

NATIONAL HEALTH INVESTORS INC
Form S-3ASR
November 14, 2013

As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on November 14, 2013

Registration No. 333-_____

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM S-3
REGISTRATION STATEMENT UNDER
THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

NATIONAL HEALTH INVESTORS, INC.

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its corporate charter)

Maryland

62-1470956

(State or other jurisdiction of
incorporation or organization)

(I.R.S. Employer Identification
Number)

222 Robert Rose Drive

Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37129

(615) 890-9100

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

J. Justin Hutchens

222 Robert Rose Drive

Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37129

(615) 890-9100

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

Copy to:

Donald A. Hammett, Jr., Esq.

X. Lane Folsom, Esq.

Locke Lord LLP

2200 Ross Avenue, Suite 2200

Dallas, Texas 75201

(214) 740-8000

Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public: From time to time after the effective date of this Registration Statement, as determined by the registrant.

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.

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 checkmark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of "large accelerated filer," "accelerated filer" and smaller reporting company" in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. (Check one)

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

(Do not check if a smaller reporting company)

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

| Title of Each Class of Securities to be Registered | Amount to be Registered | Proposed Maximum Offering Price Per Security | Proposed Maximum Aggregate Offering Price | Amount of Registration Fee |
|--|----------------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|
| Shares of Common Stock | (1)(2) | (1)(2) | (1)(2) | (3) |
| Shares of Preferred Stock | (1)(2) | (1)(2) | (1)(2) | (3) |
| Warrants | (1)(2) | (1)(2) | (1)(2) | (3) |
| Units | (1)(2) | (1)(2) | (1)(2) | (3) |
| Total | (1)(2) | (1)(2) | (1)(2) | (3) |

(1) Omitted pursuant to General Instruction II, E of Form S-3 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended.

(2) There is being registered hereunder an indeterminable number or amount of common stock and preferred stock, warrants to purchase common stock or preferred stock, or units consisting of combinations of any of the foregoing as may from time to time be offered at indeterminate prices and as may be issuable upon conversion, redemption, exchange, exercise or settlement of any securities registered hereunder. In accordance with Rule 456(b) and Rule 457(r) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, the registrant is deferring payment of all of the registration fee.

(3) In reliance on and in accordance with, Rules 456(b) and 457(r) Securities Act of 1933, as amended, the registrant is deferring payment of all applicable registration fees.

PROSPECTUS
NATIONAL HEALTH INVESTORS, INC.
Common Stock
Preferred Stock
Warrants
Units

National Health Investors, Inc. (“NHI”) may offer and sell from time to time, in one or more offerings, in one or more classes or series:

- shares of common stock;
- shares of preferred stock;
- warrants; and/or
- units consisting of combinations of any of the foregoing.

The preferred stock may be convertible into or exercisable or exchangeable for common stock or other securities of NHI.

NHI may offer and sell these securities to or through one or more underwriters, dealers and/or agents, or directly to purchasers on a continuous or delayed basis. The prospectus supplement for each offering of securities will describe the plan of distribution for that offering. For general information about the distribution of securities offered, see “Plan of Distribution” in this prospectus. The prospectus supplement also will set forth the price to the public of the securities and the net proceeds that we expect to receive from the sale of such securities.

This prospectus describes some of the general terms that may apply to these securities and the general manner in which they may be offered. The specific terms of any securities to be offered, and the specific manner in which they may be offered, will be described in a supplement to this prospectus.

Our common stock is quoted on the New York Stock Exchange (the “NYSE”) under the symbol “NHI.”

We impose certain restrictions on the ownership and transfer of our capital stock. You should read the information under the section entitled “Description of Capital Stock — Restrictions on Transfer and Ownership of Stock” in this prospectus for a description of these restrictions.

Investing in any of our securities involves a high degree of risk. Please see the “Risk Factors” sections beginning on page 3 of this prospectus, in the applicable prospectus supplement, and in our filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the accuracy or adequacy of this prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is November 14, 2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS | 1 |
| INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE | 1 |
| WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION | 2 |
| RISK FACTORS | 3 |
| CAUTIONARY LANGUAGE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS | 3 |
| THE COMPANY | 4 |
| USE OF PROCEEDS | 5 |
| RATIO OF EARNINGS TO COMBINED FIXED CHARGES AND PREFERRED STOCK | 5 |
| DIVIDENDS | 5 |
| DESCRIPTION OF THE SECURITIES WE MAY OFFER | 6 |
| DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK WE MAY OFFER | 6 |
| DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS WE MAY OFFER | 10 |
| DESCRIPTION OF UNITS WE MAY OFFER | 11 |
| BOOK ENTRY PROCEDURES AND SETTLEMENT | 11 |
| CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF MARYLAND LAW AND NHI'S CHARTER AND BYLAWS | 11 |
| FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSIDERATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES OF YOUR | 15 |
| INVESTMENT | 15 |
| ERISA CONSIDERATIONS | 31 |
| PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION | 31 |
| VALIDITY OF SECURITIES | 34 |
| EXPERTS | 34 |

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of an automatic “shelf” registration statement on Form S-3 that we have filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “SEC”), as a “well-known seasoned issuer” as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the “Securities Act”). By using an automatic shelf registration statement, we may sell, at any time and from time to time, in one or more offerings, any combination of the securities described in this prospectus. The exhibits to our registration statement and documents incorporated by reference contain the full text of certain contracts and other important documents that we have summarized in this prospectus or that we may summarize in a prospectus supplement. Since these summaries may not contain all the information that you may find important in deciding whether to purchase the securities we offer, you should review the full text of these documents. The registration statement and the exhibits and other documents can be obtained from the SEC as indicated under the section entitled “Where You Can Find More Information.”

This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we offer to sell securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering and the securities offered by us in that offering. The prospectus supplement may also add, update, or change information contained in this prospectus. If there is any inconsistency between the information in this prospectus and a prospectus supplement, you should rely on the information provided in the prospectus supplement. This prospectus does not contain all of the information included in the registration statement. The registration statement filed with the SEC includes exhibits that provide more details about the matters discussed in this prospectus. You should carefully read this prospectus, the related exhibits filed with the SEC, and any prospectus supplement, together with the additional information described below under the headings “Where You Can Find More Information” and “Incorporation of Certain Documents by Reference.”

You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and in any accompanying prospectus supplement or any applicable free writing prospectus. We have not authorized any other person to provide you with different or additional information. If anyone provides you with different or additional information, you should not rely on it. This prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement do not constitute an offer to sell, or a solicitation of an offer to purchase, any securities in any jurisdiction to or from any person to whom or for whom it is unlawful to make such offer or solicitation in such jurisdiction. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement, any applicable free writing prospectus and any other document incorporated by reference herein or therein is accurate only as of the date on the front cover of the respective document. Our business, financial condition, results of operations, and prospects may have changed since those dates.

Under no circumstances should the delivery of this prospectus to you create any implication that the information contained in this prospectus is correct as of any time after the date of this prospectus.

All references in this prospectus to “NHI,” “we,” “us” or “our” mean National Health Investors, Inc. and its consolidated subsidiaries (except where it is clear from the context that the term means only the issuer, National Health Investors, Inc.). Unless otherwise stated, currency amounts in this prospectus are stated in United States dollars. In this prospectus, we sometimes refer to the shares of common stock, shares of preferred stock, warrants and units consisting of combinations of any of the foregoing collectively as the “securities.”

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to “incorporate by reference” into this prospectus certain information we file with the SEC in other documents. This means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to other documents that we file with the SEC. The information may include documents filed after the date of this prospectus which update and supersede the information you read in this prospectus. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below, except to the extent information in those documents is different from the information contained in this prospectus, and all future documents filed by us with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14, or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the “Exchange Act”) (other than current reports furnished under Item 2.02 or Item 7.01 of Form 8-K)

until the offering of the securities described herein is terminated:

• Our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, filed with the SEC on February 15, 2013 (as amended by the Annual Report on Form 10-K/A filed with the SEC on February 25, 2013);

- Our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the quarters ended March 31, 2013, June 30, 2013 and September 30, 2013, filed with the SEC on May 6, 2013, August 6, 2013 and November 4, 2013, respectively;

1

Our Current Reports on Form 8-K, filed with the SEC on January 3, 2013 (three filings), January 15, 2013, January 18, 2013, February 1, 2013, February 15, 2013 (one filing (with respect to Items 8.01 and 9.01), which is as amended by the Current Report on Form 8-K/A filed with the SEC on February 19, 2013), February 27, 2013, April 18, 2013, April 26, 2013 (two filings), May 6, 2013 (one filing (with respect to Item 5.07)), May 30, 2013, July 1, 2013 (three filings, one of which is as amended by the Current Report on Form 8-K/A filed with the SEC on September 4, 2013), July 15, 2013, July 23, 2013, September 3, 2013, September 13, 2013, September 16, 2013, September 26, 2013, October 18, 2013, November 4, 2013 (one filing (with respect to Items 8.01 and 9.01)); and

The description of our common stock contained in Form 10 as amended by Form 8 effective with the SEC in October 1991 and any amendment or report filed for the purpose of updating such description, including the description of amendments to our charter contained in our proxy statement dated March 20, 2009.

Any statement contained in a document incorporated, or deemed to be incorporated, by reference in this prospectus shall be deemed modified, superseded, or replaced for purposes of this prospectus to the extent that a statement contained in this prospectus or in any subsequently filed document that also is, or is deemed to be incorporated, by reference in this prospectus modifies, supersedes, or replaces such statement. Any statement so modified, superseded, or replaced shall not be deemed, except as so modified, superseded, or replaced, to constitute a part of this prospectus.

We will provide without charge to each person, including any beneficial owner, to whom a copy of this prospectus is delivered, upon that person's written or oral request, a copy of any or all of the information incorporated by reference in this prospectus (other than exhibits to those documents, unless the exhibits are specifically incorporated by reference into those documents). Requests should be directed to:

Roger R. Hopkins, CPA
National Health Investors, Inc.
222 Robert Rose Drive
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37129
(615) 890-9100

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We are subject to the informational requirements of the Exchange Act, and therefore we file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements, and other documents with the SEC. You may read and copy any of the reports, proxy statements, and any other information that we file at the SEC's Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. You may obtain information on the operation of the Public Reference Room by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. In addition, the SEC maintains a website at <http://www.sec.gov> that contains reports, proxies, information statements, and other information regarding registrants, including us, that file electronically with the SEC. We also maintain a website at <http://www.nhireit.com>; however, the information contained at this website does not constitute part of this prospectus or any prospectus supplement. Reports, proxies, information statements, and other information about us may also be inspected at the New York Stock Exchange, 20 Broad Street, New York, New York 10005.

We have filed with the SEC a registration statement on Form S-3 under the Securities Act, with respect to the securities offered in this prospectus. This prospectus is part of that registration statement and, as permitted by the SEC's rules, does not contain all of the information set forth in the registration statement. For further information about us and the securities that may be offered, we refer you to the registration statement and the exhibits that are filed with it. You can review and copy the registration statement and its exhibits and schedules at the addresses listed above.

RISK FACTORS

Investing in our securities involves a high degree of risk. Before deciding to purchase any of our securities offered by this prospectus, you should carefully consider the discussion of risks and uncertainties: under the heading “Risk Factors” contained in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus;

2

under this heading or similar headings, such as “Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures About Market Risk,” in our subsequently filed quarterly reports on Form 10-Q and annual reports on Form 10-K; and in any applicable prospectus supplement as well as in any document that is incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

For a description of these reports and documents, and information about where you can find them, see “Where You Can Find More Information.” The risks and uncertainties we discuss in the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus are those we currently believe may materially affect NHI. Additional risks and uncertainties not presently known to us, or that we currently believe are immaterial, also may materially and adversely affect our business, prospects, financial condition, and results of operations.

CAUTIONARY LANGUAGE REGARDING FORWARD -LOOKING STATEMENTS

Statements in this prospectus and the information incorporated by reference in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 that are not historical factual statements are “forward-looking statements.” We intend to have our forward-looking statements covered by the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 and include this statement for purposes of complying with those provisions. Forward-looking statements include, among other things, statements regarding our and our officers’ intent, belief or expectations as identified by the use of words such as “may,” “will,” “project,” “expect,” “believe,” “intend,” “anticipate,” “seek,” “forecast,” “plan,” “estimate,” “could,” “would,” “potential,” “should” or the negative forward-looking phrases or similar words or phrases. In addition, we, through our officers, from time to time, make forward-looking oral and written public statements concerning our expected future operations, strategies, securities offerings, growth and investment opportunities, dispositions, capital structure changes, budgets and other developments. Readers are cautioned that, while forward-looking statements reflect our good faith belief and reasonable assumptions based upon current information, we can give no assurance that our expectations or forecasts will be attained. Therefore, readers should be mindful that forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance and that they are subject to known and unknown risks and uncertainties that are difficult to predict. As more fully set forth under the heading “Risk Factors” in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012 and our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the quarters ended March 31, 2013, June 30, 2013 and September 30, 2013, factors that may cause our actual results to differ materially from the expectations expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements include:

We depend on the operating success of our customers (facility operators) for collection of our revenues during this time of uncertain economic conditions in the U.S.;

We are exposed to the risk that our tenants and borrowers may not be able to meet the rent, principal and interest or other payments due us, which may result in an operator bankruptcy or insolvency, or that an operator might become subject to bankruptcy or insolvency proceedings for other reasons;

We are exposed to risks related to governmental regulations and payors, principally Medicare and Medicaid, and the effect that lower reimbursement rates will have on our tenants’ and borrowers’ business;

• We are exposed to the risk that the cash flows of our tenants and borrowers will be adversely affected by increased liability claims and general and professional liability insurance costs;

• We are exposed to risks related to environmental laws and the costs associated with the liability related to hazardous substances;

• We are exposed to the risk that we may not be indemnified by our lessees and borrowers against future litigation;

• We depend on the success of future acquisitions and investments;

• We depend on the ability to reinvest cash in real estate investments in a timely manner and on acceptable terms;

• We may need to incur more debt in the future, which may not be available on terms acceptable to the Company;

• We are exposed to the risk that the illiquidity of real estate investments could impede our ability to respond to adverse changes in the performance of our properties;

• We are exposed to risks associated with our investments in unconsolidated entities, including our lack of sole decision-making authority and our reliance on the financial condition of other interests;

• We depend on revenues derived mainly from fixed rate investments in real estate assets, while our debt capital used to finance those investments is primarily at variable rates. This circumstance creates interest rate risk to the Company;

• We are exposed to the risk that our assets may be subject to impairment charges;

• We depend on the ability to continue to qualify as a real estate investment trust;

We have ownership limits in our charter with respect to our common stock and other classes of capital stock which may delay, defer or prevent a transaction or a change of control that might involve a premium price for our common stock or might otherwise be in the best interests of our stockholders; and

We are subject to certain provisions of Maryland law and our charter and bylaws that could hinder, delay or prevent a change in control transaction, even if the transaction involves a premium price for our common stock or our stockholders believe such transaction to be otherwise in their best interests.

THE COMPANY

We are a real estate investment trust ("REIT") that invests in income-producing health care properties primarily in the long-term care and senior housing industries. As of September 30, 2013, we had ownership interests in real estate and mortgage and other note investments at original cost totaling approximately \$1,003,713,000 (excluding our corporate office building of \$882,000) and other investments in preferred stock and marketable securities having a carrying value of approximately \$51,709,000, resulting in total invested assets of approximately \$1,055,422,000. We are a self-managed REIT with our own management reporting directly to our Board of Directors. Our mission is to invest in health care real estate or in the operations thereof through independent third-party managers which generates current income that will be distributed to stockholders. We have pursued this mission by investing primarily in leased properties, mortgage loans and transaction structures allowed by the REIT

Investment Diversification Empowerment Act of 2007. These investments include senior housing, skilled nursing facilities, medical office buildings, and hospitals, all of which are collectively referred to herein as “Health Care Facilities.” Senior housing includes assisted living facilities, senior living campuses, and independent living facilities. We have funded these investments in the past through three sources of capital: (1) current cash flow, including principal prepayments from our borrowers, (2) the sale of equity securities, and (3) debt offerings, including bank lines of credit, the issuance of convertible debt instruments, and the issuance of ordinary debt. At September 30, 2013, we had approximately \$391,362,000 of outstanding debt.

At September 30, 2013, our continuing operations consisted of investments in real estate and mortgage notes receivable in 146 health care facilities located in 27 states consisting of 69 senior housing communities, 71 skilled nursing facilities, 2 medical office buildings, and 4 hospitals. These investments consisted of approximately \$944,346,000 (original cost) of real estate investments (excluding our corporate office building of \$882,000) with 23 lessees and \$59,367,000 aggregate carrying value of mortgage and other notes receivable from 14 borrowers. There are 135 health care facilities leased to operators, 42 of which are leased to National HealthCare Corporation (“NHC”), a publicly-held company and our largest tenant. These 42 facilities include 4 centers subleased to and operated by other companies, the lease payments to us being guaranteed by NHC.

NHI was incorporated in Maryland in 1991. Our executive offices are located at 222 Robert Rose Drive, Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37129, and our telephone number is (615) 890-9100.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless otherwise indicated in a prospectus supplement, we intend to use the net proceeds, from the offering of securities under this prospectus for general corporate purposes, which may include:

- funding real estate and mortgage investments in, or extensions of credit to, our subsidiaries;
- funding real estate and mortgage investments in non-affiliates;
- reducing, repaying or refinancing debt;
- financing possible acquisitions and business combinations; and
- working capital and other general purposes.

Further details relating to the use of the net proceeds from the offering of securities under this prospectus will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. Pending such uses, we anticipate that we will invest the net proceeds in interest-bearing securities in a manner consistent with maintaining our qualification as a REIT.

RATIO OF EARNINGS TO COMBINED FIXED CHARGES AND PREFERRED STOCK DIVIDENDS

The following table sets forth NHI’s consolidated ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends for the periods indicated:

| | Nine Months Ended September 30, 2013 | Year Ended December 31, | | | | |
|--|---|-------------------------|-------|-------|--------|--------|
| | | 2012 | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 | 2008 |
| Ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock | 9.83 | 19.54 | 17.43 | 34.26 | 310.38 | 148.79 |

dividends (1)

For the purpose of calculating the ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends, income from continuing operations before adjustment for income or loss from equity investees has been added to (1) fixed charges, net of capitalized interest, and that sum has been divided by such fixed charges. Fixed charges consist of interest expense, which includes amortization of debt issue cost, plus the proportion deemed to be representative of

5

the interest factor of rent expense, and capitalized interest. We have not issued preferred stock and, accordingly, no preferred stock dividends were declared or paid for any of the periods presented.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SECURITIES WE MAY OFFER

This prospectus contains summary descriptions of our shares of common stock, shares of preferred stock, warrants and units that we may offer from time to time. As further described in this prospectus, these summary descriptions are not meant to be complete descriptions of each security. The particular terms of any security will be described in the accompanying prospectus supplement and other offering material. The accompanying prospectus supplement may add, update or change the terms and conditions of the securities as described in this prospectus.

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK WE MAY OFFER

Please note that in this section entitled “Description of Capital Stock We May Offer,” references to “holders” mean those who own shares of our common or preferred stock, registered in their own names, on the books that the registrar or we maintain for this purpose, and not those who own beneficial interests in shares registered in street name or in shares issued in book-entry form through one or more depositaries.

The following description summarizes the material provisions of the common stock and preferred stock we may offer. This description is not complete and is subject to, and is qualified in its entirety by reference to our charter and our bylaws and applicable provisions of the Maryland General Corporation Law (the “MGCL”). The specific terms of any series of preferred stock will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement. Any series of preferred stock we issue will be governed by our charter and by the articles supplementary related to that series. We will file the articles supplementary with the SEC and incorporate it by reference as an exhibit to our registration statement at or before the time we issue any preferred stock.

Our authorized capital stock consists of 40,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$0.01 per share, and 10,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value \$0.01 per share. The following description does not contain all the information that might be important to you.

Restrictions on Transfer and Ownership of Stock

As described in “Certain Provisions of Maryland Law and NHI’s Charter and Bylaws - Transfer and Ownership Restrictions Relating to Our Common and Preferred Stock,” our charter contains restrictions on the ownership and transfer of our common and preferred stock that are intended to assist us in complying with the requirements to continue to qualify as a REIT. All such restrictions will apply to any common or preferred stock that we may offer pursuant to this prospectus and applicable prospectus summary.

Common Stock

As of November 12, 2013, there were 27,876,176 shares of common stock outstanding. All shares of common stock participate equally in dividends payable to holders of common stock when, as and if authorized by our board of directors and declared by us, and in net assets available for distribution to holders of common stock on liquidation, dissolution, or winding up. Each outstanding share of common stock entitles the holder to one vote on all matters submitted to a vote of our stockholders. Holders of common stock do not have cumulative voting rights in the election of directors.

All issued and outstanding shares of common stock are, and the common stock offered by this prospectus will be upon issuance, validly issued, fully paid and nonassessable. Holders of common stock do not have preference, conversion, exchange or preemptive rights. Our common stock is listed on The New York Stock Exchange under the Symbol NHI.

The Transfer Agent and Registrar for our common stock is Computershare Trust Company, N.A.

Preferred Stock

6

Shares of our preferred stock may be issued with such designations, preferences, limitations and relative rights as our board of directors may from time to time determine. Our board can, without stockholder approval, issue preferred stock with voting, dividend, liquidation and conversion rights which could dilute the voting strength of the holders of the common stock. The preferred stock will, when issued, be fully paid and nonassessable and will have no preemptive rights. As of November 12, 2013, there were no shares of our preferred stock outstanding.

If we offer preferred stock, we will file with the SEC a prospectus supplement and/or other offering material relating to that offering that will include a description of the specific terms of the offering, including the following specific terms:

- the series, the number of shares offered and the liquidation value of the preferred stock;
- the price at which the preferred stock will be issued;
- the dividend rate, the dates on which the dividends will be payable and other terms relating to the payment of dividends on the preferred stock;
- the liquidation preference of the preferred stock;
- the voting rights of the preferred stock;
- whether the preferred stock is redeemable or subject to a sinking fund, and the terms of any such redemption or sinking fund;
- whether the preferred stock is convertible or exchangeable for any other securities, and the terms of any such conversion; and
- any additional rights, preferences, qualifications, limitations and restrictions of the preferred stock.

It is not possible to state the actual effect of the issuance of any shares of preferred stock upon the rights of holders of our common stock until our board of directors determines the specific rights of the holders of the preferred stock. However, these effects might include:

- restricting dividends on the common stock;
- diluting the voting power of the common stock;
- impairing the liquidation rights of the common stock; and
- delaying or preventing a change in control of NHI.

Rank

Unless otherwise specified in the prospectus supplement, the preferred stock will, with respect to dividend rights and rights upon the Company's liquidation, dissolution or winding up, rank:

- senior to all classes or series of common stock, and to all equity securities ranking junior to such preferred stock with respect to dividend rights or rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up;
- on a parity with all equity securities the terms of which specifically provide that such equity securities rank on a parity with the preferred stock with respect to dividend rights or rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up; and
- junior to all equity securities the terms of which specifically provide that such equity securities rank senior to the preferred stock with respect to dividend rights or rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up.

Dividends

Holders of preferred stock of each series shall be entitled to receive, when, as and if declared by the board of directors, out of the Company's assets legally available for payment, cash dividends (or dividends in kind or in other property if expressly permitted and described in the applicable prospectus supplement) at such rates and on such dates as will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. Each such dividend shall be payable to holders of record as they appear on the Company's stock transfer books on such record dates as shall be fixed by the board of directors. Dividends on any series of preferred stock may be cumulative or non-cumulative, as provided in the applicable prospectus supplement. Dividends, if cumulative, will be cumulative from and after the date set forth in the prospectus supplement. If the board of directors fails to declare a dividend payable on a dividend payment date on any series of preferred stock for which dividends are non-cumulative, then the holders of such series of preferred stock will have no right to receive a dividend in respect of the dividend period ending on such dividend payment date, and the Company will have no obligation to pay the dividend accrued for such period, whether or not dividends on such series are declared payable on any future dividend payment date.

Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, if any preferred stock of any series is outstanding, no full dividends shall be declared or paid or set apart for payment on the preferred stock of any other series ranking, as to dividends, on a parity with or junior to the preferred stock of such series for any period unless full dividends (which include all unpaid dividends in the case of cumulative dividend preferred stock) have been or contemporaneously are declared and paid or declared and a sum sufficient for the payment thereof set apart for such payment on the preferred stock of such series.

When dividends are not paid in full (or a sum sufficient for such full payment is not so set apart) upon the preferred stock of any series and the shares of any other series of preferred stock ranking on a parity as to dividends with the preferred stock of such series, all dividends declared upon shares of preferred stock of such series and any other series of preferred stock ranking on a parity as to dividends with such preferred stock shall be declared pro rata among the holders of such series. No interest, or sum of money in lieu of interest, shall be payable in respect of any dividend payment or payments on preferred stock of such series which may be in arrears.

Until required dividends are paid, no dividends (other than in common stock or other capital stock ranking junior to the preferred stock of such series as to dividends and upon liquidation) shall be declared or paid, or set aside for payment, and no other distribution shall be declared or made upon the common stock or any other capital stock ranking junior to or on a parity with the preferred stock of such series as to dividends or upon liquidation. In addition, no common stock or any other capital stock ranking junior to or on a parity with the preferred stock of such series as to dividends or upon liquidation shall be redeemed, purchased or otherwise acquired for any consideration (or any moneys be paid to or made available for a sinking fund for the redemption of any shares of any such stock) by the Company (except by conversion into or exchange for other capital stock ranking junior to the preferred stock of such series as to dividends and upon liquidation).

Any dividend payment made on a series of preferred stock shall first be credited against the earliest accrued but unpaid dividend due with respect to shares of preferred stock of such series which remains payable.

Redemption

If so provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, any series of preferred stock will be subject to mandatory redemption or redemption at the Company's option, as a whole or in part, in each case upon the terms, at the times and at the redemption prices set forth in such prospectus supplement.

The prospectus supplement relating to a series of preferred stock that is subject to mandatory redemption will specify the number of shares of such preferred stock that the Company shall redeem in each year commencing after a date to be specified, at a redemption price per share to be specified, together with an amount equal to all accrued and unpaid dividends thereon (which shall not, if such preferred stock does not have a cumulative dividend, include any accumulation in respect of unpaid dividends for prior dividend periods) to the date of redemption. NHI may pay the redemption price in cash or other property, as specified in the prospectus supplement. If the redemption

price for preferred stock of any series is payable only from the net proceeds of the Company's issuance of capital stock, the terms of such preferred stock may provide that, if no such capital stock shall have been issued or to the extent the net proceeds from any issuance are insufficient to pay in full the aggregate redemption price then due, such preferred stock shall automatically and mandatorily be converted into shares of the applicable capital stock pursuant to conversion provisions specified in the applicable prospectus supplement.

So long as any dividends on any series of preferred stock ranking on a parity as to dividends and distributions of assets with such series of the preferred stock are in arrears, no shares of any such series of the preferred stock will be redeemed (whether by mandatory or optional redemption) unless all such shares are simultaneously redeemed, and the Company will not purchase or otherwise acquire any such shares. However, this will not prevent the purchase or acquisition of preferred stock pursuant to a purchase or exchange offer made on the same terms to holders of all outstanding preferred stock of such series and, unless the full cumulative dividends on all outstanding shares of any cumulative preferred stock of such series and any other stock of the Company's ranking on a parity with such series as to dividends and upon liquidation shall have been paid or contemporaneously are declared and paid for all past dividend periods, the Company shall not purchase or otherwise acquire directly or indirectly any preferred stock of such series (except by conversion into or exchange for stock ranking junior to the preferred stock of such series as to dividends and upon liquidation). However, this will not prevent the purchase or acquisition of such preferred stock to preserve the Company's REIT status or pursuant to a purchase or exchange offer made on the same terms to holders of all outstanding shares of preferred stock of such series.

If the Company is to redeem fewer than all of the outstanding preferred stock of any series, it will determine the number of shares to be redeemed and such shares may be redeemed pro rata from the holders of record of such shares in proportion to the number of such shares held by such holders (with adjustments to avoid redemption of fractional shares) or any other equitable method determined by the Company that will not result in the issuance of any excess shares.

If notice of redemption of any preferred stock has been given and the Company has set aside the funds necessary for such redemption in trust for the benefit of the holders of any preferred stock so called for redemption, then from and after the redemption date dividends will cease to accrue on such preferred stock, such preferred stock shall no longer be deemed outstanding and all rights of the holders of such shares will terminate, except the right to receive the redemption price.

Liquidation Preference

Upon any voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up of NHI, then, before any distribution or payment shall be made to the holders of common stock, or any other class or series of the Company's capital stock ranking junior to the preferred stock in the distribution of assets upon any liquidation, dissolution or winding up, the holders of each series of preferred stock will be entitled to receive out of the Company's assets legally available for distribution to shareholders liquidating distributions in the amount of the liquidation preference per share (set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement), plus an amount equal to all dividends accrued and unpaid thereon (which shall not include any accumulation in respect of unpaid dividends for prior dividend periods if such preferred stock does not have a cumulative dividend). After payment of the full amount of the liquidating distributions to which they are entitled, the holders of preferred stock will have no right or claim to any of the Company's remaining assets. In the event that, upon any such voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, the Company's legally available assets are insufficient to pay the amount of the liquidating distributions on all outstanding preferred stock and the corresponding amounts payable on all shares of other classes or series of capital stock ranking on a parity with the preferred stock in the distribution of assets upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up, then the holders of the preferred stock and all other such classes or series of capital stock shall share ratably in any such distribution of assets in proportion to the full liquidating distributions to which they would otherwise be respectively entitled.

If liquidating distributions shall have been made in full to all holders of preferred stock, the Company's remaining assets shall be distributed among the holders of any other classes or series of capital stock ranking junior to the preferred stock upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up, according to their respective rights and preferences and in each case according to their respective number of shares.

Voting Rights

Holders of preferred stock will only have such voting rights as specifically provided in the prospectus supplement or as otherwise from time to time required by law.

Conversion Rights

The terms and conditions, if any, upon which shares of any series of preferred stock are convertible into common stock will be set forth in the prospectus supplement relating thereto. Such terms will include the number of shares of common stock into which the preferred stock is convertible, the conversion price (or manner of calculation thereof), the conversion period, provisions as to whether conversion will be at the option of the holders of the preferred stock or the Company, the events requiring an adjustment of the conversion price and provisions affecting conversion in the event of the redemption of such preferred stock.

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS WE MAY OFFER

We may issue warrants to purchase shares of common stock or preferred stock. Warrants may be issued independently or together with any securities or may be attached to or separate from the securities. Each series of warrants will be issued under a separate warrant agreement to be entered into by us with a bank or trust company, as warrant agent, as specified in the applicable prospectus supplement. The warrant agent will act solely as our agent in connection with the warrants and will not assume any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for or with any holders or beneficial owners of warrants.

We will describe the specific terms of any warrants we may offer in the prospectus supplement relating to those warrants, which terms will include:

- the title of the warrants;
- the aggregate number of warrants;
- the price or prices at which the warrants will be issued;
- the designation, amount and terms of the securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants;
- any provisions for adjustment of the number of securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants or the exercise price of the warrants;
- the designation and terms of the other securities, if any, with which the warrants are to be issued and the number of the warrants issued with each security;
- if applicable, the date on and after which the warrants and the securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants will be separately transferable;
- the price or prices at which the securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants may be purchased;
- the minimum or maximum number of warrants which may be exercised at any one time;
- the date on which the right to exercise the warrants shall commence and the date on which the right shall expire;

- a discussion of any material U.S. federal income tax considerations applicable to the acquisition, ownership, exercise and disposition of the warrants;
- information with respect to book-entry procedures, if applicable; and
- any additional terms of the warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the warrants.

Each warrant will entitle the holder of the warrant to purchase for cash the number of shares of common stock or preferred stock at the exercise price stated or determinable in the applicable prospectus supplement. Warrants may be exercised at any time up to the close of business on the expiration date shown in the applicable prospectus supplement, unless otherwise specified in such prospectus supplement. After the close of business on the expiration date, unexercised warrants will become void. Warrants may be exercised as described in the applicable prospectus supplement. When the warrant holder makes the payment and properly completes and signs the warrant certificate at the corporate trust office of the warrant agent or any other office indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, we will, as soon as possible, forward the shares of common stock or preferred stock that the warrant holder has purchased. If the warrant holder exercises the warrant for less than all of the warrants represented by the warrant certificate, we will issue a new warrant certificate for the remaining warrants.

DESCRIPTION OF UNITS WE MAY OFFER

As specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, we may issue units consisting of one or more shares of common stock, shares of preferred stock, warrants, other securities or any combination of such securities. Such combinations may include, but are not limited to, units consisting of common stock and preferred stock and warrants.

BOOK ENTRY PROCEDURES AND SETTLEMENT

We may issue the securities offered pursuant to this prospectus in certificated or book-entry form or in the form of one or more global securities. The accompanying prospectus supplement will describe the manner in which the securities offered thereby will be issued.

CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF MARYLAND LAW AND NHI'S CHARTER AND BYLAWS

The following paragraphs summarize certain provisions of Maryland law and of our charter and bylaws. This is a summary, and does not completely describe Maryland law, our charter or our bylaws. For a complete description, we refer you to the MGCL, our charter and our bylaws. We have incorporated by reference our charter and bylaws as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part.

Transfer and Ownership Restrictions Relating to Our Common and Preferred Stock

We have restrictions on the ownership and transfer of our common and preferred stock in our charter that are intended to assist us in complying with the requirements to continue to qualify as a REIT. Our charter prohibits the beneficial ownership of shares of common or preferred stock in excess of the ownership limit and any attempted transfer in violation of the ownership limit is void.

Our charter provides that any transfer that (i) would result in a person owning shares in excess of the ownership limit, which as of the date of this prospectus and as a result of the Excepted Holder Agreements discussed below, is (a) for all stockholders who are not Excepted Holders (as defined below), 7.5%, in number or value, of our outstanding shares of common stock or (b) for Excepted Holders, the limit specifically set forth in the applicable Excepted Holder Agreement, (ii) would cause NHI to be beneficially owned by fewer than 100 persons, or (iii) would cause NHI to be "closely held" under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code"), would be void. For purposes of the ownership limit, shares are beneficially owned by the person who is the actual owner or who is treated as the owner of

such shares, directly, indirectly or constructively under the Code.

Any shares that are owned in violation of the ownership limit or that would cause us to be closely held will be automatically converted into shares of "Excess Stock" under our charter effective as of the day before the transaction

11

giving rise to the conversion. Our charter provides that, upon conversion, shares of Excess Stock will be deemed to be contributed into a trust held for the sole benefit of a tax exempt charitable organization designated by our board of directors. Shares of Excess Stock will carry the same voting rights and rights to distributions and dividends as the shares from which they were converted. However, any distributions or dividends paid on the shares of Excess Stock will be held in the trust and all voting rights with respect to the shares of Excess Stock may be exercised only by the trustee. The trustee may sell shares of Excess Stock provided that any such sale would not result in a violation of the ownership limitation. From the proceeds of such sale, the trustee is required to distribute to the record holder of such shares the lesser of (i) the price paid by the record owner for such shares (or, if no consideration was paid by such record owners, the average closing price for such shares for the ten trading days immediately preceding the date the record owner acquired such shares) or (ii) the proceeds received by the trustee. All remaining proceeds will be distributed to the charitable beneficiary.

We may purchase shares converted into Excess Stock for a price per share equal to the lesser of (i) the per share price paid by the record owner in the transaction that cause such shares to be converted into Excess Stock or (ii) the average closing price for such shares for the ten trading days immediately preceding the date NHI exercises its purchase right.

Our board of directors has the power to permit persons to own shares in excess of the ownership limit (thereby becoming Excepted Holders) provided that the board believes that NHI's REIT status will not be jeopardized and any such persons enter into excepted holder agreements with us.

Effective April 29, 2008, we entered into Excepted Holder Agreements with W. Andrew Adams and certain members of his family. These written agreements are intended to restate and replace the parties' prior verbal agreement. A separate agreement was entered into with each of the spouse and children of Dr. Carl E. Adams and others within Mr. W. Andrew Adams' family. We needed to enter into such an agreement with each family member because of the complicated ownership attribution rules under the Code. These agreements permit the "Excepted Holders" to own stock in excess of 9.9% up to the limit specifically provided in the individual agreement and not lose rights with respect to such shares. However, if the stockholder's stock ownership exceeds the limit then such shares in excess of the limit become Excess Stock. The purpose of these agreements is to ensure that NHI does not violate the prohibition against a real estate investment trust being closely held.

Based on the Excepted Holder Agreements currently outstanding, as of the date of this prospectus, the ownership limit of our outstanding common stock for all other stockholders who are not Excepted Holders is approximately 7.5%. This ownership limit may change if we enter into additional Excepted Holder Agreements. Our charter gives our board of directors broad powers to prohibit and rescind any attempted transfer in violation of the ownership limit.

Upon demand by us, each stockholder must disclose such information with respect to direct and indirect ownership of stock owned (or deemed to be owned after applying the rules applicable to REITs under the Code) as our board of directors deems reasonably necessary in order that we may fully comply with the REIT provisions of the Code. Proposed transferees of stock must also satisfy the board, upon demand, that such transferees will not cause us to fall out of compliance with such provisions.

Election of Directors

Our bylaws provide that our board of directors may establish, increase or decrease the number of directors, provided that the number thereof shall never be less than three nor more than nine. The directors are divided into three classes (Class A, Class B and Class C), with directors in each class serving for three-year terms and only one class up for election each year. Holders of common stock have no right to cumulative voting for the election of directors. Consequently, at each annual meeting of stockholders, the holders of a majority of the outstanding shares of our common stock can elect all of the class of our directors that are up for election at such annual meeting. A vacancy which arises through the death, resignation or removal of a director or as a result of an increase in the

number of directors may be filled by a majority vote of the entire board of directors, and a director so elected shall serve until the next annual meeting of stockholders and until a successor is duly elected and qualified.

Our bylaws provide that nominations of persons for election to our board of directors may be made only:

by, or at the direction of, a majority of our board of directors or a duly authorized committee thereof; or

by a stockholder who was a stockholder at the time the notice of meeting was given and is entitled to vote at the meeting and who has complied with the advance notice procedures, including the minimum time period, described in the bylaws.

Removal of Directors

Our charter does not vary the default provisions of the MGCL regarding the removal of directors. Accordingly, the stockholders may remove any director, with cause, by the affirmative vote of a majority of all the votes entitled to be cast generally for the election of directors, except that if the stockholders of any class or series are entitled separately to elect one or more directors, a director elected by a class or series may not be removed without cause except by the affirmative vote of a majority of all the votes of that class or series. A director may not be removed without cause.

Business Combination Provisions

Under the MGCL, certain “business combinations” (including a merger, consolidation, share exchange, or, in certain circumstances, an asset transfer or issuance of equity securities) between a Maryland corporation and any person who is the beneficial owner, directly or indirectly, of 10 percent or more of the voting power of our outstanding voting stock (an “Interested Stockholder”) or any affiliate thereof must be: (a) recommended by our board of directors; and (b) approved by the affirmative vote of at least (i) 80% of our outstanding shares entitled to vote and (ii) two-thirds of the outstanding shares entitled to vote which are not held by the Interested Stockholder with whom the business combination is to be effected, unless, among other things, NHI’s common stockholders receive a minimum price (as defined in the statute) for their shares and the consideration is received in cash or in the same form as previously paid by the Interested Stockholder for his shares. In addition, an Interested Stockholder or any affiliate thereof may not engage in a business combination with us for a period of five years following the date of becoming an Interested Stockholder. These provisions of the MGCL do not apply, however, to business combinations that are approved or exempted by our board of directors prior to a person’s becoming an Interested Stockholder.

Control Share Acquisitions

The MGCL provides that “control shares” of a Maryland corporation acquired in a “control share acquisition” may not be voted except to the extent approved by a vote of two-thirds of the votes entitled to be cast by stockholders excluding shares owned by the acquirer, officers and directors who are employees of NHI. “Control shares” are shares which, if aggregated with all other shares previously acquired which the person is entitled to vote, would entitle the acquirer to vote in the election of directors within any of the following ranges of voting power: (i) 10% or more but less than one-third, (ii) one-third or more but less than a majority, or (iii) a majority of the outstanding shares. Control shares do not include shares the acquiring person is entitled to vote because stockholder approval has previously been obtained. A “control share acquisition” means the acquisition of control shares, subject to certain exceptions.

A person who has made or proposes to make a control share acquisition and who has obtained a definitive financing agreement with a responsible financial institution providing for any amount of financing not to be provided by the acquiring person may compel our board of directors to call a special meeting of stockholders to be held within 50 days of demand to consider the voting rights of the shares. If no request for a meeting is made, NHI may itself present the question at any stockholders’ meeting.

Subject to certain conditions and limitations, we may redeem any or all of the control shares, except those for which voting rights have previously been approved, for “fair value” determined, without regard to voting rights,

13

as of the date of the last control shares acquisition or of any meeting of stockholders at which the voting rights of such shares are considered and not approved. If voting rights for control shares are approved at a stockholders' meeting and the acquirer is entitled to vote a majority of the shares entitled to vote, all other stockholders may exercise appraisal rights. The fair value of the shares as determined for purposes of such appraisal rights may not be less than the highest price per share in the control shares acquisition, and certain limitations and restrictions otherwise applicable to the exercise of dissenter's rights do not apply in the context of control share acquisition.

The control share acquisition statute does not apply to shares acquired in a merger, consolidation or share exchange if the corporation is a party to the transaction, or to the acquisitions approved or excepted by our charter or bylaws prior to a control share acquisition.

The limitation on ownership of stock set forth in our charter, as well as Maryland business combination and control share acquisition statutes, could have the effect of discouraging offers to acquire us and of increasing the difficulty of consummating any such offer.

Duties of Directors with Respect to Unsolicited Takeovers

Maryland law provides protection for Maryland corporations against unsolicited takeovers by limiting, among other things, the duties of the directors in unsolicited takeover situations. The duties of directors of Maryland corporations do not require them to (a) accept, recommend or respond to any proposal by a person seeking to acquire control of the corporation, (b) make a determination under the Maryland business combination or control share acquisition statutes described above, or (c) act or fail to act solely because of the effect the act or failure to act may have on an acquisition or potential acquisition of control of the corporation or the amount or type of consideration that may be offered or paid to the stockholders in an acquisition. Moreover, under Maryland law the act of a director of a Maryland corporation relating to or affecting an acquisition or potential acquisition of control is not subject to any higher duty or greater scrutiny than is applied to any other act of a director. Maryland law also contains a statutory presumption that an act of a director of a Maryland corporation satisfies the applicable standards of conduct for directors under Maryland law.

Unsolicited Takeovers

Under Maryland law, a Maryland corporation with a class of equity securities registered under the Exchange Act and at least three independent directors may elect to be subject to certain statutory provisions relating to unsolicited takeovers which, among other things, would automatically classify the board of directors into three classes with staggered terms of three years each and vest in the board of directors the exclusive right to determine the number of directors and the exclusive right, by the affirmative vote of a majority of the remaining directors, to fill vacancies on the board of directors, even if the remaining directors do not constitute a quorum. These statutory provisions relating to unsolicited takeovers also provide that any director elected to fill a vacancy shall hold office for the remainder of the full term of the class of directors in which the vacancy occurred, rather than the next annual meeting of directors as would otherwise be the case, and until his successor is elected and qualified.

An election to be subject to any or all of the foregoing statutory provisions may be made in our charter or bylaws, or by resolution of our board of directors without stockholder approval. Any such statutory provision to which we elect to be subject will apply even if other provisions of Maryland law or our charter or bylaws provide to the contrary. Neither our charter nor our bylaws provides that we are subject to any of the foregoing statutory provisions relating to unsolicited takeovers. However, our board of directors could adopt a resolution, without stockholder approval, to elect to become subject to some or all of these statutory provisions.

Amendments to our Charter

Provisions of our charter on business combinations, the number of directors and certain ownership restrictions may be amended only if approved by our board of directors and by our stockholders by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of all of the votes entitled to be cast by our stockholders on the matter. In certain limited circumstances, the board of directors may amend the charter by way of a majority of the entire board of directors but without action by the stockholders.

Amendments to our Bylaws

14

To the fullest extent permitted by the MGCL, our board of directors shall have the power at any annual, regular or special meeting (with appropriate notice), to alter or repeal any of our bylaws and to make new bylaws. Our stockholders shall have the power at any annual or special meeting (with appropriate notice), with the approval of stockholders holding more than 66 2/3% of all outstanding shares of our capital stock, to alter or repeal any of our bylaws and to make new bylaws.

Dissolution of NHI

Our dissolution must be approved by our board of directors by a majority vote of the entire board and by our stockholders by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of all the votes entitled to be cast by our stockholders on the matter.

FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSIDERATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES OF YOUR INVESTMENT

The following discussion summarizes our taxation and the material Federal income tax consequences associated with an investment in our securities. The tax treatment of security holders will vary depending upon the holder's particular situation, and this discussion addresses only holders that hold securities as a capital asset and does not deal with all aspects of taxation that may be relevant to particular holders in light of their personal investment or tax circumstances. This section also does not deal with all aspects of taxation that may be relevant to certain types of holders to which special provisions of the Federal income tax laws apply, including:

•dealers in securities or currencies;

•traders in securities that elect to use a mark-to-market method of accounting for their securities holdings;

•banks and other financial institutions;

•tax-exempt organizations (except to the limited extent discussed in "-Taxation of Tax-Exempt Holders");

•ertain insurance companies;

•persons liable for the alternative minimum tax;

•persons that hold securities as a hedge against interest rate or currency risks or as part of a straddle or conversion transaction;

•non-U.S. individuals and foreign corporations (except to the limited extent discussed in "-Taxation of Non-U.S. Holders"); and

•holders whose functional currency is not the U.S. dollar.

The statements in this section are based on the Code, its legislative history, current and proposed regulations under the Code, published rulings and court decisions. This summary describes the provisions of these sources of law only as they are currently in effect. All of these sources of law may change at any time, and any change in the law may apply retroactively. We cannot assure you that new laws, interpretations of law or court decisions, any of which may take effect retroactively, will not cause any statement in this section to be inaccurate.

No rulings have been issued by, or will be sought from, the IRS, or from any other taxing authority, as to any of the matters described in this prospectus. In the absence of any such rulings, no assurances can be given that the following discussion and opinions will prove to be accurate, or that the courts will agree with the tax consequences described below in the event of a challenge by the IRS.

This section is not a substitute for careful tax planning. We urge you to consult your tax advisor regarding the specific tax consequences to you of ownership of our securities and of our election to be taxed as a REIT. Specifically, you

should consult your tax advisor regarding the federal, state, local, foreign, and other tax consequences to you regarding the purchase, ownership and sale of our securities. You should also consult with your tax advisor regarding the impact of potential changes in the applicable tax laws.

15

U.S. Federal Taxation of NHI as a REIT

We have elected to be taxed as a REIT, and since our formation, have filed our federal income tax return as a REIT. We believe that we have met the requirements for qualification as a REIT since our initial REIT election in 1991, and we expect to qualify as such for each of our taxable years. Our qualification and taxation as a REIT depends upon our ability to meet on a continuing basis, through actual annual operating results, the various qualification tests and organizational requirements imposed under the Code, as discussed below, including qualification tests based on NHI's assets, income, distributions and stock ownership.

Locke Lord LLP has provided us an opinion that we have been organized and, for the taxable year ended December 31, 2010, through the taxable year ended December 31, 2012, we have operated in conformity with the requirements for qualification and taxation as a REIT under the Code, and our current manner of organization and proposed method of operation will enable us to continue to satisfy the requirements for qualification and taxation as a REIT under the Code for 2013 and thereafter. You should be aware, however, that opinions of counsel are not binding upon the IRS or any court. In providing its opinion, Locke Lord LLP is relying, as to certain factual matters, upon the statements and representations contained in certificates provided to Locke Lord LLP by us. Locke Lord LLP has assumed for purposes of its opinion that (i) we have met the requirements for qualification and taxation as a REIT at all times during the period beginning with our initial REIT election in 1991 and ending on December 31, 2008, and (ii) any prior legal opinions we have received to the effect that we satisfied the requirements for qualification and taxation as a REIT are correct. The conclusions reached in the opinion of Locke Lord LLP are expressly conditioned on the accuracy of such assumptions.

Our qualification as a REIT will depend upon our continuing satisfaction of the requirements of the Code relating to qualification for REIT status. Some of these requirements depend upon actual operating results, distribution levels, diversity of stock ownership, asset composition, source of income and record keeping. Accordingly, while we intend to continue to qualify to be taxed as a REIT, the actual results of our operations for any particular year might not satisfy these requirements. Locke Lord LLP will not monitor our compliance with the requirements for REIT qualification on an ongoing basis. Accordingly, no assurance can be given that the actual results of our operation for any particular taxable year will satisfy such requirements. For a discussion of the tax consequences of our failure to qualify as a REIT. See "-Failure to Qualify as a REIT" below.

The sections of the Code relating to qualification and operation as a REIT, and the federal income taxation of a REIT and its stockholders, are highly technical and complex. The following discussion sets forth only the material aspects of those sections. This summary is qualified in its entirety by the applicable Code provisions and the related rules and regulations.

As a REIT, we generally are not subject to federal income tax on the taxable income that we distribute to our stockholders. The benefit of that tax treatment is that it avoids the "double taxation," or taxation at both the corporate and stockholder levels, that generally results from owning shares in a corporation. Our distributions, however, will generally not be eligible for (i) the lower rate of tax applicable to dividends received by an individual from a "C corporation" (as defined below) or (ii) the corporate dividends received deduction. Further, we will be subject to federal tax in the following circumstances:

First, we will have to pay tax at regular corporate rates on any undistributed real estate investment trust taxable income, including undistributed net capital gains.

Second, under certain circumstances, we may have to pay the alternative minimum tax on items of tax preference.

Third, if we have (a) net income from the sale or other disposition of "foreclosure property," as defined in the Code, which is held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business or (b) other non-qualifying income from foreclosure property, we will have to pay tax at the highest corporate rate on that income.

Fourth, if we have net income from "prohibited transactions," as defined in the Code, we will have to pay a 100% tax on that income. Prohibited transactions are, in general, certain sales or other dispositions of property, other than foreclosure property, held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business. We do not intend to engage in prohibited transactions. We cannot assure you, however, that we will only make sales that satisfy the requirements of the safe harbor or that the IRS will not successfully assert that one or more of such sales are prohibited transactions.

Fifth, if we should fail to satisfy the 75% gross income test or the 95% gross income test, as discussed below under "-Requirements for Qualification," but we have nonetheless maintained our qualification as a REIT because we have satisfied other requirements necessary to maintain REIT qualification, we will have to pay a 100% tax on an amount equal to (a) the gross income attributable to the greater of (i) the amount by which 75% of our gross income exceeds the amount of gross income that is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% test, and (ii) the amount by which 95% of our gross income exceeds the amount of gross income that is qualifying income for purposes of the 95% test, multiplied by (b) a fraction intended to reflect our profitability.

Sixth, if we fail, in more than a de minimis fashion, to satisfy one or more of the asset tests under the REIT provisions of the Code for any quarter of a taxable year, but nonetheless continue to qualify as a REIT because we qualify under certain relief provisions, we will likely be required to pay a tax of the greater of \$50,000 or a tax computed at the highest corporate rate on the amount of net income generated by the assets causing the failure from the date of failure until the assets are disposed of or we otherwise return to compliance with the asset tests.

Seventh, if we fail to satisfy one or more of the requirements for REIT qualification under the REIT provisions of the Code (other than the income tests or the asset tests), we nevertheless may avoid termination of our REIT election in such year if the failure is due to reasonable cause and not due to willful neglect and we pay a penalty of \$50,000 for each failure to satisfy the REIT qualification requirements.

Eighth, if we should fail to distribute during each calendar year at least the sum of (1) 85% of our real estate investment trust ordinary income for that year, (2) 95% of our real estate investment trust capital gain net income for that year and (3) any undistributed taxable income from prior periods, we would have to pay a 4% excise tax on the excess of that required distribution over the sum of (a) the amount actually distributed plus (b) retained amounts on which corporate tax is paid by us.

Ninth, if we acquire any appreciated asset from a C corporation in certain transactions in which we must adopt the basis of the asset or any other property in the hands of the C corporation as our basis of the asset in our hands, and we recognize gain on the disposition of that asset during the 10-year period beginning on the date on which we acquired that asset, then we will have to pay tax on the built-in gain at the highest regular corporate rate unless the C corporation made an election to treat the asset as if it were sold for its fair market value at the time of our acquisition. In general, a "C corporation" means a corporation that has to pay full corporate-level tax.

Tenth, if we receive non-arm's length income from one of our taxable REIT subsidiaries (as defined under "-Requirements for Qualification"), we will be subject to a 100% tax on the amount of our non-arm's-length income.

Eleventh, we may elect to retain and pay tax on our net long-term capital gain. In that case, a United States stockholder would be taxed on its proportionate share of our undistributed long-term capital gain and would receive a credit or refund for the proportionate share of the tax we paid.

Twelfth, income earned by our taxable REIT subsidiaries will be subject to tax at regular rates.

Requirements for Qualification

17

To qualify as a REIT, we must elect to be treated as a REIT, and we must meet various (a) organizational requirements, (b) gross income tests, (c) asset tests, and (d) annual dividend requirements.

Organizational Requirements

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

• that is managed by one or more trustees or directors;

• the beneficial ownership of which is evidenced by transferable shares, or by transferable certificates of beneficial interest;

• that would otherwise be taxable as a domestic corporation, but for Sections 856 through 859 of the Code;

• that is neither a financial institution nor an insurance company to which certain provisions of the Code apply;

• the beneficial ownership of which is held by 100 or more persons;

• during the last half of each taxable year, not more than 50% in value of the outstanding stock of which is owned, directly or constructively, by five or fewer individuals, as defined in the Code to also include certain entities; and

• which meets certain other tests, described below, regarding the nature of its income and assets.

The Code provides that the conditions described in the first through fourth bullet points above must be met during the entire taxable year and that the condition described in the fifth bullet point above must be met during at least 335 days of a taxable year of 12 months, or during a proportionate part of a taxable year of less than 12 months.

We expect that we will satisfy the conditions described in the first through the seventh bullet points of the preceding paragraph. In addition, our charter provides for restrictions regarding the ownership and transfer of our shares. These restrictions are intended to assist us in continuing to satisfy the share ownership requirements described in the fifth and sixth bullet points of the preceding paragraph. The ownership and transfer restrictions pertaining to the stock are described in the section "Transfer and Ownership Restrictions Relating to Our Common and Preferred Stock" above. Where appropriate, we have entered into certain Excepted Holder Agreements that allow certain stockholders to exceed certain charter limits while minimizing the risk that we will fail to satisfy the share requirements. These restrictions, however, may not ensure that we will, in all cases, be able to satisfy the share ownership requirements described in the fifth and sixth bullet points above. If we fail to satisfy these share ownership requirements, except as provided in the next sentence, our status as a REIT will terminate. If, however, we do not know, or would not have known through the exercise of reasonable diligence, that we failed to meet the requirement described in the sixth bullet point above, we will be treated as having met this requirement. See "-Failure to Qualify as a REIT" below. For purposes of determining share ownership under the sixth bullet point, an "individual" generally includes a supplemental unemployment compensation benefits plan, a private foundation, or a portion of a trust permanently set aside or used exclusively for charitable purposes. An "individual," however, generally does not include a trust that is a qualified employee pension or profit sharing trust under the federal income tax laws, and the beneficiaries of such a trust will be treated as holding our shares in proportion to their actuarial interests in the trust for purposes of the sixth bullet point.

A corporation that is a "qualified REIT subsidiary" is not treated as a corporation separate from its parent REIT. All assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit of a "qualified REIT subsidiary" are treated

as assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit of the REIT. A "qualified REIT subsidiary" is a corporation, all of the capital stock of which is owned by the REIT that does not join with the REIT in making a taxable REIT subsidiary election. Thus, in applying the requirements described herein, any "qualified REIT subsidiary" that we own will be ignored, and all assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit of such subsidiary will be treated as our assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit.

An unincorporated domestic entity, such as a limited liability company, that has a single owner, generally is not treated as an entity separate from its owner for federal income tax purposes. An unincorporated domestic entity with two or more owners is generally treated as a partnership for federal income tax purposes. In the case of a REIT that is a partner in a partnership, the REIT is treated as owning its proportionate share of the assets of the partnership and as earning its allocable share of the gross income of the partnership for purposes of the applicable REIT qualification tests.

If, as in our case, a REIT is a partner in a partnership, Treasury Regulations provide that the REIT will be deemed to own its proportionate capital share of the assets of the partnership and will be deemed to be entitled to the income of the partnership attributable to that capital share. Also, the character of the assets and gross income of the partnership will retain the same character in the hands of the REIT for purposes of Section 856 of the Code, including satisfying the gross income tests and the asset tests. In addition, for these purposes, the assets and items of income of any partnership in which we own a direct or indirect interest include such partnership's share of assets and items of income of any partnership in which it owns an interest. The treatment described above also applies with respect to the ownership of interests in limited liability companies or other entities that are treated as partnerships for tax purposes. We have direct or indirect control of all partnerships and limited liability companies and intend to continue to operate them in a manner consistent with the requirements for qualification as a REIT.

Ownership of Interests in Qualified REIT Subsidiaries

We may, from time to time, own interests in subsidiary corporations. We own and operate a number of properties through our wholly-owned subsidiaries that we believe will be treated as "qualified REIT subsidiaries" under the Code. A corporation will qualify as our qualified REIT subsidiary if we own 100% of its outstanding stock and if we do not elect with the subsidiary to treat it as a "taxable REIT subsidiary," as described below. A corporation that is a qualified REIT subsidiary is not treated as a separate corporation for United States federal income tax purposes, and all assets, liabilities and items of income, deduction and credit of a qualified REIT subsidiary are treated as assets, liabilities and items of income, deduction and credit (as the case may be) of the parent REIT for all purposes under the Code (including all REIT qualification tests). Thus, in applying the United States federal income tax requirements described in this prospectus, the subsidiaries in which we own a 100% interest (other than any taxable REIT subsidiaries) are ignored, and all assets, liabilities and items of income, deduction and credit of such subsidiaries are treated as our assets, liabilities and items of income, deduction and credit. A qualified REIT subsidiary is not required to pay United States federal income tax, and our ownership of the stock of a qualified REIT subsidiary does not violate the restrictions on ownership of securities of any one issuer which constitute more than 10% of the voting power or value of such issuer's securities or more than 5% of the value of our total assets, as described below in "-Asset Tests."

Income Tests

We must satisfy two gross income tests annually to maintain our qualification as a REIT.

First, at least 75% of our gross income for each taxable year (excluding gross income from prohibited transactions) must consist of defined types of income that we derive, directly or indirectly, from investments relating to real property or mortgages on real property or qualified temporary investment income. Qualifying income for purposes of that 75% gross income test generally includes:

rents from real property;

interest on debt secured by mortgages on real property, or on interests in real property;

dividends or other distributions on, and gain from the sale of, shares in other REITs;

gain from the sale of real estate assets; and

income derived from the temporary investment of new capital that is attributable to the issuance of our shares of beneficial interest or a public offering of our debt with a maturity date of at least five years and that we receive during the one year period beginning on the date on which we received such new capital.

Second, in general, at least 95% of our gross income for each taxable year (excluding gross income from prohibited transactions) must consist of income that is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test, other types of interest and dividends, gain from the sale or disposition of stock or securities or any combination of these.

If we fail to satisfy one or both of the 75% or 95% gross income tests for any taxable year, we may nevertheless qualify as a REIT for such year if we are entitled to relief under certain provisions of the Code. These relief provisions generally will be available if our failure to meet such tests was due to reasonable cause and not due to willful neglect, if we attach a schedule of the sources of our income to our return, and if any income would be entitled to the benefit of these relief provisions. As discussed above in "U.S. Federal Taxation of NHI as a REIT," even if these relief provisions were to apply, a tax would be imposed with respect to the excess net income.

Gross income from our sale of property that we hold primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business is generally excluded from both the numerator and the denominator in both income tests. The following paragraphs discuss the specific application of the gross income tests to us.

Rents from Real Property. Rent that we receive from our real property will qualify as "rents from real property," which is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% and 95% gross income tests, only if the following conditions are met:

First, the rent must not be based in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person. Participating rent, however, will qualify as "rents from real property" if it is based on percentages of receipts or sales.

Second, we must not own, and an actual or constructive owner of 10% or more of our capital stock must not own, actually or constructively, 10% or more of the interests in the assets or net profits of the tenant, or, if the tenant is a corporation, 10% or more of the voting power or value of all classes of stock of the tenant, unless such tenant is our taxable REIT subsidiary and certain other conditions are met. The uncertainty of the application of the attribution rules at any point in time makes uncertain the determination that all or the requisite percentage of rents received by us from tenants that are publicly owned entities, such as NHC, are "rents from real property" within the meaning of the Code. We believe that we have not owned directly or by attribution at any time 10% or more of the outstanding ownership interests in any tenant. If the rents received do not qualify, we might not qualify as a REIT unless the relief provisions described below are determined to be available. Management of NHI has carefully reviewed the ownership of NHC and of each other tenant and of our common stock with the foregoing attribution rules in mind and, to the best of its knowledge, we do not own directly or by attribution 10% or more of the outstanding ownership interests in any tenant, including NHC.

Third, the rent attributable to the personal property leased in connection with a lease of real property must not be greater than 15% of the total rent received under the lease. The rent attributable to personal property under a lease is the amount that bears the same ratio to total rent under the lease for the taxable year as the average of the fair market values of the leased personal property at the beginning and at the end of the taxable year bears to the average of the aggregate fair market values of both the real and personal property covered by the lease at the beginning and at the end of such taxable year (the "personal property ratio").

Fourth, we cannot furnish or render noncustomary services to the tenants of our properties, or manage or operate our properties, other than through an independent contractor who is adequately compensated and from whom we do not derive or receive any income. However, we need not provide services through an

"independent contractor," but instead may provide services directly to our tenants, if the services are "usually or customarily rendered" in connection with the rental of space for occupancy only and are not considered to be provided for the tenants' convenience. In addition, we may provide a minimal amount of "noncustomary" services to the tenants of a property, other than through an independent contractor, as long as our income from the services does not exceed 1% of our income from the related property. Finally, we may own up to 100% of the stock of one or more taxable REIT subsidiaries, which may provide noncustomary services to our tenants without tainting our rents from the related properties. We have not provided services to leased properties that have caused rents to be disqualified as rents from real property, and in the future, we intend that any services provided will not cause rents to be disqualified as rents from real property.

We generally do not intend to receive rent that fails to satisfy any of the above conditions. Notwithstanding the foregoing, we may have taken and may continue to take actions which fail to satisfy one or more of the above conditions to the extent that we determine, based on the advice of our tax counsel, that those actions will not jeopardize our tax status as a REIT. In addition, with respect to the limitation on the rental of personal property, we have not obtained appraisals of the real property and personal property leased to tenants. Accordingly, there can be no assurance that the IRS will agree with our determinations of value.

Prohibited Transactions. A REIT will incur a 100% tax on the net income derived from any sale or other disposition of property, other than foreclosure property, that the REIT holds primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business. Under existing law, whether property is held as inventory or primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business is a question of fact that depends on all of the facts and circumstances of the particular transaction. There is a safe harbor from such treatment, under which we will not be subject to the 100% tax with respect to a sale of property if (i) the property has been held for at least two years for the production of rental income prior to the sale, (ii) capitalized expenditures on the property in the two years preceding the sale are less than 30% of the net selling price of the property, and (iii) we either (a) have seven or fewer sales of property (excluding certain property obtained through foreclosure and other than certain involuntary conversions) in the year of sale or (b) (x) the aggregate fair market value or aggregate adjusted bases of property sold during the year of sale is 10% or less of the aggregate fair market value or aggregate adjusted bases, respectively, of all our assets as of the beginning of the taxable year, excluding sales of foreclosure property and involuntary conversions, and (y) substantially all of the marketing and development expenditures with respect to the property sold are made through an independent contractor from whom we derive no income. The sale of more than one property to a buyer as part of one transaction constitutes one sale for purposes of this safe harbor. We intend to own our properties for investment with a view to long-term appreciation, to engage in the business of acquiring, developing and owning rental properties and making occasional sales of properties as are consistent with our investment objectives, and we believe that we have complied with the safe harbor provisions and will continue to so comply in the future. However, the IRS may successfully contend that some of our sales are prohibited transactions, in which case we would be required to pay the 100% penalty tax on the gains resulting from any such sales.

Hedging Transactions. Except to the extent provided by Treasury Regulations, any income we derive from hedging transactions (which may include entering into interest rate swaps, caps, and floors, options to purchase such items, and futures and forward contracts) which is clearly identified as such as specified in the Code, including gain from the sale or disposition of such a transaction, will not constitute gross income for purposes of either the 75% or 95% gross income tests, and therefore will be exempt from these tests, but only to the extent that the transaction hedges indebtedness incurred or to be incurred by us to acquire or carry real estate assets or is entered into primarily to manage the risk of foreign currency fluctuations. Income from any hedging transactions not described above will likely continue to be treated as nonqualifying for both the 75% and 95% gross income tests.

The Treasury has the authority to determine whether any item of income or gain which does not otherwise qualify under the 75% or 95% gross income tests, may be excluded as gross income for purposes of such tests or may be considered income that qualifies under such test. We intend to structure any hedging or similar transactions so as not to jeopardize our status as a REIT.

Failure to Satisfy Gross Income Tests

If we fail to satisfy one or both of the gross income tests for any taxable year, we nevertheless may qualify as a REIT for that year if we qualify for relief under certain provisions of the federal income tax laws. Those relief provisions generally will be available if:

• our failure to meet the income tests was due to reasonable cause and not due to willful neglect; and

21

• we file a description of each item of our gross income in accordance with applicable Treasury Regulations.

We cannot with certainty predict whether any failure to meet these tests will qualify for the relief provisions. As discussed above in "-U.S. Federal Taxation of NHI as a REIT," even if the relief provisions apply, we would incur a 100% tax on the gross income attributable to the greater of the amounts by which we fail the 75% and 95% gross income tests, multiplied by a fraction intended to reflect our profitability.

Asset Tests

To maintain our qualification as a REIT, we also must satisfy the following asset tests at the end of each quarter of each taxable year:

First, at least 75% of the value of our total assets must consist of: (a) cash or cash items, including certain receivables, (b) government securities, (c) real estate assets, including interests in real property, leaseholds and options to acquire real property and leaseholds, (d) interests in mortgages on real property, (e) stock in other REITs; and (f) investments in stock or debt instruments during the one year period following our receipt of new capital that we raise through equity offerings or offerings of debt with at least a five year term;

• Second, of our investments not included in the 75% asset class, the value of our interest in any one issuer's securities may not exceed 5% of the value of our total assets;

• Third, we may not own more than 10% of the voting power or value of any one issuer's outstanding securities;

• Fourth, no more than 25% of the value of our total assets may consist of the securities of one or more taxable REIT subsidiaries; and

• Fifth, no more than 25% of the value of our total assets may consist of the securities of taxable REIT subsidiaries and other non-TRS taxable subsidiaries and other assets that are not qualifying assets for purposes of the 75% asset test.

For purposes of the second and third asset tests, the term "securities" does not include stock in another REIT, equity or debt securities of a qualified REIT subsidiary or TRS, mortgage loans that constitute real estate assets, or equity interests in a partnership. For purposes of the 10% value test, the term "securities" generally does not include debt securities issued by a partnership to the extent of our interest as a partner of the partnership or if at least 75% of the partnership's gross income (excluding income from prohibited transactions) is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test. In addition, "straight debt" and certain other instruments are not treated as "securities" for purposes of the 10% value test.

Failure to Satisfy the Asset Tests

We will monitor the status of our assets for purposes of the various asset tests and will manage our portfolio in order to comply at all times with such tests. If we fail to satisfy the asset tests at the end of a calendar quarter, we will not lose our REIT status if:

• we satisfied the asset tests at the end of the preceding calendar quarter; and

• the discrepancy between the value of our assets and the asset test requirements arose from changes in the market values of our assets and was not wholly or partly caused by the acquisition of one or more non-qualifying assets.

If we did not satisfy the condition described in the second item, above, we still could avoid disqualification by eliminating any discrepancy within 30 days after the close of the calendar quarter in which it arose.

If we fail to satisfy one or more of the asset tests for any quarter of a taxable year, we nevertheless may qualify as a REIT for such year if we qualify for relief under certain provisions of the Code. For example, there are relief provisions that are generally available for failures of the 5% asset test and the 10% asset tests if the failure is due to the ownership of assets that do not exceed the lesser of 1% of our total assets or \$10 million, and the failure is

corrected within six months following the quarter in which it was discovered. Additionally, there are provisions that allow a REIT

22

that fails one or more of the asset requirements to maintain its qualification as a REIT if the failure is due to reasonable cause and not due to willful neglect, we file a schedule with a description of each asset causing the failure in accordance with Treasury Regulations, the failure is corrected within 6 months following the quarter in which it was discovered, and we pay a tax consisting of the greater of \$50,000 per failure and a tax computed at the highest corporate rate on the amount of net income generated by the assets causing the failure from the date of failure until the assets are disposed of or we otherwise return to compliance with the asset test. We may not qualify for the relief provisions in all circumstances.

Taxable REIT Subsidiary

A REIT may directly or indirectly own stock in a taxable REIT subsidiary. A taxable REIT subsidiary may be any corporation in which we directly or indirectly own stock and where both NHI and the subsidiary make a joint election to treat the corporation as a taxable REIT subsidiary, in which case it is treated separately from us and will be subject to federal corporate income taxation. Our stock, if any, of a taxable REIT subsidiary is not subject to the 10% or 5% asset tests. Instead, the value of all taxable REIT securities owned by us cannot exceed 25% of the value of our assets. We currently own all of the membership interests of NHI-SS TRS, LLC, a taxable REIT subsidiary. Such taxable REIT subsidiary will be subject to federal corporate income taxation.

Distribution Requirements

Each taxable year, we must distribute dividends, other than capital gain dividends, to our stockholders in an aggregate amount not less than: the sum of (a) 90% of our "REIT taxable income," computed without regard to the dividends-paid deduction or our net capital gain or loss, and (b) 90% of our after-tax net income, if any, from foreclosure property, minus the sum of certain items of non-cash income.

We must pay such dividends in the taxable year to which they relate, or in the following taxable year if we declare the dividend before we timely file our federal income tax return for the year and pay the dividend on or before the first regular dividend payment date after such declaration and within the twelve-month period following the close of such year. These distributions generally are taxable to our existing stockholders, other than tax-exempt entities, in the year in which paid. This is so even though these distributions may relate to the prior year for purposes of the 90% distribution requirement. However, if we declare a dividend in October, November or December of a taxable year, such dividend is payable to stockholders of record on a specified date in any such month and such dividend is actually paid before the end of the January of the following year, such dividend will be treated as both paid by us and received by our stockholders on December 31 of the year in which it was declared.

In order for distributions to be counted toward our distribution requirement and to provide a tax deduction to us, they must not be "preferential dividends." A dividend is not a preferential dividend if it is pro rata among all outstanding shares within a particular class and is in accordance with the preferences among our different classes of stock set forth in our organizational documents. A distribution of a preferential dividend may cause other distributions to be treated as preferential dividends, possibly preventing us from satisfying the requirements for REIT qualification.

To the extent that we do not distribute all of our net capital gains or distribute at least 90%, but less than 100%, of our real estate investment trust taxable income, as adjusted, we will have to pay tax on those amounts at regular ordinary and capital gains corporate tax rates. Furthermore, if we fail to distribute during each calendar year

at least the sum of (a) 85% of our ordinary income for that year, (b) 95% of our capital gain net income for that year, and (c) any undistributed taxable income from prior periods, we would have to pay a 4% nondeductible excise tax on the excess of the required dividend over the amounts actually distributed.

We believe we have made, and intend to continue to make, timely distributions sufficient to satisfy these annual distribution requirements and to minimize our corporate tax obligations. Further, we believe that our cash flow will generally exceed our REIT taxable income, and therefore, we anticipate that we will generally have sufficient cash or liquid assets to satisfy the distribution requirements. However, from time to time, we may not have sufficient cash or other liquid assets to meet the distribution requirements due to timing differences between the actual receipt of income and payment of deductible expenses, and the inclusion of income and deduction of expenses in determining our taxable income, or if the amount of nondeductible expenses (such as principal amortization or capital expenses) exceeds the amount of noncash deductions (such as depreciation). If these timing differences occur, we may be required to borrow funds or sell assets to pay cash dividends or we may be required to pay dividends in the form of taxable stock dividends in order to meet the distribution requirements.

Under certain circumstances, we may be able to correct a failure to meet the distribution requirements for a year by paying "deficiency dividends" to our stockholders in a later year. We may include such deficiency dividends in our deduction for dividends paid for the earlier year. Although we may be able to avoid income tax on amounts distributed as deficiency dividends, we will be required to pay interest and penalties based upon the amount of any deduction we take for deficiency dividends.

Recordkeeping Requirements

We must maintain certain records in order to qualify as a REIT. In addition, to avoid paying a penalty, we must request on an annual basis information from our stockholders designed to disclose the actual ownership of the outstanding common stock. We have complied and intend to continue to comply with these requirements.

Accounting Period

In order to elect to be taxed as a REIT, we must use a calendar year accounting period. We will use the calendar year as our accounting period for federal income tax purposes for each and every year we intend to operate as a REIT.

Failure to Qualify as a REIT

If we failed to qualify as a REIT in any taxable year and no relief provision applied, we would have the following consequences. We would be subject to federal income tax and any applicable alternative minimum tax at rates applicable to regular C corporations on our taxable income, determined without reduction for amounts distributed to stockholders. We would not be required to make any distributions to stockholders, and any dividends to stockholders would be taxable as ordinary income to the extent of our current and accumulated earnings and profits (which may be subject to tax at preferential rates to individual stockholders). Corporate stockholders could be eligible for a dividends-received deduction if certain conditions are satisfied. Unless we qualified for relief under specific statutory provisions, we would not be permitted to elect taxation as a REIT for the four taxable years following the year during which we ceased to qualify as a REIT. We might not be entitled to the statutory relief described in this paragraph in all circumstances.

Relief From Certain Failures of the REIT Qualification Provisions

If we fail to satisfy one or more of the requirements for REIT qualification (other than the income tests or the asset tests), we nevertheless may avoid termination of our REIT election in such year if the failure is due to reasonable cause and not due to willful neglect and we pay a penalty of \$50,000 for each failure to satisfy the REIT qualification requirements. We may not qualify for this relief provision in all circumstances.

Taxation of Taxable U.S. Holders

For purposes of this discussion, the term "U.S. holder" means a beneficial owner of securities that is for U.S. federal income tax purposes:

• a citizen or individual resident of the U.S.;

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

• a trust if it (1) is subject to the primary supervision of a court within the U.S. and one or more U.S. persons have the authority to control all substantial decisions of the trust, or (2) has a valid election in effect under applicable U.S. Treasury Regulations to be treated as a U.S. person; or

• an estate the income of which is subject to U.S. federal income tax regardless of its source.

If a partnership (including any entity treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes) is a beneficial owner of our shares, the tax treatment of a partner in the partnership generally will depend upon the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. A beneficial owner that is a partnership and partners in such a partnership should consult their tax advisors about the U.S. federal income tax consequences of the acquisition, ownership and disposition of our stock.

As long as we qualify as a REIT, distributions made by us out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits, and not designated as capital gain dividends, will constitute dividends taxable to our taxable U.S. holders as ordinary income. Individuals receiving "qualified dividends" from domestic and certain qualifying foreign subchapter C corporations may be entitled to lower rates on dividends (at rates applicable to long-term capital gains, currently at a maximum rate of 20%) provided certain holding period requirements are met. However, individuals receiving dividend distributions from us, a REIT, will generally not be eligible for such lower rates on dividends except with respect to the portion of any distribution which (a) represents dividends being passed through to us from a corporation in which we own shares (but only if such dividends would be eligible for the lower rates on dividends if paid by the corporation to its individual stockholders) (b) is equal to our REIT taxable income (taking into account the dividends paid deduction available to us) less any taxes paid by us on these items during our previous taxable year, or (c) are attributable to built-in gains realized and recognized by us from disposition of properties acquired by us in non-recognition transaction, less any taxes paid by us on these items during our previous taxable year. The lower rates will apply only to the extent we designate a distribution as qualified dividend income in a written notice to you.

Individual taxable U.S. holders should consult their own tax advisors to determine the impact of these provisions. Dividends of this kind will not be eligible for the dividends received deduction in the case of taxable U.S. holders that are corporations. Dividends made by us that we properly designate as capital gain dividends will be taxable to taxable U.S. holders as gain from the sale of a capital asset held for more than one year, to the extent that such designated amounts do not exceed our actual net capital gain for the taxable year, without regard to the period for which a taxable U.S. holder has held its common stock. Thus, with certain limitations, capital gain dividends received by an individual taxable U.S. holder may be eligible for preferential rates of taxation. Taxable U.S. holders that are corporations may, however, be required to treat up to 20% of certain capital gain dividends as ordinary income. Capital gains on 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 individuals, to the extent of previously-claimed depreciation deductions. To the extent that we pay dividends, not designated as capital gain dividends, in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits, these dividends will be treated first as a tax-free return of capital to each taxable U.S. holder. Thus, these dividends will reduce the adjusted basis which the taxable U.S. holder has in our stock for tax purposes by the amount of the dividend, but not below zero. Dividends in excess of a taxable U.S. holder's adjusted basis in its common stock will be taxable as capital gains, provided that the stock is held as a capital asset.

Stockholders may not include in their own income tax returns any of our net operating losses or capital losses. However, we generally are allowed to carry over such losses for potential offset against our future income, subject to certain limitations.

We may elect to retain, rather than distribute, all or a portion of our net long-term capital gains and pay the tax on such gains. If we make such an election, we will designate amounts as undistributed capital gains in respect of your shares or beneficial interests by written notice to you which we will mail out to you with our annual report or at any time

25

within 60 days after December 31 of any year. When we make such an election, taxable U.S. holders holding common stock at the close of our taxable year will be required to include, in computing their long-term capital gains for the taxable year in which the last day of our taxable year falls, the amount that we designate in a written notice mailed to our stockholders. We may not designate amounts in excess of our undistributed net capital gain for the taxable year. Each taxable U.S. holder required to include the designated amount in determining the holder's long-term capital gains will be deemed to have paid, in the taxable year of the inclusion, the tax paid by us in respect of such U.S. holder's share of our undistributed net capital gains. Taxable U.S. holders to whom these rules apply will be allowed a credit or a refund, as the case may be, for the tax they are deemed to have paid. Taxable U.S. holders will increase their basis in their stock by the difference between the amount of the includible gains and the tax deemed paid by the stockholder in respect of these gains.

Dividends made by us and gain arising from a taxable U.S. holder's sale or exchange of our stock will not be treated as passive activity income. As a result, taxable U.S. holders generally will not be able to apply any passive losses against that income or gain. A U.S. holder may elect to treat capital gain dividends, capital gains from the disposition of stock and qualified dividend income as investment income for purposes of computing the investment interest limitation, but in such case, the holder will be taxed at ordinary income rates on such amount. Other distributions made by us, to the extent they do not constitute a return of capital, generally will be treated as investment income for purposes of computing the investment interest limitation.

When a taxable U.S. holder sells or otherwise disposes of our securities, the holder will recognize gain or loss for federal income tax purposes in an amount equal to the difference between (a) the amount of cash and the fair market value of any property received on the sale or other disposition, and (b) the holder's adjusted basis in the security for tax purposes. This gain or loss will be capital gain or loss if the U.S. holder has held the security as a capital asset. The gain or loss will be long-term gain or loss if the U.S. holder has held the security for more than one year. Long-term capital gains of an individual taxable U.S. holder is generally taxed at preferential rates (currently, a maximum of 20%). Any gain recognized by an individual stockholder on the sale of our securities held for less than one year will be taxed at ordinary income rates (currently, a maximum of 39.6%). The characterization of income as capital gain or ordinary income may affect the deductibility of capital losses. A non-corporate taxpayer may deduct capital losses not offset by capital gains against its ordinary income only up to a maximum of \$3,000 annually. A non-corporate taxpayer may carry unused capital losses forward indefinitely. A corporate taxpayer must pay tax on its net capital gains at corporate ordinary-income rates. A corporate taxpayer may deduct capital losses only to the extent of capital gains, with unused losses carried back three years and forward five years. In general, any loss recognized by a taxable U.S. holder when the holder sells or otherwise disposes of our securities that the holder has held for six months or less, after applying certain holding period rules, will be treated as a long-term capital loss, to the extent of dividends received by the holder from us which were required to be treated as long-term capital gains.

Redemption or Repurchase by Us

A redemption or repurchase of shares of our stock will be treated under Section 302 of the Code as a distribution taxable as a dividend to the extent of our current and accumulated earnings and profits at ordinary income rates unless the redemption or repurchase satisfies one of the tests set forth in Section 302(b) of the Code and is therefore treated as a sale or exchange of the redeemed or repurchased shares. The redemption or repurchase will be treated as a sale or exchange if it:

is "substantially disproportionate" with respect to the U.S. holder;

results in a "complete termination" of the U.S. holder's stock interest in us; or

is "not essentially equivalent to a dividend" with respect to the U.S. holder, all within the meaning of Section 302(b) of the Code.

In determining whether any of these tests have been met, shares of capital stock, including common stock and other equity interests in us, considered to be owned by the U.S. holder by reason of certain constructive ownership rules set forth in the Code, as well as shares of our capital stock actually owned by the U.S. holder, must generally be taken into account. Because the determination as to whether any of the alternative tests of Section 302(b) of the Code will be satisfied with respect to the U.S. holder depends upon the facts and circumstances at the time that the determination must be made, U.S. holders are advised to consult their tax advisors to determine such tax treatment.

If a redemption or repurchase of shares of our stock is treated as a distribution taxable as a dividend, the amount of the distribution will be measured by the amount of cash and the fair market value of any property received. A U.S. holder's adjusted basis in the redeemed or repurchased shares of the stock for tax purposes will be transferred to its remaining shares of our capital stock, if any. If a U.S. holder owns no other shares of our capital stock, such basis may, under certain circumstances, be transferred to a related person or it may be lost entirely.

If a redemption or repurchase of shares of our stock is not treated as a distribution taxable as a dividend, it will be treated as a taxable sale or exchange.

Medicare Tax on Investment Income

Subject to certain exceptions, U.S. holders that are individuals, estates or trusts are required to pay a 3.8% Medicare tax on, among other items of income, dividends and capital gains from the sale or other disposition of our stock. U.S. holders are urged to consult their tax advisors regarding the effect, if any, of this tax on their ownership and disposition of our stock.

Information Reporting Requirements and Backup Withholding

We will report to our holders of our stock and to the IRS the amount of interest or dividends we pay during each calendar year and the amount of tax we withhold, if any. A holder may be subject to backup withholding with respect to dividends unless the holder:

is a corporation or comes within certain other exempt categories and, when required, demonstrates this fact; or

provides a taxpayer identification number, certifies as to no loss of exemption from backup withholding, and otherwise complies with the applicable requirements of the backup withholding rules.

A holder who does not provide us with its correct taxpayer identification number also may be subject to penalties imposed by the IRS. Any amount paid as backup withholding will be creditable against the holder's income tax liability. In addition, we may be required to withhold a portion of capital gain dividends to any holders who fail to certify their non-foreign status to us. For a discussion of the backup withholding rules as applied to non-U.S. holders, see "-Taxation of Non-U.S. Holders."

Taxation of Tax-Exempt Holders

Amounts distributed as dividends by a REIT generally do not constitute unrelated business taxable income when received by a tax-exempt entity. Provided that a tax-exempt holder is not one of the types of entity described in the next paragraph and has not held its stock as "debt financed property" within the meaning of the Code, and the stock is not otherwise used in a trade or business, the dividend income from the stock will not be unrelated business taxable income to a tax-exempt stockholder. Similarly, income from the sale of stock will not constitute unrelated business taxable income unless the tax-exempt holder has held the stock as "debt financed property" within the meaning of the Code or has used the stock in a trade or business.

Income from an investment in our securities will constitute unrelated business taxable income for 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 the applicable subsections of Section 501(c) of the Code, unless the organization is able to properly deduct amounts set aside or placed in reserve for certain purposes so as to offset the income generated by its securities. Prospective investors of

the types described in the preceding sentence should consult their own tax advisors concerning these "set aside" and reserve requirements.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, however, a portion of the dividends paid by a "pension-held REIT" will be treated as unrelated business taxable income to any trust which:

is described in Section 401(a) of the Code;

is tax-exempt under Section 501(a) of the Code; and

holds more than 10% (by value) of the equity interests in the REIT.

Tax-exempt pension, profit-sharing and stock bonus funds that are described in Section 401(a) of the Code are referred to below as "qualified trusts." A REIT is a "pension-held REIT" if:

it would not have qualified as a REIT but for the fact that Section 856(h)(3) of the Code provides that stock owned by qualified trusts will be treated, for purposes of the "not closely held" requirement, as owned by the beneficiaries of the trust (rather than by the trust itself); and

either (a) at least one qualified trust holds more than 25% by value of the interests in the REIT or (b) one or more qualified trusts, each of which owns more than 10% by value of the interests in the REIT, hold in the aggregate more than 50% by value of the interests in the REIT.

The percentage of any REIT dividend treated as unrelated business taxable income to a qualifying trust is equal to the ratio of (a) the gross income of the REIT from unrelated trades or businesses, determined as though the REIT were a qualified trust, less direct expenses related to this gross income, to (b) the total gross income of the REIT, less direct expenses related to the total gross income. We do not expect to be classified as a pension-held REIT, but this cannot be guaranteed.

The rules described above in "-Taxation of Taxable U.S. Holders" concerning the inclusion of our designated undistributed net capital gains in the income of our stockholders will apply to tax-exempt entities. Thus, tax-exempt entities will be allowed a credit or refund of the tax deemed paid by these entities in respect of the includible gains.

Taxation of Non-U.S. Holders

The rules governing U.S. federal income taxation of nonresident alien individuals, foreign corporations, foreign partnerships and other foreign stockholders are complex. This section is only a summary of such rules. We urge non-U.S. holders to consult their own tax advisors to determine the impact of federal, state, and local income tax laws on ownership of common stock, including any reporting requirements.

Ordinary Dividends. Dividends, other than dividends that are treated as attributable to gain from sales or exchanges by us of U.S. real property interests, as discussed below, and other than dividends designated by us as capital gain dividends, will be treated as ordinary income to the extent that they are made out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits. A withholding tax equal to 30% of the gross amount of the dividend will ordinarily apply to dividends of this kind to non-U.S. holders, unless an applicable income tax treaty reduces that tax. However, if income from an investment in our stock is treated as effectively connected with the non-U.S. holder's conduct of a U.S. trade or business or is attributable to a permanent establishment that the non-U.S. holder maintains in the U.S. (if that is required by an applicable income tax treaty as a condition for subjecting the non-U.S. holder to U.S. taxation on a net income basis), tax at graduated rates will generally apply to the non-U.S. holder in the same manner as U.S. holders are taxed with respect to dividends, and the 30% branch profits tax may also apply if the stockholder is a foreign corporation. We expect to withhold U.S. tax at the rate of 30% on the gross amount of any dividends, other than dividends treated as attributable to gain from sales or exchanges of U.S. real property interests and capital gain dividends, paid to a non-U.S. holder, unless (a) a lower treaty rate applies and the required form evidencing eligibility for that reduced rate (ordinarily, IRS Form W-8BEN or W-8BEN-E) is filed with us or the appropriate withholding agent or (b) the non-U.S. holders files an IRS Form W-8ECI or a successor form with us

or the appropriate withholding agent claiming that the dividends are effectively connected with the non-U.S. holder's conduct of a U.S. trade or business. However, amounts withheld should generally be refundable if it is subsequently determined that the distribution was, in fact, in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits, provided that certain conditions are met.

Dividends to a non-U.S. holder that are designated by us at the time of dividend as capital gain dividends which are not attributable to or treated as attributable to the disposition by us of a U.S. real property interest generally will not be subject to U.S. federal income taxation, except as described below.

Return of Capital. Distributions in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits, which are not treated as attributable to the gain from our disposition of a U.S. real property interest, will not be taxable to a non-U.S. holder to the extent that they do not exceed the adjusted basis of the non-U.S. holder's stock. Distributions of this kind will instead reduce the adjusted basis of the stock. To the extent that distributions of this kind exceed the adjusted basis of a non-U.S. holder's common stock, they will give rise to tax liability if the non-U.S. holder otherwise would have to pay tax on any gain from the sale or disposition of its common stock, as described below. If it cannot be determined at the time a distribution is made whether the distribution will be in excess of current and accumulated earnings and profits, withholding will apply to the distribution at the rate applicable to dividends. However, the non-U.S. holder may seek a refund of these amounts from the IRS if it is subsequently determined that the distribution was, in fact, in excess of our current accumulated earnings and profits.

Capital Gain Dividends. For any year in which we qualify as a REIT, dividends that are attributable to gain from sales or exchanges by us of U.S. real property interests will be taxed to a non-U.S. holder under the provisions of the Foreign Investment in Real Property Tax Act of 1980, as amended. Under this statute, these dividends are taxed to a non-U.S. holder as if the gain were effectively connected with a U.S. business. Thus, non-U.S. holders will be taxed on the dividends at the normal capital gain rates applicable to U.S. holders, subject to any applicable alternative minimum tax and special alternative minimum tax in the case of non-U.S. holders that are individuals. The above rules relating to distributions attributable to gains from our sales or exchanges of U.S. real property interests (or such gains that are retained and deemed to be distributed) will not apply with respect to a non-U.S. holder that does not own more than 5% of our common stock at any time during the taxable year, provided our common stock is "regularly traded" on an established securities market in the U.S. We believe, but cannot guarantee, that our stock is, or will remain, "regularly traded." We are required by applicable Treasury Regulations under the Foreign Investment in Real Property Tax Act of 1980, as amended, to withhold 35% of any distribution that we could designate as a capital gains dividend. However, if we designate as a capital gain dividend a distribution made before the day we actually effect the designation, then although the distribution may be taxable to a non-U.S. holder, withholding does not apply to the distribution under this statute. Rather, we must effect the 35% withholding from distributions made on and after the date of the designation, until the distributions so withheld equal the amount of the prior distribution designated as a capital gain dividend. The non-U.S. holder may credit the amount withheld against its U.S. tax liability.

Sale of Our Stock. Gain recognized by a non-U.S. holder upon a sale or exchange of our stock generally will not be taxed under the Foreign Investment in Real Property Tax Act if we are a "domestically controlled REIT," defined generally as a REIT, less than 50% in value of whose stock is and was held directly or indirectly by foreign persons at all times during a specified testing period. We believe, but cannot guarantee, that we have been and will continue to be a domestically controlled REIT, and, therefore, that taxation under this statute generally should not apply to the sale of our common stock. However, because our stock is publicly traded, no assurance can be given that we will qualify as a domestically controlled REIT at any time in the future. Gain to which this statute does not apply will be taxable to a non-U.S. holder if investment in the common stock is treated as effectively connected with the non-U.S. holder's U.S. trade or business or is attributable to a permanent establishment that the non-U.S. holder maintains in the U.S. (if that is required by an applicable income tax treaty as a condition for subjecting the non-U.S. holders to U.S. taxation on a net income basis). In this case, the same treatment will apply to the non-U.S. holders as to U.S. holders with respect to the gain. In addition, gain to which the Foreign Investment in Real Property Tax Act does not apply will be taxable to a non-U.S. holder if the non-U.S. holder is a nonresident alien individual who was present in the U.S. for 183 days or more during the taxable year to which the gain is attributable. In this case, a 30% tax will apply to the nonresident alien individual's capital gains. A similar rule will apply to capital gain dividends to which this statute does not apply.

If we were not a domestically controlled REIT, tax under the Foreign Investment in Real Property Tax Act would apply to a non-U.S. holder's sale of common stock only if the selling non-U.S. holders owned more than 5% of the class of common stock sold at any time during a specified period. This period is generally the shorter of the period that the non-U.S. holder owned the common stock sold or the five-year period ending on the date when the stockholder disposed of the common stock. If tax under this statute applies to the gain on the sale of common stock, the same treatment would

29

apply to the non-U.S. holder as to U.S. holders with respect to the gain, subject to any applicable alternative minimum tax and a special alternative minimum tax in the case of nonresident alien individuals.

Backup Withholding and Information Reporting

Generally, we must report annually to the IRS the amount of dividends paid to a non-U.S. holder, such holder's name and address, and the amount of tax withheld, if any. A similar report is sent to the non-U.S. holder. Pursuant to tax treaties or other agreements, the IRS may make its reports available to tax authorities in the non-U.S. holder's country of residence.

Payments of dividends or of proceeds from the disposition of stock made to a non-U.S. holder may be subject to information reporting and backup withholding unless such holder establishes an exemption, for example, by properly certifying its non-United States status on an IRS Form W-8BEN or W-8BEN-E or another appropriate version of IRS Form W-8. Notwithstanding the foregoing, backup withholding and information reporting may apply if either we have or are paying agent has actual knowledge, or reason to know, that a non-U.S. holder is a United States person.

Backup withholding is not an additional tax. Rather, the United States income tax liability of persons subject to backup withholding will be reduced by the amount of tax withheld. If withholding results in an overpayment of taxes, a refund or credit may be obtained, provided that the required information is furnished to the IRS in a timely manner.

Tax Aspects of the Partnerships

We own, directly or indirectly, interests in various partnerships and limited liability companies which are treated as partnerships or disregarded entities for United States federal income tax purposes and may own interests in additional partnerships and limited liability companies in the future. Our ownership interests in such partnerships and limited liability companies involve special tax considerations. These special tax considerations include, for example, the possibility that the IRS might challenge the status of one or more of the partnerships or limited liability companies in which we own an interest as partnerships or disregarded entities, as opposed to associations taxable as corporations, for United States federal income tax purposes. If a partnership or limited liability company in which we own an interest, or one or more of its subsidiary partnerships or limited liability companies, were treated as an association, it would be taxable as a corporation and would therefore be subject to an entity-level tax on its income. In this situation, the character of our assets and items of gross income would change, and could prevent us from satisfying the REIT asset tests and possibly the REIT income tests. See "U.S. Federal Taxation of NHI as a REIT-Asset Tests" and "U.S. Federal Taxation of NHI as a REIT-Income Tests" above. This, in turn, could prevent us from qualifying as a REIT. See "-Failure to Qualify as a REIT" for a discussion of the effect on our failure to meet these tests. In addition, a change in the tax status of one or more of the partnerships or limited liability companies in which we own an interest might be treated as a taxable event. If so, we might incur a tax liability without any related cash distributions.

Treasury Regulations that apply for tax periods beginning on or after January 1, 1997, provide that a domestic business entity not organized or otherwise required to be treated as a corporation (an "eligible entity") may elect to be taxed as a partnership or disregarded entity for United States federal income tax purposes. Unless it elects otherwise, an eligible entity in existence prior to January 1, 1997, will have the same classification for United States federal income tax purposes that it claimed under the entity classification Treasury Regulations in effect prior to this date. In addition, an eligible entity which did not exist or did not claim a classification prior to January 1, 1997, will be classified as a partnership or disregarded entity for United States federal income tax purposes unless it elects otherwise. The partnerships and limited liability companies in which we own an interest intend to claim classification as partnerships or disregarded entities under these Treasury Regulations. As a result, we believe that these partnerships and limited liability companies will be classified as partnerships or disregarded entities for United States federal income tax purposes.

Taxation of the Leases

The availability to us of, among other things, depreciation on our Health Care Facilities will depend upon the treatment of us as the owner of the Health Care Facilities and the classification of our leases as true leases, rather than, for example, financing transactions for federal income tax purposes. Based on a number of court decisions, whether we will be treated as the owner of the Health Care Facilities and whether each lease will constitute a true lease for federal income tax purposes will be determined by reference to the facts and circumstances.

No assurances can be given that the IRS will not successfully challenge our status as the owner of the Health Care Facilities and the status of each lease as a true lease. For example, the IRS could take the position that NHC's

30

original contribution of the real property in 1991 and leaseback of the Health Care Facilities by NHC constituted a financing transaction in which NHC is the owner and NHI merely a secured creditor. In such event, we would not be entitled to claim depreciation with respect to any facility subject to the lease. As a consequence, we might lack sufficient cash or liquid assets to meet the distribution requirements, or if the requirements were met, a larger percentage of distributions from us in a particular year would constitute ordinary dividend income instead of a partial return of capital to our stockholders.

State and Local Taxes

We and/or our securityholders may be subject to taxation by various states and localities, including those in which we or a holder transacts business, owns property or resides. The state and local tax treatment may differ from the federal income tax treatment described above. For instance, while some states recognize the status of REITs as corporations and permit them to substantially eliminate corporate-level taxation via deductible distributions, other states may not. Consequently, holders should consult their own tax advisors regarding the effect of state and local tax laws upon an investment in our securities.

Withholding Taxes on Certain Foreign Accounts

Recently enacted legislation may impose withholding taxes on certain types of payments made to "foreign financial institutions" and certain other non-United States entities. Under these rules, the failure to comply with additional certification, information reporting and other specified requirements could result in withholding tax being imposed on payments of dividends and sales proceeds to U.S. holders who own our capital stock through foreign accounts or foreign intermediaries and certain non-U.S. holders. Specifically, after June 30, 2014, a 30% withholding tax may be imposed on dividends, and, after December 31, 2016, gross proceeds from the sale or other disposition of capital stock paid to a foreign financial institution or to a foreign non-financial entity, unless (i) the foreign financial institution undertakes certain diligence and reporting obligations or (ii) the foreign non-financial entity either certifies it does not have any substantial United States owners or furnishes identifying information regarding each substantial United States owner. If the payee is a foreign financial institution, it must enter into an agreement with the United States Treasury requiring, among other things, that it undertake to identify accounts held by certain United States persons or United States-owned foreign entities, annually report certain information about such accounts, and withhold 30% on payments to certain other account holders. Prospective investors should consult their tax advisors regarding these rules.

Investors Should Seek Their Own Tax Advice

The preceding is a brief summary of the tax considerations potentially affecting NHI and its stockholders. This discussion is based on the current state of the law, which is subject to legislative, administrative or judicial actions. Moreover, the discussion does not fully address consideration that may adversely affect the treatment of certain prospective investors (such as corporations, foreign and tax-exempt investors). In these circumstances, and particularly because the ultimate tax impact may vary depending upon the personal circumstances of each investor, **ALL PROSPECTIVE INVESTORS SHOULD CONSULT THEIR OWN TAX ADVISORS CONCERNING THE TAX ASPECTS OF OWNING AND DISPOSING OF COMMON STOCK OR PREFERRED STOCK OF NHI.**

ERISA CONSIDERATIONS

NHI intends to conduct its affairs so that its assets will not be deemed to be "plan assets" of any individual retirement account, employee benefit plan subject to Title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as amended, or other qualified retirement plan subject to Section 4975 of the Code which acquires its securities. The Company believes that, under present law, its distributions do not create so called "unrelated business taxable income" to tax exempt entities such as pension trusts, subject, however, to special rules which apply to pension trusts holding more than 10% of the securities.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may offer and sell the securities from time to time as follows:

through agents;

to or through dealers or underwriters;
directly to other purchasers;

31

in block trades;

through a combination of any of these methods of sale; and

through any other method permitted by applicable law and described in a prospectus supplement.

In addition, the securities may be issued as a dividend or distribution or in a subscription rights offering to existing holders of securities. In some cases, we may also repurchase securities and reoffer them to the public by one or more of the methods described above.

The prospectus supplement with respect to any offering of securities will include the following information:

- the terms of the offering;
- the names of any underwriters or agents;
- the name or names of any managing underwriter or underwriters;
- the purchase price or initial public offering price of the securities;
- the net proceeds from the sale of the securities;
- any delayed delivery arrangements;
- any underwriting discounts, commissions and other items constituting underwriters' compensation;
- any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers;
- any commissions paid to agents; and
- any securities exchange on which the securities may be listed.

Any initial public offering price, discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers may be changed from time to time.

The securities we distribute by any of these methods may be sold to the public, in one or more transactions, either:

- at a fixed price or prices, which may be changed;
- at market prices prevailing at the time of sale;
 - at prices related to prevailing market prices;
- at prices determined by an auction process; or
- at negotiated prices.

We may solicit offers to purchase securities directly from the public from time to time. We may also designate agents from time to time to solicit offers to purchase securities from the public on our behalf. The prospectus supplement relating to any particular offering of securities will name any agents designated to solicit offers, and will include information about any commissions we may pay the agents, in that offering. Agents may be deemed to be “underwriters” as that term is defined in the Securities Act.

From time to time, we may sell securities to one or more dealers as principals. The dealers, who may be deemed to be “underwriters” as that term is defined in the Securities Act, may then resell those securities to the public.

We may sell securities from time to time to one or more underwriters, who would purchase the securities as principals for resale to the public, either on a firm-commitment or best-efforts basis. If we sell securities to underwriters, we will execute an underwriting agreement with them at the time of sale and will name them in the applicable prospectus supplement. In connection with those sales, underwriters may be deemed to have received compensation from us in the form of underwriting discounts or commissions and may also receive commissions from purchasers of the securities for whom they may act as agents. Underwriters may resell the securities to or through dealers, and those dealers may receive compensation in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions from the underwriters and/or commissions from purchasers for whom they may act as agents. The applicable prospectus supplement will include information about any underwriting compensation we pay to underwriters, and any discounts, concessions or commissions underwriters allow to participating dealers, in connection with an offering of securities.

Underwriters or agents could make sales deemed to be an “at-the-market” offering as defined in Rule 415 promulgated under the Securities Act, including sales made directly on the NYSE, the existing trading market for our common stock, or sales made to or through a market maker other than on an exchange. Unless otherwise indicated in the prospectus supplement, any agent will be acting on a reasonable best efforts basis for the period of its appointment. Any agent may, and if acting as agent in an “at-the-market” equity offering will, be deemed to be an underwriter, as that term is defined in the Securities Act, of the offered securities.

If we offer securities in a subscription rights offering to our existing security holders, we may enter into a standby underwriting agreement with dealers, acting as standby underwriters. We may pay the standby underwriters a commitment fee for the securities they commit to purchase on a standby basis. Additionally, before the expiration date for the subscription rights, the standby underwriters may offer the securities, including securities they may acquire through the purchase and exercise of subscription rights, on a when-issued basis at prices set from time to time by them. After the expiration date, the standby underwriters may offer the securities, whether acquired under the standby underwriting agreement, on exercise of subscription rights or by purchase in the market, to the public at prices to be determined by them. Thus, standby underwriters may realize profits or losses independent of the underwriting discounts or commissions we may pay them. If we do not enter into a standby underwriting arrangement, we may retain a dealer-manager to manage a subscription rights offering for us. Any dealer-manager we retain may acquire securities by purchasing and exercising the subscription rights and resell the securities to the

public at prices it determines. As a result, a dealer-manager may realize profits or losses independent of any dealer-manager fee paid by us.

We may authorize underwriters, dealers and agents to solicit from third parties offers to purchase securities under contracts providing for payment and delivery on future dates. The third parties with whom we may enter into contracts of this kind may include banks, insurance companies, pension funds, investment companies, educational and charitable institutions, and others. The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the material terms of these contracts, including any conditions to the purchasers' obligations and will include information about any commissions we may pay for soliciting these contracts.

We may enter into derivative transactions with third parties, or sell securities not covered by this prospectus to third parties in privately negotiated transactions. If the applicable prospectus supplement indicates, in connection with those derivatives, the third parties may sell securities covered by this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement, including in short sale transactions. If so, the third party may use securities pledged by us or borrowed from us or others to settle those sales or to close out any related open borrowings of stock, and may use securities received from us in settlement of those derivatives to close out any related open borrowings of stock. The third party in such sale transactions will be an underwriter and will be identified in the applicable prospectus supplement (or a post-effective amendment).

Underwriters, dealers, agents and other persons may be entitled, under agreements that they may enter into with us, to indemnification by us against civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act.

Underwriters may engage in stabilizing and syndicate covering transactions in accordance with Rule 104 of Regulation M. Rule 104 permits stabilizing bids to purchase the securities being offered as long as the stabilizing bids do not exceed a specified maximum. Underwriters may over-allot the offered securities in connection with the offering, thus creating a short position in their account. Syndicate covering transactions involve purchases of the offered securities by underwriters in the open market after the distribution has been completed in order to cover syndicate short positions. Stabilizing and syndicate covering transactions may cause the price of the offered securities to be higher than it would otherwise be in the absence of these transactions. These transactions, if commenced, may be discontinued at any time.

The underwriters, dealers and agents, as well as their associates, may be customers of or lenders to, and may engage in transactions with and perform services for, NHI and its subsidiaries in the ordinary course of business.

VALIDITY OF SECURITIES

Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, the validity of the securities offered hereby will be passed upon for us by Locke Lord LLP. Any underwriters will be advised about other issues relating to any transaction by their own legal counsel.

EXPERTS

The financial statements and schedules as of December 31, 2012 and 2011 and for each of the three years in the period ended December 31, 2012, management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2012, and the historical statements of revenues and certain direct operating expenses of Care YBE Subsidiary LLC for the year ended December 31, 2012, as set forth in the Current Report on Form 8-K/A filed by us with the SEC on September 4, 2013, incorporated by reference in this prospectus have been so incorporated in reliance on the reports of BDO USA, LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, incorporated herein by reference, given on authority of said firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

PART II
INFORMATION NOT REQUIRED IN PROSPECTUS

Item 14. Other expenses of issuance and distribution.

The following table sets forth the costs and expenses, other than selling or underwriting discounts and commissions, to be incurred by us in connection with the issuance and distribution of the securities being registered hereby. All fees and expenses set forth below are estimates.

| | | |
|---------------------------------|------|---|
| SEC registration fee | \$(1 |) |
| Printing and engraving expenses | (2 |) |
| Legal fees and expenses | (2 |) |
| Rating agency fees | (2 |) |
| Accounting fees and expenses | (2 |) |
| Miscellaneous | (2 |) |
| Total | \$(2 |) |

(1)Deferred in accordance with Rules 456(b) and 457(r) under the Securities Act.

(2)These fees and expenses depend on the securities offered and the number of issuances and, accordingly, cannot be estimated at this time.

Item 15. Indemnifications of directors and officers.

Our charter provides that we shall, to the full extent permitted by the MGCL, indemnify present and former directors of NHI. Our charter also provides that we shall have the power to indemnify, by express provision in our bylaws, by agreement, or by majority vote of either our stockholders or disinterested directors, any one or more of the following classes of individuals: (1) present or former officers, (2) present or former agents and/or employees, (3) present or former administrators, trustees or other fiduciaries under any pension, profit sharing, deferred compensation, or other employee benefit plan maintained by NHI, and (4) persons serving or who have served at our request in any of these capacities for any other corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprises.

Article VII of our bylaws provides that we shall provide to all persons elected or appointed as an officer of NHI indemnification on account of matters resulting in their capacity as an officer to the full extent permitted by our charter.

The MGCL presently permits the liability of directors and officers to a corporation or its stockholders for money damages to be limited, except (i) to the extent that it is proved that the director or officer actually received an improper benefit or profit, or (ii) if the judgment or other final adjudication is entered in a proceeding based on a finding that the directors or officers action, or failure to act, was a result of active and deliberate dishonesty and was material to the cause of action adjudicated in the proceeding. The provisions of our charter do not limit the ability of us or our stockholders to obtain other relief, such as injunction or rescission.

However, a Maryland corporation may not indemnify for an adverse judgment in a suit by or in the right of the corporation. In addition, the MGCL requires a corporation, as a condition to advancing expenses, to obtain (a) a written affirmation by the director or officer of his good faith belief that he has met the standard of conduct necessary for indemnification by such corporation as authorized by the MGCL and (b) a written statement by or on his behalf to repay the amount paid or reimbursed by such corporation if it shall ultimately be determined that the standard of conduct was not met.

Section 2-418 of the MGCL requires a corporation, unless its charter provides otherwise, which our charter does not, to indemnify a director or officer who has been successful, on the merits or otherwise, in the defense of any

proceeding to which he is made a party by reason of his service in that capacity, or in the defense of any claim, issue or matter in the proceeding. Section 2-418 of the MGCL generally permits indemnification of any director or officer made a party to any proceedings by reason of service as a director or officer unless it is established that (i) the act or omission of such person was material to the matter giving rise to the proceeding and was committed in bad faith or was the result of active and deliberate dishonesty; (ii) such person actually received an improper personal benefit in money, property or services; or (iii) in the case of any criminal proceeding, such person had reasonable cause to believe that the act or omission was unlawful. The indemnity may include judgments, penalties, fines, settlements and reasonable expenses

35

actually incurred by the director or officer in connection with the proceeding; provided, however, that if the proceeding is one by, or in the right of the corporation, indemnification is not permitted with respect to any proceeding in which the director or officer has been adjudged to be liable to the corporation. In addition, a director or officer may not be indemnified with respect to any proceeding charging improper personal benefit to the director or officer adjudged to be liable on the basis that personal benefit was improperly received. The termination of any proceeding by conviction or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent or an entry of an order of probation prior to judgment creates a rebuttable presumption that the director or officer did not meet the requisite standard of conduct required for permitted indemnification. The termination of any proceeding by judgment, order or settlement, however, does not create a presumption that the director or officer failed to meet the requisite standard of conduct for permitted indemnification.

Item 16. Exhibits.

Exhibit

Number Description of Exhibits

1.1 Form of Underwriting Agreement (1)

3.1 Articles of Incorporation

3.2 Articles of Amendment to Articles of Incorporation dated as of June 8, 1994

3.3 Articles of Amendment to Articles of Incorporation dated as of May 1, 2009

3.4 Restated Bylaws

4.1 Form of Common Stock Certificate (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 39 to Form S-11 Registration Statement No. 33-41863)

4.2 Articles Supplementary with respect to Preferred Stock issued hereunder (1)

4.3 Form of Preferred Stock Certificate (1)

4.4 Form of Warrant (1)

4.5 Form of Unit (1)

4.6 Form of Warrant Agreement (1)

5.1 Opinion of Locke Lord LLP as to the legality of the securities being registered

8.1 Opinion of Locke Lord LLP as to certain tax matters

12.1 Statement regarding Computation of Ratio of Earnings to Combined Fixed Charges and Preferred Stock Dividends

23.1 Consent of BDO USA, LLP

23.2 Consent of Locke Lord LLP (included in Exhibit 5.1 hereto)

23.3 Consent of Locke Lord LLP (included in Exhibit 8.1 hereto)

24.1 Power of Attorney (included on signature page hereto)

36

(1) To be filed by amendment or incorporated by reference when required in connection with the offering of securities.

Item 17. Undertakings.

(a) Each 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;

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 this 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% change in the maximum aggregate offering price set forth in the "Calculation of Registration Fee" table in the effective Registration Statement; and

(ii) 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), (a)(1)(ii), and (a)(1)(iii) above do not apply if 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 SEC by NHI pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "Exchange Act") that are incorporated by reference in this registration statement, or is contained in a form of prospectus filed pursuant to Rule 424(b) that is part of the registration statement.

That, for the purpose of determining any liability under the Securities Act, each such post-effective amendment (2) 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 post-effective amendment any of the securities being registered which remain unsold at the termination of the offering.

(4) That, for the purpose of determining liability under the Securities Act to any purchaser:

(A) Each prospectus filed by the registrant pursuant to Rule 424(b)(3) shall be deemed to be part of the registration statement as of the date the filed prospectus was deemed part of and included in the registration statement; and Each prospectus required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2), (b)(5) or (b)(7) as part of a registration statement in reliance on Rule 430B relating to an offering made pursuant to Rule 415(a)(1)(i), (vii) or (x) for the purpose of providing the information required by Section 10(a) of the Securities Act shall be deemed to be part of and included in the registration statement as of the earlier of the date such form of prospectus is first used after

(B) effectiveness or the date of the first contract of sale of securities in the offering described in the prospectus. As provided in Rule 430B, for liability purposes of the issuer and any person that is at that date an underwriter, such date shall be deemed to be a new effective date of the registration statement relating to the securities in the registration statement to which the prospectus relates, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof. Provided, however, that no

statement made in a registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement or made in a document incorporated or deemed incorporated by reference into the registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement will, as to a purchaser with a time of contract of sale prior to such effective date, supersede or modify any statement that was made in the registration statement or prospectus that was part of the registration statement or made in any such document immediately prior to such effective date; and

That, for the purpose of determining liability of the registrant under the Securities Act to any purchaser in the initial distribution of the securities, the undersigned registrant undertakes that in a primary offering of securities of the undersigned registrant pursuant to this registration statement, regardless of the underwriting method used to sell the securities to the purchaser, if the securities are offered or sold to such purchaser by means of any of the following communications, the undersigned registrant will be a seller to the purchaser and will be considered to offer or sell such securities to such purchaser:

- (i) Any preliminary prospectus or prospectus of the undersigned registrant relating to the offering required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424;
- (ii) Any free writing prospectus relating to the offering prepared by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant or used or referred to by the undersigned registrant;
- (iii) The portion of any other free writing prospectus relating to the offering containing material information about the undersigned registrant or its securities provided by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant; and
- (iv) Any other communication that is an offer in the offering made by the undersigned registrant to the purchaser.

The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes that, for purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act, each filing of its annual report pursuant to Section 13(a) or Section 15(d) of the 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.

Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act may be permitted to directors, officers and controlling persons of NHI pursuant to the foregoing provisions, or otherwise, the registrant has been advised that in the opinion of the SEC such indemnification is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act and is, therefore, unenforceable. In the event that a claim for indemnification against such liabilities (other than the payment by the registrant of expenses incurred or paid by a director, officer or controlling person of the registrant in the successful defense of any action, suit or proceeding) is asserted by such director, officer or controlling person in connection with the securities being registered, the registrant will, unless in the opinion of its counsel the matter has been settled by controlling precedent, submit to a court of appropriate jurisdiction the question whether such indemnification by it is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act and will be governed by the final adjudication of such issue.

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, 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 registration statement to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized, in the City of Murfreesboro, State of Tennessee, on November 14, 2013.

NATIONAL HEALTH INVESTORS, INC
/s/J. Justin Hutchens
J. Justin Hutchens
President and Chief Executive Officer

POWER OF ATTORNEY

Each person whose signature appears below appoints W. Andrew Adams and J. Justin Hutchens, and each of them, as his true and lawful attorneys-in-fact and agents with full power of substitution and resubstitution, for him and in his name, place and stead, in any and all capacities, to sign any or all amendments (including post-effective amendments) to this Registration Statement and any subsequent registration statement thereto pursuant to Rule 462(b) of the Securities Act of 1933, and to file the same, with all exhibits thereto, and all documents in connection therewith, with the Securities and Exchange Commission, granting unto said attorneys-in-fact and agents, and each of them, full power and authority to do and perform each and every act and thing requisite and necessary to be done in and about the foregoing, as fully to all intents and purposes as he might or could do in person, hereby ratifying and confirming all that said attorneys-in-fact and agents, or any of them or their or his substitutes, may lawfully do or cause to be done by virtue hereof.

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, this registration statement has been signed by each of the following persons in the capacities and on the dates indicated:

| Signature | Title | Date |
|--|---|-------------------|
| /s/ J. Justin Hutchens J. Justin Hutchens | Director, President and Chief Executive Officer (Principal Executive Officer) | November 14, 2013 |
| /s/ Roger R. Hopkins Roger R. Hopkins | Chief Accounting Officer (Principal Accounting Officer) | November 14, 2013 |
| /s/ James R. Jobe James R. Jobe | Director | November 14, 2013 |
| /s/ Robert A. McCabe, Jr. Robert A. McCabe, Jr. | Director | November 14, 2013 |
| /s/ Robert T. Webb Robert T. Webb | Director | November 14, 2013 |

Exhibit Index

Exhibit

Number Description of Exhibits

1.1 Form of Underwriting Agreement (1)

3.1 Articles of Incorporation

3.2 Articles of Amendment to Articles of Incorporation dated as of June 8, 1994

3.3 Articles of Amendment to Articles of Incorporation dated as of May 1, 2009

3.4 Restated Bylaws

4.1 Form of Common Stock Certificate (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 39 to Form S-11 Registration Statement No. 33-41863)

4.2 Articles Supplementary with respect to Preferred Stock issued hereunder (1)

4.3 Form of Preferred Stock Certificate (1)

4.4 Form of Warrant (1)

4.5 Form of Unit (1)

4.6 Form of Warrant Agreement (1)

5.1 Opinion of Locke Lord LLP as to the legality of the securities being registered

8.1 Opinion of Locke Lord LLP as to certain tax matters

12.1 Statement regarding Computation of Ratio of Earnings to Combined Fixed Charges and Preferred Stock Dividends

23.1 Consent of BDO USA, LLP

23.2 Consent of Locke Lord LLP (included in Exhibit 5.1 hereto)

23.3 Consent of Locke Lord LLP (included in Exhibit 8.1 hereto)

24.1 Power of Attorney (included on signature page hereto)

(1) To be filed by amendment or incorporated by reference when required in connection with the offering of securities.