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135 Cedar Street, New York, N.Y.
March 5, 1936

To Presidents of State Societies
of Certified Public Accountants

Gentlemen:

In the 1935 sessions of state legislatures there were eight bills introduced which in some way would have lowered the standards of the C.P.A. certificate – by outright waiver provision, by modified waiver applicable to accountants who had been in practice for a certain number of years, by provision of oral examination, by repeal of the C.P.A. law, or by credit toward passage of the examination for years of practice.

The Institute's committee on state legislation fully realizes the difficulty which state societies sometimes encounter in opposing bills of this type before legislative committees. Legislators are often led to believe by proponents of such bills that certified public accountants constitute a monopoly which they jealously guard against intruders. It is difficult to convince such legislators that there is a real public interest in the maintenance of high standards for the C.P.A. certificate.

The American Institute of Accountants has approached a number of public and semi-public bodies, with which it is on friendly terms, with a request for official statements of the interest of those bodies in the maintenance of high standards for the certified public accountant certificate. Such statements have been obtained from the following organizations, and copies are enclosed herewith:

Federal Trade Commission
National Association of Credit Men
New York Stock Exchange
Robert Morris Associates
Securities and Exchange Commission
Treasury Department

These letters constitute indisputable evidence that the business and financial community is keenly interested in the prevention of anything which would lower C.P.A. standards. It is suggested that in the event of introduction of legislation of a retrogressive nature in your state these letters be called to the attention of the proper committees of the legislature.

It is also suggested that in preparation for possible attacks on your C.P.A. law the state society obtain from state organizations, such as chambers of commerce, clearing house associations, state bankers associations, local stock exchanges, etc., etc., statements similar to those enclosed, which should serve as good examples in your approach to the state groups.

You may wish to have these letters read at a meeting of your society, or published in your society bulletin, for the information of your members.

It would be of great interest to us to learn of any steps which you may take in this matter.

Please bear it in mind that the Institute's committee on state legislation is eager to co-operate with your state society in opposing attempted legislation which would affect the C.P.A. certificate adversely.

Yours truly,

Charles H. Towns, Chairman

Committee on State Legislation

John L. Carey, secretary