

New law will assist California CPAs

Yee's legislation ensures public accountants can serve clients in all states

SACRAMENTO—75,000 Certified Public Accountants (CPA) in California will be able to continue serving clients that do business in other states thanks to a new law authored by Senator Leland Yee (D-San Francisco).

The current system in California for licensing CPAs does not conform to national standards that have been adopted by 46 other states. California currently has two pathways to receiving a CPA license. One such pathway requires 120 units of education followed by two years of accounting experience. The second pathway, which has become the national standard, requires 150 units of education and one year of accounting experience.

As a result of the two pathway system, California CPAs are not deemed "substantially equivalent" by other states, resulting in thousands of CPAs being unable to serve clients that do business outside of

California.

On Sunday, however, legislation was signed to ensure that California CPAs will be able to serve all clients. SB 819 adopts the national standard requiring 150 units of education, followed by one year of accounting experience. Under the rules of the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy, California CPAs who are currently licensed through the 120 unit pathway will automatically be considered equivalent as a result of the legislation. The additional education hours for new California CPAs must be dedicated to ethics and other accounting-related issues.

"As a result of SB 819, all California CPAs will be considered substantially equivalent to their counterparts from other states," said Yee. "Without this bill, many of our CPAs would have been disenfranchised and unable to serve their clients. It is

imperative that California CPAs are not put at a competitive disadvantage with out-of-state practitioners."

"Without SB 819, California consumers would not receive the same level of service that consumers in other states enjoy and California CPAs would face insurmountable hurdles in representing their clients," said Bruce Allen of the California Society of Certified Public Accountants.

In addition to the California Society of Certified Public Accountants and the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy, SB 819 was supported by the California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce, California Teachers Association, Philippine-American Society of Certified Public Accountants, American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Minority Initiatives Committee, and the National Association of Black Accountants. (AP)

Are flat-screen TVs power hogs? Calif. weighs

Some manufacturers face off against environmentalists, utilities at hearing

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—Within a month, the California Energy Commission could vote on whether to impose the nation's first energy-efficiency requirements for flat-screen TVs—a mandatory standard that would likely be copied by other states.

California utilities and environmental groups are lobbying for the regulators to ban the most power-hungry televisions from stores as a way to lower electricity demand.

Some manufacturers, on the other hand, argue a mandatory power standard would hamper innovation, limit consumer choice and hurt California electronics retailers.

At a hearing Tuesday, Oct. 13, energy commissioners acknowledged that the proposal could play a key role in reducing electricity use as consum-

ers buy larger TVs and put more of them in their homes. It could also help California meet its 2006 global warming law, which calls for the state to cut its greenhouse gases by 25 percent by 2020.

Watching TV accounts for about 10 percent of a home's electricity use and about 2 percent of California's total electricity usage. If left unchecked, the amount of electricity used by TVs is projected to rise by 8 percent a year.

"There is no dispute TVs do consume a large amount of electricity in California," commissioner Julia Levin said.

Under the proposed rule, all TVs sold in California starting in 2013 would have to meet recently strengthened guidelines under the federal Energy Star program. Only one-quarter of the TVs on the market currently meet the standard. (AP)

College cutbacks make it harder...

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'All I can do is say no'
Policymakers right up to President Barack Obama have been calling on public colleges to move students through more efficiently, and some have been doing so. "They will not graduate on time. I hope they will graduate at

all," said David Baggins, who as chairman of political science at Cal State University-East Bay has been bombarded with requests for spots in already packed classes.

Some students struggle for places in the core entry-level classes such as composition and math

because the part-time instructors who typically teach those courses are the first to be laid off in tough times. Other students are shut out of crowded core courses in their majors by upperclassmen. Some upperclassmen face an even tougher road: The upper-level classes they need have been cut entirely because they aren't popular enough. (AP)

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