

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 2892

Introduced by Representative **JESUS R. MARQUEZ**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to exempt indigent degree holders from licensure and qualifying examination fees, thereby allowing them to take the exams free of charge. This measure was approved on Third and Final Reading in the 19th Congress. Its refiling underscores our continued commitment to easing the financial burden faced by graduates from poor families, empowering them to pursue professional careers without economic barriers.

Taking a licensure examination marks the first step in a college graduate's journey toward entering their chosen profession. Typically administered after graduation, these exams assess a graduate's knowledge, competencies, and readiness to practice their field of study.

At present, professional licensure examination fees can cost up to ₱1,300, especially for exams with both theoretical and practical components. For those seeking to work in government service, the Civil Service Examination imposes a non-refundable fee of ₱500. For many fresh graduates from low-income families, these fees present a significant barrier. The burden of having to save for these costs delays their ability to earn and help support their families, especially for those pursuing careers in public service, a path that demands much but offers immense value to our communities.

By removing this financial barrier, the bill upholds the principle of equal access to professional opportunities, regardless of economic status. It seeks to empower deserving graduates who possess the talent and dedication but lack the financial means to realize their full potential. Under this measure, qualified indigents shall be granted full exemption from licensure and qualifying examination fees, upon presentation of a valid Certificate of Indigency issued by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

This initiative aligns with the 1987 Constitution's mandate to promote social justice, equal opportunity, and accessible education. It affirms the State's duty to prioritize education, accelerate social progress, and advance holistic human development.

The Free Professional Examinations Act is more than a policy. It is a transformative tool for inclusive development. It opens doors for generations of young Filipinos, ensuring that no dream is deferred simply because of poverty.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is highly sought.


HON. JESUS "Jess" R. MARQUEZ

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2892

Introduced by Representative **JESUS R. MARQUEZ**

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:

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This as shall be known as the “Free Professional
2 Examinations Act”.

3
4 **SEC 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is declared the policy of the State to promote
5 full employment and to provide equal opportunities for employment for all. Furthermore,
6 it is the policy of the State to promote a just and dynamic social order that will free the
7 people from poverty through policies and programs that provide adequate social services,
8 and improve the quality of life for all. In this regard, the State shall provide the poor access
9 to mechanisms that expand opportunities for better employment.

10
11 **SEC 3. Definition of Terms.** – As used in this Act:

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

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

20
21 **SEC 4. Requirements for Availment.** - For purposes of availing the benefits
22 of this Act, an examinee shall secure Certificate of Indigency from the DSWD. Such
23 certification shall be presented to the PRC and CSC, as the case may be, to be exempt from

24 the payment of examination fees. No other fee shall be charged against the qualified
25 indigents for purposes of taking the professional examinations.

26

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

29

30 **SEC 6. Information, Education, and Communication (IEC)**
31 **Campaign.** – The DSWD, PRC, and CSC, in cooperation with the Philippine
32 Information Agency (PIA), is hereby mandated to conduct an annual IEC campaign in
33 order to inform the people of the procedures and guidelines in availing the benefits of this
34 Act.

35

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

40

41 **SEC 8. Separability Clause.** - Should any provision herein be declared invalid
42 or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force
43 and effect.

44

45 **SEC 9. Repealing clause.** -All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, rules
46 and regulation or parts thereof inconsistent with any provisions of this Act are hereby
47 repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

48

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

51

Approved,