


**SENATE**  
S. No. 276

'19 JUL -8 P2:51

Introduced by SENATOR MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID

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

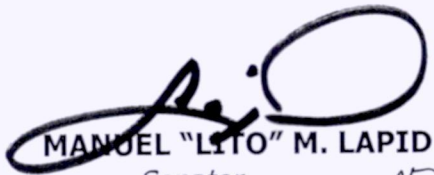
Education is a key driver of socio-economic development. With the recently passed Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act, the youth has now been given a chance at having a better future by being able to acquire a college degree.

Furthermore, better employment opportunities await those graduates who are holding a professional license. The grant of professional license is only extended to select individuals who shall undergo specific examinations prescribed by the law.

Thus, another hindrance for graduates from poor Filipino families are the fees they need to pay in order to take these professional examinations. 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.

With this, the Government should open up more opportunities to a better employment for those qualified indigents. 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**  
Senator

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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:*

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

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 is the concomitant responsibility of the state to ensure that there are no  
6 inroads that may effectively hinder the professional growth of the citizens.

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

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

13 a) "*Professional Examinations*" shall refer to the licensure examinations  
14 conducted by Professional Regulations Commission leading to the issuance of  
15 a professional license. It shall also include examinations conducted by the  
16 Civil Service Commission leading to eligibility for employment to the

1 government as a civil service professional or sub- professionals and the Bar  
2 Examinations conducted by the Supreme Court of the Philippines.

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

17           *Approved,*