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Letter of Comment No: 3520  
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**From:** Mary Jo Geimer [greinma@sierrahealth.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 09, 2004 6:48 PM  
**To:** Director - FASB  
**Subject:** Share-Based Payment Exposure Draft

Mary Jo Geimer  
1100 South Buffalo Dr., #110  
Las Vegas, NV 89117

June 9, 2004

Ms. Suzanne Bielstein  
Financial Accounting Standards Board  
401 Merritt 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.

We all know that employers are required to alter benefits to employees, or to ask that the employee assume more of the cost. In our current economic environment this is most understandable. The employee's assumption of a greater share of expense (i.e., insurance co-payments, premium costs, etc.) is easier to accept knowing that the ESPP remains as a value-added reward to employees.

If projections regarding the future of Social Security ring true, then the opportunity to participate in the ESPP takes on increased importance, in that I have that much more to invest for impending retirement.

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,

Mary Jo Geimer