

February 16, 2026

The Honorable Delegate C.T. Wilson
Chair, House Economic Matters Committee
House Office Building
Room 231
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

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Maryland Society of Accounting and Tax Professionals

Re: House Bill 643 – Certified Public Accountants – Licensure – Qualifications

Chair Wilson and Members of the Committee,
The Maryland Society of Accounting and Tax Professionals represents over 1,400 tax and accounting professionals who collectively serve more than 400,000 Maryland taxpayers and small businesses. We respectfully submit this testimony in support of House Bill 643.

House Bill 643 modernizes the educational and experiential pathways to CPA licensure in Maryland by providing multiple, clearly defined options for meeting licensure requirements. By recognizing different combinations of academic preparation and practical experience, the bill maintains high professional standards while improving access to the profession.

The bill preserves rigorous accounting education while acknowledging that candidates gain meaningful, relevant experience across a variety of settings, including public practice, industry, government, and academia. Allowing candidates to qualify through additional experience in lieu of certain academic hours helps address workforce shortages without compromising competence or public protection.

From the perspective of taxpayers and small businesses, a strong and accessible CPA pipeline is essential. CPAs play a critical role in tax compliance, financial reporting, advisory services, and fraud prevention. Ensuring Maryland can attract and retain qualified professionals supports economic stability and consumer confidence.

For accounting firms and employers, House Bill 643 provides greater flexibility in recruiting and developing talent while maintaining Board oversight of qualifications and experience. The bill does not reduce examination requirements or ethical standards and continues to rely on the Board of Public Accountancy to evaluate equivalency and approve experience.

By aligning licensure pathways with modern educational models and workforce realities, House Bill 643 strengthens the profession, supports economic growth, and protects the public interest.

For these reasons, the Maryland Society of Accounting and Tax Professionals respectfully urges a Favorable Report on House Bill 643.

Respectfully submitted,

Giavante Hawkins
Giavante' Hawkins

