

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

ACCOUNTING & AUDIT

CPA Pathways Discussion: Addressing the Objections

The Minnesota Society of CPAs (MNCPA) introduced legislation this session at the Minnesota Legislature to broaden the pathways to CPA licensure, leading to many conversations with multiple stakeholders.

Isaac M. O'Bannon • May. 25, 2023



The Minnesota Society of CPAs (MNCPA) **introduced legislation** this session at the Minnesota Legislature to **broaden the pathways** to CPA licensure, leading to many conversations with multiple stakeholders. It is in these conversations that new ideas and rationales emerge for making change. It is also where objections are raised — and these are just as important to address as the problems we seek to solve.

The reason driving the change — the declining number of CPAs — is well-documented, so what are the objections to broadening the pathway to CPA licensure?

- **Objection No. 1:** Allowing the option of 150 college credits or 120 credits with additional experience will destroy mobility.
 - Mobility is a hurdle, but it is not *the* problem. The problem is there are not enough people earning CPA licenses.
- **Objection No. 2:** The demographics impacting the profession are temporary and will change, leading to too many CPAs.
 - Minnesota’s legislation will not result in a sudden rush of new CPAs, but it will make the credential attractive to more candidates. It will also make the credential more accessible to candidates who do not have the financial means to pay for an additional 30 college credits and forego a year of wages.
- **Objection No. 3:** Allowing 120 college credits with an increase in years of experience creates a reputational risk that the profession is lowering its standards to attract candidates.
 - The profession currently has a mix of CPAs who qualified under 120 college credits and 150 credits. Ironically, many of those opposed to any changes earned their CPA with 120 hours. The clients and users of the work produced by CPAs do not differentiate between CPAs with 120 or 150 college credits.
- **Objection No. 4:** The profession’s image as overworking and underpaying CPAs is the problem, not the 150-hour requirement.
 - There are many challenges to the reputation of the accounting profession, but what a web search doesn’t reveal are the [many stories](#) of how CPAs provide the financial stability that communities require to be vibrant, the problem-solving skills that CPAs bring to businesses and the insights CPAs provide that protect and help clients achieve their goals and prosper.

You can [read more](#) about how these objections are addressed by reading a post from Linda Wedul, MNCPA president and CEO, on the MNCPA website.

The legislation proposed in Minnesota does not eliminate the option to use 150 college credits to qualify as a CPA; the legislation provides additional pathways. It is a modification, not a radical gutting of the current requirements. Making a change is about adapting and thriving, which the profession has done many times and will continue to do.

CPAPA is registered with the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) as a sponsor of continuing professional education on the National Registry of CPE Sponsors.

© 2023 Firmworks, LLC. All rights reserved