

Proponent Testimony – HB 442  
By Cassandra Edelstein, Olivia Abdallah and Travis Whitt  
To House Commerce & Labor Committee  
February 12, 2020

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Dean, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan and members of the Committee, we appreciate this chance to share why we think it's important for Ohio to enact House Bill 442.

I'm Cassandra Edelstein, an accounting major at The Ohio State University. I'm here today with fellow OSU accounting majors Olivia Abdallah and Travis Whitt. We know that you have a full schedule today so we will be testifying together, but each of us will share our reasons for why we support allowing Ohio residents to sit for the CPA Exam when they have a bachelor's degree or its equivalent of 120 semester hours.

Olivia and I also serve as student ambassadors for The Ohio Society of CPAs. In that role, we regularly talk with students on our campus about the opportunities and benefits that come with an accounting degree to help keep the pipeline of future Ohio CPAs as full as possible. OSCPA's Foundation funds the program and has ambassadors in 17 other Ohio colleges and universities.

A 2020 survey of OSCPA student members revealed what we've also seen at OSU:

- Over 90% of all who responded said they plan to take the CPA Exam.
- 73% were not aware that currently they can get around Ohio's 150-hour law by sending their scores to an existing 120-hour state.
- 58.5% said they do not want to wait as long as Ohio law requires to take the Exam; 30.4% are fine waiting per current Ohio law, and 10% say it is not an issue because they will be working out of state. That makes sense, because each person will be ready to take the test when it works best for them, and this bill allows for that flexibility.
- 48.6% said if they send their scores out of Ohio, they will transfer them back to Ohio for licensure because they plan to work in Ohio. Also, 89% said they would be more likely to transfer their scores back to Ohio if Ohio were to become a 120 state.
- 80% believe the doubled experience requirement and red tape required to be licensed in Ohio (if they sent their scores to an existing 120 state) are a disincentive to work as a CPA in Ohio.

In summary, earning the Certified Public Accountant designation is a career goal thousands of Ohio college students – including us – are working toward. We're all willing to put in the hard work necessary but having to deal with academic hurdles that students in 37 other states don't have just doesn't make sense. Please support passage of HB 442.

Thank you for listening to our views on this important issue. We would be happy to answer any questions.