



Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City, Metro Manila

**TWENTIETH CONGRESS**  
*First Regular Session*

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1810**



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**Introduced by Representative Ivan Howard Guintu**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Section 9, Article II of the 1987 Constitution provides that “[t]he State shall promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all.

Furthermore, Section 5(3), Article XIV provides that “[e]very citizen has a right to select a **profession** or course of study, subject to fair, reasonable, and **equitable admission** and academic requirements.

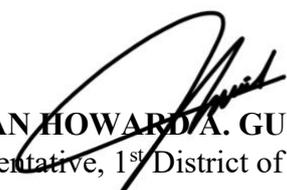
In 2017, Republic Act No. 10931 or the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act was signed into law providing for free college education. This gave the underprivileged youth better economic access to higher education and provided them an opportunity for a better future through education.

Despite this, most professions require graduates to undergo professional licensure examinations as prescribed by law. These professional licensure exams entails further expenses for graduates, especially in the form of examination fees. To indigent graduates, this is another financial burden which they must shoulder before they could start practicing their chosen profession and have gainful employment.

To promote social justice and to provide for equitable opportunity to pursue a profession, this bill seeks to exempt qualified indigents from paying examination fees to government administered professional examinations.

This proposed measure is approved on 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading during the 19<sup>th</sup> Congress in the House of Representatives.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

  
**IVAN HOWARD A. GUINTU**  
Representative, 1<sup>st</sup> District of Capiz



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

*Be it enacted by the Senate and the 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 declared the policy of the State to promote full employment and to provide equal opportunities for employment for all.

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, the State shall provide the poor access to mechanisms that expand opportunities for better employment.

**SEC 3. *Definition of Terms.***- As used in this Act:

(a) *Professional Examinations* refer to the licensure examinations conducted by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) leading to the issuance of professional licenses to successful examinees. It shall also include examinations conducted by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) leading to eligibility for employment in the government.

(b) *Qualified Indigents* refer to persons who have no visible means of income or support, or whose income may not be sufficient for the subsistence or basic needs of the family, as may be determined by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

**SEC 4. *Requirements for Availment.*** – For purposes of availing the benefits of this Act, an examinee shall secure Certificate of Indigency from the DSWD. Such certification shall be presented to the PRC and CSC, as the case may be, to be exempt from the payment of examination fees.

No other fee shall be charged against the qualified indigents for purposes of taking the professional examinations.

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

**SEC 6. *Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) Campaign.*** - The DSWD, PRC, and CSC, 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, and CSC shall submit an annual report to both Houses of Congress indicating therein the number of indigent examinees who benefited from this Act.

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

**SEC 9. *Repealing Clause.*** - All laws, executive orders, decrees, rules and regulations, or any part thereof inconsistent with the provision of this Act are deemed repealed or modified accordingly.

**SEC 10. *Effectivity.*** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

*Approved.*