



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

BOARD OF ACCOUNTANCY
200 Hawthorne Ave SE, Ste D450
Salem, OR 9730
☎ (503) 378.4181
☎ Fax (503) 378.3575
boa.info@state.or.us
<http://www.oregon.gov/boa>

SB 796 (LC 0298) – Board of Accountancy Agency Request Legislation Authority to fund accounting scholarships Oregon State Legislature – 2025 Regular Legislative Session

Problem Description: The Certified Public Accountant (CPA) profession is facing a diminishing pipeline nationally. According to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), accounting degree completions fell by 17% from 75,153 in 2017–2018 to 62,318 in 2021–2022. In addition, in 2020 the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) estimated that 75% of the CPA workforce will meet retirement age within 15 years. The reasons for this workforce pipeline issue are complex, with the rising cost of education playing a part.

What this measure does: Authorizes the Oregon Board of Accountancy (Board) to fund need-based accounting scholarships. This proposal does not provide the Board authority to run its own scholarship program. Instead, the proposed measure leverages existing private sector scholarship programs to accomplish this objective, avoiding unnecessary overhead and creating a new program. The 2025-27 budget proposal for the Board contains a \$1 million expenditure authorization request should this measure become law. The measure would allow (but not require) the Board to make additional scholarship expenditure authorization requests in future budget cycles, without having to seek additional legislative authorization permitting it to spend funds for this type of purpose.

Other Relevant Background: The Board is committed to tracking the equity impacts of this measure if passed. Need-based scholarships are rare for accounting students, as are scholarships open to part-time and community college students. The Board is working through its Pipeline Committee with our higher education partners to address that, utilizing the grant agreement process that would be enabled by this bill. If the bill is approved, the effect would be to leverage and change existing scholarship programs to reflect these equity priorities.

From a fiscal perspective, this measure would reduce the Board's operating reserves to a level more in line with state government oversight expectations, while helping to address pressing workforce pipeline issues. The \$1 million size of the associated expenditure authorization request was carefully calibrated to ensure it would not on its own trigger fee increases in the 2025-27 or 2027-29 biennium.

In addition, the Board is proposing a separate measure, SB 797, which contains changes to its licensure pathways in response to the workforce pipeline problem described above. The Board already has completed three aggressive rounds of rulemaking in the 2023-25 biennium using its existing statutory authority to remove or reduce barriers for candidates to sit for the CPA exam, applicants for licensure, and licensed practitioners.

Support/Opposition: The Board has built a unified coalition in Oregon in support of these proposals. No organized opposition is expected.

Contact: Martin Pittioni, Executive Director, at martin.pittioni@boa.oregon.gov or (503) 569-7686.