of tax to be withheld will be deducted from the amount of the cash distribution that would have otherwise been made to the participant and only the reduced amount will be reinvested in Plan shares. If withholding results in an overpayment of taxes, a refund may be obtained.

Participants will not realize any taxable income upon receipt of a certificate for whole shares credited to their plan account either upon their request for a specified number of shares or upon termination of enrollment in the Plan.

For additional information on the tax consequences of participation in the Plan, please consult your own tax advisor.

28. What is the tax treatment of a participant that acquires shares at a discount through an optional cash purchase?

The IRS has privately ruled that stockholders who acquire stock at a discount to fair market value pursuant to a stock purchase and dividend reinvestment plan of a REIT will not be treated as receiving dividend income in respect of the discount unless such stockholder also participates in the reinvestment of dividends under such plan. Private letter rulings are not precedent and may not be relied upon by any taxpayer other than the taxpayer to whom the ruling is addressed. Nevertheless, such rulings often reflect the thinking of the IRS at the time of the ruling. Under the analysis adopted by the IRS in those rulings, the tax treatment of a purchase of shares under the Plan with an initial cash purchase by a prospective investor or a cash purchase by an existing stockholder may differ depending on whether the purchaser is participating in the dividend reinvestment feature of the Plan.

If you are not participating in the dividend reinvestment feature of the Plan, you may not be treated for federal income tax purposes as having received a distribution from us equal to the amount of the discount. In that case, your tax basis in the shares purchased will equal the purchase price for such shares.

On the other hand, if you participate in the dividend reinvestment feature of the Plan, you may be treated for federal income tax purposes as having received a distribution from us upon the purchase of shares with a cash purchase in an amount equal to the excess, if any, of (i) the per share fair market value of the purchased shares multiplied by the number of shares (including any fractional share) purchased, plus any trading fees or service charges that we pay on your behalf, over (ii) the purchase price of such shares, taking into account any discount. For a discussion of the federal income tax consequences of receiving a distribution from us, see the section entitled "Federal Income Tax Considerations - Taxation of Stockholders" above. In the case of participants who are subject to withholding tax in respect of amounts deemed to be received under the Plan (see above), we or the Plan Administrator will reinvest dividends less the amount of tax required to be withheld. If withholding results in an overpayment of taxes, a refund may be obtained.

If you participate in the dividend reinvestment feature of the Plan, you will receive a tax basis in shares acquired with a cash purchase equal to the purchase price you paid for the shares plus the amount of income you recognized as a result of any cash purchase. The holding period for shares (including a fractional share) acquired under the Plan generally will begin on the day after the shares were acquired.

Table of Contents

Modification and Termination

29. What happens if a participant wishes to terminate participation in the Plan?

Participants may terminate participation in the Plan at any time by notifying the Plan Administrator through the Internet, by telephone or in writing. To be effective for any given dividend or distribution payment date, the notice to terminate must be received by the Plan Administrator before the record date for the dividend or distribution payment. All dividends or distributions with a record date after receipt of notification will be sent directly to the participant. Participants may cancel an optional cash purchase of \$10,000 or less by advising the Plan Administrator at least two (2) business days before the applicable purchase date. The Plan Administrator will return the funds from a canceled purchase without interest as soon as practical. No refund of a check or money order will be made until the funds have been actually received by the Plan Administrator. For cash purchases of more than \$10,000 per month, see Question 15.

Upon termination of participation, you will receive a certificate for the number of full shares of our common stock held by the Plan Administrator at no charge. At the same time, you will receive a check in payment for any fractional shares in your account, valued at the then current market price of our common stock, less any applicable processing fees and any other costs of sale. If you prefer, you can request that your full shares of our common stock held by the Plan Administrator be sold (through the Internet, by telephone or in writing), and you will receive a check for the proceeds, valued at the then current market price of our common stock, less a service charge of \$15, any applicable processing fees and any other costs of sale.

30. May the Plan be amended, suspended or terminated?

We, along with the Plan Administrator, may amend, suspend or terminate the Plan at any time. Any such amendment, suspension or termination will be effective upon a designated dividend record date and notice of such amendment, suspension or termination will be sent to all participants at least thirty (30) days prior to such record date.

If the plan is terminated, whole shares will continue to be held in book-entry form in your plan account or distributed in certificate form at our sole discretion. A cash payment will be made for any fractional share.

Plan Administrator Responsibilities

31. What are the Plan Administrator's responsibilities under the Plan?

The Plan Administrator will not be liable under the Plan for any act done by the Plan Administrator in good faith or for any good faith omission to act including, without limitation, any claims for liability (a) arising out of failure to terminate a participant's participation in the Plan upon the participant's death prior to receipt of notice in writing of such death; (b) with respect to the prices at which shares are purchased or sold for the participant's account and the time such purchases or sales are made; and (c) relating to the value of the shares acquired for the participant's plan account.

The Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, imposes certain reporting obligations upon brokers and other middlemen. As a result, the Plan Administrator will be required to report to the Internal Revenue Service and the participant any sales of stock by the Plan Administrator on behalf of a participant.

32. What if I have additional questions about the Plan?

Additional questions about the Plan should be directed to the Plan Administrator. If your shares are held by a Nominee, contact your Nominee for more information. They can contact the Plan Administrator directly for instructions on how to participate on your behalf.

Table of Contents

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

The Plan allows for shares to be purchased and dividends to be reinvested into shares acquired by the Plan Administrator either on the market or through receipt of newly issued or treasury shares of common stock from us. If the shares are purchased on the market, subject to our discretion we will pay the administrative expenses connected with the operation of the Plan, except for brokerage commissions. Brokerage commissions shall be borne *pro rata* by the Plan participants.

In connection with the administration of the Plan, we may be requested to approve investments made pursuant to requests for waiver by or on behalf of participants or other investors who may be engaged in the securities business. Persons who acquire shares of our common stock through the Plan and resell them shortly after acquiring them, including coverage of short positions, under certain circumstances, may be participating in a distribution of securities that would require compliance with Regulation M under the Exchange Act, and may be considered to be underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act. We will not extend to any such person any rights or privileges other than those to which they would be entitled as a participant, nor will we enter into any agreement with any such person regarding the resale or distribution by any such person of the shares of our common stock so purchased.

Our common stock may not be available under the Plan in all states or jurisdictions. We are not making an offer to sell our common stock in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the shares of common stock offered hereby will be passed upon for us by Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, LLP, New York, N.Y.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements of American Capital Agency Corp. incorporated by reference in American Capital Agency Corp.'s Annual Report (Form 10-K) for the year ended December 31, 2009 have been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, as set forth in their report thereon, included therein, and incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements are incorporated herein by reference in reliance upon such report given on the authority of such firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We are subject to the informational requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act), and, in accordance with those requirements, file reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. Such reports, proxy statements and other information, as well as the registration statement and the exhibits and schedules thereto, can be inspected at the public reference facilities maintained by the SEC at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. Copies of such materials may be obtained at prescribed rates. Information about the operation of the public reference facilities may be obtained by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. The SEC also maintains a website that contains reports, proxy statements and other information regarding registrants, including us, that file such information electronically with the SEC. The address of the SEC's website is <http://www.sec.gov>. Our common stock is listed on The NASDAQ Global Select Market and our corporate website is located at <http://www.AGNC.com>.

We have filed with the SEC a registration statement on Form S-3 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the Securities Act), with respect to the securities offered by this prospectus. This prospectus, which forms a part of the registration statement, does not contain all of the information set forth in the registration

Table of Contents

statement and its exhibits and schedules, certain parts of which are omitted in accordance with the SEC's rules and regulations. For further information about us and the securities, we refer you to the registration statement and to such exhibits and schedules. Statements contained in this prospectus concerning the provisions of any document filed as an exhibit to the registration statement or otherwise filed with the SEC are not necessarily complete, and in each instance reference is made to the copy of such document so filed. Each such statement is qualified in its entirety by such reference.

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE

We have filed the following documents with the SEC (File No. 001-34057) under the Exchange Act and hereby incorporate such documents by reference in this prospectus:

our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2009 filed on February 24, 2010;

our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the fiscal quarter ended March 31, 2010 filed on May 3, 2010;

our Definitive Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A filed on April 2, 2010; and

the description of our common stock set forth in our registration statement on Form 8-A filed on May 14, 2008, and any amendment or report filed with the SEC for the purpose of updating such description.

Each document or report subsequently filed by us pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act after the date of this prospectus and prior to the termination of the offering of the securities shall be deemed to be incorporated by reference into this prospectus and to be a part of this prospectus from the date of filing of such document. Any statement contained in this prospectus, or in a document all or a portion of which is incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus, shall be deemed to be modified or superseded for purposes of the registration statement and this prospectus to the extent that a statement contained herein or in any other subsequently filed document (that also is or is deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus) modifies or supersedes such statement. Any such statement so modified or superseded shall not be deemed, except as so modified or superseded, to constitute a part of the registration statement or this prospectus.

We will provide without charge to any person to whom this prospectus is delivered, on the written or oral request of such person, a copy of any or all of the foregoing documents incorporated by reference, other than certain exhibits to such documents. Written requests should be directed to: American Capital Agency Corp., 2 Bethesda Metro Center, 14th Floor, Bethesda, Maryland 20814, Attention: Investor Relations, telephone number (301) 968-9300.

We will make available free of charge, on the investor relations section of our web site, annual reports on Form 10-K, quarterly reports on Form 10-Q and current reports on Form 8-K and amendments to these reports filed or furnished pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act as soon as practicable after we electronically file such material with, or furnish it to the SEC. The information on our web site is incorporated by reference into this prospectus.

INDEMNIFICATION

Section 102 of the Delaware General Corporation Law, as amended, allows a corporation to eliminate the personal liability of a director of a corporation to the corporation or its stockholders for monetary damages for breach of fiduciary duty as a director, except where the director breached his duty of loyalty to the corporation or its stockholders, failed to act in good faith, engaged in intentional misconduct or knowingly violated a law, authorized the payment of a dividend or approved a stock purchase or redemption in violation of Delaware corporate law or obtained an improper personal benefit.

Table of Contents

Section 145 of the Delaware General Corporation Law provides, among other things, that a corporation may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding (other than an action by or in the right of the corporation) by reason of the fact that the person is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of the corporation, or is or was serving at the corporation's request as a director, officer, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, against expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by the person in connection with the action, suit or proceeding. The power to indemnify applies (i) if such person is successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit or proceeding or (ii) if such person acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation, and with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful. The power to indemnify applies to actions brought by or in the right of the corporation as well, but only to the extent of defense expenses, (including attorneys' fees but excluding amounts paid in settlement) actually and reasonably incurred by the indemnified person and not to any satisfaction of judgment or settlement of the claim itself, and with the further limitation that in such actions no indemnification shall be made in the event such person is adjudged liable to the corporation unless a court believes that in light of all the circumstances indemnification should apply.

Section 174 of the Delaware General Corporation Law provides, among other things, that a director who willfully and negligently approves of an unlawful payment of dividends or an unlawful stock purchase or redemption may be held liable for such actions. A director who was either absent when the unlawful actions were approved or dissented at the time, may avoid liability by causing his dissent to such actions to be entered in the books containing the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors at the time the action occurred or immediately after the absent director receives notice of the unlawful acts.

Article Seventh of our amended and restated certificate of incorporation provides that our directors shall not be personally liable to us and our stockholders for monetary damages for breach of certain fiduciary duties as a director, except for liability to the extent such director has committed willful misfeasance, bad faith, gross negligence or reckless disregard of such director's duties involved in the conduct of the office of director. Our amended and restated by-laws and certificate of incorporation provide that we may indemnify any person who is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of us to the fullest extent permitted by Delaware law. The indemnification provisions contained in our amended and restated by-laws and certificate of incorporation are not exclusive of any other rights to which a person may be entitled by law, agreement, vote of stockholders or disinterested directors or otherwise.

Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act may be permitted to directors, officers or persons controlling the registrant pursuant to the foregoing provisions, we have been informed that in the opinion of the SEC such indemnification is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act and is therefore unenforceable.

Table of Contents

**Amended and Restated Dividend Reinvestment
and
Direct Stock Purchase Plan
13,000,000 Shares
Common Stock,
Par Value \$0.01 Per Share**

PROSPECTUS

Dated: , 2010

Table of Contents**PART II****INFORMATION NOT REQUIRED IN PROSPECTUS****ITEM 14. OTHER EXPENSES OF ISSUANCE AND DISTRIBUTION**

The expenses to be incurred in connection with the issuance and distribution of the shares of common stock (Common Stock) of American Capital Agency Corp. (the Company) being offered hereby payable by the registrant are as follows:

SEC Registration Fee	\$ 18,577
Printing and Engraving Costs	\$ 5,000
Fees and Expenses of Counsel	\$ 15,000
Accounting Fees and Expenses	\$ 10,000
Miscellaneous	\$ 514
 TOTAL	 \$ 49,091

ITEM 15. INDEMNIFICATION OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS

Section 145 of the Delaware General Corporation Law, or DGCL, permits, under certain circumstances, the indemnification of any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative (other than an action by or in the right of the corporation) by reason of the fact that he is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of the corporation, or is or was serving in a similar capacity for another enterprise at the request of the corporation. To the extent that a director, officer, employee or agent of the corporation has been successful in defending any such proceeding, the DGCL provides that he shall be indemnified against expenses (including attorneys' fees) actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection therewith.

With respect to a proceeding by or in the right of the corporation, such person may be indemnified against expenses (including attorneys' fees), actually and reasonably incurred, if he acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation. The DGCL provides, however, that indemnification shall not be permitted in such a proceeding if such person is adjudged liable to the corporation unless, and only to the extent that, the court, upon application, determines, that he is entitled to indemnification under the circumstances. With respect to proceedings other than those brought by or in the right of the corporation, notwithstanding the outcome of such a proceeding, such person may be indemnified against judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement, as well as expenses, if he acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation and, with respect to any criminal action, had no reason to believe his conduct was unlawful. Except with respect to mandatory indemnification of expenses to successful defendants as described in the preceding paragraph or pursuant to a court order, the indemnification described in this paragraph may be made only upon a determination in each specific case (i) by majority vote of the directors that are not parties to the proceeding, even though less than a quorum, or (ii) if there are no such directors, or if such directors so direct, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion, or (iii) by the stockholders.

The DGCL permits a corporation to advance expenses incurred by a proposed indemnitee in advance of final disposition of the proceeding, provided that the indemnitee undertakes to repay such advanced expenses if it is ultimately determined that he is not entitled to indemnification. Also, a corporation may purchase insurance on behalf of an indemnitee against any liability asserted against him in his designated capacity, whether or not the corporation itself would be empowered to indemnify him against such liability.

The Company has adopted provisions in its Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation and its Amended and Restated Bylaws to provide for indemnification of its officers and directors to the maximum extent permitted under the DGCL.

Table of Contents

As authorized by the DGCL, the Company's Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation limits the liability of directors of the Company for monetary damages. The effect of this provision is to eliminate the rights of the Company and its stockholders (through stockholders derivative suits on behalf of the Company) to recover monetary damages against a director for breach of the fiduciary duty of care as a director (including breaches resulting from negligent or grossly negligent behavior) except in certain limited situations. This provision does not limit or eliminate rights of the Company or the rights of any stockholder to seek non-monetary relief such as an injunction or rescission in the event of a breach of a director's duty of care. This provision will not alter the liability of directors under federal securities laws.

The Company has purchased an insurance policy which purports to insure the officers and directors of the Company against certain liabilities incurred by them in the discharge of their functions as such officers and directors, except for liabilities resulting from their own malfeasance.

The foregoing descriptions are general summaries only. Reference is made to the full text of the Company's Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation and its Amended and Restated Bylaws, both as previously filed with the SEC[, and incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 3.1 and Exhibit 3.2, respectively, to this Registration Statement].

ITEM 16. EXHIBITS

Exhibit	Description
Exhibit 4.1*	Instruments defining the rights of holders of securities: See Article IV of our Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation, incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 3.1 of Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2008 (File No. 001-34057), filed August 14, 2008.
Exhibit 4.2*	Instruments defining the rights of holders of securities: See Article VI of our Amended and Restated Bylaws, incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 3.2 of Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2008 (File No. 001-34057), filed August 14, 2008.
Exhibit 4.3*	Form of Certificate for Common Stock, incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 4.1 to Amendment No. 4 to the Registration Statement on Form S-11(Registration No. 333-149167), filed May 9, 2008.
Exhibit 5*	Opinion of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP regarding legality of common stock being registered, incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 5 to the Registration Statement on Form S-3 (Registration No. 333-166199), filed April 20, 2010.
Exhibit 8*	Opinion of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP concerning tax matters, incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 8 to the Registration Statement on Form S-3 (Registration No. 333-166199), filed April 20, 2010.
Exhibit 23.1*	Consent of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP (included in Exhibit 5 hereto).
Exhibit 23.2	Consent of Ernst & Young LLP.
Exhibit 24*	Powers of Attorney of certain directors and officers of American Capital Agency Corp., incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 24 to the Registration Statement on Form S-3 (Registration No. 333-162034), filed April 20, 2010.

* Previously filed in whole or in part.

Table of Contents

ITEM 17. UNDERTAKINGS

The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes:

1. To file, during any period in which offers or sales are being made, a post-effective amendment to this Registration Statement:

(i) To include any prospectus required by Section 10(a)(3) of the Securities Act;

(ii) To reflect in the prospectus any facts or events arising after the effective date of the Registration Statement (or the most recent post-effective amendment thereof) which, individually or in the aggregate, represent a fundamental change in the information set forth in the Registration Statement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any increase or decrease in volume of securities offered (if the total dollar value of securities offered would not exceed that which was registered) and any deviation from the low or high end of the estimated maximum offering range may be reflected in the form of prospectus filed with the Commission pursuant to Rule 424(b) if, in the aggregate, the changes in volume and price represent no more than a 20 percent change in the maximum aggregate offering price set forth in the Calculation of Registration Fee table in the effective registration statement;

(iii) To include any material information with respect to the plan of distribution not previously disclosed in the Registration Statement or any material change to such information in the Registration Statement;

Provided, however, that paragraphs (a)(1)(i) and (a)(1)(ii) do not apply if the Registration Statement is on Form S-3, Form S-8 or Form F-3, and the information required to be included in a post-effective amendment by those paragraphs is contained in periodic reports filed with or furnished to the Commission by the registrant pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act, that are incorporated by reference in the Registration Statement;

2. That, for the purpose of determining any liability under the Securities Act, each such post-effective amendment shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial *bona fide* offering thereof;

3. To remove from registration by means of a post-effective amendment any of the securities being registered which remain unsold at the termination of the offering;

4. That, for purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act, each filing of the registrant's annual report pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act (and, where applicable, each filing of an employee benefit plan's annual report pursuant to Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act) that is incorporated by reference in the registration statement shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial *bona fide* offering thereof.

Table of Contents

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act, the registrant certifies that it has reasonable grounds to believe that it meets all of the requirements for filing on Form S-3 and has duly caused this amendment to the registration statement to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned thereunto duly authorized in the city of Bethesda, state of Maryland, on May 6, 2010.

AMERICAN CAPITAL AGENCY CORP.

By: */s/* SAMUEL A. FLAX
Samuel A. Flax
Secretary

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act, this registration statement has been signed by the following persons in the capacities and on the dates indicated:

Signature	Title	Date
<i>/s/</i> MALON WILKUS Malon Wilkus	Chairman of the Board of Directors, President and Chief Executive Officer (Principal Executive Officer)	May 6, 2010
<i>/s/</i> JOHN R. ERICKSON John R. Erickson	Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer (Principal Financial Officer and Principal Accounting Officer)	May 6, 2010
* Morris A. Davis	Director	May 6, 2010
* Randy E. Dobbs	Director	May 6, 2010
* Larry K. Harvey	Director	May 6, 2010
* Alvin N. Puryear	Director	May 6, 2010
<i>*/s/</i> SAMUEL A. FLAX Samuel A. Flax	Attorney-in-Fact	May 6, 2010

Table of Contents

Exhibit Index

Exhibit	Description
Exhibit 4.1*	Instruments defining the rights of holders of securities: See Article IV of our Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation, incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 3.1 of Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2008 (File No. 001-34057), filed August 14, 2008.
Exhibit 4.2*	Instruments defining the rights of holders of securities: See Article VI of our Amended and Restated Bylaws, incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 3.2 of Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2008 (File No. 001-34057), filed August 14, 2008.
Exhibit 4.3*	Form of Certificate for Common Stock, incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 4.1 to Amendment No. 4 to the Registration Statement on Form S-11 (Registration No. 333-149167), filed May 9, 2008.
Exhibit 5*	Opinion of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP regarding legality of common stock being registered, incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 5 to the Registration Statement on Form S-3 (Registration No. 333-166199), filed April 20, 2010.
Exhibit 8*	Opinion of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP concerning tax matters, incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 8 to the Registration Statement on Form S-3 (Registration No. 333-166199), filed April 20, 2010.
Exhibit 23.1*	Consent of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP (included in Exhibit 5 hereto).
Exhibit 23.2	Consent of Ernst & Young LLP.
Exhibit 24*	Powers of Attorney of certain directors and officers of American Capital Agency Corp., incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 24 to the Registration Statement on Form S-3 (Registration No. 333-162034), filed April 20, 2010.

* Previously filed in whole or in part.