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NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JOHN HANCOCK TAX-ADVANTAGED GLOBAL SHAREHOLDER YIELD FUND DECLARES QUARTERLY DISTRIBUTION

BOSTON, MA (December 1, 2011) – The John Hancock Tax-Advantaged Global Shareholder Yield Fund (NYSE: HTY) declared a quarterly distribution of \$0.32 per share today, a decrease of 11.11% from its previous quarterly distribution rate of \$0.36. This new distribution rate equates to an annualized rate of 10.18%, based on the Fund's closing market price of \$12.57 as of November 30, 2011. The new distribution rate is payable December 30, 2011 to shareholders of record on December 12, 2011 with an ex-date of December 8, 2011.

The adjustment in the distribution rate is the result of continued analysis conducted by the investment teams managing the portfolio with respect to the rate and sustainability of the Fund's distributions. As portfolio and market conditions change, the distribution rate paid by the Fund could change.

A portion of a Fund's current distribution may include sources other than net investment income, including a return of capital. Investors should understand that a return of capital is not a distribution from income or gains of a Fund. As required under the Investment Company Act of 1940, a notice with the estimated components of the distribution will be mailed to shareholders at the time of payment if it does not consist solely of net investment income. At this time, the Fund anticipates that the notice accompanying the current distribution will include an estimate of return of capital. Such notice will also be posted to the Funds' website at www.jhfunds.com. The notice should not be used to prepare tax returns as the estimates indicated in the notice may differ from the ultimate federal income tax characterization of distributions. After the end of each calendar year, investors will be sent a Form 1099-DIV informing them how to report distributions received during that year for federal income tax purposes.

Statements in this press release that are not historical facts are forward-looking statements as defined by the United States securities laws. You should exercise caution in interpreting and relying on forward-looking statements because they are subject to uncertainties and other factors which are, in some cases, beyond the Fund's control and could cause actual results to differ materially from those set forth in the forward-looking statements.

An investor should consider a Fund's investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses carefully before investing.

About John Hancock Funds

The Boston-based mutual fund business unit of John Hancock Financial, John Hancock Funds, manages more than \$62.3 billion in open-end funds, closed-end funds, private accounts,

retirement plans and related party assets for individual and institutional investors at September 30, 2011.

About John Hancock Financial and Manulife Financial Corporation

John Hancock Financial is a unit of Manulife Financial Corporation, a leading Canadian-based financial services group serving millions of customers in 22 countries and territories worldwide. Operating as Manulife Financial in Canada and in most of Asia, and primarily as John Hancock in the United States, Manulife Financial Corporation offers clients a diverse range of financial protection products and wealth management services through its extensive network of employees, agents and distribution partners. Funds under management by Manulife Financial and its subsidiaries were Cdn\$492 billion (US\$473 billion) at September 30, 2011.

Manulife Financial Corporation trades as 'MFC' on the TSX, NYSE and PSE, and under '945' on the SEHK. Manulife Financial can be found on the Internet at www.manulife.com.

The John Hancock unit, through its insurance companies, comprises one of the largest life insurers in the United States. John Hancock offers a broad range of financial products and services, including [life insurance](#), fixed and variable [annuities](#), [fixed products](#), [mutual funds](#), [401\(k\) plans](#), [long-term care insurance](#), [college savings](#), and other forms of business insurance. Additional information about John Hancock may be found at www.johnhancock.com.