



FILE PHOTO

Richard Berkowitz hopes the law will lead nonprofits to do more internal monitoring.

Congress considers new nonprofit requirements

SARBANES, from previous page

that publicity, said Dana Forgione, director of the School of Accounting at Florida International University's College of Business Administration.

This year, public companies will start complying with Sarbanes-Oxley's Section 404, which requires them and their auditors to certify that they have controls in place for verifying the accuracy of financial statements.

Starting last year, public companies' CEOs and CFOs were required to certify the accuracy of each quarter's report to the SEC.



Forgione

FICPA: Law not for private companies

After Congress passed Sarbanes-Oxley, the FICPA began "explaining it to our state legislators that it should not be applicable to non-publicly traded companies," said Lloyd "Buddy" Turman, the FICPA's executive director.

"We feel that we have been successful," he said.

In early January, staff officials of the state's House and Senate Regulated Industries committees, which have initial jurisdiction on accounting issues, said no members had introduced bills on Sarbanes-Oxley issues.

Congress probably won't see the need to put nonprofits under those two key Sarbanes-Oxley requirements, said Harvey Berger, accounting firm Grant Thornton's national partner in charge of nonprofits' tax services.

But Congress is considering new requirements of making nonprofits' financial statements subject to public disclosure,

said Berger, who is based in Washington, D.C.

Grant Thornton partners who advise private companies on tax issues have not told him of any congressional bills that would make private companies subject to Sarbanes-Oxley, he said.

Impacts of Sarbanes-Oxley include lengthier audits that are creating a bigger workload for accounting firms and a heightened public awareness of the work of accountants, Berkowitz said.

Publicizing the work accountants do at CPA firms, other companies and in community organizations will be among his goals in 2005-2006, he said.

"We will have a theme that 'CPAs make organizations work,'" said Berkowitz, of the 18,400-member organization. "We will talk about how CPAs play critical roles in making government and businesses work properly and kept their controls."

The FICPA also will publicize the role CPAs play in community and charitable organizations.

"You see CPAs on the boards of almost every one of them," Berkowitz said.

Berkowitz Dick Pollack & Brant had \$24.9 million in revenue in 2003, making it South Florida's fourth largest accounting firm according to *Business Journal* research.

The firm, which also has a Fort Lauderdale office, expanded its number of employees from about 100 to about 150 between late 2002 and late 2004.

Grant Thornton, which has offices in Weston and Miami, expanded its South Florida employees from about 100 to 125 in 2004, said Mark Margulies, a tax partner for the firm in South Florida.

Berkowitz and Margulies expect their firms will expand their staffs again this year to handle expanded workloads.

E-MAIL BANKING, finance and insurance writer Jim Freer at jfreer@bizjournal.com.