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**Letter of Comment No: 4065**  
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**From:** Christopher Southwick [southch@sierrahealth.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 10, 2004 1:46 PM  
**To:** Director - FASB  
**Subject:** Share-Based Payment Exposure Draft

Christopher Southwick  
5321 S. Cameron  
Las Vegas, NV 89118

June 10, 2004

Ms. Suzanne Bielstein  
Financial Accounting Standards Board  
401 Merrit 7  
Norwalk, CT 06856-5116

Dear Ms. Bielstein:

Re: Share-Based Payment Exposure Draft

I work for a company that allows employees to purchase my employer's stock at a discount through an Employee Stock Purchase Plan (ESPP). I understand that the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) has proposed a change to accounting standards that would require my company to count this discount as an expense against its earnings (Share-Based Payment exposure draft). I respectfully request that you reconsider this proposal and not require expensing of the discount allowed in ESPPs.

I am concerned that required expensing of the discount in the ESPP may make this valuable benefit plan less attractive to my employer, potentially causing my employer to either discontinue the plan, or reduce or eliminate the current discount. If the discount is greatly reduced or eliminated, buying company stock through the ESPP would no longer be much of a benefit. Unlike benefits aimed only at high-paid executives, this is a valuable benefit for employees across the company.

The ESPP is a very important benefit to me. Being able to participate in an ESPP has enabled me to invest in my financial future and experience a sense of ownership in my company. This benefit helped attract me to and serves as an incentive for me to remain with my employer. I could even say I continuously strive to perform to the best of my ability because I am an owner of the company.

My name is Chris Southwick Director of Pharmacy for THC of Nevada a subsidiary company of Sierra Health Services. This added benefit allows me to fund my childrens college savings plan and take family vacations I would otherwise not be able to afford. Eliminating the discount would do a great disservice to all ESPP employees who have worked hard to make their company succeed and who enjoy sharing in the resulting profit. Please reconsider counting ESPP discounts against earnings

Millions of workers like me in companies across the country are able to purchase their employer's stock through ESPPs. This builds company loyalty and helps to promote high standards of work when employees have a sense of ownership.

I strongly urge FASB to consider the negative impact the proposed rule would have on the nearly 16 million workers like me and eliminate the expensing requirement for ESPP discounts in the final rule.