

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



23 APR 19 P 1:29

**SENATE
Senate Bill No. 2079**

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Introduced by: **Senator Raffy T. Tulfo**

**AN ACT MANDATING PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO
WAIVE THE COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION FEES TO UNDERPRIVILEGED
GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES
BELONGING TO THE TOP FIFTEEN PERCENT (15%) OF THEIR GRADUATING
CLASS**

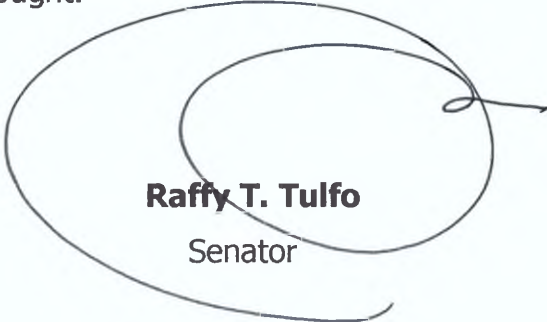
Explanatory Note

It is the policy of the state to provide equal access to quality higher education for all citizens. The proposed measure gives opportunities to underprivileged graduating high school students and high school graduates belonging to the top fifteen percent (15%) of their graduating class. The bill mandates private higher education institutions to waive the college entrance examination fees for these students, thereby enabling them to pursue higher education without the burden of financial constraints.

The bill recognizes that the cost of taking college entrance examinations can be a significant barrier to entry for students from low-income families. By waiving the fees for these students, the bill seeks to level the playing field and provide equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their socio-economic background.

Furthermore, the bill prioritizes high achieving students who belong to the top fifteen percent (15%) of their graduating class. This recognizes the importance of academic excellence and incentivizes students to strive for excellence in their studies.

The passage of this measure is thus earnestly sought.



Raffy T. Tulfo
Senator



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OF THEIR GRADUATING CLASS**

*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*
2 *Entrance Examinations Act"*.

3
4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State
5 to expand and further democratize access to quality college education in private higher
6 education institutions by instituting mechanisms that promote the rights of the
7 underprivileged graduating high school students and high school graduates belonging
8 to the top fifteen percent (15%) of their graduating class.

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

12
13 **SEC. 3. Definition of Terms.** – For the purposes of this Act, the following
14 terms shall be defined as follows:

- 1 a. **College entrance examinations** refer to the examinations required and
2 administered by higher education institutions on college entrants that is a
3 criterion for determining admission to a college degree program;
- 4 b. **Higher education institution** refers to an educational institution
5 recognized by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and is legally
6 authorized to offer a program of education leading to the conferment of a
7 degree;
- 8 c. **Private Higher Education Institution** refers to a higher education
9 institution not owned or controlled by the government or its
10 instrumentalities and may be sectarian (usually non-stock, non-profit, duly
11 incorporated, owned and operated by a religious organization) or non-
12 sectarian (not affiliated to any religious organization, duly incorporated,
13 owned and operated by private entities); and
- 14 d. **Underprivileged graduating high school students and graduates**
15 refer to graduating high school students or high school graduates entering
16 college, whose parents have a combined income that falls below the poverty
17 threshold, as determined by the National Economic and Development
18 Authority (NEDA) and the National Household Targeting System of the
19 Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).
- 20

21 **SEC. 4. Waiver of Fees.** – The college entrance examination fees in PHEIs
22 for the unprivileged public senior high school graduating students and graduating
23 students and graduates belonging to the top fifteen percent (15%) of their graduating
24 class shall be waived. It shall be covered under the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary
25 Education fund administered by the Commission on Higher Education - Unified Student
26 Financial Assistance Secretariat (CHED - UniFAST).

27

28 **SEC. 5. Qualification Requirements.** – A student shall become eligible as
29 beneficiary under this Act when the following qualifications are met:

- 30 a. Must be a natural-born Filipino citizen;

- 1 b. Must be a graduating high school student or a high school graduate who
2 belongs to the top fifteen percent (15%) of their graduating class and seeks to
3 be admitted to a private higher education institution within the country; and
4 c. Must belong to a family whose combined income falls below the poverty
5 threshold, as determined by the NEDA and the DSWD.

6
7 **SEC. 6. Additional Benefits for Qualified Students** – Qualified Students
8 according to Section 5 of this act are given priority to scholarships offered by the
9 national government.

10
11 **SEC. 7. Sanctions.** – The CHED shall reprimand any official or employee of a
12 private higher education institution or other individuals who violate Section 4 of this
13 Act, and impose disciplinary sanctions for a repetition of the same offense, pursuant
14 to its powers under Section 8 (e) of Republic Act No. 7722, otherwise known as the
15 "Higher Education Act of 1994"

16
17 **SEC. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** –Within ninety (90) days from
18 the effectivity of this Act, the CHED shall, in coordination with the Department of
19 Education and the Coordinating Council of Private Educational Associations of the
20 Philippines, issue the rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

21 **SEC. 9. Separability Clause.** – If, for any reason, any part or provision of this
22 Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not
23 affected shall remain in full force and effect.

24
25 **SEC. 10. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, executive orders, decrees, instructions,
26 rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with any provision of this Act are
27 hereby amended, repealed or modified accordingly.

28
29 **SEC. 11. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
30 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,