



**Fort Washington  
Investment Advisors, Inc.**

A member of Western & Southern Financial Group

▼ *Uncompromised Focus®*

## FORT WASHINGTON STRATEGIC INCOME – 4Q2025

- ▶ Flexible investment approach with diversified sources of return
- ▶ Premium yield with a high-quality bias
- ▶ High-conviction security selection supported by rigorous bottom-up research
- ▶ Lead portfolio managers in place since inception

### PORTFOLIO COMMENTARY

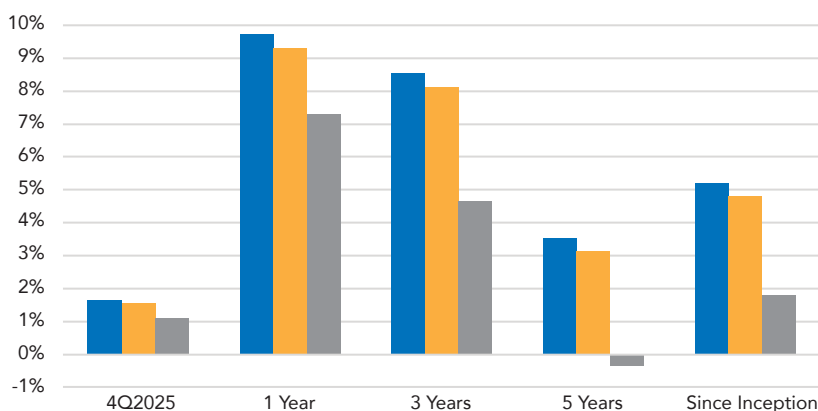
The Strategic Income strategy returned 1.64% gross and 1.54% net for the quarter, compared with 1.10% for the Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index.

Sector allocation was the largest contributor to relative outperformance, driven primarily by overweight allocations to Emerging Market Debt and non-credit sectors. These sectors outperformed as spreads tightened and risk assets moved higher over the period.

Security selection also had a positive impact on relative performance, reflecting outperformance within High Yield and Investment Grade Corporates. Within High Yield Corporates, multiple sectors contributed to outperformance, with the largest drivers coming from Media and Retailers. Within Investment Grade Corporates, the primary driver of relative performance was an underweight to the Technology sector, which underperformed during the quarter.

Interest rate positioning further contributed to relative outperformance during the quarter. The strategy tactically adjusted duration over the period but was managed short duration relative to the benchmark, which benefited performance as long-term rates moved higher while short-term rates declined. This steepening of the yield curve benefited the portfolio's interest rate positioning.

### Trailing Total Returns (as of December 31, 2025)



■ Strategic Income (Gross)	1.64	9.75	8.55	3.55	5.22
■ Strategic Income (Net)	1.54	9.31	8.12	3.13	4.80
■ Bloomberg US Aggregate	1.10	7.30	4.66	-0.36	1.78

Inception date: 07/01/2017. Source: Fort Washington. Past performance is not indicative of future results. This supplemental information complements the Strategic Income GIPS Report.

Inception Date: 07/01/2017

Total Strategy Assets: \$1.6 billion

Total Fixed Income Assets: \$65.4 billion

Style: Multi-Sector Bond, Opportunistic Fixed Income

### Flexibility

Max 50% Non-Investment Grade

### Premium Yield

5.5% Yield

A3/Baa1 Average Credit Quality

### Diversified Returns

0.74 correlation to the Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index since inception\*

### High Conviction

125–175 Issuers

### Experienced Team

35 Investment Professionals

Lead Portfolio Managers Average:

Average Industry Experience / 27 Years

Average Firm Experience / 21 Years

\*Source: Fort Washington, Nasdaq eVestment. Strategy Inception date is 07/01/2017.

### PEER GROUP PERFORMANCE

	Percentile Rank <sup>1</sup>
4Q2025	29
1 Year	26
3 Years	44
5 Years	29
Since Inception	22

Source: Nasdaq eVestment

<sup>1</sup>Peer ranks are percentile rankings relative to the eVestment US Multi-Sector Fixed Income Universe based on net returns. Past performance is not indicative of future results.

## POSITIONING

**Risk budget:** The strategy is targeting a modest overweight to risk, representing 30% of the risk budget.

Current valuations are at levels that are tight relative to history. Incorporating our macroeconomic outlook and elevated uncertainty, portfolios are positioned with a modest overweight risk posture and the flexibility to add risk as opportunities arise.

**Sectors:** Sector positioning reflects current valuations, relative value, and opportunities within each sector. Allocations were mostly unchanged during the quarter, and primary risk exposures include:

- ▶ Exposure to Investment Grade Credit was maintained over the quarter. The sector continues to favor positions lower in the capital structure within high-quality Financials and Utilities, while selectively adding to bottom-up opportunities with attractive relative value, including investments at the front and intermediate portions of the curve. In addition, the allocation remains underweight the Technology sector, as heavy expected issuance is likely to pressure spreads and create more attractive opportunities in the future.
- ▶ The allocation to Securitized Products was largely unchanged over the quarter. The team continues to favor non-agency exposure and remains overweight risk within ABS, RMBS, and CMBS. CLO exposure has been reduced due to expensive valuations and limited upside potential. In addition, the strategy has been opportunistically adding to ABS, primarily through whole-business securitizations.
- ▶ The strategy maintained its exposure to Emerging Market Debt, which remains toward the lower end of the Fund's historical range. The sector is primarily invested in attractive bottom-up narratives within the below-Investment Grade segment. Latin America represents the largest regional exposure within the sector.
- ▶ High Yield exposure was modestly reduced over the quarter as the strategy seeks to opportunistically trim the allocation given spreads that are expensive relative to history. The High Yield allocation remains broadly diversified by sector, favors quality, and is positioned to add risk at more attractive spread levels.

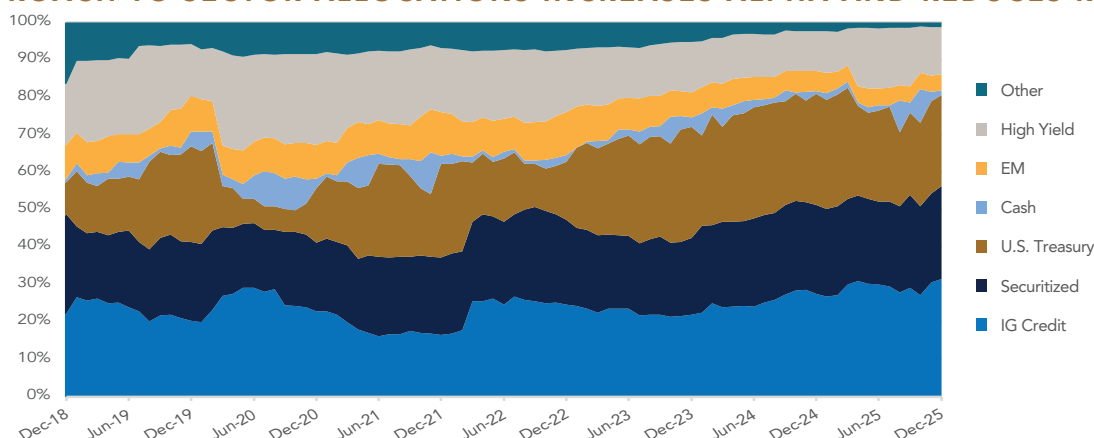
**Rates:** Duration was tactically adjusted during the quarter. The portfolio began and ended the quarter at approximately a 5.0-year duration, averaging 5.1 years over the period. We are positioning portfolios within the current range of 4.75 to 5.25 years, with a bias toward longer-term real yields. The yield curve steepened over the quarter, and the strategy is targeting a largely neutral curve positioning. Volatility has subsided over the past year; however, we anticipate the timing of future rate cuts will continue to shift with new economic data and developments around executive-branch policies, presenting opportunities for tactical adjustments.

Portfolio Characteristics	
Weighted Average Yield to Worst	5.54%
Effective Duration (Years)	5.06
Average Credit Quality	A3/Baa1
Credit Quality (% of Fixed Income)	
AAA	5%
AA	29%
A	6%
BBB	37%
BB	10%
B	8%
CCC and Below	1%
Not Rated	2%
Cash	1%

Sector Allocation	Current	3-Year Average	3-Year High	3-Year Low
Investment Grade Credit	31%	26%	31%	21%
High Yield Corporate	12%	13%	16%	10%
U.S. Treasuries	24%	26%	30%	20%
Securitized	25%	22%	25%	19%
ABS	7%	6%	8%	3%
CLO	3%	5%	7%	2%
CMBS	8%	6%	8%	4%
RMBS	6%	4%	6%	2%
Emerging Markets Debt	4%	6%	11%	4%
Other	2%	4%	7%	1%
Cash	1%	3%	9%	0%

Source: Fort Washington and Bloomberg PORT. Past performance is not indicative of future results. Portfolio characteristics subject to change at any time without notice. This supplemental information complements the Strategic Income GIPS Report.

## FLEXIBLE APPROACH TO SECTOR ALLOCATIONS INCREASES ALPHA AND REDUCES RISK



Source: Fort Washington. Past performance is not indicative of future results. Portfolio characteristics subject to change at any time without notice. Inception date is 07/01/2017. This supplemental information complements the Strategic Income GIPS Report.

## MARKET OVERVIEW

As we turn to a new year, the investment landscape remains marked by lingering uncertainty, though optimism around 2026 has been building. Despite headwinds from trade policy and geopolitical tensions, the U.S. economy has remained resilient in recent quarters. The primary drivers of growth have been strong personal consumption—supported by higher-income consumers and the “wealth effect”—alongside continued investment in artificial intelligence infrastructure. Investors expect both to remain key growth catalysts into 2026.

The Federal Reserve built on its September rate cut by delivering two additional 25-basis-point reductions at the final meetings of the year. A weakening employment picture prompted the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) to move policy closer to neutral. However, divisions among members have grown, with concerns over downside risks to the labor market at odds with views that the economy could still experience upside inflation surprises. While recent reports show inflation plateauing, goods prices appear the most likely source of higher-than-expected inflation, given ongoing tariff pressures and a pending Supreme Court ruling on their legality.

Following stronger-than-expected 4.3% GDP growth in Q3, the economy is projected to see a modest slowdown in Q4. This is largely due to the temporary drag from the U.S. government shutdown, with growth expected to normalize in Q1 2026. Beyond weighing on activity, the shutdown has complicated the interpretation of economic data due to missing inputs and delayed releases. As these effects dissipate, tax policy remains a potential tailwind, as accelerated depreciation should boost capital expenditures and individual tax cuts should support consumer spending. That said, job creation has slowed meaningfully and could begin to pressure consumption should unemployment rise further.

As rate cuts eased financial conditions and market fundamentals remained healthy, the S&P 500 continued to reach new highs over the quarter. Closing the year with an annual return of 17.9%, this marked a third consecutive year of double-digit gains for the index. Credit spreads were largely range bound during the quarter and remain near historically tight levels. Expectations for additional rate cuts in 2026, alongside benign long-term inflation expectations, contributed to a steepening yield curve over the quarter, despite the 10-year Treasury ending largely unchanged at 4.17%.

## WHAT DIFFERENTIATES STRATEGIC INCOME?

**Premium Yield.** Strategic Income has a yield well above the Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index, as well as traditional fixed income strategies.<sup>2</sup>

**High Conviction Security Selection.** Bottom-up security selection in fixed income has proven to be a reliable source of alpha. Strategic Income is a portfolio of 125–175 issuers, focusing on the best ideas of our investment teams.

**Sector Diversification.** Non-traditional fixed income strategies often have large concentrations in a single sector, such as High Yield or preferred securities. Strategic Income is broadly diversified by sector, resulting in multiple sources of return potential.

**Duration Management.** Unconstrained fixed income strategies can take large—and sometimes negative—duration positions. Strategic Income uses duration as a risk-mitigation tool, and seeks to avoid large duration exposures given the difficulty of predicting interest rates.

**Quality Bias.** Strategic Income has maintained a top-quintile yield without taking excessive risk. The average credit quality of current holdings is Investment Grade, while the average credit quality of most peer portfolios is High Yield.

## WHY INVEST IN THE STRATEGY?

**Flexibility.** Having the flexibility to react to market dislocations in a timely manner can be a benefit of non-traditional fixed income approaches such as Strategic Income.

**Enhanced Return.** Multi-Sector bond strategies have outperformed traditional strategies over the past 1-, 3-, 5-, and 10-year periods<sup>2</sup> with only a moderate increase in risk.

**Higher Yield.** For investors seeking increased yield, Strategic Income has historically provided a yield in excess of the Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index by 2%,<sup>3</sup> higher than most traditional strategies.

**Expanded Opportunity Set.** Traditional strategies are largely invested in sectors and securities represented in common market indices. Strategic Income extends beyond common market indices into less trafficked areas, providing more opportunities for alpha.

**Portfolio Diversification.** Traditional strategies are often invested in the major index sectors of Investment Grade Corporates, Securitized, and Government Securities. Strategic Income provides dedicated exposure to diversifying fixed income asset classes with low correlation to traditional fixed income strategies.

<sup>2</sup> Source: eVestment US Multi-Sector Fixed Income Universe and eVestment US Core Plus Fixed Income Universe as of 12/31/2025.

<sup>3</sup> Source: Bloomberg, Fort Washington.

## STRATEGIC INCOME COMPOSITE GIPS REPORT

	4Q2025	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018 <sup>1</sup>
Strategic Income (Gross)	1.64%	9.75%	7.28%	8.64%	-9.86%	3.24%	10.72%	12.84%	0.49%
Strategic Income (Net)	1.54%	9.31%	6.85%	8.21%	-10.22%	2.83%	10.28%	12.39%	0.09%
Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index	1.10%	7.30%	1.25%	5.53%	-13.01%	-1.54%	7.51%	8.72%	0.01%
Strategic Income 3-Year Annual Standard Deviation <sup>2</sup>	-	5.30%	7.48%	6.96%	8.41%	6.68%	6.87%	-	-
Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index 3-Year Annual Standard Deviation <sup>2</sup>	-	5.98%	7.72%	7.14%	5.77%	3.35%	3.36%	-	-
Dispersion <sup>3</sup>	0.12%	0.35%	1.05%	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of Accounts	6	6	6	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5
Composite Assets (\$ Millions) <sup>4</sup>	\$1,572	\$1,572	\$1,212	\$880	\$605	\$1,060	\$386	\$286	\$58
Total Firm Assets (\$ Millions)	\$89,448	\$89,448	\$81,286	\$74,613	\$66,365	\$73,804	\$65,086	\$59,174	\$49,225

Composite inception and creation date: 07/01/2017. <sup>1</sup>2017 returns are partial-year returns, reflecting the composite inception date of 07/01/2017. <sup>2</sup>The 3-Year annualized ex-post standard deviation is calculated using monthly gross-of-fee returns to measure the average deviations of returns from its mean. <sup>3</sup>Dispersion is not calculated for years in which the composite contains five portfolios or less. Dispersion is calculated as the equal weighted standard deviation of quarterly gross-of-fee returns for those portfolios held in the composite during the full measurement period. Past performance is not indicative of future results. <sup>4</sup>The change in composite assets from 2021 to 2022 was the result of two accounts dropping below the \$100 million strategy minimum. The accounts continued to be managed in the style of the Strategic Income strategy and were returned to the composite in 2023 when their asset values once again exceeded the minimum threshold. The benchmark for this composite is the Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index. The Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index is a market capitalization-weighted index that measures the performance of the U.S. dollar-denominated, fixed-rate, taxable bond market. The index includes investment grade securities such as U.S. Treasuries, government-related and corporate bonds, mortgage-backed securities, asset-backed securities, and commercial mortgage-backed securities. The index accounts for interest payments by incorporating them into the total return calculation. The Strategic Income strategy employs a high conviction, yield oriented investment approach coupled with sector diversification and diligent risk management resulting in attractive risk adjusted returns via high levels of income. The primary objective of Strategic Income is to produce a high level of current income with a secondary objective of capital appreciation. The strategy will invest in public fixed income, private fixed income, common stock and derivatives. The strategy will incorporate the best investment ideas available to Fort Washington, exploiting Fort Washington's core competencies of bottom-up credit and structure analysis. Risk monitoring, performance measurement, and active management is a key component to achieving attractive risk adjusted returns. All fee-paying, fully discretionary portfolios managed in the Strategic Income style, with a minimum of \$100 million under our management, are included in this composite. The strategy's fee schedule is 0.40% for separate accounts. Portfolios in this composite include cash, cash equivalents, investment securities, interest and dividends. Cash is maintained, within each separately managed account segment, in accordance with our asset allocation ratio. The U.S. dollar is the base currency. The specific securities identified and described do not represent all the securities purchased, sold, or recommended. Returns are presented gross and net of management fees and include the reinvestment of all income. Gross returns will be reduced by investment advisory fees and other expenses that may be incurred in the management of the account. Net returns reflect the portfolio's gross returns with the deduction of expenses and other costs associated with the management of the investments in the portfolio as well as the deduction of the highest advertised fee rate for the applicable strategy shown. Individual portfolio returns are calculated on a daily valuation basis. Fort Washington Investment Advisors, Inc. (Fort Washington), a wholly owned subsidiary of The Western and Southern Life Insurance Company, is a registered investment advisor and provides discretionary money management to a broad range of investors, including both institutional and individual investors. Assets under management include all portfolios managed by Fort Washington and exclude assets managed by and marketed as its Private Equity business unit. Fort Washington claims compliance with the Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS®) and has prepared and presented this report in compliance with the GIPS Standards. Fort Washington has been independently verified for the periods 07/01/1994-12/31/2024. The verification reports are available upon request. A firm that claims compliance with the GIPS standards must establish policies and procedures for complying with all the applicable requirements of the GIPS standards. Verification provides assurance on whether the firm's policies and procedures related to composite and pooled fund maintenance, as well as the calculation, presentation, and distribution of performance, have been designed in compliance with the GIPS standards and have been implemented on a firm-wide basis. Verification does not provide assurance on the accuracy of any specific performance report. GIPS® is a registered trademark of CFA Institute. CFA Institute does not endorse or promote this organization, nor does it warrant the accuracy or quality of the content contained herein. Policies for valuing investments, calculating performance, and preparing GIPS Reports are available upon request. To receive a complete list and description of composites, contact Fort Washington by phone at 888.244.8167, in writing at 303 Broadway, Suite 1200, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202, or online at fortwashington.com.

## RISK DISCLOSURE

The Fort Washington Strategic Income strategy invests in fixed-income securities which can experience reduced liquidity during certain market events, lose their value as interest rates rise and are subject to credit risk which is the risk of deterioration in the financial condition of an issuer and/or general economic conditions that can cause the issuer to not make timely payments of principal and interest also causing the securities to decline in value and an investor can lose principal. The strategy invests in non-investment grade debt securities which are considered speculative with respect to the issuers' ability to make timely payments of interest and principal, may lack liquidity and has had more frequent and larger price changes than other debt securities. The strategy invests in mortgage-backed securities and asset-backed securities which are subject to the risks of prepayment, defaults, changing interest rates and at times, the financial condition of the issuer. The strategy invests in equities which are subject to market volatility and loss. The strategy invests in preferred stocks which are relegated below bonds for payment should the issuer be liquidated. The strategy invests in foreign securities which carry the associated risks of economic and political instability, market liquidity, currency volatility and accounting standards that differ from those of U.S. markets and may offer less protection to investors. The strategy invests in derivatives such as futures contracts. Derivatives can be highly volatile, illiquid and difficult to value, subject to counterparty and leverage risks and there is risk that changes in the value of a derivative held by the strategy will not correlate with the strategy's other investments. The strategy invests in mortgage dollar rolls which involve increased risk and volatility, as the securities the strategy is required to repurchase may be worth less than the securities that the strategy originally held.

## CONTACT

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