

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS  
**First Regular Session**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 4323**



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Introduced by **HON. GUS S. TAMBUNTING**

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

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

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 is the fees they need to pay to take these professional examinations. To a regular graduate, the schedule 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 for better employment for those qualified indigents. This measure seeks to exempt them from paying the examination fees for government-administered professional examinations.

On behalf of the people of Parañaque City's Second District, and for the common good of the Filipino people, the approval of the said measure is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Gus S. Tambunting".

**REP. GUS S. TAMBUNTING**  
2nd District, Parañaque City

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*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”.

**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. The 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 that 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 the 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 may be, instead 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 only by a qualified indigent once 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), are hereby mandated to conduct an annual IEC campaign 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 two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

*Approved,*