



TXCPA Advocacy Successes Continue

During the 2023 legislative session, TXCPA successfully advocated for issues that were important in addressing the CPA pipeline. From the passage of Senate Bill 159 – allowing student candidates to begin sitting for the CPA Exam after 120 semester hours – to the passage of House Bill 2217 – expanding the State Board’s scholarship program to more eligible students – TXCPA’s advocacy work was instrumental in helping students and candidates be in a good position to become licensed CPAs.

Following is a summary. We thank our members for their advocacy efforts in advancing these important issues.

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■ GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

TXCPA's advocacy work has continued post-session to include significant work with educators, the TSBPA board and TSBPA committees to ensure that rules relating to SB 159 and other national pipeline initiatives work effectively. TXCPA has raised the issue of the composition of courses, including accounting research, which will make up the 21 hours of upper-level accounting needed for a student to begin taking the CPA Exam after completing 120 semester hours of education.

TXCPA has advocated for a broad approach to course composition to provide students the best opportunity to become licensed CPAs. TXCPA's advocacy will also enable accounting education programs to better understand the education path to licensure. These efforts are vital to the CPA pipeline.

TXCPA pipeline advocacy efforts also stretch to addressing the expiration of CPA Exam sections credits. In Spring 2023, NASBA issued an exposure draft recommending changing the Uniform Accountancy Act so that the window to complete Exam sections and avoid expiration would be extended from 18 months to 24 months. TXCPA submitted comments to NASBA and the TSBPA pushing for an extension of credit to 30 months. As a result, TSBPA has amended credit extension rules, effective January 1, 2024, to provide for a 30-month window.

Texas now joins the vast majority of other states to move to 180 days for Notice to Sit for the CPA Exam. Limited testing sites has made it difficult for students to plan and secure testing locations. TXCPA has long advocated for a longer notice to sit.

The State Board, with input from TXCPA, is considering a credit relief initiative that will allow students who have lost Exam credit between January 2020 and January 2024 to have their Exam credit restored and have an additional 18 months to complete the Exam. There is a potential pool of 1,900 CPA candidates in Texas, out of over 18,000 nationally, who have lost credit during the tumultuous last three years and this NASBA-initiated effort will help students get back into the CPA pipeline.

Nationally, TXCPA is continuing to work closely with the Texas congressional delegation in pushing for STEM legislation to include accounting within the technology and math tracks. Legislation has been introduced in both the House and Senate and lobbying efforts continue. TXCPA has also been advocating for expansion of 529 plans to allow 529 funds to be used to cover the cost of certain workforce training, credentialing programs, certification exams, and maintenance of certification credentials. Both of these issues have wide bi-partisan support and TXCPA will continue to work for passage.



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