

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



23 JAN 30 A10 53

**SENATE**  
S. No. 1793

RECEIVED BY:

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**Introduced by SENATOR RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.**

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**AN ACT**  
**EXEMPTING QUALIFIED INDIGENT FILIPINOS FROM PAYMENT OF**  
**PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATION FEES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Article II, Section 9 of the 1987 Constitution states that "[t]he State shall promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all."

Social mobility remains to be largely determined by education and self-development initiatives. The proposed measure complements Republic Act No. 10931, or the "Universal Access to Quality Education Act", and Republic Act No. 11261, or the "First Time Jobseekers Act", in ensuring access to quality education and employment by removing possible hindrances brought about by any prohibitive cost. Passing a licensure and professional examinations is the penultimate stage prior to legal practice of one's profession.

The measure aims to provide a mechanism to make these examinations available to individuals who may have difficulty with paying the required fees.

In view of making government administered licensure examinations more accessible to qualified indigent, the early passage of this bill is earnestly requested.

  
**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 Professional*  
2 *Examinations Act of 2023*".

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the declared policy of the State to promote  
4 full employment and to provide equal opportunities for employment for all. Corollary  
5 to this, the State shall promote a just and dynamic social order that will free the people  
6 from poverty through policies and programs that provide adequate social services and  
7 improve the quality of life for all. In this regard, efforts should be exerted to provide  
8 the qualified indigent Filipinos access to government certifications which will recognize  
9 their potential as professionals and partners to nation-building.

10 Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* - As provided for in this Act;

- 11 a. "*Professional Examination*" shall refer to the licensure examinations conducted  
12 by the Professional Regulations Commission leading to the issuance of a  
13 professional license, and the examinations conducted by the Civil Service  
14 Commission leading to eligibility for employment to the government as a civil  
15 service professional or sub-professionals.
- 16 b. "*Qualified Indigent*" refers to a person who has no visible means of income or  
17 support, or whose income is insufficient for the subsistence or basic needs of

1 his family, as may be determined by the Department of Social Welfare and  
2 Development (DSWD).

3 *Sec. 4. Requirements for Availment.* - For purposes of availing the benefits of  
4 this Act, an examinee shall secure a certification from the DSWD that said examinee  
5 is a qualified indigent. Such certification shall be presented to the Professional  
6 Regulations Commission (PRC), or the Civil Service Commission (CSC), as the case  
7 may be, in lieu of the payment of examination fees. No other fee shall be charged  
8 against the qualified indigent for purposes of the professional examination.

9 *Sec. 5. Limitations on Availment* - Benefits of this Act may be availed of only by  
10 a qualified indigent once.

11 *Sec. 6. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign.* - The  
12 DSWD, PRC, and CSC, and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), in  
13 cooperation with the Philippine Information Agency (PIA), is hereby mandated to  
14 conduct an annual IEC campaign in order to inform the people of the procedures and  
15 guidelines in availing the benefits of this Act.

16 *Sec. 7. Reportorial Requirement.* - For purposes of determining the impact of  
17 the provisions of this Act, the DSWD, PRC, CSC and CHED shall submit an annual  
18 report to the Senate Committee on Civil Service, Government Reorganization and  
19 Professional Regulation and House Committee on Civil Service and Professional  
20 Regulation. The said report shall indicate the detail, among others, geographic  
21 distribution, demographic characteristics and socioeconomic profile of the beneficiaries  
22 of this Act.

23 *Sec. 8. Non-Duplication of Benefits.* - Examinees who are already covered with  
24 similar benefits under other laws and programs of the government shall not be entitled  
25 to the benefits of this Act.

26 *Sec. 9. Harmonization with the CHED - Unified Student Financial Assistance*  
27 *System for Tertiary Education (UniFAST)* - The implementation of this Act shall be  
28 harmonized with the the implementation of the Tertiary Education Subsidy under  
29 Section 7 of Republic Act 10931, otherwise known as, "*Universal Access to Quality*  
30 *Tertiary Education Act.*"

1           Sec. 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR)*. - Within ninety (90) days  
2 from the date of effectivity of this Act, the DSWD, PRC, CSC and CHED shall formulate  
3 the IRR for the proper and effective implementation of the provisions of this Act.

4           Sec. 11. *Appropriations*. - An amount necessary for the implementation of this  
5 Act shall be charged against the respective budgetary allocations of the concerned  
6 government agencies. Thereafter, an amount necessary for the proper implementation  
7 of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

8           Sec. 12. *Separability Clause*. – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or  
9 unconstitutional, other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall remain  
10 in full force and effect.

11           Sec. 13. *Repealing Clause*. – All laws, orders, decrees, rules and regulations,  
12 and other parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby  
13 repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

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

*Approved,*