

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



'22 OCT 20 A8 :14

SENATE

S. No. 1407

RECEIVED BY:

Introduced by SENATOR RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.

**AN ACT
GRANTING FREE COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS TO THE
UNDERPRIVILEGED PUBLIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATING
STUDENTS AND GRADUATES BELONGING TO THE TOP FIFTEEN PERCENT
(15%) OF THEIR GRADUATING CLASS FOR ADMISSION IN PRIVATE
HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

According to Article XIV, Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution, "The State shall protect and promote the rights of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all." Moreover, Section 2(3) states that the State shall "establish and maintain a system of scholarship grants, student loan programs, subsidies, and other incentives which shall be available to deserving students in both public and private schools, especially to the underprivileged."

However, considering the rising cost of education, especially college education, a sizable high school graduates find it impossible to continue their college degree once they fail to secure admission in a State University and College or Local University and College because of their limited financial capacity.

Thus, this bill aims to ensure that poor but deserving and qualified public senior high graduating students and graduates are given equal opportunities in applying for college admission to private higher education institutions by removing hindrances at the entry level, such as the prohibitive cost of entrance examinations.

In our desire to further provide for the underprivileged in achieving a college education, the immediate approval of this measure is earnestly sought.


RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.

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Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

1 Section 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Free College Entrance
2 Examination Act for Underprivileged Public Senior High School Graduating Students
3 and Graduates in Private Higher Education Institutions."

4 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared policy of the State to expand
5 and further democratize access to quality college education in private higher education
6 institutions by instituting mechanism to promote the rights of the underprivileged
7 public senior high school graduating students and graduates belonging to the top
8 fifteen percent (15%) of their graduating class.

9 This exemption from the imposition of the entrance examination fees is one
10 mechanism that shall provide adequate assistance and equal opportunity to these
11 students to pursue their dream of obtaining a college education.

12 Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* -

13 a. College Entrance Examinations - refer to the examinations required and
14 administered by higher education institutions on college entrants that is
15 a criterion for determining admission to a college degree program;

16 b. Underprivileged Public Senior High School Graduating Students and
17 Graduates - refer to graduating senior high school students or graduates

1 of public schools entering college, whose parents have a combined
2 income that falls below the poverty threshold, as determined by the
3 National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) and the National
4 Household Targeting System of the Department of Social Work and
5 Development (DSWD);

- 6 c. Private Higher Educational Institution (PHEI) - refers to a higher
7 educational institution not owned or controlled by the government or its
8 instrumentalities and may be sectarian or non-sectarian

9 Sec. 4. *Waiver of Fees* - The college entrance examination fees in PHEIs for the
10 underprivileged public senior high school graduating students and graduates
11 belonging to the top fifteen percent (15%) of their graduating class shall be waived.
12 It shall be covered under the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education fund
13 administered by the Commission on Higher Education - Unified Student Financial
14 Assistance Secretariat (CHED - UniFAST).

15 Sec. 5. *Qualification Requirements for Free College Entrance Examination*
16 *Beneficiaries in Private HEIs* - A student shall become eligible as beneficiary under this
17 Act when the following requirements are met:

- 18 a. A natural born Filipino citizen;
19 b. Must be a graduating high school student or graduate who belongs to
20 the top ten percent (15%) of their graduating class and seeks to be
21 admitted to a private higher education institution within the country; and
22 c. Must belong to a family whose combined income falls below the poverty
23 threshold, as determined by the NEDA and DSWD.

24 The eligible beneficiaries may avail of these waived fees for no more than three (3)
25 examinations.

26 Sec. 6. *Sanctions*. - The CHED shall reprimand any official or employee of a
27 PHEI or other individuals who violate Section 4 of this Act, and impose disciplinary
28 sanctions for a repetition of the same offense, pursuant to its power under Section 8
29 (e) of the Republic Act No. 7722, otherwise known as the "*Higher Education Act of*
30 *1994*".

31 Sec. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR)*. - Within ninety (90) days
32 from the effectivity of this Act, the CHED-UniFAST, in coordination with the

1 Department of Education (DepEd) and the Coordinating Council of Private Educational
2 Associations of the Philippines (COCOPEA), shall promulgate the necessary rules and
3 regulations to implement the provisions of this Act. *Provided,* That the non-
4 promulgation of the rules and regulations provided under this section shall not prevent
5 the immediate implementation of this Act upon effectivity.

6 *Sec. 8. Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or
7 unconstitutional, other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall remain
8 in full force and effect.

9 *Sec. 9. Repealing Clause.* – All laws, orders, decrees, rules and regulations, and
10 other parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed,
11 amended or modified accordingly.

12 *Sec. 10. Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
13 complete publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general
14 circulation in the Philippines.

Approved,