

By Representative Bitner

1                           A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to certified public  
3           accountants; creating s. 473.3065, F.S.;  
4           establishing the Certified Public Accountant  
5           Education Minority Assistance Program;  
6           providing for scholarships to eligible  
7           students; providing for the funding of  
8           scholarships; requiring Board of Accountancy  
9           rules; providing a penalty for certain  
10          violations; creating an advisory council to  
11          assist in program administration; providing an  
12          effective date.

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14 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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16           Section 1. Section 473.3065, Florida Statutes, is  
17          created to read:

18                   473.3065 Certified Public Accountant Education  
19          Minority Assistance Program; advisory council.--

20                   (1) The Certified Public Accountant Education Minority  
21          Assistance Program for Florida residents is hereby established  
22          in the division for the purpose of providing scholarships to  
23          minority persons, as defined in s. 288.703(3), who are  
24          students enrolled in their fifth year of an accounting  
25          education program at an institution in this state approved by  
26          the board by rule. A Certified Public Accountant Education  
27          Minority Assistance Advisory Council shall assist the board in  
28          administering the program.

29                   (2) All moneys used to provide scholarships under the  
30          program shall be funded by a portion of existing license fees,  
31          as set by the board, not to exceed \$10 per license. Such

1 moneys shall be deposited into the Professional Regulation  
2 Trust Fund in a separate account maintained for that purpose.  
3 The department is authorized to spend up to \$100,000 per year  
4 for the program from this program account, but may not  
5 allocate overhead charges to it. Moneys for scholarships  
6 shall be disbursed annually upon recommendation of the  
7 advisory council and approval by the board, based on the  
8 adopted eligibility criteria and comparative evaluation of all  
9 applicants. Funds in the program account may be invested by  
10 the Treasurer under the same limitations as apply to  
11 investment of other state funds, and all interest earned  
12 thereon shall be credited to the program account.

13 (3) The board shall adopt rules as necessary for  
14 administration of the program, including rules relating to the  
15 following:

16 (a) Eligibility criteria for receipt of a scholarship,  
17 which, at a minimum, shall include the following factors:

18 1. Financial need.

19 2. Ethnic, gender, or racial minority status pursuant  
20 to s. 288.703(3).

21 3. Scholastic ability and performance.

22 (b) Scholarship application procedures.

23 (c) Amounts in which scholarships may be provided, the  
24 total amount that may be provided, the timeframe for payments  
25 or partial payments, and criteria for how scholarship funds  
26 may be expended.

27 (d) The total amount of scholarships that can be made  
28 each year.

29 (e) The minimum balance that must be maintained in the  
30 program account.

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1       (4) Determinations made by the board regarding  
2 recipients of scholarship moneys shall not be considered  
3 agency action for purposes of chapter 120.

4       (5) It is unlawful for any person or agent of such  
5 person to knowingly file with the board any notice, statement,  
6 or other document which is false or which contains any  
7 material misstatement of fact. A person who violates any  
8 provision of this subsection commits a misdemeanor of the  
9 second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s.  
10 775.083.

11       (6) There is hereby created the Certified Public  
12 Accountant Education Minority Assistance Advisory Council to  
13 assist the board in administering the program. The council  
14 shall be diverse and representative of the gender, ethnic, and  
15 racial categories set forth in s. 288.703(3).

16       (a) The council shall consist of five licensed  
17 Florida-certified public accountants selected by the board, of  
18 whom one shall be a board member who serves as chair of the  
19 council, one shall be a representative of the National  
20 Association of Black Accountants, one shall be a  
21 representative of the Cuban American CPA Association, and two  
22 shall be selected at large. At least one member of the  
23 council must be a woman.

24       (b) The board shall determine the terms for initial  
25 appointments and appointments thereafter.

26       (c) Any vacancy on the council shall be filled in the  
27 manner provided for the selection of the initial member. Any  
28 member appointed to fill a vacancy of an unexpired term shall  
29 be appointed for the remainder of that term.

30       (d) Three consecutive absences or absences  
31 constituting 50 percent or more of the council's meetings

1 within any 12-month period shall cause the council membership  
2 of the member in question to become void, and the position  
3 shall be considered vacant.

4 (e) The members of the council shall serve without  
5 compensation, and any necessary and actual expenses incurred  
6 by a member while engaged in the business of the council shall  
7 be borne by such member or by the organization or agency such  
8 member represents. However, the council member who is a  
9 member of the board shall be compensated in accordance with  
10 the provisions of ss. 455.207(4) and 112.061.

11 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1 of the  
12 year in which enacted.

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15 HOUSE SUMMARY

16 Establishes the Certified Public Accountant Education  
17 Minority Assistance Program to provide for scholarships  
18 to eligible students, provides for funding scholarships,  
19 and creates an advisory council to assist in  
20 administering the program. See bill for details.  
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