

BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY INC

Form 424B2

February 04, 2010

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Filed Pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2)

Registration Statement No. 333-164611

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The information contained in this preliminary prospectus supplement is not complete and may be changed. A registration statement relating to these securities has been declared effective by the Securities and Exchange Commission. This preliminary prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are not an offer to sell these securities and they are not soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale of these securities is not permitted.

Subject to completion, dated February 4, 2010

Prospectus Supplement to Prospectus dated February 1, 2010

\$8,000,000,000

Berkshire Hathaway Inc.

\$

Senior Notes due 2011

Issue price %

Interest payable

\$

Senior Notes due 2012

Issue price %

Interest payable

We are offering (i) \$ of our Senior Notes due 2011, (ii) \$ of our Senior Notes due 2012, (iii) \$ of our Senior Notes due 2013 and (iv) \$ of our Senior Notes due 2015 (collectively, the notes). Interest on the notes will accrue from the date of original issuance, expected to be February , 2010 and will be payable on of each year, commencing on , 2010. The Senior Notes due 2011 will mature on , 2011, the Senior Notes due 2012 will mature on , 2012, the Senior Notes due 2013 will mature on , 2013 and the Senior Notes 2015 will mature on , 2015.

We may redeem any series of the fixed rate notes, in whole or in part, at any time at the redemption prices as described under Description of notes Optional redemption. We will not have the right to redeem the floating rate notes.

The notes will be senior unsecured indebtedness of ours and will rank equally with all of our other existing and future senior unsecured indebtedness.

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The notes will not be listed on any securities exchange. Currently, there is no public market for the notes.

The risks involved in investing in our debt securities are described in the Risk factors section starting on page S-5 of this prospectus supplement.

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

		Price to Public(1)	Underwriting Discounts	Proceeds, Before Expenses,
Per	Senior Note due 2011	%	%	%
Per	Senior Note due 2012	%	%	%
Per	Senior Note due 2013	%	%	%
Per	Senior Note due 2015	%	%	%
Total		\$	\$	\$

(1) Plus accrued interest from February , 2010 if delivery of the notes occurs after such date.

The underwriters expect to deliver the notes to purchasers through the book-entry delivery system of The Depository Trust Company and its participants including Euroclear Bank S.A./N.V. and Clearstream Banking, société anonyme, on or about February , 2010.

Sole Book-Running Manager

J.P. Morgan

Joint Lead Manager

Wells Fargo Securities

The date of this prospectus supplement is February , 2010

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You should read this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus carefully before you invest in the notes. This document contains or incorporates by reference important information you should consider before making your investment decision. You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. We have not, and the underwriters have not, authorized anyone else to provide you with any different or additional information. You should not assume that the information contained in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus (as updated by this prospectus supplement) is accurate as of any date other than the date on the front cover of this prospectus supplement, or that the information we previously filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") and incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus is accurate as of any date other than the date of the document incorporated by reference. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates.

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Forward-looking information

Certain statements contained, or incorporated by reference, in this prospectus supplement are forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Forward-looking statements include statements that are predictive in nature, that depend upon or refer to future events or conditions, that include words such as expects, anticipates, intends, plans, believes, estimates, or similar expressions. In addition, any statements concerning future financial performance (including future revenues, earnings or growth rates), ongoing business strategies or prospects, and possible future actions by us, which may be provided by management are also forward-looking statements as defined by the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Forward-looking statements are based on current expectations and projections about future events and are subject to risks, uncertainties, and assumptions about us, economic and market factors and the industries in which they do business, among other things. These statements are not guarantees of future performance and we have no specific intention to update these statements.

Actual events and results may differ materially from those expressed or forecasted in forward-looking statements due to a number of factors. The principal important risk factors that could cause our actual performance and future events and actions to differ materially from such forward-looking statements, include, but are not limited to, continuing volatility in the capital or credit markets and other changes in the securities and capital markets, changes in market prices of our investments in fixed maturity and equity securities, losses realized from derivative contracts, the occurrence of one or more catastrophic events, such as an earthquake, hurricane, or act of terrorism that causes losses insured by our insurance subsidiaries, changes in insurance laws or regulations, changes in federal income tax laws, and changes in general economic and market factors that affect the prices of securities or the industries in which we and our affiliates do business.

Unless required by law, we undertake no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements to reflect events or developments after the date of this prospectus supplement.

About this prospectus supplement

This document is in two parts. The first part is this prospectus supplement, which describes the terms of the offering of the notes and also adds to and updates information contained in the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. The second part is the accompanying prospectus, which provides more general information. To the extent there is a conflict between the information contained in this prospectus supplement, on the one hand, and the information contained in the accompanying prospectus or any document incorporated herein and therein by reference, on the other hand, you should rely on the information contained in this prospectus supplement.

The information in this prospectus supplement is not complete and may be changed. You should rely only on the information provided in or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, or documents to which we otherwise refer you. We are not making an offer of these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, as well as information we have filed or will file with the SEC and incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and accompanying prospectus, is accurate as of the date of the applicable document or other date referred to in that document. Our business, financial condition, and results of operations may have changed since that date.

In this prospectus supplement, unless otherwise specified or the context otherwise implies, references to dollars and \$ are to U.S. dollars. Unless we indicate otherwise or unless the context requires otherwise, all references in this prospectus supplement to Berkshire, we, us, our, or similar references are to Berkshire Hathaway Inc. excluding its consolidated subsidiaries.

This prospectus supplement is based on information provided by us and by other sources that we believe are reliable. We cannot assure you that this information is accurate or complete. This prospectus supplement summarizes certain documents and other information and we refer you to them for a more complete understanding of what we discuss in this prospectus supplement.

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Summary

The following summary is qualified in its entirety by the more detailed information included elsewhere in or incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. Because this is a summary, it does not contain all the information that may be important to you. You should carefully read the entire prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, together with documents incorporated by reference, in their entirety before making an investment decision.

About Berkshire Hathaway Inc.

We are incorporated in Delaware and are a holding company owning subsidiaries that engage in a number of diverse business activities including property and casualty insurance and reinsurance, utilities and energy, finance, manufacturing, services and retailing. Included in the group of subsidiaries that underwrite property and casualty insurance and reinsurance is GEICO, the third largest auto insurer in the United States and two of the largest reinsurers in the world, General Re and the Berkshire Hathaway Reinsurance Group. Other subsidiaries that underwrite property and casualty insurance include National Indemnity Company, Columbia Insurance Company, National Fire & Marine Insurance Company, National Liability and Fire Insurance Company, Wesco-Financial Insurance Company, Medical Protective Company, Applied Underwriters, U.S. Liability Insurance Company, Central States Indemnity Company, Kansas Bankers Surety, Cypress Insurance Company, Boat U.S. and several other subsidiaries referred to as the Homestate Companies.

MidAmerican Energy Holdings Company (MidAmerican) is an international energy holding company owning a wide variety of operating companies engaged in the generation, transmission and distribution of energy. Among MidAmerican s operating energy companies are Northern Electric and Yorkshire Electricity; MidAmerican Energy Company; Pacific Power and Rocky Mountain Power; and Kern River Gas Transmission Company and Northern Natural Gas. In addition, MidAmerican owns HomeServices of America, a real estate brokerage firm. Our finance and financial products businesses primarily engage in proprietary investing strategies (BH Finance), commercial and consumer lending (Berkshire Hathaway Credit Corporation and Clayton Homes, Inc.) and transportation equipment and furniture leasing (XTRA and CORT). McLane Company is a wholesale distributor of groceries and nonfood items to convenience stores, wholesale clubs, mass merchandisers, quick service restaurants and others. The Marmon Group is an international association of approximately 130 manufacturing and service businesses that operate independently within diverse business sectors. Shaw Industries is the world s largest manufacturer of tufted broadloom carpet.

Numerous business activities are conducted through our other manufacturing, services and retailing subsidiaries. Benjamin Moore is a formulator, manufacturer and retailer of architectural and industrial coatings. Johns Manville is a leading manufacturer of insulation and building products. Acme Building Brands is a manufacturer of face brick and concrete masonry products. MiTek Inc. produces steel connector products and engineering software for the building components market. Fruit of the Loom, Russell, Vanity Fair, Garan, Fechheimer, H.H. Brown Shoe Group and Justin Brands manufacture, license and distribute apparel and footwear under a variety of brand names. FlightSafety International provides training to aircraft operators. NetJets

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provides fractional ownership programs for general aviation aircraft. Nebraska Furniture Mart, R.C. Willey Home Furnishings, Star Furniture and Jordan's Furniture are retailers of home furnishings. Borsheims, Helzberg Diamond Shops and Ben Bridge Jeweler are retailers of fine jewelry.

In addition, other manufacturing, service and retail businesses include: Buffalo News, a publisher of a daily and Sunday newspaper; See's Candies, a manufacturer and seller of boxed chocolates and other confectionery products; Scott Fetzer, a diversified manufacturer and distributor of commercial and industrial products; Albecca, a designer, manufacturer and distributor of high-quality picture framing products; CTB International, a manufacturer of equipment for the livestock and agricultural industries; International Dairy Queen, a licensor and service provider to about 5,700 stores that offer prepared dairy treats and food; The Pampered Chef, the premier direct seller of kitchen tools in the United States; Forest River, a leading manufacturer of leisure vehicles in the United States; Business Wire, the leading global distributor of corporate news, multimedia and regulatory filings; Iscar Metalworking Companies, an industry leader in the metal cutting tools business; TTI, Inc., a leading distributor of electronic components and Richline Group, a leading jewelry manufacturer.

Operating decisions for our various businesses are made by managers of the business units. Investment decisions and all other capital allocation decisions are made for us and our subsidiaries by Warren E. Buffett, in consultation with Charles T. Munger. Mr. Buffett is Chairman and Mr. Munger is Vice Chairman of our Board of Directors. Our businesses collectively employ approximately 222,000 people.

Our executive offices are located at 3555 Farnam Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68131, and our telephone number is (402) 346-1400.

Proposed acquisition of Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corporation

On November 3, 2009, we entered into a merger agreement with Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corporation (BNSF), pursuant to which, subject to conditions described below, BNSF would be merged into a subsidiary of National Indemnity Company, an indirect wholly owned insurance subsidiary of ours, so that following the proposed transaction, we would indirectly own 100% of BNSF.

If the merger is completed, each share of BNSF common stock will be converted into the right to receive, at the BNSF stockholder's election (subject to certain proration and reallocation procedures), either (i) \$100.00 in cash, or (ii) a portion of a share of our Class A common stock equal to an exchange ratio determined in accordance with the merger agreement.

Under the merger agreement, approximately 60% of the total merger consideration payable by us to BNSF stockholders will be in the form of cash and approximately 40% will be in the form of our common stock.

The transaction is subject to customary closing conditions and requires approval by (i) the holders of at least 66-2/3% of the outstanding shares of BNSF common stock not owned by us and (ii) the holders of a majority of the outstanding shares of BNSF common stock.

If the requisite approval of the BNSF stockholders is obtained at the meeting of BNSF stockholders currently scheduled for February 11, 2010, and the other conditions to close are met or waived, the merger is expected to become effective as soon as practicable but in no event later than the fourth business day following the meeting of BNSF stockholders.

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Issuer Berkshire Hathaway Inc.

Securities offered \$ aggregate principal amount of Senior Notes due 2011.
 \$ aggregate principal amount of Senior Notes due 2012.
 \$ aggregate principal amount of Senior Notes due 2013.
 \$ aggregate principal amount of Senior Notes due 2015.

Offering price % in respect of the Senior Notes due 2011.
 % in respect of the Senior Notes due 2012.
 % in respect of the Senior Notes due 2013.
 % in respect of the Senior Notes due 2015.

Maturity date , 2011 in respect of Senior Notes due 2011.
 , 2012 in respect of Senior Notes due 2012.
 , 2013 in respect of Senior Notes due 2013.
 , 2015 in respect of Senior Notes due 2015.

Interest The Senior Notes due 2011 will bear interest at a rate per annum equal to %. Interest on the Senior Notes due 2011 will be payable in arrears on of each year, commencing on , 2010.

The Senior Notes due 2012 will bear interest at a rate per annum equal to %. Interest on the Senior Notes due 2012 will be payable in arrears on of each year, commencing on , 2010.

The Senior Notes due 2013 will bear interest at a rate per annum equal to %. Interest on the Senior Notes due 2013 will be payable in arrears on of each year, commencing on , 2010.

The Senior Notes due 2015 will bear interest at a rate per annum equal to %. Interest on the Senior Notes due 2015 will be payable in arrears on of each year, commencing on , 2010.

Ranking Each series of notes will be our unsecured senior obligations, will rank *pari passu* in right of payment with all of our unsubordinated, unsecured indebtedness and will be senior in right of payment to all of our subordinated indebtedness. As of September 30, 2009, we had no secured indebtedness and \$169 million of indebtedness, and our subsidiaries had \$37.8 billion of indebtedness.

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Optional redemption	<p>We will have the option to redeem each of the fixed rate notes, in whole or in part, at any time, at a redemption price equal to the greater of (A)100% of the principal amount of the notes to be redeemed or (B) as determined by the quotation agent and as described herein under Description of the notes Optional redemption, the sum of the present values of the remaining scheduled payments of principal and interest on the notes to be redeemed, not including any portion of such payments of interest accrued as of the date on which the notes are to be redeemed, discounted to the date on which the notes are to be redeemed on a semi-annual basis, assuming a 360-day year consisting of twelve 30-day months, at the adjusted treasury rate described herein under Description of the notes Optional redemption plus basis points, and plus accrued interest to the date on which the notes are to be redeemed.</p> <p>We will not have the right to redeem the floating rate notes.</p>
Repayment	<p>The notes will not be repayable at the option of the holder prior to maturity.</p>
Sinking fund	<p>None of the notes are subject to a sinking fund provision.</p>
Form and denomination	<p>The Depository Trust Company (DTC) will act as securities depository for the notes, which will be issued only as fully registered global securities registered in the name of DTC or its nominee for credit to an account of a direct or indirect participant in DTC, except in certain circumstances. One or more fully registered global notes will be issued to DTC for the notes. The notes will be issued in minimum denominations of \$2,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000 in excess thereof.</p>
Use of proceeds	<p>We expect to use the net proceeds of this offering in connection with our acquisition, through merger, of BNSF. If the conditions to such acquisition are not met, we expect to use the net proceeds for general corporate purposes. See Use of proceeds.</p>
Trustee	<p>The Bank of New York Mellon Trust Company, N.A.</p>
Governing law	<p>New York</p>
Risk factors	<p>You should carefully consider the specific factors set forth under Risk factors, beginning on page S-5 of this prospectus supplement as well as the information and data included elsewhere or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus, before making an investment decision.</p>

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Risk factors

An investment in our securities involves some degree of risk. Prior to making a decision about investing in our securities, you should carefully consider the risks described in the section entitled "Risk factors" in any prospectus supplement and the risks described in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K filed with the SEC, in each case as these risk factors are amended or supplemented by subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q. The occurrence of any of these risks could materially adversely affect our business, operating results and financial condition.

The risks and uncertainties we describe are not the only ones facing us. Additional risks and uncertainties not presently known to us or that we currently deem immaterial may also impair our business or operations. Any adverse effect on our business, financial condition or operating results could result in a decline in the value of our securities and the loss of all or part of your investment.

There is currently no trading market for the notes and an active trading market for the notes may not develop.

The notes are a new issue of securities with no established trading market, and we do not intend to list them on any securities exchange or automated quotation system. As a result, an active trading market for the notes may not develop, or if one does develop, it may not be sustained. If an active trading market fails to develop or cannot be sustained, you may not be able to resell your notes at their fair market value or at all.

Risks unique to our regulated businesses.

Insurance business

Our insurance businesses are subject to regulation in the jurisdictions in which we operate. Such regulations may relate to among other things, the types of business we can write, the rates we can charge for coverage, the level of capital that we must maintain and restrictions on the types and size of investments we can make. Regulations may also restrict the timing and amount of dividend payments. Accordingly, changes in regulations related to these or other matters or regulatory actions imposing restrictions on our insurance companies, may adversely impact our results of operations.

Railroad business

The railroad business of BNSF that we propose to acquire through merger is subject to a significant amount of governmental regulation with respect to its rates and practices, railroad operations and a variety of health, safety, labor, environmental and other matters. Failure to comply with applicable laws and regulations could have a material adverse effect on its operation. Governments may change the legislative framework within which BNSF operates without providing it with any recourse for any adverse effects that the change may have on its railroad business. Also, some of the regulations require BNSF to obtain and maintain various licenses, permits and other authorizations, and we cannot be sure that BNSF will continue to be able to do so. Increased economic regulation of the rail industry could negatively impact BNSF's ability to determine prices for rail services and to make capital improvements to its rail network, resulting in an adverse effect on the results of operations, financial condition or liquidity of its railroad business.

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BNSF regularly utilizes debt to fund operations and capital expenditures. BNSF depends on having access to borrowed funds through the capital markets. To the extent that access to the credit is restricted or the cost of funding increases, our operations could be adversely affected.

Regulatory changes may adversely impact our future operating results.

Over the past year, partially in response to the financial markets crises and the global economic recession, regulatory initiatives have accelerated in the United States and abroad. Such initiatives address for example, the regulation of banks and other major financial institutions, regulations related to environmental and global-warming matters and health care reform. It is not yet clear whether or not these initiatives will result in significant changes to existing laws and regulations. These initiatives could have a significant impact on our operating businesses as well as on the businesses that we have a significant but not controlling economic interest. Accordingly, we cannot predict whether such initiatives will have a material adverse impact on our consolidated financial position, results of operations or cash flows.

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Use of proceeds

We intend to use all of the net proceeds that we receive from the sale of the notes as part of the cash consideration to be paid to the stockholders of BNSF in connection with our acquisition, through merger, of BNSF. If the conditions to such acquisition are not met, we expect to use the net proceeds for general corporate purposes.

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Description of the notes

The following description of certain material terms of the notes does not purport to be complete.

This description of the notes is intended to be an overview of the material provisions of the notes and is intended to supplement, and to the extent of any inconsistency replace, the description of the general terms and provisions of the debt securities set forth in the accompanying prospectus, to which we refer you. The notes will be issued under an indenture, dated as of February 1, 2010, (the "indenture") among us, Berkshire Hathaway Finance Corporation and The Bank of New York Mellon Trust Company, N.A., a New York banking corporation, as trustee (the "trustee"). Since this description of the notes is only a summary, we urge you to read the indenture (including definitions of terms used therein) and the form of note because they, and not this description, define your rights as a beneficial holder of the notes. You may request copies of these documents from us at our address set forth above under "Summary About Berkshire Hathaway Inc." The indenture and a form of the notes, are included or incorporated by reference as an exhibit to the registration statement of which this prospectus supplement forms a part.

General

The % Senior Notes due and % Senior Notes due will be collectively referred to herein as the fixed rate notes.

The Floating Rate Senior Notes due and Floating Rate Senior Notes due will be collectively referred to herein as the floating rate notes.

Each maturity of the fixed rate notes and the floating rate notes offered by this prospectus supplement will be issued as a separate series under the indenture. The notes will be our senior unsecured obligations and will be initially limited in aggregate principal amount to \$ in the case of the Senior Notes due 2011, \$ in the case of the Senior Notes due 2012, \$ in the case of the Senior Notes due 2013, and \$ in the case of the Senior Notes due 2015.

We may at any time, without notice to or consent of the holders of the notes offered by this prospectus supplement, issue additional notes of the same series as any series of the notes offered hereby. Any such additional notes will have the same ranking, interest rate, maturity date and other terms as such series of notes offered hereby, except for possible variations permitted under the indenture. Any such additional notes, together with the notes offered hereby of such series, will constitute a single series of notes under the indenture.

The entire principal amount of the Senior Notes due 2011 will mature and become due and payable, together with any accrued and unpaid interest thereon, on 2011. The entire principal amount of the Senior Notes due 2012 will mature and become due and payable, together with any accrued and unpaid interest thereon, on 2012. The entire principal amount of the Senior Notes due 2013 will mature and become due and payable, together with any accrued and unpaid interest thereon, on 2013. The entire principal amount of the Senior Notes due 2015 will mature and become due and payable, together with any accrued and unpaid interest thereon, on 2015.

The notes will be evidenced by one or more global notes deposited with a custodian for and registered in the name of a nominee of DTC. Except as described herein, beneficial interests in

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the global notes will be shown on, and transfers thereof will be effected only through, records maintained by DTC and its direct and indirect participants. See Book-entry delivery and form.

You will not have the right to cause us to repurchase the notes in whole or in part at any time before they mature. The notes are not subject to a sinking fund provision.

Interest Fixed rate notes

The fixed rate notes will accrue interest at a rate of % per annum. The fixed rate notes will accrue interest on their stated principal amount from , 2010, or from the most recent date to which interest has been paid or duly provided for, and accrued and unpaid interest will be payable semi-annually in arrears on and of each year, which we refer to as interest payment dates, commencing on , 2010. Interest will be paid to the person in whose name a fixed rate note is registered at the close of business on or (whether or not a business day), which we refer to as the record dates, immediately preceding the relevant interest payment date.

The amount of interest payable on the fixed rate notes for any full semi-annual interest period will be computed on the basis of a 360-day year of twelve 30-day months. The amount of interest payable for any period shorter than a full semi-annual interest period for which interest is computed will be computed on the basis of 30-day months and, for periods of less than a month, the actual number of days elapsed per 30-day month. If any date on which interest is payable on the fixed rate notes is not a business day, then payment of the interest payable on such date will be made on the next succeeding day that is a business day (and without any interest or other payment in respect of any such delay) with the same force and effect as if made on such interest payment date. For purposes of this prospectus supplement, a business day means any day, other than a Saturday or Sunday, that is not a day on which banking institutions in the Borough of Manhattan, the City of New York are authorized or required by law, regulation or executive order to close.

Any amounts payable on any fixed rate notes that are not punctually paid on any payment date will cease to be payable to the person in whose name such notes are registered on the relevant record date, and such defaulted payment will instead be payable to the person in whose name such notes are registered on the special record date or other specified date determined in accordance with the indenture.

Interest Floating rate notes

The floating rate notes will bear interest from , 2010 at a rate per annum equal to the initial interest rate and thereafter will be reset as described below at a rate per annum equal to LIBOR (as defined below) plus % per annum. The initial interest rate of the floating rate notes will be equal to LIBOR plus % per annum as determined by the calculation agent as described below.

Interest on each series of the floating rate notes will be payable quarterly in arrears on , , , and of each year, commencing , 2010, to the person in whose name such notes are registered at the close of business on the preceding , , and as applicable (whether or not a business day). If any interest payment date falls on a day that is not a business day, the interest payment date will be postponed to the next day that is a business day and interest will accrue to but excluding the date interest is paid. However, if

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the postponement would cause the day to fall in the next calendar month, the interest payment date will instead be brought forward to the immediately preceding business day. For purposes of this prospectus supplement, a business day means any day, other than a Saturday or Sunday, that is not a day on which banking institutions in the Borough of Manhattan, the City of New York are authorized or required by law, regulation or executive order to close.

The rate of interest on each series of the floating rate notes will reset quarterly (the interest reset period, and the first day of each interest reset period will be an interest reset date). The interest reset date will be the same dates as the interest payment dates.

The calculation agent for each series of the floating rate notes is The Bank of New York Mellon Trust Company, N.A., which we refer to as the calculation agent.

The calculation agent will determine the initial interest rate on the second London business day preceding the issue date for each series of the floating rate notes and the interest rate for each succeeding interest reset period by reference to LIBOR on the second London business day preceding the applicable interest reset date, each of which we refer to as an interest determination date.

London business day means any day on which dealings in deposits in U.S. Dollars are transacted in the London interbank market.

The interest rate for the floating rate notes will be based on the London interbank offered rate, which we refer to as LIBOR, and will be determined by the calculation agent as follows:

(i) As of an interest determination date, LIBOR will be the rate for deposits in U.S. dollars for a period of three months, commencing on the date of issuance of each series of the floating rate notes and on each related interest reset date, that appears on the Reuters Screen LIBOR01 Page, or any successor service, at approximately 11:00 a.m., London time, on that interest determination date.

(ii) If no rate appears, then the calculation agent will request the principal London offices of each of four major reference banks in the London interbank market, as selected by the calculation agent after consultation with us, to provide the calculation agent with its offered quotation for deposits in U.S. dollars for a period of three months, commencing on the date of issuance of each series of the floating rate notes or on the related interest reset date, as the case may be, to prime banks in the London interbank market at approximately 11:00 a.m., London time, on that interest determination date and in a principal amount that is representative of a single transaction in U.S. dollars in that market at that time. If at least two quotations are provided, LIBOR determined on that interest determination date will be the arithmetic mean of those quotations. If fewer than two quotations are provided, LIBOR will be determined for the related interest reset date as the arithmetic mean of the rates quoted at approximately 11:00 a.m., New York time, on that interest reset date, by three major banks in New York City, as selected by the calculation agent after consultation with Berkshire for loans in U.S. dollars to leading European banks, for a period of three months, commencing on the related interest reset date, and in a principal amount that is representative of a single transaction in U.S. dollars in that market at that time. If the banks so selected by the calculation agent are not quoting as set forth above, LIBOR for that interest determination date will remain LIBOR for the immediately preceding interest reset period, or, if there was no preceding interest reset period, the rate of interest payable will be the initial interest rate.

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Accrued interest on each series of the floating rate notes will be calculated by multiplying the principal amount of such notes by an accrued interest factor. The accrued interest factor will be computed by adding the interest factors calculated for each day in the period for which interest is being paid. The interest factor for each day is computed by dividing the interest rate applicable to that day by 360. The interest rate in effect on any interest reset date will be the applicable rate as reset on that date. The interest rate applicable to any other day is the interest rate from the immediately preceding interest reset date, or if none, the initial interest rate. All percentages used in or resulting from any calculation for the rate of interest on any floating rate note will be rounded, if necessary, to the nearest one hundred-thousandth of a percentage point (with .000005% rounded up to .00001%), and all U.S. dollar amounts used in or resulting from these calculations will be rounded to the nearest cent (with one-half cent rounded upward).

Ranking

The fixed rate notes and the floating rate notes will be our senior unsecured obligations and will rank pari passu in right of payment with all of our unsubordinated, unsecured indebtedness and will be senior in right of payment to all of our subordinated indebtedness. As of September 30, 2009, Berkshire had no secured indebtedness and \$169 million of indebtedness, and our subsidiaries had \$37.8 billion of indebtedness.

Optional redemption

Fixed rate notes

We will have the option to redeem the fixed rate notes in whole or in part, at any time, at a redemption price equal to the greater of (A) 100% of the principal amount of the fixed rate notes to be redeemed or (B) as determined by the quotation agent described below, the sum of the present values of the remaining scheduled payments of principal and interest on the fixed rate notes to be redeemed, not including any portion of such payments of interest accrued as of the date on which the fixed rate notes are to be redeemed, discounted to the date on which the fixed rate notes are to be redeemed on a semi-annual basis assuming a 360-day year consisting of twelve 30-day months, at the adjusted treasury rate described below plus basis points, in each case, plus accrued interest on the fixed rate notes to be redeemed to the date on which the fixed rate notes are to be redeemed.

We will utilize the following procedures to calculate the adjusted treasury rate described in the previous paragraph. We will appoint J.P. Morgan Securities Inc. or its successor and two or more other primary U.S. Government securities dealers in New York City as reference dealers, and we will appoint J.P. Morgan Securities Inc. or its successor to act as our quotation agent. If J.P. Morgan Securities Inc. or its successor is no longer a primary U.S. Government securities dealer, we will substitute another primary U.S. Government securities dealer in its place as a reference dealer.

The quotation agent will select a United States Treasury security which has a maturity comparable to the remaining maturity of our fixed rate notes which would be used in accordance with customary financial practice to price new issues of corporate debt securities with a maturity comparable to the remaining maturity of our notes. The reference dealers will provide us with the bid and asked prices for that comparable United States Treasury security as of 5:00 p.m. on the third business day before the redemption date. We will calculate the average of the bid and asked prices provided by each reference dealer, eliminate the highest and the lowest reference

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dealer quotations and then calculate the average of the remaining reference dealer quotations. However, if we obtain fewer than three reference dealer quotations, we will calculate the average of all the reference dealer quotations and not eliminate any quotations. We call this average quotation the comparable treasury price. The adjusted treasury rate will be the semi-annual equivalent yield to maturity of a security whose price is equal to the comparable treasury price, in each case expressed as a percentage of its principal amount.

We may redeem the fixed rate notes at any time on a redemption date of our choice. However, we must give the holders of such notes notice of the redemption not less than 30 days or more than 60 days before the redemption date. We will give the notice in the manner described under Notices. If we elect to redeem fewer than all the notes, the trustee will select the particular notes to be redeemed on a pro rata basis, by lot or by such other method of random selection, if any, that the trustee deems fair and appropriate.

Floating rate notes

We will not have the right to redeem our floating rate notes.

Book-entry delivery and form

General

The notes offered hereby will be issued in registered, global form in minimum denominations of \$2,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000 in excess thereof. The notes will be issued on the issue date therefor only against payment in immediately available funds.

Each series of the notes offered hereby initially will be represented by one or more permanent global certificates (which may be subdivided) in definitive, fully registered form without interest coupons, which we refer to as the global notes.

The global notes will be deposited upon issuance with the trustee as custodian for DTC in New York, New York, and registered in the name of DTC or its nominee for credit to an account of a direct or indirect participant in DTC (including the Euroclear Bank S.A./N.V. (Euroclear) or Clearstream Banking, société anonyme (Clearstream)), as described below under Depository procedures.

Except as set forth below, the global notes may be transferred, in whole and not in part, only to another nominee of DTC or to a successor of DTC or its nominee. Beneficial interests in the global notes may not be exchanged for notes in certificated form except in the limited circumstances described below under Exchange of book-entry notes for certificated notes.

Transfers of beneficial interests in the global notes will be subject to the applicable rules and procedures of DTC and its direct or indirect participants (including, if applicable, those of Euroclear and Clearstream), which may change from time to time.

Depository procedures

The following description of the operations and procedures of DTC, Euroclear and Clearstream is provided solely as a matter of convenience. These operations and procedures are solely within the control of the respective settlement systems and are subject to changes by them. We take no responsibility for these operations and procedures and urge investors to contact the systems or their participants directly to discuss these matters.

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DTC is a limited-purpose trust company created to hold securities for its participating organizations, referred to as participants, and facilitate the clearance and settlement of transactions in those securities between DTC's participants through electronic book-entry changes in accounts of its participants. DTC's participants include securities brokers and dealers (including the underwriters), banks, trust companies, clearing corporations and certain other organizations. Access to DTC's system is also available to other entities such as banks, brokers, dealers and trust companies that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a DTC participant, either directly or indirectly, which entities are referred to as indirect participants. Persons who are not DTC participants may beneficially own securities held by or on behalf of DTC only through participants or indirect participants. DTC has no knowledge of the identity of beneficial owners of securities held by or on behalf of DTC. DTC's records reflect only the identity of its participants to whose accounts securities are credited. The ownership interests and transfer of ownership interests of each beneficial owner of each security held by or on behalf of DTC are recorded on the records of DTC's participants and indirect participants.

Pursuant to procedures established by DTC:

upon deposit of the global notes, DTC will credit the accounts of its participants designated by the underwriters with portions of the principal amount of the global notes; and

ownership of such interests in the global notes will be maintained by DTC (with respect to its participants) or by DTC's participants and indirect participants (with respect to other owners of beneficial interests in the global notes).

Investors in the global notes may hold their interests therein directly through DTC, if they are participants in such system, or indirectly through organizations (including Euroclear and Clearstream) that are participants or indirect participants in such system. Euroclear and Clearstream will hold interests in the notes on behalf of their participants through customers' securities accounts in their respective names on the books of their respective depositaries, which are Euroclear Bank, S.A./N.V., as operator of Euroclear, and Citibank, N.A., as operator of Clearstream. The depositaries, in turn, will hold interests in the notes in customers' securities accounts in the depositaries' names on the books of DTC.

All interests in a global note, including those held through Euroclear or Clearstream, will be subject to the procedures and requirements of DTC. Those interests held through Euroclear or Clearstream will also be subject to the procedures and requirements of these systems. The laws of some jurisdictions require that certain persons take physical delivery of certificates evidencing securities they own. Consequently, the ability to transfer beneficial interests in a global note to such persons will be limited to that extent. Because DTC can act only on behalf of its participants, which in turn act on behalf of indirect participants, the ability of beneficial owners of interests in a global note to pledge such interests to persons or entities that do not participate in the DTC system, or otherwise take actions in respect of such interests, may be affected by the lack of a physical certificate evidencing such interests. For certain other restrictions on the transferability of the notes, see Exchange of book-entry notes for certificated notes.

Except as described below, owners of interests in the global notes will not have notes registered in their names, will not receive physical delivery of notes in certificated form and will not be considered the registered owners or holders thereof under the indenture for any purpose.

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Payments in respect of the principal of, and interest on, a global note registered in the name of DTC or its nominee will be payable by the trustee (or the paying agent if other than the trustee) to DTC in its capacity as the registered holder under the indenture. We and the trustee will treat the persons in whose names the notes, including the global notes, are registered as the owners thereof for the purpose of receiving such payments and for any and all other purposes whatsoever. Consequently, neither we nor the trustee or any of our respective agents has or will have any responsibility or liability for:

any aspect of DTC's records or any participant's or indirect participant's records relating to or payments made on account of beneficial ownership interests in the global notes, or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any of DTC's records or any participant's or indirect participant's records relating to the beneficial ownership interests in the global notes; or

any other matter relating to the actions and practices of DTC or any of its participants or indirect participants.

DTC has advised us that its current practice, upon receipt of any payment in respect of securities such as the notes (including principal and interest), is to credit the accounts of the relevant participants with the payment on the payment date in amounts proportionate to their respective holdings in the principal amount of the relevant security as shown on the records of DTC, unless DTC has reason to believe it will not receive payment on such payment date. Payments by the participants and the indirect participants to the beneficial owners of notes will be governed by standing instructions and customary practices and will be the responsibility of the participants or the indirect participants and will not be the responsibility of DTC, the trustee or us. Neither we nor the trustee will be liable for any delay by DTC or any of its participants in identifying the beneficial owners of the notes, and we and the trustee may conclusively rely on and will be protected in relying on instructions from DTC or its nominee for all purposes.

Transfers between participants in DTC will be effected in accordance with DTC's procedures, and will be settled in same day funds, and transfers between participants in Euroclear and Clearstream will be effected in accordance with their respective rules and operating procedures.

Cross-market transfers between participants in DTC, on the one hand, and Euroclear or Clearstream participants, on the other hand, will be effected through DTC in accordance with DTC's rules on behalf of Euroclear or Clearstream, as the case may be, by their depositaries. Cross-market transactions will require delivery of instructions to Euroclear or Clearstream, as the case may be, by the counterparty in that system in accordance with the rules and procedures and within the established deadlines (Brussels time) of that system. Euroclear or Clearstream, as the case may be, will, if the transaction meets its settlement requirements, deliver instructions to its respective depositaries to take action to effect final settlement on its behalf by delivering or receiving interests in the relevant global note in DTC, and making or receiving payment in accordance with normal procedures for same-day funds settlement applicable to DTC. Euroclear and Clearstream participants may not deliver instructions directly to the depositaries for Euroclear or Clearstream.

Because of time zone differences, the securities account of a Euroclear or Clearstream participant purchasing an interest in a global note from a participant in DTC will be credited and reported to the relevant Euroclear or Clearstream participant, during the securities settlement processing day (which must be a business day for Euroclear and Clearstream) immediately following the settlement date of DTC. DTC has advised us that cash received in Euroclear or Clearstream as a

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result of sales of interests in a global note by or through a Euroclear or Clearstream participant to a participant in DTC will be received with value on the settlement date of DTC but will be available in the relevant Euroclear or Clearstream cash account only as of the business day for Euroclear or Clearstream following DTC's settlement date.

DTC has advised us that it will take any action permitted to be taken by a holder of notes only at the direction of one or more participants to whose account with DTC interests in the global notes are credited and only in respect of such portion of the aggregate principal amount of the notes as to which such participant or participants has or have given such direction.

Although DTC, Euroclear and Clearstream have agreed to the foregoing procedures to facilitate transfers of interests in the global notes among participants in DTC, Euroclear and Clearstream, they are under no obligation to perform or to continue to perform such procedures, and the procedures may be discontinued at any time. None of us, Berkshire or the trustee will have any responsibility for the performance by DTC, Euroclear or Clearstream or their respective participants or indirect participants of their respective obligations under the rules and procedures governing their operations.

The information in this section concerning DTC, Euroclear and Clearstream and their book-entry systems has been obtained from sources that we believe to be reliable, but we take no responsibility for the accuracy thereof.

Exchange of book-entry notes for certificated notes

The global notes are exchangeable for certificated notes in definitive, fully registered form without interest coupons only in the following limited circumstances:

DTC (1) notifies us that it is unwilling or unable to continue as depository for the global notes or (2) has ceased to be a clearing agency registered under the Exchange Act,

if there shall have occurred and be continuing an event of default with respect to the notes, or

if we determine, in our sole discretion, that the global notes are exchangeable in accordance with the terms of the indenture.

In all cases, certificated notes delivered in exchange for any global note or beneficial interests therein will be registered in the names, and issued in any approved denominations, requested by or on behalf of DTC (in accordance with its customary procedures).

Notices

Except as otherwise described herein, notice to registered holders of the notes will be given by mail to the addresses as they appear in the security register. Notices will be deemed to have been given on the date of such mailing.

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Material United States federal income and estate tax considerations

The following is a summary of the material U.S. federal income and estate tax considerations that may be relevant to initial holders of the notes. The summary is limited to holders that purchase notes in the initial offering for cash at their issue price within the meaning of Section 1273 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the Code), and that hold the notes as capital assets within the meaning of Section 1221 of the Code (generally, for investment). The summary does not purport to address all of the tax considerations that may be relevant to a particular holder or to deal with the tax considerations that may be relevant to holders in special tax situations, such as banks, thrifts, real estate investment trusts, regulated investment companies, partnerships and other pass-through entities, insurance companies, dealers in securities or currencies, traders in securities electing to mark to market, foreign persons (except to the extent specifically provided below), tax-exempt organizations, expatriates and certain former citizens or long-term residents of the U.S., persons holding notes as part of a straddle, hedge, conversion transaction, synthetic security or other integrated investment, persons deemed to sell the notes under the constructive sale provisions of the Code, or U.S. holders (as defined below) whose functional currency is not the U.S. dollar, nor does it address alternative minimum taxes or state, local, or foreign taxes.

If a partnership (including any entity treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes) holds notes, the tax treatment of a partner generally will depend upon the status of the partner and upon the activities of the partnership. A partnership considering a purchase of the notes, and partners in such a partnership, should consult their own tax advisers regarding the tax consequences to them of the purchase, ownership and disposition of the notes.

Under the terms of the fixed rate notes, we may be obligated in certain circumstances to pay amounts in excess of stated interest or principal on the fixed rate notes. It is possible that the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) could assert that the payment of such excess amounts is a contingent payment and the fixed rate notes are therefore contingent payment debt instruments for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Under the applicable Treasury regulations, however, for purposes of determining whether a debt instrument is a contingent payment debt instrument, remote or incidental contingencies (determined as of the date the fixed rate notes are issued) are ignored. We believe that the possibility of making additional payments is remote and/or incidental. Accordingly, we do not intend to treat the fixed rate notes as contingent payment debt instruments. Our position will be binding on holders of the fixed rate notes, unless a holder timely and explicitly discloses to the IRS that it takes a position different from ours. Our position, however, is not binding on the IRS. If the IRS successfully challenges this position, the timing and amount of income included and the character of the income recognized with respect to the fixed rate notes may be materially different from the consequences discussed herein. Holders should consult their own tax advisors regarding this issue. The remainder of this discussion assumes that the notes are not treated as contingent payment debt instruments.

This summary is based upon the Code, Treasury regulations, IRS rulings and pronouncements and administrative and judicial decisions currently in effect, all of which are subject to change (possibly with retroactive effect) or possible differing interpretations. No ruling has been or will be sought from the IRS with respect to the U.S. federal income tax consequences of the purchase, ownership and disposition of the notes. As a result, the IRS could disagree with portions of this discussion.

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Persons considering a purchase of the notes should consult their own tax advisers with respect to the tax consequences to them of the purchase, ownership and disposition of the notes in light of their own particular circumstances, including the tax consequences under state, local, foreign and other tax laws and the possible effects of any changes in applicable tax laws.

Consequences to U.S. holders

The following discussion summarizes the material U.S. federal income tax considerations relevant to a U.S. holder. For purposes of this discussion, the term "U.S. holder" means a beneficial owner of the notes that is (1) an individual who is a citizen or resident of the United States, (2) a corporation or other entity treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes, in each case, that is created or organized in or under the laws of the United States or any political subdivision thereof, (3) a trust if it (i) is subject to the primary supervision of a U.S. court and the control of one or more U.S. persons or (ii) was in existence on August 20, 1996 and has a valid election in effect under applicable Treasury regulations to be treated as a U.S. person, or (4) an estate, the income of which is subject to U.S. federal income tax regardless of its source.

Payments or accruals of interest

Payments or accruals of interest on a note will be taxable to U.S. holders as ordinary interest income at the time such U.S. holders receive or accrue such amounts (in accordance with a holder's regular method of tax accounting).

Sale, exchange, redemption or other disposition of the notes

When a U.S. holder disposes of a note by sale, exchange, redemption or other disposition, the holder will generally recognize gain or loss equal to the difference between the amount the holder realizes on the transaction (less any accrued interest, which will be subject to tax in the manner described above under "Payments or accruals of interest") and the holder's adjusted federal income tax basis in the note. A U.S. holder's tax basis in a note will generally equal the cost of the note to the holder.

The gain or loss that a U.S. holder recognizes on the sale, exchange, redemption or other disposition of a note will generally be capital gain or loss. The capital gain or loss on the sale, exchange, redemption or other disposition of a note will be long-term capital gain or loss if the holder held the note for more than one year on the date of disposition. Capital gains recognized by individuals on assets held for longer than one year are subject to taxation at preferential rates. The tax deductibility of capital losses is subject to limitations.

Backup withholding and information reporting

Unless a U.S. holder is an exempt recipient, such as a corporation, payments under the notes or proceeds received from the sale of the notes will generally be subject to information reporting and will generally also be subject to U.S. federal backup withholding tax if such U.S. holder fails to supply an accurate taxpayer identification number or otherwise fails to comply with applicable U.S. information reporting or certification requirements. Any amounts so withheld do not constitute a separate tax and will be allowed as a refund or a credit against the U.S. holder's U.S. federal income tax liability, provided that the required information is timely furnished to the IRS.

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Consequences to non-U.S. holders

The following discussion summarizes the material U.S. federal income and estate tax considerations relevant to a non-U.S. holder. For purposes of this discussion, the term non-U.S. holder means a beneficial owner of the notes that is for U.S. federal income tax purposes a nonresident alien individual, a foreign corporation, or a trust or estate that is not a U.S. holder.

Payments of interest

Payments of interest on the notes made to a non-U.S. holder will generally be exempt from U.S. federal income and withholding tax, provided that:

the non-U.S. holder does not own, actually or constructively, 10 percent or more of the total combined voting power of all classes of Berkshire Hathaway Inc.'s stock entitled to vote, and is not a controlled foreign corporation related, directly or indirectly, to Berkshire Hathaway Inc. through stock ownership;

the non-U.S. holder is not a bank receiving interest on a loan entered into the ordinary course of its trade or business;

the non-U.S. holder certifies on IRS Form W-8BEN (or a successor form), under penalties of perjury, that it is a non-U.S. holder and provides its name and address or otherwise satisfies applicable d