



Industry & Legislative Hot Topics

NCACPA Business & Industry Fall Conference

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Omni Grove Park Inn



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Several forces are converging on the CPA role at once

EXTERNAL PRESSURE

Public policy, regulation, economic uncertainty, changing expectations



OPERATING PRESSURE

AI, cybersecurity, data, and demands for greater productivity



PEOPLE PRESSURE

Workforce shortages, new skill requirements, changing career expectations



THE CPA ROLE

The work, the talent model, the risks, and the responsibilities are changing at the same time—and they interact



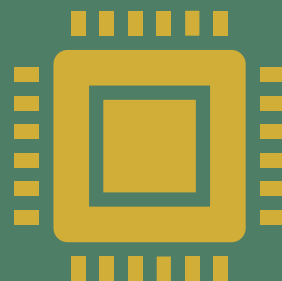
STRATEGY

External forces
(policy, markets,
elections)



GOVERNANCE

Structure and
operations of
firms and
organizations



TECHNOLOGY

Tools reshaping
work (AI,
automation,
data)



TALENT

Pipeline,
licensure,
workforce
constraints



CULTURE

Expectations,
leadership,
professional
identity

The same forces land differently on firms and corporate finance teams

Force	Public accounting	Corporate finance
Technology	Client-service delivery and workflow	Close-cycle and reporting automation
Talent	Campus recruiting, busy-season capacity	Job design, career paths, retention
Regulation	Practice privilege and mobility	Multistate licensure, provision complexity
Capital	Private equity and alternative practice structures	Board and lender expectations
Risk	Client data across multiple entities	One organization's data, deeper exposure

Same forces, different decisions.

Legislative and regulatory hot topics

Across the finish line: IRC conformity and the state budget

Appropriations Act

SL 2026-41 (SB 257)

- Schedules personal income tax rate reductions over next decade
- PIT: **3.99%** in TY26; **3.49%** for TY27–29, **3.24%** for TY30–32, and **2.99%** for TY33+
- Repeals sales tax exemption for electricity for data centers
- Creates income tax deduction for gambling losses

Revenue Laws Update

SL 2026-31 (SB 595)

- Updates IRC conformity date to July 5, 2025 (through OBBBA)
- Decouples from federal treatment of R+E expenditures
- Provides Helene interest relief
- Aligns with federal partnership audit procedures
- NCDOR issued updated tax guidance on July 29

The real cost of the delay was months of not knowing the rules

- Capital expenditure timing
- Where to fund research and development
- Entity structuring and multistate footprint
- Purchase price and deal modeling
- Cash tax forecasting and estimated payments
- Rate reported to the board

For most of the year, finance teams could not determine the state tax consequences of transactions they were already executing.

Delayed conformity is an economic cost, not a compliance inconvenience.

Other issues important to business leaders

Modification of Nonprofit Corporation Act

SL 2026-52 (HB 517)

- Modernizes nonprofit corporation laws
- Impacts mergers, conversions, board composition, annual reporting, charitable disclosure and more

Regulatory Reform Act

SL 2026-59 (SB 445)

- Requires *de novo* standard for judicial review of rules and regulations
- Ends deferral to agency expertise
- Similar to SCOTUS *Loper Bright* decision
- Impact will be years in the making

Economic Development & Competitiveness

- NC ranked **2nd overall** among Top States for Business in 2026 (1st in economy, 3rd in workforce, and 5th in access to capital)*
- NC state and local tax climate ranked **4th most competitive** among benchmark states**

* America's Top States for Business 2026, CNBC.com, July 9, 2026

** North Carolina's Business Tax Climate: Current Conditions and Options for Change, NC Chamber Foundation, August 2026

Deregulation: Prioritizing the threats



Level 3

New Burdens and Bureaucracy

Burdensome, but don't pose an imminent threat to licensing or mobility

- Increased Legislative Oversight and Approval of Regulatory Changes
- Occupational Licensing Reform
- Task Force Review of Licensure Requirements



Level 2

Negative Impact to License & Mobility

Danger of slippery slope and snowballing

- Universal Licensure
- Eliminating or Reducing CPE
- Board Composition
- Board Consolidation



Level 1

Existential Threat to License & Mobility

Could destroy the license

- Board Elimination
- Occupational Consumer Choice Act

Universal licensure doesn't remove hurdles for CPAs—it creates new ones

WHAT IT IS

A mandate to recognize out-of-state licenses without meeting destination state's requirements.

WHAT THEY SAY

Promotes workforce development, enhances mobility, reduces barriers, and cuts costs.

THE REALITY

Does not take into account existing and effective mobility model for CPAs (no fee, no notice, no escape).

HB 763 – Neighbor State License Recognition Act (S.L. 2025-61)

SB 451 – Originally a CPE reduction bill; amended in 2026 to broaden S.L. 2025-61 to nationwide application (referred to Senate Finance Committee)

Our priority: Carve-out for your CPA license

Reducing CPE requirements does more harm than good for CPAs and the public

WHAT IT IS

A legislative mandate to reduce the number of CPE hours required for license renewal.

WHAT THEY SAY

Continuing education is too burdensome, untethered to demonstrated need, and should be voluntary.

THE REALITY

CPE keeps us current and credible. States that cut CPE for CPAs risk license reciprocity and mobility.

Make your voice heard. If lawmakers don't hear from CPAs, they'll assume it doesn't matter.

Efforts to modernize CPE requirements should be led by the profession.

CPE IS EVOLVING.

**YOUR INSIGHTS
SHOULD SHAPE
WHAT COMES NEXT.**



AICPA-NASBA National
Profession-Wide Study



Respond by September 30

Help shape the future of CPE

The accounting profession is changing and continuing professional education must continue evolving with it. This is an opportunity to share YOUR insights to help shape what comes next.

The survey takes 10–15 minutes
and must be completed by
September 30, 2026.

[Take the survey](#)



Take the Survey

Weighing in on SEC rulemaking

WHAT WAS PROPOSED

The SEC wants to allow public companies to report semiannually, and to greatly expand the number of companies eligible for scaled reporting and relief from auditor attestation of internal controls.

WHAT WE SAID

NCACPA supported reducing unnecessary burden, but urged targeted relief that preserves timely information, comparability, and independent assurance over internal controls.

WHAT'S NEXT

Both proposals remain pending. SEC leadership appears intent on moving forward, but the comment record makes revisions and guardrails more likely than adoption exactly as proposed.

View NCACPA's comment letters [here](#) and [here](#)

NCACPA member expertise is helping shape federal rules before they are finalized.

Lame duck session priorities are ballooning

Government
shutdown on Dec.
11

National Defense
Authorization Act

Farm Bill & FISA
Reauthorizations

Clarity Act (crypto
market structure)

AI regulation bill

Iran War funding/
Reconciliation 3.0

Congress has its hands full, and only 6–7 weeks to tackle this growing list

MEMBER EXCLUSIVE

INSIDE TRACK: NCACPA General Election Preview

***Featuring speakers Jim Blaine and
Amanda Finelli from Differentiators Data***



September 24 | 12-1 p.m. | Zoom



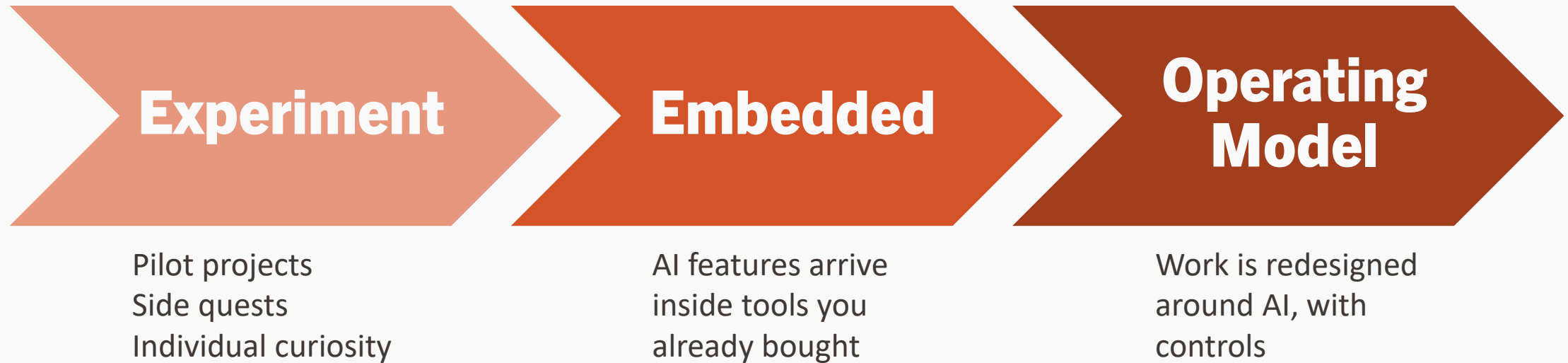
- Data-driven preview of key federal and state races
- Expert analysis of the trends and political dynamics shaping this election cycle
- Designed for CPAs and business leaders who want to understand the landscape without the partisan noise



[Register at NCACPA.org](https://www.ncacpa.org)

Technology disruption and the future of corporate finance

The question moved from whether to use AI to under what controls



Adoption raises four questions:
Governance | Privacy | Accuracy | Accountability

The finance leader's AI agenda

1

Use Case – **Where can AI create meaningful value?**

2

Data Governance – **What information may go into which systems?**

3

Human Review – **Which outputs need validation or judgment?**

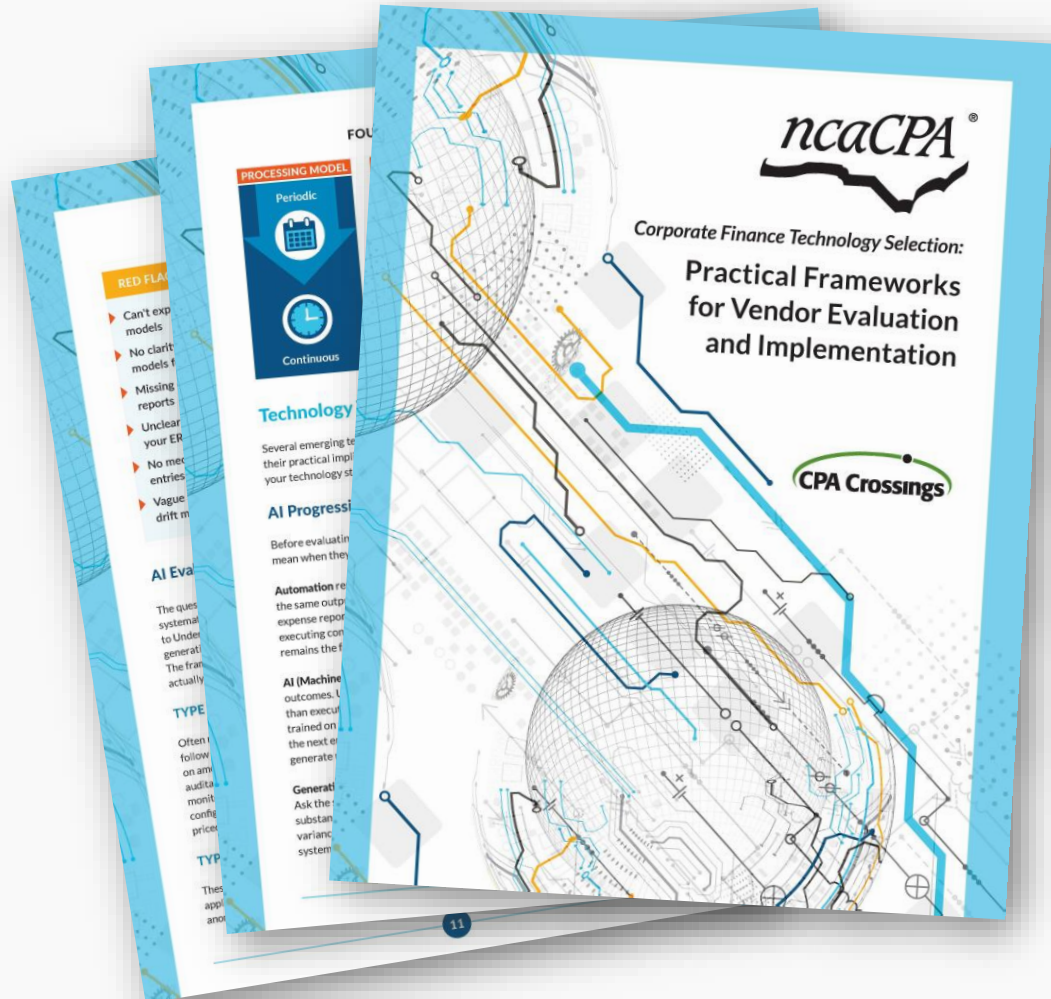
4

Controls & Accountability – **Who owns the process and result?**

5

Workforce Development – **Which capabilities must people build?**

NEW RESEARCH | Evaluate technology on total costs and outcomes, not feature lists



- Vendor evaluation scorecard
- 5-year total cost framework
- Guidance on evaluating AI capabilities
- 4-phase implementation roadmap

Download the full report from the conference resource page

Technology Solutions Showcase | Sept. 29

WHY ATTEND

- FREE member benefit; no cost to attend
- Up to 8 CPE credits available
- Designed to be accessible, regardless of your current comfort level with technology
- A practical, unbiased look at where the profession is headed—not a vendor pitch
- Choose one or both sessions

MORNING

Explore practical AI tools, automation, cybersecurity considerations, and other emerging technology
(up to 4 CPE credits)

AFTERNOON

Discover technology that streamlines the full tax lifecycle, from data gathering to review and delivery
(up to 4 CPE credits)



Tech Showcase

[Register at NCACPA.org](https://www.ncacpa.org)

Workforce challenges and the search for accounting talent

The workforce
challenge is changing

What is the hardest role on your team to fill right now, and why?

New pathways into the
profession & CPA
licensure

Has anyone hired, promoted, or sponsored someone coming through the new pathway?

From pipeline to
profession readiness

What capabilities is your team shortest on today, and what are you doing to close the gap?

What employers can do
now

What is one change you made in the last year that worked, and what did it cost?

3-Year Continuous Roadmap

The NCACPA Board of Directors adopted a continuous, 3-year strategic plan that helps us focus, adapt, and lead with purpose, so our members can do the same.



Elevate your impact and make a difference

NORTH CAROLINA
CPA-PAC
your voice in action



Invest Now



Launch Date:
October 22, 2026

NCCPA

FOUNDATION



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Questions & Answers