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Letter of Comment No:3587  
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**From:** Christine Roberts [croberts@sierrahealth.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 10, 2004 11:36 AM  
**To:** Director - FASB  
**Subject:** Share-Based Payment Exposure Draft

Christine Roberts  
P.O. Box 42534  
Las Vegas, NV 89116

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.

It is obvious that the government is again looking to find alternative ways to tax individuals. It is important to remember that this option, so generously provided by this company, is allowing individual employees to plan for future family and retirement expenses. Taxing this benefit would erode the confidence and support of their employees so badly needed in uncertain economic times. If this option were to be taxed, or counted as assets, many employees would be in financial jeopardy and would not be able to provide for their families' future. I personally take pride in supporting my company.

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.

CC:

SEC, Chairman, William Donaldson

SEC, Chief Accountant, Donald Nicolaisen

Employee Ownership Coalition (eoc@vennstrategies.com)

Sincerely,

Christine Roberts