

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.S.B. 159  
By: Perry  
Licensing & Administrative Procedures  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

There is both a shortage of certified public accountants (CPAs) and a decline in the number of accounting students and graduates who pursue CPA certifications. C.S.S.B. 159 seeks to reverse these trends by updating eligibility requirements to take the uniform CPA examination and for issuance of a certificate to practice public accountancy to allow accounting students and recent graduates to begin taking the CPA examination earlier and broadening acceptable work experience criteria necessary to ultimately earn the certification. The updated work experience requirements bring the standards in line with those of the Uniform Accountancy Act.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

C.S.S.B. 159 amends the Occupations Code to decrease from 150 to 120 the minimum number of semester hours or quarter-hour equivalents in courses recognized by the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy (TSBPA) that an applicant for the uniform CPA examination who satisfies other existing education requirements must complete to be eligible to take the examination. The bill replaces the requirement that those hours include an accounting concentration or equivalent courses as determined by TSBPA rule with a requirement that the hours include at least 24 semester hours of accounting or equivalent courses as determined by TSBPA rule. These provisions apply only to an application to take an examination submitted on or after the bill's effective date.

C.S.S.B. 159 clarifies that an applicant for a public accountant certificate must still complete at least 150 semester hours or quarter-hour equivalents in TSBPA-recognized courses, including an accounting concentration or equivalent courses meeting certain eligibility requirements, as determined by TSBPA rule, as a condition of eligibility to receive the certificate. Additionally, the bill removes as a condition of eligibility for the certificate the condition that the person has completed at least two years of work experience under the supervision of a certified public accountant. These provisions apply only to an application for a public accountant certificate submitted on or after the bill's effective date.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2023.

**COMPARISON OF SENATE ENGROSSED AND SUBSTITUTE**

While C.S.S.B. 159 may differ from the engrossed in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the engrossed and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute omits the provision from the engrossed that prohibited TSBPA rules from requiring an applicant for the uniform CPA examination to complete more than 21 semester hours of upper-level accounting courses.