



ILLINOIS CPA SOCIETY.

### SUPPORT SENATE BILL 1723

The Illinois CPA Society, on behalf of our 23,000 members, supports Senate Bill 1723. This legislation amends the Illinois Public Accounting Act to allow applicants to sit for the CPA exam after completing 120 semester hours of specified educational work versus 150 hours, which is currently required here in Illinois. Applicants would still need to complete a total of 150 semester hours in order to be certified to obtain CPA licensure.

Thirty-nine states currently require 120 semester hours to sit for the CPA exam including our surrounding states of Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri, Kentucky, Ohio, and Michigan. There is no evidence of detriment to the public's interest in these particular states that permit candidates to sit for the exam with less than 150 semester hours.

This change, to sit for the exam only, reflects the trend line of a vast majority of states. Benefits of this legislation:

1) We want to ensure there is a healthy pipeline of applicants to take the CPA Exam in Illinois to ensure that our State maintains its prominence as the Midwest Financial Capitol that attracts young aspiring professionals to locate here while enabling them to take the exam, start working in accounting, and finish the remaining 30 academic hours for licensure as they continue to work.

2) The other attractive feature to moving the requirement to sit for the exam to 120 hours may help applicants of lesser means to pursue their dream of being a CPA. What this means is that people can take the exam and start working in accounting, rather than waiting until they have completed the 150 hours to start working. Mind you, the completion of 150 hours will still be required for licensure. In short, the move to 120 hours removes a barrier to faster gainful employment, the taking of the exam, and ultimate licensure.

3) Moving the requirement to sit for the exam to 120 hours will preserve the accounting profession's mobility practice by accepting out-of-state CPA exam scores (120 hours) plus 30 hours for licensure. As it is now, Illinois will not accept exam scores for 120 hours even if the applicant completed 150 semester hours of course work.

4) This proposal removes barriers for applicants to sit for the exam and will ultimately make applicants more marketable in obtaining a job.

The Illinois Board of Examiners (IBOE) surveyed the accounting department chairs of colleges and universities in Illinois on the efficacy of moving to 120 semester hours to sit for the exam. The result was overwhelming support throughout the State for such a move.

In sum, Senate Bill 1723 updates the Illinois Public Accounting Act by allowing CPA exam applicants to test at 120 semester hours and ultimately certification for licensure at 150 semester hours.

Proponents: Illinois CPA Society