

GOLDMAN SACHS GROUP INC  
Form 424B2  
September 25, 2018  
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Registration Statement No. 333-219206

Subject to Completion. Dated September 25, 2018.

## GS Finance Corp.

\$

Autocallable Contingent Coupon Index-Linked Notes due

guaranteed by

**The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.**

**If the closing level of the S&P Oil & Gas Exploration & Production Select Industry Index on any coupon observation date is *less than* 73.7% of the initial level, you will not receive a coupon on the applicable coupon payment date.** The amount that you will be paid on your notes is based on the performance of the index. The notes will mature on the stated maturity date (expected to be October 17, 2019), unless automatically called on any call observation date (expected to be each coupon observation date described below). Your notes will be automatically called if the closing level of the index on any such call observation date is *greater than or equal to* the initial level (set on the trade date, expected to be September 28, 2018). If your notes are automatically called, you will receive a payment on the next call payment date (the third business day after the call observation date) equal to the face amount of your note *plus* a coupon (as described below).

On each coupon observation date (expected to be January 10, 2019, April 11, 2019 and July 11, 2019), subject to the automatic call feature, if the closing level of the index is *greater than or equal to* 73.7% of the initial level, you will receive on the corresponding coupon payment date (expected to be the third business day after each coupon observation date), for each \$1,000 face amount of your notes, a coupon payment equal to (i) the *product of* \$25 *times* the number of coupon observation dates that have occurred up to and including the relevant coupon observation date *minus* (ii) the sum of all coupons previously paid, if any.

The amount that you will be paid on your notes at maturity, if any, if the notes have not been automatically called, is based on the index return. The index return is the percentage increase or decrease in the final level, which is the arithmetic average of the closing levels of the index on each of the averaging dates (expected to be October 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11, 2019), from the initial level.

At maturity, for each \$1,000 face amount of your notes, you will receive an amount in cash equal to:

- if the index return is *greater than or equal to* -26.3% (the final level is *greater than or equal to* 73.7% of the initial level), the *sum* of (i) \$1,000 *plus* (ii) a coupon equal to \$100 minus the sum of all coupons previously paid, if any; or
- if the index return is *less than* -26.3% (the final level is *less than* 73.7% of the initial level), the *sum* of (i) \$1,000 *plus* (ii) the *product* of (a) the index return *times* (b) \$1,000. **You will receive less than 73.7% of the face amount of your notes.**

**You should read the disclosure herein to better understand the terms and risks of your investment, including the credit risk of GS Finance Corp. and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. See page PS-13.**

*The estimated value of your notes at the time the terms of your notes are set on the trade date is expected to be between \$960 and \$990 per \$1,000 face amount. For a discussion of the estimated value and the price at which Goldman, Sachs & Co. would initially buy or sell your notes, if it makes a market in the notes, see the following page.*

|                               |                                |                                    |                             |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Original issue date:</b>   | expected to be October 3, 2018 | <b>Original issue price:</b>       | 100.00% of the face amount* |
| <b>Underwriting discount:</b> | % of the face amount*          | <b>Net proceeds to the issuer:</b> | % of the face amount        |

\*Accounts of certain national banks, acting as purchase agents for such accounts, have agreed with the purchase agents to pay a purchase price of % of the face amount, and as a result of such agreements, the agents with respect to sales to be made to such accounts will not receive any portion of the underwriting discount from GS & Co.

**Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any other regulatory body 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 notes are not bank deposits and are not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other governmental agency, nor are they obligations of, or guaranteed by, a bank.**

**Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC**

**JPMorgan**

**Placement Agent**

Pricing Supplement No.    dated                   , 2018.



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The issue price, underwriting discount and net proceeds listed above relate to the notes we sell initially. We may decide to sell additional notes after the date of this pricing supplement, at issue prices and with underwriting discounts and net proceeds that differ from the amounts set forth above. The return (whether positive or negative) on your investment in notes will depend in part on the issue price you pay for such notes.

GS Finance Corp. may use this prospectus in the initial sale of the notes. In addition, Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC or any other affiliate of GS Finance Corp. may use this prospectus in a market-making transaction in a note after its initial sale. **Unless GS Finance Corp. or its agent informs the purchaser otherwise in the confirmation of sale, this prospectus is being used in a market-making transaction.**

**Estimated Value of Your Notes**

*The estimated value of your notes at the time the terms of your notes are set on the trade date (as determined by reference to pricing models used by Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC (GS&Co.) and taking into account our credit spreads) is expected to be between \$960 and \$990 per \$1,000 face amount, which is less than the original issue price. The value of your notes at any time will reflect many factors and cannot be predicted; however, the price (not including GS&Co.'s customary bid and ask spreads) at which GS&Co. would initially buy or sell notes (if it makes a market, which it is not obligated to do) and the value that GS&Co. will initially use for account statements and otherwise is equal to approximately the estimated value of your notes at the time of pricing, plus an additional amount (initially equal to \$      per \$1,000 face amount).*

*Prior to      , the price (not including GS&Co.'s customary bid and ask spreads) at which GS&Co. would buy or sell your notes (if it makes a market, which it is not obligated to do) will equal approximately the sum of (a) the then-current estimated value of your notes (as determined by reference to GS&Co.'s pricing models) plus (b) any remaining additional amount (the additional amount will decline to zero on a straight-line basis from the time of pricing through      ). On and after      , the price (not including GS&Co.'s customary bid and ask spreads) at which GS&Co. would buy or sell your notes (if it makes a market) will equal approximately the then-current estimated value of your notes determined by reference to such pricing models.*

**About Your Prospectus**

The notes are part of the Medium-Term Notes, Series E program of GS Finance Corp., and are fully and unconditionally guaranteed by The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. This prospectus includes this pricing supplement and the accompanying documents listed below. This pricing supplement constitutes a supplement to the documents listed below and should be read in conjunction with such documents:

- General terms supplement no. 1,734 dated July 10, 2017
- Prospectus supplement dated July 10, 2017
- Prospectus dated July 10, 2017

The information in this pricing supplement supersedes any conflicting information in the documents listed above. In addition, some of the terms or features described in the listed documents may not apply to your notes.

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**SUMMARY INFORMATION**

*We refer to the notes we are offering by this pricing supplement as the offered notes or the notes. Each of the offered notes has the terms described below. Please note that in this pricing supplement, references to GS Finance Corp., we, our and us mean only GS Finance Corp. and do not include its subsidiaries or affiliates, references to The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., our parent company, mean only The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. and do not include its subsidiaries or affiliates and references to Goldman Sachs mean The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. together with its consolidated subsidiaries and affiliates, including us. Also, references to the accompanying prospectus mean the accompanying prospectus, dated July 10, 2017, references to the accompanying prospectus supplement mean the accompanying prospectus supplement, dated July 10, 2017, for Medium-Term Notes, Series E, and references to the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734 mean the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734, dated July 10, 2017, in each case of GS Finance Corp. and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. The notes will be issued under the senior debt indenture, dated as of October 10, 2008, as supplemented by the First Supplemental Indenture, dated as of February 20, 2015, each among us, as issuer, The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., as guarantor, and The Bank of New York Mellon, as trustee. This indenture, as so supplemented and as further supplemented thereafter, is referred to as the GSFC 2008 indenture in the accompanying prospectus supplement.*

*This section is meant as a summary and should be read in conjunction with the section entitled Supplemental Terms of the Notes on page S-16 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734. Please note that certain features described in the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734 are not applicable to the notes. This pricing supplement supersedes any conflicting provisions of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734.*

**Key Terms**

**Issuer:** GS Finance Corp.

**Guarantor:** The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.

**Underlier:** The S&P Oil & Gas Exploration & Production Select Industry Index (Bloomberg symbol, SPSIOP Index), as published by S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC

**Specified currency:** U.S. dollars ( \$ )

**Face amount:** each note will have a face amount equal to \$1,000; \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in the aggregate for all the offered notes; the aggregate face amount of the offered notes may be increased if the issuer, at its sole option, decides to sell an additional amount of the offered notes on a date subsequent to the date of this pricing supplement

**Denominations:** \$10,000 or integral multiples of \$1,000 in excess thereof

**Purchase at amount other than face amount:** the amount we will pay you for your notes on a call payment date or the stated maturity date, as the case may be, will not be adjusted based on the issue price you pay for your notes, so if you acquire notes at a premium (or discount) to face amount and hold them to a call payment date or the stated maturity date, it could affect your investment in a number of ways. The return on your investment in such notes will be lower (or higher) than it would have been had you purchased the notes at face amount. See *Additional Risk Factors Specific to Your Notes If You Purchase Your Notes at a Premium to Face Amount, the Return on Your Investment Will Be Lower Than the Return on Notes Purchased at Face Amount and the Impact of Certain Key Terms of the Notes Will Be Negatively Affected* on page PS-15 of this pricing supplement

**Supplemental discussion of U.S. federal income tax consequences:** you will be obligated pursuant to the terms of the notes in the absence of a change in law, an administrative determination or a judicial ruling to the contrary to characterize each note for all tax purposes as an income-bearing pre-paid derivative contract in respect of the underlier, as described under *Supplemental Discussion of Federal Income Tax Consequences* herein. Pursuant to this approach, it is the opinion of Sidley Austin LLP that it is likely that any coupon payment will be taxed as ordinary income in accordance with your regular method of accounting for U.S. federal income tax purposes. If you are a United States alien holder of the notes, we intend to withhold on coupon payments made to you at a 30% rate or at a lower rate specified by an

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applicable income tax treaty. In addition, upon the sale, exchange, redemption or maturity of your notes, it would be reasonable for you to recognize capital gain or loss equal to the difference, if any, between the amount of cash you receive at such time (excluding amounts attributable to any coupon payment) and your tax basis in your notes

**Automatic call feature:** if, as measured on any call observation date, the closing level of the underlier is *greater than* or *equal to* the initial underlier level, your notes will be automatically called; if your notes are automatically called on any call observation date, on the corresponding call payment date, in addition to the coupon then due, you will receive an amount in cash equal to \$1,000 for each \$1,000 face amount of your notes

**Cash settlement amount (on any call payment date):** if your notes are automatically called on a call observation date because the closing level of the underlier is *greater than* or *equal to* the initial underlier level, for each \$1,000 face amount of your notes, on the related call payment date, we will pay you an amount in cash equal to the *sum* of (i) \$1,000 *plus* (ii) the coupon then due

**Cash settlement amount (on the stated maturity date):** if your notes are not automatically called, for each \$1,000 face amount of your notes, we will pay you on the stated maturity date an amount in cash equal to:

- if the underlier return is *greater than* or *equal to* -26.3% (the final underlier level is *greater than* or *equal to* 73.7% of the initial underlier level), the *sum* of (i) \$1,000 *plus* (ii) a coupon equal to \$100 minus the sum of all coupons previously paid, if any; or
- if the underlier return is *less than* -26.3% (the final underlier level is *less than* 73.7% of the initial underlier level), the *sum* of (i) \$1,000 *plus* (ii) the *product* of (a) the underlier return *times* (b) \$1,000. **You will receive less than 73.7% of the face amount of your notes**

**Coupon:** subject to the automatic call feature, on each coupon payment date other than the stated maturity date, for each \$1,000 face amount of your notes, we will pay you an amount in cash equal to:

- if the closing level of the underlier on the related coupon observation date is *greater than* or *equal to* 73.7% of the initial underlier level, (i) the *product* of \$25 *times* the number of coupon observation dates that have occurred up to and including the relevant coupon observation date *minus* (ii) the sum of all coupons previously paid; or



- if the closing level of the underlier on the related coupon observation date is *less than 73.7%* of the initial underlier level, \$0

The coupon that may be paid on the stated maturity date will be calculated as described under Cash settlement amount (on the stated maturity date) above, which is based on the underlier return and averaging dates as described below.

**Initial underlier level (to be set on the trade date):** the closing level of the underlier on the trade date

**Final underlier level:** the arithmetic average of the closing levels of the underlier on each of the averaging dates, except in the limited circumstances described under Supplemental Terms of the Notes Consequences of a Market Disruption Event or a Non-Trading Day on page S-23 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734 and subject to adjustment as provided under Supplemental Terms of the Notes Discontinuance or Modification of an Underlier on page S-27 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734

**Closing level:** as described under Supplemental Terms of the Notes Special Calculation Provisions Closing Level on page S-31 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734

**Underlier return:** the *quotient* of (i) the final underlier level *minus* the initial underlier level *divided by* (ii) the initial underlier level, expressed as a positive or negative percentage

**Defeasance:** not applicable

**No listing:** the offered notes will not be listed or displayed on any securities exchange or interdealer market quotation system

**Business day:** as described under Supplemental Terms of the Notes Special Calculation Provisions Business Day on page S-30 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734.

**Trading day:** means a day on which the respective principal securities markets for all of the underlier stocks are open for trading, the underlier sponsor is open for business and the underlier is calculated and published by the underlier sponsor. Although the underlier sponsor may publish the underlier level on a day when one or more of the principal securities markets for the underlier stocks are closed, that day would not be a trading day for purposes of the underlier

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**Trade date:** expected to be September 28, 2018

**Original issue date (settlement date) (to be set on the trade date):** expected to be October 3, 2018

**Averaging dates (to be set on the trade date):** expected to be October 7, 2019, October 8, 2019, October 9, 2019, October 10, 2019 and October 11, 2019, each subject to adjustment as described under Supplemental Terms of the Notes Averaging Dates on page S-18 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734

**Stated maturity date (to be set on the trade date):** expected to be October 17, 2019, subject to adjustment as described under Supplemental Terms of the Notes Stated Maturity Date on page S-16 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734

**Determination date (to be set on the trade date):** the final averaging date, expected to be October 11, 2019, subject to adjustment as described under Supplemental Terms of the Notes Averaging Dates on page S-18 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734

**Call observation date (to be set on the trade date):** expected to be each coupon observation date, subject to adjustment as described under Supplemental Terms of the Notes Call Observation Dates on page S-20 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734

**Call payment dates:** expected to be the third business day after each call observation date, subject to adjustment as described under Supplemental Terms of the Notes Call Payment Dates on page S-16 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734

**Coupon observation dates (to be set on the trade date):** expected to be January 10, 2019, April 11, 2019 and July 11, 2019, subject to adjustment as described under Supplemental Terms of the Notes Coupon Payments Coupon Observation Dates on page S-25 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734

**Coupon payment dates (to be set on the trade date):** expected to be (i) the third business day after each coupon observation date and (ii) the stated maturity date, subject to adjustment as described under Supplemental

Terms of the Notes Coupon Payments Coupon Payment Dates on page S-25 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734

**Regular record dates:** the scheduled business day immediately preceding the day on which payment is to be made (as such payment date may be adjusted)

**Use of proceeds and hedging:** as described under Use of Proceeds and Hedging on page S-94 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734

**ERISA:** as described under Employee Retirement Income Security Act on page S-95 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734

**Supplemental plan of distribution; conflicts of interest:** as described under Supplemental Plan of Distribution on page S-96 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734 and Plan of Distribution Conflicts of Interest on page 94 of the accompanying prospectus; GS Finance Corp. estimates that its share of the total offering expenses, excluding underwriting discounts and commissions, will be approximately \$ .

GS Finance Corp. expects to agree to sell to Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC ( GS&Co. ), and GS&Co. expects to agree to purchase from GS Finance Corp., the aggregate face amount of the offered notes specified on the front cover of this pricing supplement. GS&Co. proposes initially to offer the notes to the public at the original issue price set forth on the cover page of this pricing supplement, and to certain securities dealers at such price less a concession not in excess of % of the face amount. Accounts of certain national banks, acting as purchase agents for such accounts, have agreed with the purchase agents to pay a purchase price of % of the face amount, and as a result of such agreements, the agents with respect to sales to be made to such accounts will not receive any portion of the underwriting discount set forth on the front cover page of this pricing supplement from GS&Co. GS&Co. is an affiliate of GS Finance Corp. and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. and, as such, will have a conflict of interest in this offering of notes within the meaning of Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc. (FINRA) Rule 5121. Consequently, this offering of notes will be conducted in compliance with the provisions of FINRA Rule 5121. GS&Co. will not be permitted to sell notes in this offering to an account over which it exercises discretionary authority without the prior specific written approval of the account holder.

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We expect to deliver the notes against payment therefor in New York, New York on October 3, 2018. Under Rule 15c6-1 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, trades in the secondary market generally are required to settle in two business days, unless the parties to any such trade expressly agree otherwise. Accordingly, purchasers who wish to trade notes on any date prior to two business days before delivery will be required to specify alternative settlement arrangements to prevent a failed settlement.

We have been advised by GS&Co. that it intends to make a market in the notes. However, neither GS&Co. nor any of our other affiliates that makes a market is obligated to do so and any of them may stop doing so at any time without notice. No assurance can be given as to the liquidity or trading market for the notes.

**Calculation agent:** GS&Co.

**CUSIP no.:** 40056E2H0

**ISIN no.:** US40056E2H06

**FDIC:** the notes are not bank deposits and are not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other governmental agency, nor are they obligations of, or guaranteed by, a bank

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**ADDITIONAL TERMS SPECIFIC TO YOUR NOTES**

You should read this pricing supplement together with the prospectus dated July 10, 2017, the prospectus supplement dated July 10, 2017 and the general terms supplement no. 1,734 dated 1,734. You may access these documents on the SEC website at [sec.gov](http://sec.gov) as follows (or if such address has changed, by reviewing our filings for the relevant date on the SEC website):

Prospectus dated July 10, 2017:

<https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/886982/000119312517224447/d356650d424b2.htm>

Prospectus supplement dated July 10, 2017:

<https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/886982/000119312517224493/d393410d424b2.htm>

General terms supplement no. 1,734 dated July 10, 2017:

<https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/886982/000119312517224511/d420249d424b2.htm>

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The following examples are provided for purposes of illustration only. They should not be taken as an indication or prediction of future investment results and are intended merely to illustrate (i) the impact that various hypothetical closing levels of the underlier on a coupon observation date could have on the coupon payable on the related coupon payment date and (ii) the impact that various hypothetical closing levels of the underlier on the averaging dates could have on the cash settlement amount at maturity assuming all other variables remain constant.

The examples below are based on a range of underlier levels that are entirely hypothetical; no one can predict what the underlier level will be on any day throughout the life of your notes, what the closing level will be on any coupon observation date or call observation date and what the final underlier level will be on any averaging date. The underlier has been highly volatile in the past meaning that the underlier levels have changed substantially in relatively short periods and its performance cannot be predicted for any future period.

The information in the following examples reflects the hypothetical rates of return on the offered notes assuming that they are purchased on the original issue date at the face amount and held to a call payment date or the stated maturity date. If you sell your notes in a secondary market prior to a call payment date or the stated maturity date, as the case may be, your return will depend upon the market value of your notes at the time of sale, which may be affected by a number of factors that are not reflected in the examples below such as interest rates, the volatility of the underlier, the creditworthiness of GS Finance Corp., as issuer, and the creditworthiness of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., as guarantor. In addition, the estimated value of your notes at the time the terms of your notes are set on the trade date (as determined by reference to pricing models used by GS&Co.) is less than the original issue price of your notes. For more information on the estimated value of your notes, see *Additional Risk Factors Specific to Your Notes – The Estimated Value of Your Notes At the Time the Terms of Your Notes Are Set On the Trade Date (as Determined By Reference to Pricing Models Used By GS&Co.) Is Less Than the Original Issue Price Of Your Notes* on page PS-13 of this pricing supplement. The information in the examples also reflect the key terms and assumptions in the box below.

| <b>Key Terms and Assumptions</b>  |         |
|---|---------|
| Face amount   | \$1,000 |
| Hypothetical initial underlier level  | 6,600   |
| The notes are not automatically called, unless otherwise indicated below  |         |
| Neither a market disruption event nor a non-trading day occurs on any originally scheduled coupon observation date or call observation date or the originally scheduled averaging dates |         |
| No change in or affecting any of the underlier stocks or the method by which the underlier sponsor calculates the underlier   |         |
| Notes purchased on original issue date at the face amount and held to a call payment date or the stated maturity date   |         |

Moreover, we have not yet set the initial underlier level that will serve as the baseline for determining the coupon payable on each coupon payment date, if any, if the notes will be automatically called, the underlier return and the amount that we will pay on your notes, if any, on the call payment date or at maturity. We will not do so until the trade date. As a result, the actual initial underlier level may differ substantially from the

underlier levels prior to the trade date. They may also differ substantially from the underlier level at the time you purchase your notes.

For these reasons, the actual performance of the underlier over the life of your notes, the actual underlier levels on any call observation date or coupon observation date, as well as the coupon payable, if any, on each coupon payment date, may bear little relation to the hypothetical examples shown below or to the historical underlier levels shown elsewhere in this pricing supplement. For information about the underlier levels during recent periods, see [The Underlier Historical Closing Levels of the Underlier](#) on page PS-17. Before investing in the notes, you should consult publicly available information to determine the underlier levels between the date of this pricing supplement and the date of your purchase of the notes.

Also, the hypothetical examples shown below do not take into account the effects of applicable taxes. Because of the U.S. tax treatment applicable to your notes, tax liabilities could affect the after-tax rate of return on your notes to a comparatively greater extent than the after-tax return on the underlier stocks.

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The examples below show the hypothetical performance of the underlier as well as the hypothetical coupons, if any, that we would pay on each coupon payment date with respect to each \$1,000 face amount of the notes if the closing level of the underlier on the applicable coupon observation date were the hypothetical closing levels shown. If the closing level of the underlier on any coupon observation date is equal to or greater than 73.7% of the initial underlier level you will receive, on the corresponding coupon payment date, a coupon payment equal to (i) the *product* of \$25 *times* the number of coupon observation dates that have occurred up to and including the relevant coupon observation date *minus* (ii) the sum of all coupons previously paid. If the closing level of the underlier on any call observation date (which occurs on each coupon observation date) is equal to or greater than the initial underlier level, your notes will be automatically called and for each \$1,000 face amount of your notes you will receive, on the corresponding call payment date, \$1,000 plus the coupon then due.

**Scenario 1**

| Hypothetical Coupon Observation Date | Hypothetical Closing Level of the Underlier | Hypothetical Coupon |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| <b>First</b>                         | <b>5,400</b>                                | <b>\$25</b>         |
| Second                               | 4,500                                       | \$0                 |
| <b>Third</b>                         | <b>5,600</b>                                | <b>\$50</b>         |
|                                      | <b>Total Hypothetical Coupons</b>           | <b>\$75</b>         |

In Scenario 1, the hypothetical closing level of the underlier increases and decreases by varying amounts on each hypothetical coupon observation date. Because the hypothetical closing levels of the underlier on the first and third hypothetical coupon observation dates are *greater than or equal to* 73.7% of the hypothetical initial underlier level, the total of the hypothetical coupons paid to but excluding the stated maturity date in Scenario 1 is \$75. Because the hypothetical closing level of the underlier on the second hypothetical coupon observation date is less than 73.7% of the hypothetical initial underlier level, no coupon will be paid on the corresponding hypothetical coupon payment date.

**Scenario 2**

| Hypothetical Coupon Observation Date | Hypothetical Closing Level of the Underlier | Hypothetical Coupon |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| First                                | 3,500                                       | \$0                 |
| Second                               | 4,000                                       | \$0                 |
| Third                                | 3,200                                       | \$0                 |
|                                      | <b>Total Hypothetical Coupons</b>           | <b>\$0</b>          |

In Scenario 2, the hypothetical closing level of the underlier increases and decreases by varying amounts on each hypothetical coupon observation date. Because in each case the hypothetical closing level of the underlier is *less than* 73.7% of the hypothetical initial underlier level, you will not receive a coupon payment on the applicable hypothetical coupon payment date. Since this occurs on every hypothetical coupon observation date, the overall return you earn on your notes may be zero or less. Therefore, the total of the hypothetical coupons in Scenario 2

is \$0.

### Scenario 3

| Hypothetical Coupon Observation Date | Hypothetical Closing Level of the Underlier | Hypothetical Coupon |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| First                                | 6,800                                       | \$25                |
| <b>Total Hypothetical Coupons</b>    |   | <b>\$25</b>         |

In Scenario 3, the hypothetical closing level of the underlier is *greater than* the hypothetical initial underlier level on the first hypothetical coupon observation date. Because the hypothetical closing level is *greater than or equal to* the hypothetical initial underlier level on the first hypothetical coupon observation date (which is also the first hypothetical call observation date), your notes will be automatically called. Therefore, on the corresponding hypothetical call payment date, in addition to the hypothetical coupon of \$25, you will receive an amount in cash equal to \$1,000 for each \$1,000 face amount of your notes.

### Hypothetical Payment at Maturity

If the notes are **not** automatically called on any call observation date (i.e., on each call observation date the closing level is *less than* the initial underlier level), the cash settlement amount we would deliver for each \$1,000 face amount of your notes on the stated maturity date will depend on the performance of the underlier on the averaging dates, as shown in the table below. The table below assumes that **the notes have not been automatically called on a call observation date** and does not include the final coupon, if any, and

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reflects hypothetical cash settlement amounts that you could receive on the stated maturity date. If the final underlier level (expressed as a percentage of the initial underlier level) is less than 73.7%, you will not be paid a final coupon at maturity.

The levels in the left column of the table below represent hypothetical final underlier levels and are expressed as percentages of the initial underlier level. The amounts in the right column represent the hypothetical cash settlement amounts, based on the corresponding hypothetical final underlier level (expressed as a percentage of the initial underlier level), and are expressed as percentages of the face amount of a note (rounded to the nearest one-thousandth of a percent). Thus, a hypothetical cash settlement amount of 100.000% means that the value of the cash payment that we would deliver for each \$1,000 of the outstanding face amount of the offered notes on the stated maturity date would equal 100.000% of the face amount of a note, based on the corresponding hypothetical final underlier level (expressed as a percentage of the initial underlier level) and the assumptions noted above.

**The Notes Have Not Been Automatically Called**

| Hypothetical Final Underlier Level<br>(as Percentage of Initial Underlier Level) | Hypothetical Cash Settlement Amount<br>at Maturity if the Notes Have <u>Not</u> Been<br>Automatically Called on a Call<br>Observation Date<br>(as Percentage of Face Amount) |
|--|--|
| 175.000%   | 100.000%*  |
| 150.000%   | 100.000%*  |
| 125.000%   | 100.000%*  |
| <b>100.000%</b>  | <b>100.000%*</b>   |
| 90.000%  | 100.000%*  |
| 85.000%  | 100.000%*  |
| <b>73.700%</b>   | <b>100.000%*</b>   |
| 73.699%  | 73.699%  |
| 60.000%  | 60.000%  |
| 50.000%  | 50.000%  |
| 25.000%  | 25.000%  |
| <b>0.000%</b>  | <b>0.000%</b>  |

\*Does not include the coupon to be paid at maturity

If, for example, the notes have not been automatically called on a call observation date and the final underlier level were determined to be 25.000% of the initial underlier level, the cash settlement amount that we would deliver on your notes at maturity would be 25.000% of the face amount of your notes, as shown in the table above. As a result, if you purchased your notes on the original issue date at the face amount and held them to the stated maturity date, you would lose 75.000% of your investment (if you purchased your notes at a premium to face amount you would lose a correspondingly higher percentage of your investment). In addition, if the final underlier level were determined to be 175.000% of the initial underlier level, the cash settlement amount that we would deliver on your notes at maturity would be limited to 100.000% of each \$1,000 face amount of your notes, as shown in the table above. As a result, if you held your notes to the stated maturity date, you would not benefit from any increase in the final underlier level over the initial underlier level.

The cash settlement amounts shown above are entirely hypothetical; they are based on market prices for the underlier stocks that may not be achieved on the determination date and on assumptions that may prove to be erroneous. The actual market value of your notes on the stated maturity date or at any other time, including any time you may wish to sell your notes, may bear little relation to the hypothetical cash settlement amounts shown above, and these amounts should not be viewed as an indication of the financial return on an investment in the offered notes. The hypothetical cash settlement amounts on notes held to the stated maturity date in the examples above assume you purchased your notes at their face amount and have not been adjusted to reflect the actual issue price you pay for your notes. The return on your investment (whether positive or negative) in your notes will be affected by the amount you pay for your notes. If you purchase your notes for a price other than the face amount, the return on your investment will differ from, and may be significantly lower than, the hypothetical returns suggested by the above examples. Please read Additional Risk Factors Specific to Your Notes – The Market Value of Your Notes May Be Influenced by Many Unpredictable Factors on page S-3 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734.

Payments on the notes are economically equivalent to the amounts that would be paid on a combination of other instruments. For example, payments on the notes are economically equivalent to a combination of an interest-bearing bond bought by the holder and one or more options entered into between the holder and us (with one or more implicit option premiums paid over time). The discussion in this paragraph does not modify or affect the terms of the notes or the U.S. federal income tax treatment of the notes, as described elsewhere in this pricing supplement.

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*We cannot predict the actual closing level of the underlier on any day, the final underlier level or what the market value of your notes will be on any particular trading day, nor can we predict the relationship between the closing level of the underlier and the market value of your notes at any time prior to the stated maturity date. The actual coupon payment, if any, that you will receive on each coupon payment date, the actual amount that you will receive at maturity, if any, and the rate of return on the offered notes will depend on whether or not the notes are automatically called and the actual initial underlier level and coupon, which we will set on the trade date, and on the actual closing level of the underlier on the coupon observation dates and the actual final underlier level determined by the calculation agent as described above. Moreover, the assumptions on which the hypothetical examples are based may turn out to be inaccurate. Consequently, the coupon to be paid in respect of your notes, if any, and the cash amount to be paid in respect of your notes on the stated maturity date, if any, may be very different from the information reflected in the examples above.*

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**ADDITIONAL RISK FACTORS SPECIFIC TO YOUR NOTES**

*An investment in your notes is subject to the risks described below, as well as the risks and considerations described in the accompanying prospectus, in the accompanying prospectus supplement and under Additional Risk Factors Specific to the Notes in the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734. You should carefully review these risks and considerations as well as the terms of the notes described herein and in the accompanying prospectus, the accompanying prospectus supplement and the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734. Your notes are a riskier investment than ordinary debt securities. Also, your notes are not equivalent to investing directly in the underlier stocks, i.e., the stocks comprising the underlier to which your notes are linked. You should carefully consider whether the offered notes are suited to your particular circumstances.*

**The Estimated Value of Your Notes At the Time the Terms of Your Notes Are Set On the Trade Date (as Determined By Reference to Pricing Models Used By GS&Co.) Is Less Than the Original Issue Price Of Your Notes**

The original issue price for your notes exceeds the estimated value of your notes as of the time the terms of your notes are set on the trade date, as determined by reference to GS&Co.'s pricing models and taking into account our credit spreads. Such estimated value on the trade date is set forth above under Estimated Value of Your Notes ; after the trade date, the estimated value as determined by reference to these models will be affected by changes in market conditions, the creditworthiness of GS Finance Corp., as issuer, the creditworthiness of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., as guarantor and other relevant factors. The price at which GS&Co. would initially buy or sell your notes (if GS&Co. makes a market, which it is not obligated to do), and the value that GS&Co. will initially use for account statements and otherwise, also exceeds the estimated value of your notes as determined by reference to these models. As agreed by GS&Co. and the distribution participants, this excess (i.e., the additional amounts described under Estimated value of Your Notes ) will decline to zero on a straight line basis over the period from the date hereof through the applicable date set forth above under Estimated Value of Your Notes . Thereafter, if GS&Co. buys or sells your notes it will do so at prices that reflect the estimated value determined by reference to such pricing models at that time. The price at which GS&Co. will buy or sell your notes at any time also will reflect its then current bid and ask spread for similar sized trades of structured notes.

In estimating the value of your notes as of the time the terms of your notes are set on the trade date, as disclosed above under Estimated Value of Your Notes , GS&Co.'s pricing models consider certain variables, including principally our credit spreads, interest rates (forecasted, current and historical rates), volatility, price-sensitivity analysis and the time to maturity of the notes. These pricing models are proprietary and rely in part on certain assumptions about future events, which may prove to be incorrect. As a result, the actual value you would receive if you sold your notes in the secondary market, if any, to others may differ, perhaps materially, from the estimated value of your notes determined by reference to our models due to, among other things, any differences in pricing models or assumptions used by others. See Additional Risk Factors Specific to the Notes The Market Value of Your Notes May Be Influenced by Many Unpredictable Factors on page S-2 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,734.

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The difference between the estimated value of your notes as of the time the terms of your notes are set on the trade date and the original issue price is a result of certain factors, including principally the underwriting discount and commissions, the expenses incurred in creating, documenting and marketing the notes, and an estimate of the difference between the amounts we pay to GS&Co. and the amounts GS&Co. pays to us in connection with your notes. We pay to GS&Co. amounts based on what we would pay to holders of a non-structured note with a similar maturity. In return for such payment, GS&Co. pays to us the amounts we owe under your notes.

In addition to the factors discussed above, the value and quoted price of your notes at any time will reflect many factors and cannot be predicted. If GS&Co. makes a market in the notes, the price quoted by GS&Co. would reflect any changes in market conditions and other relevant factors, including any deterioration in our creditworthiness or perceived creditworthiness or the creditworthiness or perceived creditworthiness of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. These changes may adversely affect the value of your

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notes, including the price you may receive for your notes in any market making transaction. To the extent that GS&Co. makes a market in the notes, the quoted price will reflect the estimated value determined by reference to GS&Co.'s pricing models at that time, plus or minus its then current bid and ask spread for similar sized trades of structured notes (and subject to the declining excess amount described above).

Furthermore, if you sell your notes, you will likely be charged a commission for secondary market transactions, or the price will likely reflect a dealer discount. This commission or discount will further reduce the proceeds you would receive for your notes in a secondary market sale.

There is no assurance that GS&Co. or any other party will be willing to purchase your notes at any price and, in this regard, GS&Co. is not obligated to make a market in the notes. See "Your Notes May Not Have an Active Trading Market" below.

**The Notes Are Subject to the Credit Risk of the Issuer and the Guarantor**

Although the coupons and return on the notes will be based on the performance of the underlier, the payment of any amount due on the notes is subject to the credit risk of GS Finance Corp., as issuer of the notes, and the credit risk of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., as guarantor of the notes. The notes are our unsecured obligations. Investors are dependent on our ability to pay all amounts due on the notes, and therefore investors are subject to our credit risk and to changes in the market's view of our creditworthiness. Similarly, investors are dependent on the ability of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., as guarantor of the notes, to pay all amounts due on the notes, and therefore are also subject to its credit risk and to changes in the market's view of its creditworthiness. See "Description of the Notes We May Offer" Information About Our Medium-Term Notes, Series E Program "How the Notes Rank Against Other Debt" on page S-4 of the accompanying prospectus supplement and "Description of Debt Securities We May Offer" Guarantee by The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. on page 33 of the accompany prospectus.

**The Cash Settlement Amount on Your Notes Is Linked to the Closing Level of the Underlier on Five Averaging Dates**

The final underlier level will be based on the arithmetic average of the underlier closing levels on each of the five averaging dates (each of which is subject to postponement in the case of market disruption events or non-trading days), and therefore not the simple performance of the underlier over the life of your notes. Therefore, the cash settlement amount for your notes may be significantly less than it would have been had the cash settlement amount been linked only to the closing level of the underlier on that last averaging date.

**You May Lose Your Entire Investment in the Notes**

You can lose your entire investment in the notes. Assuming your notes are not automatically called, the cash settlement amount on your notes, if any, on the stated maturity date will be based on the performance of the S&P Oil & Gas Exploration & Production Select Industry Index as measured from the initial underlier level set on the trade date to the



closing level on each of the averaging dates. If the final underlier level is *less than* 73.7% of the initial underlier level, you will have a loss for each \$1,000 of the face amount of your notes equal to the *product* of the underlier return *times* \$1,000. Thus, you may lose your entire investment in the notes, which would include any premium to face amount you paid when you purchased the notes.

Also, the market price of your notes prior to a call payment date or the stated maturity date, as the case may be, may be significantly lower than the purchase price you pay for your notes. Consequently, if you sell your notes before the stated maturity date, you may receive far less than the amount of your investment in the notes.

**The Return on Your Notes May Change Significantly Despite Only a Small Change in the Underlier Level**

If the final underlier level is less than the trigger buffer level, you will receive less than the face amount of your notes and you could lose all or a substantial portion of your investment in the notes. This means that while a 26.3% drop between the initial underlier level and the final underlier level will not result in a loss of principal on the notes, a decrease in the final underlier level to less than 73.7% of the initial underlier level will result in a loss of a significant portion of the principal amount of the notes despite only a small change in the underlier level.

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**You May Not Receive a Coupon on Any Coupon Payment Date**

If the closing level of the underlier on the applicable coupon observation date is *less than 73.7%* of the initial underlier level, you will not receive a coupon payment on the corresponding coupon payment date. If this occurs on every coupon observation date, the overall return you earn on your notes may be zero or less and such return will be less than you would have earned by investing in a note that bears interest at the prevailing market rate.

Although the coupon formula provides that, if the closing level of the underlier on the related coupon observation date is *greater than or equal to 73.7%* of the initial underlier level, the coupon paid on the corresponding coupon payment date will be equal to (i) the *product* of \$25 *times* the number of coupon observation dates that have occurred up to and including the relevant coupon observation date *minus* (ii) the *sum* of all coupons previously paid, if any, on your notes, you should be aware that, with respect to prior coupon observation dates that did not result in the payment of a coupon, this formula does not compensate you for any opportunity cost implied by inflation and other factors relating to the time value of money. Further, there is no guarantee that you will receive any coupon payment with respect to the notes at any time and you may lose your entire investment in the notes.

**Your Notes Are Subject to Automatic Redemption**

We will automatically call and redeem all, but not part, of your notes on a call payment date if, as measured on any call observation date, the closing level of the underlier is greater than or equal to the initial underlier level. Therefore, the term for your notes may be reduced to approximately three months after the original issue date. You will not receive any additional coupon payments after the notes are automatically called and you may not be able to reinvest the proceeds from an investment in the notes at a comparable return for a similar level of risk in the event the notes are automatically called prior to maturity.

**The Coupon Does Not Reflect the Actual Performance of the Underlier from the Trade Date to Any Coupon Observation Date or from Coupon Observation Date to Coupon Observation Date**

The coupon for each quarterly coupon payment date is different from, and may be less than, a coupon determined based on the percentage difference of the closing levels of the underlier between the trade date and any coupon observation date or between two coupon observation dates. Accordingly, the coupons, if any, on the notes may be less than the return you could earn on another instrument linked to the underlier that pay coupons based on the performance of the underlier from the trade date to any coupon observation date or from coupon observation date to coupon observation date.

**If You Purchase Your Notes at a Premium to Face Amount, the Return on Your Investment Will Be Lower Than the Return on Notes Purchased at Face Amount and the Impact of Certain Key Terms of the Notes Will Be Negatively Affected**

The cash settlement amount you will be paid for your notes on the stated maturity date, if any, or the amount you will be paid on a call payment date will not be adjusted based on the issue price you pay for the notes. If you purchase notes at a price that differs from the face amount of the notes, then the return on your investment in such notes held to a call payment date or the stated maturity date will differ from, and may be substantially less than, the return on notes purchased at face amount. If you purchase your notes at a premium to face amount and hold them to a call payment date or the stated maturity date, the return on your investment in the notes will be lower than it would have been had you purchased the notes at face amount or a discount to face amount.

**The S&P Oil & Gas Exploration & Production Select Industry Index is Concentrated in Oil and Gas Companies and Does Not Provide Diversified Exposure**

The S&P Oil & Gas Exploration & Production Select Industry Index is not diversified. The S&P Oil & Gas Exploration & Production Select Industry Index's assets will be concentrated in oil and gas companies, which means the S&P Oil & Gas Exploration & Production Select Industry Index is more likely to be more adversely affected by any negative performance of oil and gas companies than an underlier that has more diversified holdings across a number of sectors. Oil and gas companies develop and produce crude oil and natural gas and provide drilling and other energy resources production and distribution related services. Stock prices for these types of companies are affected by supply and demand both for their specific product or service and for energy products in general. The price of oil and gas, exploration and production spending,

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government regulation, world events and economic conditions will likewise affect the performance of these companies. Correspondingly, securities of companies in the energy field are subject to swift price and supply fluctuations caused by events relating to international politics, energy conservation, the success of exploration projects, and tax and other governmental regulatory policies. Weak demand for the companies' products or services or for energy products and services in general, as well as negative developments in these other areas, would adversely impact the performance of the S&P Oil & Gas Exploration & Production Select Industry Index. For example, the S&P Oil & Gas Exploration & Production Select Industry Index suffered a significant negative performance for each of the years 2014 and 2015 primarily due to negative developments in the oil & gas sector, while the broader S&P® 500 Index achieved a positive return for each of the same periods. In addition, oil and gas exploration and production can be significantly affected by natural disasters as well as changes in exchange rates, interest rates, government regulation, world events and economic conditions. Companies in the oil & gas sector may also be at risk for environmental damage claims.

**You Have No Shareholder Rights or Rights to Receive Any Underlier Stock**

Investing in your notes will not make you a holder of any of the underlier stocks. Neither you nor any other holder or owner of your notes will have any rights with respect to the underlier stocks, including any voting rights, any right to receive dividends or other distributions, any rights to make a claim against the underlier stocks or any other rights of a holder of the underlier stocks. Your notes will be paid in cash and you will have no right to receive delivery of any underlier stocks.

**Your Notes May Not Have an Active Trading Market**

Your notes will not be listed or displayed on any securities exchange or included in any interdealer market quotation system, and there may be little or no secondary market for your notes. Even if a secondary market for your notes develops, it may not provide significant liquidity and we expect that transaction costs in any secondary market would be high. As a result, the difference between bid and asked prices for your notes in any secondary market could be substantial.

**We May Sell an Additional Aggregate Face Amount of the Notes at a Different Issue Price**

At our sole option, we may decide to sell an additional aggregate face amount of the notes subsequent to the date of this pricing supplement. The issue price of the notes in the subsequent sale may differ substantially (higher or lower) from the issue price you paid as provided on the cover of this pricing supplement.

**Your Notes May Be Subject to an Adverse Change in Tax Treatment in the Future**

The tax consequences of an investment in your notes are uncertain, both as to timing and character of any inclusion in income in respect of your notes. The Internal Revenue Service announced on December 7, 2007 that it is considering issuing guidance regarding the proper U.S. federal income tax treatment of an instrument such as your notes, and any such guidance could

adversely affect the tax treatment and the value of your notes. Among other things, the Internal Revenue Service may decide to require the holders to accrue ordinary income on a current basis and recognize ordinary income on payment at maturity, and could subject non-U.S. investors to withholding tax. Furthermore, in 2007, legislation was introduced in Congress that, if enacted, would have required holders that acquired instruments such as your notes after the bill was enacted to accrue interest income over the term of such instruments even though there may be no interest payments over the term of such instruments. It is not possible to predict whether a similar or identical bill will be enacted in the future, or whether any such bill would affect the tax treatment of your notes. We describe these developments in more detail under Supplemental Discussion of Federal Income Tax Consequences United States Holders Possible Change in Law below. You should consult your tax advisor about this matter. Except to the extent otherwise provided by law, GS Finance Corp. intends to continue treating the notes for U.S. federal income tax purposes in accordance with the treatment described under Supplemental Discussion of Federal Income Tax Consequences on page PS-23 below unless and until such time as Congress, the Treasury Department or the Internal Revenue Service determine that some other treatment is more appropriate.

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**Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) Withholding May Apply to Payments on Your Notes, Including as a Result of the Failure of the Bank or Broker Through Which You Hold the Notes to Provide Information to Tax Authorities**

Please see the discussion under United States Taxation Taxation of Debt Securities Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) Withholding in the accompanying prospectus for a description of the applicability of FATCA to payments made on your notes.

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**THE UNDERLIER**

The S&P Oil & Gas Exploration & Production Select Industry Index (Bloomberg ticker SPSIOP) is managed by S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC ( S&P ) and is a modified equal-weighted index that is designed to measure the performance of stocks in the S&P Total Market Index that both (i) are classified under the Global Industry Classification Standard ( GICS® ) in the integrated oil & gas, oil & gas exploration & production and oil & gas refining & marketing sub-industries and (ii) satisfy certain liquidity and market capitalization requirements. The S&P Total Market Index tracks all eligible U.S. common stocks listed on the NYSE, NYSE Arca, NYSE American (formerly NYSE MKT), NASDAQ Global Select Market, NASDAQ Select Market, NASDAQ Capital Market, Bats BZX, Bats BYX, Bats EDGA, Bats EDGX and IEX. The index is one of the 21 sub-industry sector indices S&P maintains that are derived from a portion of the stocks comprising the S&P Total Market Index. An equal-weighted index is one where every stock, or company, has the same weight in the index. As such, the index must be rebalanced from time to time to re-establish the proper weighting.

**Eligibility for Inclusion in the Index**

Selection for the index is based on a company's GICS® classification, as well as liquidity and market capitalization requirements. In addition, only U.S. companies are eligible for inclusion in the index. GICS® classifications are determined by S&P using criteria it has selected or developed. Index and classification system sponsors may use very different standards for determining sector designations. In addition, many companies operate in a number of sectors, but are listed only in one sector. As a result, sector comparisons between indices with different sponsors may reflect differences in methodology as well as actual differences in the sector composition of the indices.

To be eligible for inclusion in the index, stocks must be in the S&P Total Market Index and satisfy the following combined size and liquidity criteria: (i) a float-adjusted market capitalization above \$500 million with a float-adjusted liquidity ratio above 90% or (ii) a float-adjusted market capitalization above \$400 million with a float-adjusted liquidity ratio above 150%. The float-adjusted liquidity ratio is defined as the dollar value traded over the previous 12 months divided by the float-adjusted market capitalization as of the index's rebalancing reference date.

All stocks in the related GICS® sub-industries satisfying the above requirements are included in the index and the total number of stocks in the index should be at least 35. If there are fewer than 35 stocks in the index, the market capitalization requirements may be relaxed to reach at least 22 stocks.

With respect to liquidity, the length of time to evaluate liquidity is reduced to the available trading period for companies that recently became public or companies that were spun-off from other companies, the stocks of which therefore do not have 12 months of trading history.

### **Current Composition of the Index**

As of September 21, 2018, the index was comprised of the stocks of 73 companies.

As of September 21, 2018, the index held stocks of companies in the following sub-industries: oil & gas exploration & production (79.92%), oil & gas refining & marketing (14.91%) and integrated oil & gas (5.17%).

As of September 21, 2018, the top ten constituents of the index and their relative weights in the index were as follows: SM Energy Company (2.35%), Energen Corporation (2.30%), Matador Resources Company (2.23%), Centennial Resource Development Inc. Class A (2.19%), Southwestern Energy Company (2.10%), Callon Petroleum Company (2.06%), Hess Corporation (2.03%), Gulfport Energy Corporation (2.03%), Diamondback Energy Inc. (2.01%) and Concho Resources Inc. (1.98%).

### **Calculation of the Index**

The index is calculated as the index market value divided by the divisor. In an equal-weighted index like the index, the market capitalization of each stock used in the calculation of the index market value is redefined so that each stock has an equal weight in the index on each rebalancing date. The adjusted market capitalization for each stock in the index is calculated as the product of the stock price, the number of shares outstanding, the stock's float factor and the adjustment factor.

A stock's float factor refers to the number of shares outstanding that are available to investors. S&P indices exclude shares closely held by control groups from the index calculation because such shares are not available to investors. For each stock, S&P calculates an Investable Weight Factor (IWF) which is the percentage of total shares outstanding that are included in the index calculation.



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The adjustment factor for each stock is assigned at each rebalancing date and is calculated by dividing a specific constant set for the purpose of deriving the adjustment factor (often referred to as modified index shares) by the number of stocks in the index multiplied by the float adjusted market value of such stock on such rebalancing date.

Adjustments are also made to ensure that no stock in the index will have a weight that exceeds the value that can be traded in a single day for a theoretical portfolio of \$2 billion. Theoretical portfolio values are reviewed annually and any updates are made at the discretion of the index committee, as defined below. The maximum basket liquidity weight for each stock in the index will be calculated using the ratio of its three-month median daily value traded to the theoretical portfolio value of \$2 billion. Each stock's weight in the index is then compared to its maximum basket liquidity weight and is set to the lesser of (1) its maximum basket liquidity weight or (2) its initial equal weight. All excess weight is redistributed across the index to the uncapped stocks. If necessary, a final adjustment is made to ensure that no stock in the index has a weight greater than 4.5%. No further adjustments are made if the latter step would force the weight of those stocks limited to their maximum basket liquidity weight to exceed that weight. If the index contains exactly 22 stocks as of the rebalancing effective date, the index will be equally weighted without basket liquidity constraints.

If a company has more than one share class line in the S&P Total Market Index, such company will be represented once by the designated listing (generally the share class with both (i) the highest one-year trading liquidity as defined by median daily value traded and (ii) the largest float-adjusted market capitalization). S&P reviews designated listings on an annual basis and any changes are implemented after the close of the third Friday in September. The last trading day in July is used as the reference date for the liquidity and market capitalization data in such determination. Once a listed share class line is added to the index, it may be retained in the index even though it may appear to violate certain constituent addition criteria. For companies that issue a second publicly traded share class to index share class holders, the newly issued share class line will be considered for inclusion if the event is mandatory and the market capitalization of the distributed class is not considered to be de minimis.

The index is calculated by using the divisor methodology used in all S&P equity indices. The initial divisor was set to have a base value of 1,000 on December 17, 1999. The index level is the index market value divided by the index divisor. In order to maintain index series continuity, it is also necessary to adjust the divisor at each rebalancing. Therefore, the divisor (after rebalancing) equals the index market value (after rebalancing) divided by the index value before rebalancing. The divisor keeps the index comparable over time and is one manipulation point for adjustments to the index, which we refer to as maintenance of the index.

### **Maintenance of the Index**

The composition of the index is reviewed quarterly. Rebalancing occurs after the closing of the relevant U.S. trading markets on the third Friday of the month ending that quarter. The reference date for additions and deletions is after the closing of the last trading day of the previous month. Closing prices as of the second Friday of the last month of the quarter are used for setting index weights. Existing stocks in the index are removed at the quarterly rebalancing if either their float-adjusted capitalization falls below \$300 million or their float-adjusted liquidity ratio falls below 50%. A stock will also be deleted from the index if the S&P Total Market Index deletes that stock. Stocks are added between rebalancings only if a company deletion causes the number of stocks in the index to fall below 22. The newly added stock will be added to the index at the weight of the deleted stock. If the stock was deleted at \$0.00, the newly added stock will be added at the deleted stock's previous day's closing value (or the most immediate prior business day that the deleted stock was not valued at \$0.00) and an adjustment to the divisor will be made (only in the case of stocks removed at \$0.00). At the next rebalancing, the index will be rebalanced based on the eligibility requirements and equal-weight methodology discussed above.

In the case of GICS® changes, where a stock does not belong to the oil & gas exploration & production sub-industry or another qualifying sub-industry after the classification change, it is removed from the index on the next rebalancing date. In the case of a spin-off, the spin-off company will be added to the index at a zero price after the close of trading on the day before the ex-date. In general and subject to certain exceptions, both the parent company and spin-off companies will remain in the index until the next index rebalancing. In the case of a merger involving two index constituents, the merged entity will remain in the index provided that it meets all general eligibility requirements. The merged entity will be added to the index at the weight of the stock deemed to be the surviving stock in the transaction. The surviving stock will not experience a weight change and its subsequent weight will not be equal to that of the pre-merger weight of the merged entities.

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Adjustments are made to the index in the event of certain corporate actions relating to the stocks included in the index, such as spin-offs, rights offerings, stock splits and special dividends, as specified below.

The table below summarizes the types of index maintenance adjustments:

| <b>Type of Corporate Action</b>                                    | <b>Adjustment Factor</b>  | <b>Divisor Adjustment Required</b> |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| Spin-Off   | In general and subject to certain exceptions, both the parent stock and spin-off stocks will remain in the index until the next index rebalancing, regardless of whether they conform to the theme of the index.                        | No                                 |
| Rights Offering  | Price is adjusted to equal (i) price of parent company minus (ii) price of rights subscription divided by the rights ratio. Index shares change so that the company's weight remains the same as its weight before the rights offering. | No                                 |
| Stock split (e.g., 2-for-1), stock dividend or reverse stock split | Index shares multiplied by split factor (i.e., 2); stock price divided by split factor (i.e., 2).   | No                                 |
| Share issuance or share repurchase                                 | None.   | No                                 |
| Special dividends  | Price of the stock making the special dividend payment is reduced by the per share special dividend amount after the close of trading on the day before the dividend ex-date.   | Yes                                |

### Index Committee

The Americas Thematic and Strategy Index Committee (the index committee) maintains the index and consists of full-time professional members of S&P staff. At monthly meetings, the index committee reviews pending corporate actions that may affect index constituents, statistics comparing the composition of the indices to the market, companies that are being considered as candidates for additions to the index and any significant market events. The index committee may also revise index policy, such as the rules for selecting constituents, the treatment of dividends, share counts or other matters.

### Unexpected Exchange Closures

An unexpected market/exchange closure occurs when a market/exchange fully or partially fails to open or trading is temporarily halted. This can apply to a single exchange or to a market as a whole, when all of the primary exchanges are closed and/or not trading. Unexpected market/exchange closures are usually due to unforeseen circumstances, such as natural disasters, inclement weather, outages, or other events.

To a large degree, S&P is dependent on the exchanges to provide guidance in the event of an unexpected exchange closure. S&P's decision making is dependent on exchange guidance regarding pricing and mandatory corporate actions.

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NYSE Rule 123C provides closing contingency procedures for determining an official closing price for listed securities if the exchange is unable to conduct a closing transaction in one or more securities due to a system or technical issue.

3:00 PM ET is the deadline for an exchange to determine its plan of action regarding an outage scenario. As such, S&P also uses 3:00 PM ET as the cutoff.

If all major exchanges fail to open or unexpectedly halt trading intraday due to unforeseen circumstances, S&P will take the following actions:

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Market Disruption Prior to Open of Trading:

(i) If all exchanges indicate that trading will not open for a given day, S&P will treat the day as an unscheduled market holiday. The decision will be communicated to clients as soon as possible through the normal channels. Indices containing multiple markets will be calculated as normal, provided that at least one market is open that day. Indices which only contain closed markets will not be calculated.

(ii) If exchanges indicate that trading, although delayed, will open for a given day, S&P will begin index calculation when the exchanges open.

Market Disruption Intraday:

(i) If exchanges indicate that trading will not resume for a given day, the index level will be calculated using prices determined by the exchanges based on NYSE Rule 123C. Intraday index values will continue to use the last traded composite price until the primary exchange publishes official closing prices.

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CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO LOSS OF PROFITS, TRADING LOSSES, LOST TIME OR GOODWILL, EVEN IF THEY HAVE BEEN ADVISED OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGES, WHETHER IN CONTRACT, TORT, STRICT LIABILITY, OR OTHERWISE. THERE ARE NO THIRD PARTY BENEFICIARIES OF ANY AGREEMENTS OR ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN S&P DOW JONES INDICES AND GOLDMAN, OTHER THAN THE LICENSORS OF S&P DOW JONES INDICES.

**Historical Closing Levels of the Underlier**

The closing level of the underlier has fluctuated in the past and may, in the future, experience significant fluctuations. Any historical upward or downward trend in the closing level of the underlier during the period shown below is not an indication that the underlier is more or less likely to increase or decrease at any time during the life of your notes.

**You should not take the historical levels of the underlier as an indication of the future performance of the underlier. We cannot give you any assurance that the future performance of the underlier or the underlier stocks will result in your receiving an amount greater than the outstanding face amount of your notes on the stated maturity date.**

Neither we nor any of our affiliates make any representation to you as to the performance of the underlier. Before investing in the offered notes, you should consult publicly available information to determine the levels of the underlier between the date of this pricing supplement and the date of your purchase of the offered notes. The actual performance of the underlier over the life of the offered notes, as well as the cash settlement amount, may bear little relation to the historical closing levels shown below.

The graph below shows the daily historical closing levels of the underlier from September 21, 2008 through September 21, 2018. We obtained the closing levels in the graph below from Bloomberg Financial Services, without independent verification.

**Historical Performance of the S&P Oil & Gas Exploration & Production Select Industry Index**

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**SUPPLEMENTAL DISCUSSION OF FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES**

The following section supplements the discussion of U.S. federal income taxation in the accompanying prospectus.

The following section is the opinion of Sidley Austin LLP, counsel to GS Finance Corp. and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. In addition, it is the opinion of Sidley Austin LLP that the characterization of the notes for U.S. federal income tax purposes that will be required under the terms of the notes, as discussed below, is a reasonable interpretation of current law.

This section does not apply to you if you are a member of a class of holders subject to special rules, such as:

- a dealer in securities or currencies;
  
- a trader in securities that elects to use a mark-to-market method of accounting for your securities holdings;
  
- a bank;
  
- a life insurance company;
  
- a regulated investment company;
  
- an accrual method taxpayer subject to special tax accounting rules as a result of its use of financial statements;
  
- a tax exempt organization;
  
- a partnership;

- a person that owns a note as a hedge or that is hedged against interest rate risks;
- a person that owns a note as part of a straddle or conversion transaction for tax purposes; or
- a United States holder (as defined below) whose functional currency for tax purposes is not the U.S. dollar.

Although this section is based on the U.S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, its legislative history, existing and proposed regulations under the Internal Revenue Code, published rulings and court decisions, all as currently in effect, no statutory, judicial or administrative authority directly discusses how your notes should be treated for U.S. federal income tax purposes, and as a result, the U.S. federal income tax consequences of your investment in your notes are uncertain. Moreover, these laws are subject to change, possibly on a retroactive basis.

*You should consult your tax advisor concerning the U.S. federal income tax and other tax consequences of your investment in the notes, including the application of state, local or other tax laws and the possible effects of changes in federal or other tax laws.*

#### **United States Holders**

This section applies to you only if you are a United States holder that holds your notes as a capital asset for tax purposes. You are a United States holder if you are a beneficial owner of a note and you are:

- a citizen or resident of the United States;

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- a domestic corporation;
- an estate whose income is subject to U.S. federal income tax regardless of its source; or
- a trust if a United States court can exercise primary supervision over the trust's administration and one or more United States persons are authorized to control all substantial decisions of the trust.

*Tax Treatment.* You will be obligated pursuant to the terms of the notes in the absence of a change in law, an administrative determination or a judicial ruling to the contrary to characterize your notes for all tax purposes as income-bearing pre-paid derivative contracts in respect of the underlier. Except as otherwise stated below, the discussion below assumes that the notes will be so treated.

Coupon payments that you receive should be included in ordinary income at the time you receive the payment or when the payment accrues, in accordance with your regular method of accounting for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

Upon the sale, exchange, redemption or maturity of your notes, you should recognize capital gain or loss equal to the difference between the amount realized on the sale, exchange, redemption or maturity (excluding any amounts attributable to accrued and unpaid coupon payments, which will be taxable as described above) and your tax basis in your notes. Your tax basis in your notes will generally be equal to the amount that you paid for the notes. Such capital gain or loss should generally be short-term capital gain or loss if you hold the notes for one year or less, and should be long-term capital gain or loss if you hold the notes for more than one year. Short-term capital gains are generally subject to tax at the marginal tax rates applicable to ordinary income.

**No statutory, judicial or administrative authority directly discusses how your notes should be treated for U.S. federal income tax purposes. As a result, the U.S. federal income tax consequences of your investment in the notes are uncertain and alternative characterizations are possible. Accordingly, we urge you to consult your tax advisor in determining the tax consequences of an investment in your notes in your particular circumstances, including the application of state, local or other tax laws and the possible effects of changes in federal or other tax laws.**

*Alternative Treatments.* There is no judicial or administrative authority discussing how your notes should be treated for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Therefore, the Internal Revenue Service might assert that a treatment other than that described above is more appropriate. For example, the Internal Revenue Service could treat your notes as a single debt instrument subject to special rules governing contingent payment debt instruments.

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Under those rules, the amount of interest you are required to take into account for each accrual period would be determined by constructing a projected payment schedule for the notes and applying rules similar to those for accruing original issue discount on a hypothetical noncontingent debt instrument with that projected payment schedule. This method is applied by first determining the comparable yield i.e., the yield at which we would issue a noncontingent fixed rate debt instrument with terms and conditions similar to your notes and then determining a payment schedule as of the applicable original issue date that would produce the comparable yield. These rules may have the effect of requiring you to include interest in income in respect of your notes prior to your receipt of cash attributable to that income.

If the rules governing contingent payment debt instruments apply, any income you recognize upon the sale, exchange, redemption or maturity of your notes would be treated as ordinary interest income. Any loss you recognize at that time would be treated as ordinary loss to the extent of interest you included as income in the current or previous taxable years in respect of your notes, and, thereafter, as capital loss.

If the rules governing contingent payment debt instruments apply, special rules would apply to persons who purchase a note at other than the adjusted issue price as determined for tax purposes.

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It is possible that the Internal Revenue Service could assert that your notes should generally be characterized as described above, except that (1) the gain you recognize upon the sale, exchange, redemption or maturity of your notes should be treated as ordinary income or (2) you should not include the coupon payments in income as you receive them but instead you should reduce your basis in your notes by the amount of coupon payments that you receive. It is also possible that the Internal Revenue Service could seek to characterize your notes in a manner that results in tax consequences to you different from those described above.

It is also possible that the Internal Revenue Service could seek to characterize your notes as notional principal contracts. It is also possible that the coupon payments would not be treated as either ordinary income or interest for U.S. federal income tax purposes, but instead would be treated in some other manner.

You should consult your tax advisor as to possible alternative characterizations of your notes for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

***Possible Change in Law***

In 2007, legislation was introduced in Congress that, if enacted, would have required holders that acquired instruments such as your notes after the bill was enacted to accrue interest income over the term of such instruments even though there may be no interest payments over the term of such instruments. It is not possible to predict whether a similar or identical bill will be enacted in the future, or whether any such bill would affect the tax treatment of your notes.

In addition, on December 7, 2007, the Internal Revenue Service released a notice stating that the Internal Revenue Service and the Treasury Department are actively considering issuing guidance regarding the proper U.S. federal income tax treatment of an instrument such as the offered notes including whether the holders should be required to accrue ordinary income on a current basis and whether gain or loss should be ordinary or capital. It is not possible to determine what guidance they will ultimately issue, if any. It is possible, however, that under such guidance, holders of the notes will ultimately be required to accrue income currently and this could be applied on a retroactive basis. The Internal Revenue Service and the Treasury Department are also considering other relevant issues, including whether foreign holders of such instruments should be subject to withholding tax on any deemed income accruals, and whether the special constructive ownership rules of Section 1260 of the Internal Revenue Code might be applied to such instruments. Except to the extent otherwise provided by law, GS Finance Corp. intends to continue treating the notes for U.S. federal income tax purposes in accordance with the treatment described above unless and until such time as Congress, the Treasury Department or the Internal Revenue Service determine that some other treatment is more appropriate.

It is impossible to predict what any such legislation or administrative or regulatory guidance might provide, and whether the effective date of any legislation or guidance will affect notes that were issued before the date that such legislation or guidance is issued. You are urged to consult your tax advisor as to the possibility that any legislative or administrative action may adversely affect the tax treatment of your notes.

**United States Alien Holders**

This section applies to you only if you are a United States alien holder. You are a United States alien holder if you are the beneficial owner of the notes and are, for U.S. federal income tax purposes:

- a nonresident alien individual;
  
- a foreign corporation; or
  
- an estate or trust that in either case is not subject to U.S. federal income tax on a net income basis on income or gain from the notes.

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Because the U.S. federal income tax treatment (including the applicability of withholding) of the coupon payments on the notes is uncertain, in the absence of further guidance, we intend to withhold on the coupon payments made to you at a 30% rate or at a lower rate specified by an applicable income tax treaty under an other income or similar provision. We will not make payments of any additional amounts. To claim a reduced treaty rate for withholding, you generally must provide a valid Internal Revenue Service Form W-8BEN, Internal Revenue Service Form W-8BEN-E or an acceptable substitute form upon which you certify, under penalty of perjury, your status as a United States alien holder and your entitlement to the lower treaty rate. Payments will be made to you at a reduced treaty rate of withholding only if such reduced treaty rate would apply to any possible characterization of the payments (including, for example, if the coupon payments were characterized as contract fees). Withholding also may not apply to coupon payments made to you if: (i) the coupon payments are effectively connected with your conduct of a trade or business in the United States and are includable in your gross income for U.S. federal income tax purposes, (ii) the coupon payments are attributable to a permanent establishment that you maintain in the United States, if required by an applicable tax treaty, and (iii) you comply with the requisite certification requirements (generally, by providing an Internal Revenue Service Form W-8ECI). If you are eligible for a reduced rate of United States withholding tax, you may obtain a refund of any amounts withheld in excess of that rate by filing a refund claim with the Internal Revenue Service.

Effectively connected payments includable in your United States gross income are generally taxed at rates applicable to United States citizens, resident aliens, and domestic corporations; if you are a corporate United States alien holder, effectively connected payments may be subject to an additional branch profits tax under certain circumstances.

You will also be subject to generally applicable information reporting and backup withholding requirements with respect to payments on your notes and, notwithstanding that we do not intend to treat the notes as debt for tax purposes, we intend to backup withhold on such payments with respect to your notes unless you comply with the requirements necessary to avoid backup withholding on debt instruments (in which case you will not be subject to such backup withholding) as set forth under United States Taxation Taxation of Debt Securities United States Alien Holders in the accompanying prospectus.

Furthermore, on December 7, 2007, the Internal Revenue Service released Notice 2008-2 soliciting comments from the public on various issues, including whether instruments such as your notes should be subject to withholding. It is therefore possible that rules will be issued in the future, possibly with retroactive effects, that would cause payments on your notes to be subject to withholding, even if you comply with certification requirements as to your foreign status.

As discussed above, alternative characterizations of the notes for U.S. federal income tax purposes are possible. Should an alternative characterization of the notes, by reason of a change or clarification of the law, by regulation or otherwise, cause payments with respect to the notes to become subject to withholding tax, we will withhold tax at the applicable statutory rate and we will not make payments of any additional amounts. Prospective United States alien holders of the notes should consult their tax advisor in this regard.

In addition, the Treasury Department has issued regulations under which amounts paid or deemed paid on certain financial instruments ( 871(m) financial instruments ) that are treated as attributable to U.S.-source dividends could be treated, in whole or in part depending on the circumstances, as a dividend equivalent payment that is subject to tax at a rate of 30% (or a lower rate under an applicable treaty), which in the case of any coupon payments and any amounts you receive upon the sale, exchange, redemption or maturity of your notes, could be collected via withholding. If these regulations were to apply to the notes, we may be required to withhold such taxes if any U.S.-source dividends are paid on the stocks included in the underlier during the term of the notes. We could also require you to make certifications (e.g., an applicable internal Revenue Service Form W-8) prior to any coupon payment or the maturity of the notes in order to avoid or minimize withholding obligations, and we could withhold

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accordingly (subject to your potential right to claim a refund from the Internal Revenue Service) if such certifications were not received or were not satisfactory. If withholding was required, we would not be required to pay any additional amounts with respect to amounts so withheld. These regulations generally will apply to 871(m) financial instruments (or a combination of financial instruments treated as having been entered into in connection with each other)

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issued (or significantly modified and treated as retired and reissued) on or after January 1, 2021, but will also apply to certain 871(m) financial instruments (or a combination of financial instruments treated as having been entered into in connection with each other) that have a delta (as defined in the applicable Treasury regulations) of one and are issued (or significantly modified and treated as retired and reissued) on or after January 1, 2017. In addition, these regulations will not apply to financial instruments that reference a qualified index (as defined in the regulations). We have determined that, as of the issue date of your notes, your notes will not be subject to withholding under these rules. In certain limited circumstances, however, you should be aware that it is possible for United States alien holders to be liable for tax under these rules with respect to a combination of transactions treated as having been entered into in connection with each other even when no withholding is required. You should consult your tax advisor concerning these regulations, subsequent official guidance and regarding any other possible alternative characterizations of your notes for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

**Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) Withholding**

Pursuant to Treasury regulations, Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) withholding (as described in United States Taxation Taxation of Debt Securities Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) Withholding in the accompanying prospectus) will generally apply to obligations that are issued on or after July 1, 2014; therefore, the notes will generally be subject to FATCA withholding. However, according to published guidance, the withholding tax described above will not apply to payments of gross proceeds from the sale, exchange, redemption or other disposition of the notes made before January 1, 2019.

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We have not authorized anyone to provide any information or to make any representations other than those contained or incorporated by reference in this pricing supplement, the accompanying prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. We take no responsibility for, and can provide no assurance as to the reliability of, any other information that others may give you. This pricing supplement, the accompanying prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus is an offer to sell only the notes offered hereby, but only under circumstances and in jurisdictions where it is lawful to do so. The information contained in this pricing supplement, the accompanying prospectus supplement the accompanying prospectus is current only as of the respective dates of such documents.

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Autocallable Contingent Coupon Index-Linked Notes due

**GS Finance Corp.**

**guaranteed by**

**The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.**

Prospectus Supplement dated July 10, 2017

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**Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC**

**JPMorgan**

**Placement Agent**