Dec. 18, 2019

The Honorable David Hickernell
Chairman
House Professional Licensure Committee
43A East Wing
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Re: Please Consider House Bill 1566

Dear Chairman Hickernell:

On behalf of the more than 20,000 members of the Pennsylvania Institute of Certified Public Accountants (PICPA), I am writing to respectfully request that you consider House Bill 1566, sponsored by Rep. Bill Kortz (D-Allegheny), which was introduced and referred to the House Professional Licensure Committee on June 4, 2019.

House Bill 1566 permits licensed professionals to receive advice from licensing boards. When a professional who is licensed in Pennsylvania has a question on whether a certain action is permitted by the licensing board, the licensee will often ask the licensing board for advice prior to acting. Under current law, licensing boards cannot provide guidance because they lack the statutory authority to do so. But they can, and do, issue fines after the fact if the act in question was in violation of the law.

This proposal will allow the boards to answer inquiries through the form of an advisory opinion, which would be legally nonbinding. Many violations could be avoided because licensees would have the means to determine if an action is in fact permissible. A licensee will no longer be forced to guess at whether an act is permitted, and it will allow the board to provide the guidance a licensee needs when completing his or her due diligence.

The PICPA was founded in 1897 and is currently the fourth-largest CPA organization in the country. The PICPA represents CPAs from across Pennsylvania, and membership is composed of CPAs in public accounting, business and industry, government, and education. Our members are trusted advisers to thousands of Pennsylvania’s leading businesses and industries, and individual taxpayers as well. The PICPA’s mission is to preserve the legacy and propel the integrity of the CPA profession, while also upholding the public interest by serving as an advocate for and articulating positions on professional and public issues where the knowledge of CPAs is relevant.

Please consider House Bill 1566. Thank you and do not hesitate to contact me at pcalcara@picpa.org or (717) 232-1821 with questions.

Sincerely,

Peter Calcara, CAE
Vice President - Government Relations

cc: The Honorable Harry Readshaw, Minority Chair
    The Honorable Bill Kortz