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Senator Lew Frederick, Chair
Senate Committee on Education
Oregon State Legislature
Salem, OR 97301

Submitted via OLIS

RE: Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 796, Oregon Board of Accountancy Scholarship Grant Agreement

Chair Frederick and Members of the Senate Committee on Education:

On behalf of the Oregon Society of Certified Public Accountants (OSCPA), representing nearly 4,000 members, we respectfully submit this testimony in **support of SB 796**.

Background:

Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) provide a broad breath of vital services to individuals, businesses, governmental agencies and others. The profession's core values of ethics, integrity and independence not only support their clients but also contribute to public protection. In Oregon, CPAs are licensed by the Oregon Board of Accountancy (Board).

The accounting profession is experiencing pipeline challenges both in Oregon as well as nationally. A number of factors are causing the challenges not the least of which is the cost of education.

We applaud the Board for their efforts in exploring the pipeline issue and requesting legislation which would provide authorization to the Board to fund need-based accounting scholarships. The Board's ability to propose a scholarship bill is based on their healthy financial position today. This is based on several factors including efforts by the Board as well as OSCPAs sponsorship of Senate Bill 581 in 2015. The 2015 bill contained a requested change in fees for individual licensure and CPA firm registration to provide appropriate and targeted funding levels for Board operations. The Board is funded primarily by individual licensee and firm registration fees and does not obtain support from the General Fund.

The Oregon Board of Accountancy's request to fund student scholarships is based on a prior State of Washington bill in 2015 for the Washington Board of Accountancy. In exploring and developing this request, the Oregon Board has also engaged with various Oregon stakeholders.

Passage of SB 796 would authorize the Oregon Board of Accountancy to utilize a grant agreement process for the need-based scholarships.

Recommendation:

On behalf of Oregon Society of CPAs, we ask you to **support Senate Bill 796** for the benefit of students and the accounting pipeline in Oregon.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our comments.

Sincerely,

Sherri McPherson, President/CEO
Oregon Society of CPAs

For more information, please contact Nicole Palmateer Hazelbaker, nicole@braviocommunications.com