

ECHELON CORP
Form 8-K
April 26, 2016

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM 8-K

Current Report

**Pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of
the Securities Exchange Act of 1934**

Date of Report (Date of earliest event reported): April 22, 2016

ECHELON CORPORATION

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Delaware
(State or other jurisdiction of
incorporation)

000-29748
(Commission
File Number)
2901 Patrick Henry Drive

77-0203595
(I.R.S. Employer
Identification No.)

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Santa Clara, California 95054

(Address of principal executive offices)

(Zip Code)

Registrant's telephone number including area code: (408) 938-5200

(Former name or address, if changed since last report)

Check the appropriate box below if the Form 8-K filing is intended to simultaneously satisfy the filing obligation of the registrant under any of the following provisions:

- .. Written communications pursuant to Rule 425 under the Securities Act (17 CFR 230.425)
- .. Soliciting material pursuant to Rule 14a-12 under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14a-12)
- .. Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 14d-2(b) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14d-2(b))
- .. Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 13e-4(c) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.13e-4(c))

Item 1.01. Entry into a Material Definitive Agreement.

On April 22, 2016, the Board of Directors (the *Board*) of Echelon Corporation (the *Company*) authorized and declared a dividend distribution of one right (a *Right*) for each outstanding share of common stock, par value \$0.01 per share (the *Common Shares*), of the Company to stockholders of record as of the close of business on May 6, 2016 (the *Record Date*). Each Right entitles the registered holder to purchase from the Company one one-thousandth of a share of Series A Participating Preferred Stock, par value \$0.01 per share (the *Preferred Shares*), of the Company at an exercise price of \$25.00 per one one-thousandth of a Preferred Share, subject to adjustment (the *Exercise Price*). The complete terms of the Rights are set forth in a Tax Benefit Preservation Plan (the *Plan*), dated as of April 22, 2016, between the Company and Computershare Inc., as rights agent.

By adopting the Plan, the Board is helping to preserve the value of certain deferred tax benefits, including those generated by net operating losses (collectively, the *Tax Benefits*). The Company's ability to use these Tax Benefits would be substantially limited if it were to experience an ownership change as defined under Section 382 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the *Code*). In general, an ownership change would occur if there is a greater than 50-percentage point change in ownership of securities by stockholders owning (or deemed to own under Section 382 of the Code) five percent or more of a corporation's securities over a rolling three-year period. The Plan reduces the likelihood that changes in the Company's investor base have the unintended effect of limiting the Company's use of its Tax Benefits. The Board believes it is in the best interest of the Company and its stockholders that the Company provide for the protection of the Tax Benefits by adopting the Plan.

The Plan is intended to act as a deterrent to any person acquiring shares of the Company's securities equal to or exceeding the Trigger Amount (as defined below) without the approval of the Board. This would protect the Tax Benefits because changes in ownership by a person owning less than 4.99% of the Company's stock are not included in the calculation of ownership change for purposes of Section 382 of the Code. The Board has established procedures to consider requests to exempt certain acquisitions of the Company's securities from the Plan if the Board determines that doing so would not limit or impair the availability of the Tax Benefits or is otherwise in the best interests of the Company.

The Plan specifying the terms of the Rights (as defined below) and the text of the press release announcing the declaration of the Rights are incorporated herein by reference as exhibits to this current report. The following summary provides only a general description of the Plan and is qualified in its entirety by reference to such exhibits.

The following is a summary of the terms of the Plan. The summary does not purport to be complete and is qualified in its entirety by reference to the Plan, a copy of which is attached as Exhibit 4.1 and incorporated herein by reference.

Distribution and Transfer of Rights; Rights Certificates

The Board has declared a dividend of one Right for each outstanding Common Share. Prior to the Distribution Date referred to below:

the Rights will be evidenced by and trade with the certificates for the Common Shares (or, with respect to any uncertificated Common Shares registered in book entry form, by notation in book entry), and no separate rights certificates will be distributed;

new Common Shares certificates issued after the Record Date will contain a legend incorporating the Plan by reference (for uncertificated Common Shares registered in book entry form, this legend will be contained in a notation in book entry); and

the surrender for transfer of any certificates for Common Shares (or the surrender for transfer of any uncertificated Common Shares registered in book entry form) will also constitute the transfer of the Rights associated with such Common Shares.

Rights will accompany any new Common Shares that are issued after the Record Date.

Distribution Date

Subject to certain exceptions specified in the Plan, the Rights will separate from the Common Shares and become exercisable following (i) the 10th business day (or such later date as may be determined by the Board) after the public announcement that an Acquiring Person has acquired beneficial ownership of 4.99% or more of the Common Shares or (ii) the 10th business day (or such later date as may be determined by the Board) after a person or group announces a tender or exchange offer that would result in ownership by a person or group of 4.99% or more of the Common Shares.

The date on which the Rights separate from the Common Shares and become exercisable is referred to as the Distribution Date.

After the Distribution Date, the Company will mail Rights certificates to the Company's stockholders as of the close of business on the Distribution Date and the Rights will become transferable apart from the Common Shares. Thereafter, such Rights certificates alone will represent the Rights.

Preferred Shares Purchasable Upon Exercise of Rights

After the Distribution Date, each Right will entitle the holder to purchase, for \$25.00 (the Exercise Price), one one-thousandth of a Preferred Share having economic and other terms similar to that of one Common Share. This portion of a Preferred Share is intended to give the stockholder approximately the same dividend, voting and liquidation rights as would one Common Share, and should approximate the value of one Common Share.

More specifically, each one one-thousandth of a Preferred Share, if issued, will:

not be redeemable;

entitle holders to quarterly dividend payments of \$0.01 per share, or an amount equal to the dividend paid on one Common Share, whichever is greater;

entitle holders upon liquidation either to receive \$1.00 per share or an amount equal to the payment made on one Common Share, whichever is greater;

have the same voting power as one Common Share; and

entitle holders to a per share payment equal to the payment made on one Common Share if the Common Shares are exchanged via merger, consolidation or a similar transaction.

Flip-In Trigger

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If a person or group of affiliated or associated persons (an Acquiring Person) obtains beneficial ownership of 4.99% or more of the Common Shares, except pursuant to an offer for all outstanding Common Shares that the independent members of the Board determine to be fair and not inadequate and to otherwise be in the best interests of the Company and its stockholders after receiving advice from one or more investment banking firms, *then* each Right will entitle the holder thereof to purchase, for the

Exercise Price, a number of Common Shares (or, in certain circumstances, cash, property or other securities of the Company) having a then-current market value of twice the Exercise Price. However, the Rights are not exercisable following the occurrence of the foregoing event until such time as the Rights are no longer redeemable by the Company, as further described below.

Following the occurrence of an event set forth in preceding paragraph, all Rights that are or, under certain circumstances specified in the Plan, were beneficially owned by an Acquiring Person or certain of its transferees will be null and void.

Any person who, together with its affiliates and associates, beneficially owns 4.99% or more of the outstanding Common Shares as of the time of the first public announcement of the Plan (an Exempt Person) shall not be deemed an Acquiring Person, but only for so long as such person, together with its affiliates and associates, does not become the beneficial owner of any additional Common Shares while such person is an Exempt Person. A person will cease to be an Exempt Person if such person, together with such person's affiliates and associates, becomes the beneficial owner of less than 4.99% of the outstanding Common Shares.

Flip-Over Trigger

If, after an Acquiring Person obtains 4.99% or more of the Common Shares, (i) the Company merges into another entity, (ii) an acquiring entity merges into the Company or (iii) the Company sells or transfers more than 50% of its assets, cash flow or earning power, *then* each Right (except for Rights that have previously been voided as set forth above) will entitle the holder thereof to purchase, for the Exercise Price, a number of shares of common stock of the person engaging in the transaction having a then-current market value of twice the Exercise Price.

Redemption of the Rights

The Rights will be redeemable at the Company's option for \$0.01 per Right (payable in cash, Common Shares or other consideration deemed appropriate by the Board) at any time on or prior to the 10th business day (or such later date as may be determined by the Board) after the public announcement that an Acquiring Person has acquired beneficial ownership of 4.99% or more of the Common Shares. Immediately upon the action of the Board ordering redemption, the Rights will terminate and the only right of the holders of the Rights will be to receive the \$0.01 redemption price. The redemption price will be adjusted if the Company undertakes a stock dividend or a stock split.

Exchange Provision

At any time after the date on which an Acquiring Person beneficially owns 4.99% or more of the Common Shares and prior to the acquisition by the Acquiring Person of 50% of the Common Shares, the Board may exchange the Rights (except for Rights that have previously been voided as set forth above), in whole or in part, for Common Shares at an exchange ratio of one Common Share per Right (subject to adjustment). In certain circumstances, the Company may elect to exchange the Rights for cash or other securities of the Company having a value approximately equal to one Common Share.

Expiration of the Rights

The Rights expire on the earliest of (i) 5:00 p.m., New York City time, on April 25, 2017 (unless such date is extended); (ii) the redemption or exchange of the Rights as described above; (iii) the close of business on the effective date of the repeal of Section 382 or any other change if the Board, in its sole discretion, determines that the Plan is no longer necessary or desirable for the preservation of the Tax Benefits; (iv) the time at which the Board determines that the Tax Benefits are fully utilized or no longer

available pursuant to Section 382 or that an ownership change pursuant to Section 382 would not adversely impact in any material respect the time period in which the Company could use the Tax Benefits, or materially impair the amount of the Tax Benefits that could be used by the Company in any particular time period, for applicable tax purposes; or (v) a determination by the Board, in its sole discretion and prior to the Distribution Date, that the Plan and the Rights are no longer in the best interests of the Company and its stockholders.

Amendment of Terms of Plan and Rights

The terms of the Rights and the Plan may be amended in any respect without the consent of the holders of the Rights on or prior to the Distribution Date. Thereafter, the terms of the Rights and the Plan may be amended without the consent of the holders of Rights in order to (i) cure any ambiguities, (ii) shorten or lengthen any time period pursuant to the Plan or (iii) make changes that do not adversely affect the interests of holders of the Rights.

Voting Rights; Other Stockholder Rights

The Rights will not have any voting rights. Until a Right is exercised, the holder thereof, as such, will have no separate rights as stockholder of the Company.

Anti-Dilution Provisions

The Board may adjust the Exercise Price, the number of Preferred Shares issuable and the number of outstanding Rights to prevent dilution that may occur from a stock dividend, a stock split or a reclassification of the Preferred Shares or Common Shares.

With certain exceptions, no adjustments to the Exercise Price will be made until the cumulative adjustments amount to at least 1% of the Exercise Price. No fractional Preferred Shares will be issued and, in lieu thereof, an adjustment in cash will be made based on the current market price of the Preferred Shares.

Taxes

The distribution of Rights should not be taxable for federal income tax purposes. However, following an event that renders the Rights exercisable or upon redemption of the Rights, stockholders may recognize taxable income.

Item 3.03. Material Modification to Rights of Security Holders.

The information included in Item 1.01 and Item 5.03 of this Current Report on Form 8-K is incorporated by reference into this Item 3.03.

Item 5.03. Amendments to Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws; Change in Fiscal Year.

In connection with the adoption of the Plan, on April 26, 2016, the Company filed a Certificate of Designation of Rights, Preferences and Privileges of Series A Participating Preferred Stock (the Certificate of Designation) with the Secretary of State of the State of Delaware. The Certificate of Designation sets forth the rights, powers and preferences of the Preferred Shares.

The summary of the rights, powers and preferences of the Preferred Shares set forth in Item 1.01 of this Current Report on Form 8-K is incorporated by reference into this Item 5.03. A copy of the Certificate of Designation is attached as Exhibit 3.1 and is incorporated herein by reference.

Item 8.01. Other Events.

On April 26, 2016, the Company issued a press release announcing the adoption of the Plan and the declaration of the dividend of the Rights. A copy of the press release is attached as Exhibit 99.1 and incorporated herein by reference.

Item 9.01. Financial Statements and Exhibits.

(d) Exhibits.

3.1 Certificate of Designation of Rights, Preferences and Privileges of Series A Participating Preferred Stock.

4.1 Tax Benefit Preservation Plan, dated as of April 22, 2016, by and between Echelon Corporation and Computershare Inc., as rights agent.

99.1 Press Release of Echelon Corporation, dated April 26, 2016.

SIGNATURE

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned hereunto duly authorized.

ECHELON CORPORATION

By: /s/ C. Michael Marszewski
C. Michael Marszewski
Vice President and Chief Financial
Officer

Dated: April 26, 2016

EXHIBIT INDEX

| Exhibit No. | Description of Exhibit |
|--------------------|--|
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