

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2488



Introduced by **Representative Roy M. Gonzales**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

No less than the 1987 Constitution explicitly declares that "The State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels, and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all" (*Article XIV, Section 1*). It is one of the primordial duties of the State to promote and protect the right to quality education at all levels and make it accessible to all.

The licensure examinations administered by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) serve as a pathway for college graduates to become professionals in accountancy, criminology, medicine, nursing, social work, and other professional careers. Expenses incurred from preparation to actual examination cover examination fees, review center costs, rental fees, transportation allowance, and other related charges that may arise.

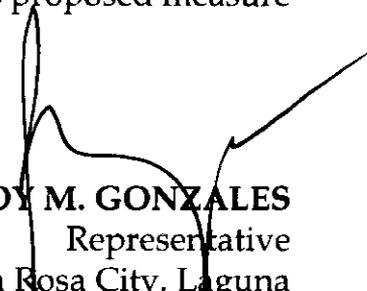
The Constitution sets forth the duty of the State to guarantee accessible and quality education to all Filipinos; however, the duty must not conclude by completion of the degree. The burden of financial constraints from taking professional licensure examinations becomes an unacceptable barrier for potential and capable examinees to become licensed professionals in this country, resulting in lost opportunities for employment and affecting social mobility. This affects a reasonable number of graduates, especially our fellow indigent college graduates.

This measure will address this prevalent problem by granting free professional licensure examinations to qualified college graduate indigents. In its passage, the State stands firm in its commitment to promote equal opportunity, inclusive progress, and social justice. In effect, producing more licensed

professionals in the country will answer the need to meet the demands of a growing population for public services and contribute to nation building.

A similar version of this laudable bill was approved on Third and Final Reading in the 17th Congress and was transmitted to the Senate; however, the same was not passed into law due to lack of material time. Subsequently, similar bills were filed in the 18th and 19th Congresses, and the present proponent is acknowledging the hard work and wisdom of his predecessors.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this proposed measure is earnestly sought.



ROY M. GONZALES
Representative
Lone District of Santa Rosa City, Laguna

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AN ACT
GRANTING FREE PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATIONS TO QUALIFIED
INDIGENTS

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 2025.*"

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is hereby 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.

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

- a.) "*Professional Examinations*" refers to the licensure examinations administered by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) to assess the competence of individuals seeking to practice a profession. The term can also refer to examinations conducted by the Civil Service Examination, which are general ability tests for those seeking government positions.

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).

SECTION 4. *Requirements for Availment.* - For purposes of availing the benefits of this Act, an examinee shall secure a Certificate of Indigency from the DSWD. Such certification shall be presented to the CSC and PRC, 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.

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

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

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

SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision or part of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, executive orders, issuances, and rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 10. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,