

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **3626**



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Introduced by Representatives Enrico A. Pineda  
and Michael Odylon L. Romero, Ph.D.

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

We have always believed that education is the foundation upon which one builds a future. Realizing this, the government has endeavored on ways to provide its youth with every opportunity to access free primary, secondary and even tertiary education, so as to assure that the young will have a greater chance to become professionals themselves.

However, it should be realized that finishing school is not the be-all-end-all to a promising career in an employment environment where title equates to proficiency. It bears stressing that a college diploma does not confer one title but rather, it is after hurdling a professional examination may an individual claim to be a medical doctor, nurse, engineer, teacher or lawyer, among others. And this professional examination come at a steep price particularly for those indigent students who may not afford the cost of a review much less the fee required to undertake the professional examination.

For an indigent graduate who had pinned all hopes for a brighter future in this journey to professional career, the government as the administrator of these professional examinations should not make this exercise of regulation a hindrance. For someone who may consider these examination fees restrictive, it should be afforded for free and with no dime for cost. In that manner, we can better assure that those who deserve and are qualified may proceed unhampered in their pursuit of a means that may eventually help them eke out of poverty.

Early passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

ENRICO A. PINEDA

MICHAEL ODYLON L. ROMERO, PH.D.

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

**AN ACT**  
**PROVIDING FOR FREE PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATIONS**  
**TO QUALIFIED INDIGENTS**

Section 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Free Professional Examinations Act of 2016".

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 (PRC) 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 may not be sufficient 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 as a qualified indigent from the DSWD. 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.

Adopted.