To the Shareholders of Flaherty & Crumrine Preferred Income Fund ("PFD"):

The Fund's year is off to a strong start, benefiting from a rebound in prices of preferred securities in the first fiscal quarter[1]. Total return[2] on net asset value ("NAV") was 7.0% for the quarter, while total return on market price was 11.0%.

To say investors had a lot to think about in late 2016 would be an understatement, and markets were weaker and more volatile leading up to year-end as a result. A contentious November election was settled in a way that surprised many, and interest rates moved higher in anticipation of infrastructure spending and tax and regulatory reform. The Federal Reserve raised its benchmark fed funds rate in December and projected three additional hikes in 2017 (one of which came in March), as the U.S. economy showed signs of continued gradual improvement. Once the dust settled, however, investors began looking ahead to what all these changes could mean for the economy, corporate profitability, and credit conditions—and outlooks were generally favorable.

Even though interest rates moved higher following the election, rates quickly stabilized at those new levels, and they remain low overall by historical standards—especially if we broaden our view to include global interest rates. Higher rates should generate higher earnings for banks and insurance companies and further strengthen credit quality at these companies, which comprise the bulk of the preferred market. They also have offered the Fund opportunities to reinvest proceeds from redeemed securities at higher yields than we might have expected several quarters ago.

The rebound in prices of preferred securities was broad, but a few sectors led the way for portfolio performance. Fixed-to-float securities continue to be in demand, as investors seek reasonable income with moderate interest-rate duration. During the quarter, securities with 2-5 years to their float date outperformed those with 5-10 years—but nearly all fixed-to-float securities benefited from the market's evolving view on short-term rates. Not long ago, investors were concerned about short-term rates being stuck near a zero-bound (or even negative), but recent Fed rate hikes (and projections for more) have removed much of that worry. As of February 28, 2017, 62% of the portfolio was in fixed-to-float securities. Preferred securities also benefited from positive inflows at mutual funds and exchange-traded funds that focus on this market.

A detailed policy discussion is outside the scope of this letter, but regulation is one area worth touching upon. Banks and financial companies are heavily regulated (preferred securities are primarily issued to satisfy regulatory capital requirements), so any relief in regulation could further accrete into earnings over time. A trade-off exists as regulation can enhance the safety and soundness of a company and the entire financial system, but we believe near-term regulatory changes likely would enhance earnings without materially impacting overall creditworthiness of the sector. For our broader policy review and related market implications, please see "Discussion Topics" in the 2016 annual report—available on the Fund's website.

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[1] December 1, 2016—February 28, 2017

[2] Following the methodology required by the Securities and Exchange Commission, total return assumes dividend reinvestment.

Preferred securities continue to benefit from a global search for yield, strong credit quality, and favorable technical factors. U.S. banks have largely filled their regulatory “buckets” for preferred securities, so going forward supply will be driven primarily by organic growth and refinancing of older securities. Supply from foreign issuers is likely to be more robust due to a longer timetable for transitioning to new capital requirements than U.S. banks, but it should remain manageable. Strong demand from yield buyers and moderate supply should continue to support prices of preferred securities. We believe this combination of fundamental and technical factors will continue to make preferred securities attractive to long-term investors.

As always, we encourage you to visit the Fund’s website, www.preferredincome.com, for timely and important information.

Sincerely,

The Flaherty & Crumrine Portfolio Management Team

March 31, 2017