

Republic of the Philippines
SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES
Pasay City

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12 MAY -2 PM 57

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

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Senate Bill No. 3172

Introduced by Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid

EXPLANATORY NOTE

It has always been said that a college diploma is the most potent tool for one to be able to eke out of poverty. Thus, free tertiary education was in order and support to state-run universities and colleges providing free tertiary education poured in. The poor who dreamt of salvation from the chains of poverty now have a college diploma to pin their hopes on.

It should be realized that finishing college is just one part of a much promising professional career. A college diploma may define the fitness and aptitude of an individual but it is the title as a registered professional which is the *culmination of one's* proficiency and competence. Thus, to complete the formula of a ticket to a rewarding employment either in the government or the private sector, one must have a diploma and professional license. A good employment is assured a college graduate but better employment opportunities are in store for those who are graduates holding professional licenses.

The grant of professional license is only extended to select individuals who shall undergo specific examinations prescribed by law. To a regular graduate, the schedule of fees required to take the examination are minimal but to some, particularly indigents who finished their degrees without spending a dime as scholars or as students in state run institutions, the fees may seem restrictive that they would forego taking the examination altogether for lack of funds to pay the exam fees.

The Government should open up more opportunities to a better employment for those qualified indigents and in this line, this measure seeks to exempt them from paying the examination fees to government administered professional examinations.

Early passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID

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**AN ACT PROVIDING A MECHANISM FOR FREE PROFESSIONAL
EXAMINATIONS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

Section 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "*Free Professional Examinations Act of 2012*".

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is the declared policy of the State to promote full employment and to provide equal opportunities for employment for all. Corollary to this is the concomitant responsibility of the state to ensure that there are no inroads that may effectively hinder the professional growth of the citizens.

Furthermore, it is the policy of the State to promote a just and dynamic social order that will free the people from poverty through policies and programs that provide adequate social services and improve the quality of life for all. In this regard, efforts should be initiated so as we may afford the poor access to mechanisms that may expand opportunities for better employment.

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

- a) "Professional Examinations" shall refer to the licensure examinations conducted by Professional Regulations Commission leading to the issuance of a professional license. It shall also include examinations conducted by the Civil Service Commission leading to eligibility for employment to the government as a civil

service professional or sub-professionals and the Bar Examinations conducted by the Supreme Court of the Philippines.

- b) "Qualified Indigent" refers to a person who has no visible means of income or support, or whose income is insufficient for the subsistence or basic needs of his family, as may be determined by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

Sec. 4. *Requirements for Availment.* - For purposes of availing of the benefits of this Act, an examinee shall secure a certification from the DSWD that he/she is a qualified indigent. Such certification shall be presented to the Professional Regulations Commission (PRC), the Civil Service Commission (CSC) or the Supreme Court of the Philippines as the case maybe, in lieu of the payment of examination fees.

No other fee shall be charged against the qualified indigent for purposes of the professional examination.

Sec. 5. *Limitations on Availment.* Benefits of this Act may be availed of by a qualified indigent only once for every year.

Sec. 6. *Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign.* - The DSWD, PRC, CSC and the Supreme Court of the Philippines, in cooperation with the Philippine Information Agency (PIA), is hereby mandated to conduct an annual IEC campaign in order to inform the people of the procedures and guidelines in availing the benefits of this Act.

Sec. 7. *Reportorial Requirement.* - For purposes of determining the effectiveness and social impact of the provisions of this Act, the DSWD, PRC, CSC and the Supreme Court of the Philippines shall submit an annual report to both Houses of Congress indicating therewith the number of parties who benefited from this Act.

The report shall state in detail, among others, the geographic location, demographic characteristics and socioeconomic profile of the beneficiaries of this Act.

Sec. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).* - Within ninety (90) days from the date of effectivity of this Act, the DSWD, PRC, CSC and the Supreme Court of the Philippines shall formulate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper and effective implementation of the provisions of this Act.

Sec. 9. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect.

Sec. 10. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, decree, ordinance or administrative circular not consistent with any provision of this Act is hereby amended, repealed or modified accordingly.

Sec. 11. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,