

Frustrating the use of foreign credentials

Many foreign-trained accountants who move to Ontario continue to proudly display their educational credentials on business cards and other materials. And fairly so – they are not making false claims to training or certification they have not earned. While many Canadians may be unfamiliar with the foreign designations such as CIMA (from the British-based Chartered Institute of Management Accountants), it's hard to imagine that anyone displaying these credentials could be harming the public or, worse, committing a crime.

Ontario's Liberal government doesn't see it this way. Legislation winding its way through the province's legislature would make it an offence – punishable by a \$10,000 fine – for people to display post-nominal initials if they include any portion of the letters CA (chartered accountant), CMA (certified management accountant) or CGA (certified general accountant) – the three major accounting designations available in Canada. The rules mean, for

example, that members of CIMA or of the British-based Association of Chartered Certified Accountants would no longer be allowed to put their credentials on letterhead, business cards or possibly even job applications.

The province, supported by the three largest accounting bodies, has defended the provision on the grounds it is meant to protect the public from confusion or from outright fraud. Foreign-trained accountants say there is no evidence of a major problem that needs such a fix, and argue the provision goes far beyond those goals, to significantly limit their ability to display legitimate credentials.

While the legislation will not stop foreign-trained accountants from working in the province, it will add another hurdle to the challenges already facing immigrants as they try to get a toehold in their professions. And it comes at a time when governments claim they are working to help foreign professionals transfer their accreditations more easily once

they arrive in this country.

Last week, Michael Bach, national director of diversity at the accounting firm KPMG, told a Queen's Park committee that 300 people working at KPMG in Ontario have certifications from other accounting bodies, and those credentials are a key business advantage when serving clients with foreign operations or those who want expertise with international accounting standards being adopted by Canada. But their "invaluable" experience "will be severely diminished" if KPMG cannot tell clients about their training, he said.

Foreign-trained accountants have offered a sensible compromise, saying they could put a bracket after their designation to identify the country it comes from. The proposal has been rejected in a demonstration of inexplicable intransigence. The unwillingness to find reasonable compromise makes it hard not to conclude the real intention of the rule is to close doors for highly skilled immigrants.

Credential War

Legislation to "modernize and clarify" the accounting profession would normally draw yawns from the public. But Bill 158, now before the legislature, is being seen as a test of Ontario's commitment to welcoming foreign-trained professionals.

Concerns about the bill have been raised by accounting firms and opposition critics, pointing to a clause that would prohibit those who are not members of Ontario's chartered, general and management accountants' associations from displaying their similar foreign-earned credentials.

The measure is intended to stop unqualified people from hanging out

a shingle with a fancy title and duping Ontarians. But the critics argue that it goes too far. New Democrat MPP Peter Kormos says it is an "assault on foreign-trained professionals."

The bill would not affect the work foreign-trained accountants are allowed to do, but it would subject them to fines of up to \$10,000 for putting the designations they have earned on their business cards.

KPMG's Michael Bach urged the legislative committee reviewing the bill to amend it so "it does not inadvertently create barriers for the people we are actively trying to bring to our province."

British Consul General Jonathan Dart suggested the bill, while ostensibly protecting the public, is actually an attempt to "protect a little piece of Ontario for the professional organizations here."

These are not allegations that Ontario can take lightly. As Premier Dalton McGuinty often says, our economic future rests on attracting the best and brightest skilled immigrants to Ontario.

Bill 158 is back before the committee Thursday. The government should consider amendments to ensure that unnecessary new barriers are not being thrown up for foreign-trained professionals.

April 30, 2010



CIMA leads opposition to the Bill 158 ban of foreign accounting qualifications in Ontario

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and business cards. "CIMA Operates in 165 countries around the world and we have never seen a



Group Photo with Mr. Charles Tilley CEO of CIMA, Lorenzo Berardinetti MPP and Reza Moridi MPP. Pic by Bashir Nasir

the public hearing of the Standing Committee on Justice Policy scheduled for April 22, 2010 at the Ontario Legislature.

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to the attention of the Ontario Government what it deems to be an overly restrictive Clause within the Bill, which will place internationally qualified professional accountants at a disadvantage when they immigrate to Ontario. CIMA believes this Clause will act as an employment barrier, as it proposes a ban on the use of foreign professional designations on documents, including resumes

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April 22, 2010

Financial body acts to help migrants

ACCOUNTING The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants says it will propose changes that will help immigrants at a public hearing on an Ontario bill today.

Bill 158, the Accounting Professions Act, was tabled in the legislature by the Ontario government with a view to modernizing the accounting profession in Ontario.

CIMA says it supports parts of the bill that safeguard consumer protection.

But it opposes a clause that it says places internationally qualified professional accountants at a disadvantage when they immigrate here.

CIMA says the clause will be an employment barrier because it proposes a ban on the use of foreign professional designations on documents, including resumes and business cards.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

April 30, 2010

Ontario Bill 158 to serve as employment barrier: CIMA



TORONTO: The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) proposed amendments to Ontario Bill 158 at a public hearing of the Standing Committee on Justice Policy at the Ontario Legislature on April 22. "CIMA Operates in 165 countries around the world and we have never seen a piece of legislation anywhere in the world that imposes a ban on the CIMA qualification," said CIMA CEO Charles Tilley, who traveled to Toronto from the UK to address the Standing Committee. "Prohibitions under this Bill will take Ontario in the wrong direction and go completely against the 'Open Ontario Policy' advocated by Premier McGuinty," he warned.

CIMA chief executive officer Charles Tilley with MPPs Lorenzo Berardinetti and Reza Moridi.

Bashir Nasir

Clause banning use of foreign professional designations on documents like resumes and business cards, will place internationally qualified professional accountants at a disadvantage when they immigrate to Ontario

Bill 158, The Accounting Professions Act, was tabled in the Legislature by the Ontario Government with a view to modernizing the province's accounting profession. CIMA recognizes the importance of this and supports the elements of the Bill that safeguard consumer protection and increase transparency in the Accountancy profession. However, the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants has brought to the attention of the Ontario Government what it deems an overly restrictive Clause within the Bill, which will place internationally qualified professional accountants at a disadvantage when they immigrate to Ontario. CIMA believes this clause will act as an employment barrier as it proposes a ban on the use of foreign professional designations on documents, including resumes and business cards. Financial and management ser-

vices form a vital component of the Canadian economy, the CIMA representatives pointed out. Moreover, approximately half of Toronto's population and a significant proportion of the Ontario population were not born in Canada.

Many of them are internationally trained professionals whose creativity and innovation are needed to drive the Canadian economy on a global scale, the CIMA delegates added. CIMA tabled a number of amendments intended to ensure that Bill 158 will not negatively affect the Ontario government's stated policy of helping foreign trained professionals integrate in to the province's economy. The mission of CIMA is to be the first choice for employers in qualifying and developing management accountants and work to qualify students, support members and protect the public interest. CIMA outlines and communicates responsibilities and establish clear guidelines, timeframes and standards to ensure delivery against objectives.

— *Staff Reporter*

CIMA to highlight the impact of Ontario Bill 158 on foreign qualified immigrants to Ontario

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INDIA JOURNAL

CIMA to highlight on foreign qualifieds

New amendments proposals on Ontario Bill 158 is in readiness.

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CIMA Proposes Amendments To Bill 158

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Seen in the picture are Charles Tilley, Berardinetti MPP, Colen Shaw, Ranil Mendis, and Reza Moridi MPP

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INDIA JOURNAL



The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) proposed amendments to Ontario Bill 158 at the public hearing of the Standing Committee on Justice Policy scheduled for April 22, 2010 at the Ontario Legislature. Seen are the participating members and patrons at a recently-held CIMA event. Pic by Bashir Nasir.

اپوزیشن نے چارٹر انسٹیٹیوٹ مینجمنٹ ایکٹ میں ترمیم کا مشورہ دیدیا

ترمیم سے سرمایہ کاروں کیلئے کچھ مسائل اور رکاوٹیں دور ہونے میں مدد ملے گی

ٹورنٹو (خبرنگار) اپوزیشن نے چارٹر انسٹیٹیوٹ مینجمنٹ ایکٹ میں ترمیم کا مشورہ دیدیا ہے۔ بل اس وقت سینیٹ میں پیش کر دیا گیا ہے۔ بل 158 کا مقصد تازوں کو تحفظ فراہم کرنا ہے اور اس میں موجود کچھ رکاوٹوں کو بھی ترمیم کے ذریعے ختم کرنا ہے تاکہ تجارت میں حائل رکاوٹوں کو ختم کیا جاسکے۔ بل میں غیر ملکی سرمایہ کاروں کیلئے آسانی پیدا کرنے کا بھی مشورہ دیدیا گیا ہے۔

تا کہ تجارت کو فروغ مل سکے۔ سی آئی ایم اے کے مطابق 165 ملکوں میں کام کیا جا رہا ہے لیکن تحفظ کے حوالے سے کوئی قانون موجود نہیں۔ لہذا اس میں اکثریت کینیڈین تاجروں کی ہے اور یہ تحفظ قانون بنانا بھی کینیڈا کی پارلیمنٹ کا کام ہے۔ بل میں کوئی نئی چیز شامل نہیں بلکہ اس میں سرمایہ کاروں کے تحفظ کو اولین ترجیحی بنیادوں پر عمل کرنے کا مشورہ دیدیا گیا ہے۔



ہرمندر

‘سِما’ وِلّوے یونٹاریو دے بیل 158 ’چ سہو تہجیج



ویڈیو سہو چارلس ٹیلو، سہو کولون سہا، رانیل مہڈیس اہتے ویڈیو سہو سہو مہریدی۔

ڈوٹو : ہسہر ناسہر

ٹورنٹو (یونٹاریو، کینیڈا)، 27 اپریل (ہ. ہ.) : چارٹرڈ ایسٹیریٹیوٹ آف مینجمنٹ اکیڈمی (سِما) نے نیوٹاریو نیوٹی ہارہ سہاہی کومٹی دہی جنننک سہوٹاہی مہوے یونٹاریو دے بیل نہہر 158 وِچ سہو تہجیج کھیڈیآں ہن۔ بیل 158 ہاڈ اکیڈمی پروفیسنل اہوٹ یونٹاریو سہوٹاہی وِچ وِچان سہو ’چ ایس لہی پہس کھیڈا گیآ سہو تہجیج ایس سہو وِچ اکیڈمی دے کھیڈو نُو آہوٹیک ہٹاہیآ سہو سہو۔ سِما ایس دے مہوٹہڈ نُو سہوٹاہی ہو اہتے بیل دے یونٹاہی پہوآ دہی ہٹاہیڈ کھدی ہو، سہوٹاہی ہٹاہیڈ سہوٹاہی پہوٹاہی ہٹاہیڈ ہن اہتے اکیڈمی دے کھیڈو وِچ پآرہوٹاہی نُو وِچاہیڈ وِچ مہوٹاہی ہن پہر ایس سہوٹاہی نُو ایڈٹاہی ایس گول دہی ہو ایڈ کھنٹاہی لہوٹاہی نال کھوٹاہی پہوٹاہی دے ہوٹاہی تہ پروفیسنل اکیڈمی دے نال سہوٹاہی ہوٹاہی سہوٹاہی یونٹاریو ’چ آہوٹاہی کھیڈو ایس بیل وِچ اکیڈمی دہی وِچاہی ڈیگہیآں یونٹاہی ہٹاہیڈ دہی گول آہوٹاہی ہو۔ سِما دہی ہٹاہی وِچ 165 دہسٹاہی ڈک ہٹاہیآ ہوٹاہی ہو۔



Foreign-trained accountants fear fines under Ontario law

Say new bill preventing them from using their credentials creates barrier to working here

Article Photos (1) Comments (11)

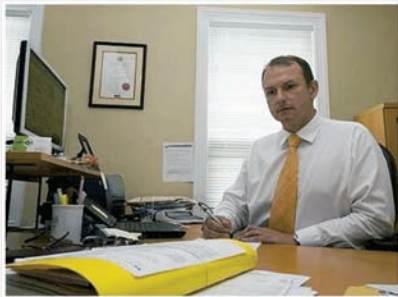
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Nicholas Keung
IMMIGRATION REPORTER

For more than a decade, Martin Saxton, an accountant originally from Scotland who now has a Toronto business, has printed the professional credentials he earned in the U.K. on his business cards and resumé.

Saxton, who runs Arrow Accounting and Bookkeeping on Danforth Ave., uses his Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA)



Martin Saxton, a native of Scotland who now runs a Toronto accounting business, worries he will not be able to advertise his foreign credentials.

Report on Business

The Globe and Mail, Thursday, July 2, 2009

... While accountants get into a CA(t) fight

BY JANET MCFARLAND

When Mahes Wickramasinghe moved to Canada in 1989 to work for an accounting firm, he never considered concealing the credentials he had earned from Britain's Chartered Institute of Management Accountants.

But Mr. Wickramasinghe and other foreign-accredited accountants are now facing a crackdown on using the designations they earned abroad, in a raging battle that could only happen in the notoriously fractious world of accounting regulation in Ontario.

The bizarre dispute hinges on the use of a few letters. New legislation tabled in the province would prohibit accountants who have earned designations in foreign countries from displaying those letters after their names on business cards or letterhead if they include any portion of the initials CA (chartered accountant), CMA (certified management accountant) or CGA (certified general accountant).

The proposed Bill 158 has dismayed two British-based accounting organizations — the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants

legislation, you're even barred from using that," he said.

Ontario does not require accountants to be approved or licensed provincially unless they are providing auditing services. That status will not change under Bill 158, and foreign-trained accountants will still be able to work in the same sorts of finance and accounting roles as they currently hold.

But accountants say it is nonetheless a blow to be told they cannot even display designations they have earned elsewhere.

Once you come here, you hear, 'That qualification is not recognized, and, by legislation, you're even barred from using that.'

Mahes Wickramasinghe
Chartered Management Accountant

as breaching that section of the Act, or even confusing the public," he added.

The Ontario government says the new rules are intended to prevent misunderstandings by the public when people are dealing with accountants whose designations are similar to known Canadian designations.

"The legislation is intended to protect potential consumers of accounting services from confusion about the qualifications of accountants," said Brendan Crawley, spokesman for the Ministry of the Attorney-General, which is responsible for setting accounting standards.

The province is, however, considering whether confusion could be avoided by indicating the country from which the credentials were earned when they are displayed, he said. That could mean, for example, that a British-certified accountant could put (UK) after his or her



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Immigrant balance wobbly

New provincial rule for the accounting industry has newcomers crying foul

By CHRISTINA BLIZZARD, SUN MEDIA

Last Updated: 10th July 2009, 4:20am

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Any place that relies on immigrants for its lifeblood has to perform a great, high wire balancing act.

How do you encourage people with professional qualifications to come here and work — while ensuring you maintain your own professional standards?

Organizations such as the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) and the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA), both based in the U.K., are crying foul over legislation introduced this spring by Attorney General Chris Bentley aimed at toughening up certification requirements for people in the accounting industry.

The new law will forbid members of those and some other professional organizations from listing their professional credentials on their business cards, advertising and letterhead.

Mahes Wickramasinghe who came here from Sri Lanka, says the new legislation discriminates against foreign-trained professionals.