



Senate
Office of the Secretary

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

23 JAN 19 P5:14

SENATE

RECEIVED BY:

Senate Bill No. 1708

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER LAWRENCE "BONG" T. GO

AN ACT
MANDATING PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO WAIVE THE COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION FEES TO UNDERPRIVILEGED GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES BELONGING TO THE TOP TEN OF THEIR GRADUATING CLASS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Constitution provides that "the State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and to take appropriate steps to make education accessible to all." The Constitution clearly states the role of the State in making sure that every citizen has equal access to quality education. However, through the years, the cost of quality education continues to rise, making it unaffordable to underprivileged students given their limited financial capacity.

This bill seeks to expand and further democratize access to quality college education in private higher education institutions by instituting mechanisms that promote the rights of the underprivileged graduating high school students and high school graduates belonging to the top ten of their graduating class. The exemption from the imposition of entrance examination fees is one such mechanism that shall give adequate assistance and equal opportunity to these students to pursue their dreams of obtaining a college education.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Bong T. Go', is written over the printed name below.

SENATOR CHRISTOPHER LAWRENCE "BONG" T. GO



Senate
Office of the Secretary

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

23 JAN 19 P5:14

SENATE

Senate Bill No. 1708

RECEIVED BY.

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER LAWRENCE "BONG" T. GO

AN ACT

MANDATING PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO WAIVE THE COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION FEES TO UNDERPRIVILEGED GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES BELONGING TO THE TOP TEN OF THEIR GRADUATING CLASS

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

1 **SECTION 1. *Short Title.*** - This Act shall be known as the "*Free College Entrance*
2 *Examinations Act of 2023.*"

3 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
4 expand and further democratize access to quality college education in private higher
5 education institutions by instituting mechanisms that promote the rights of the
6 underprivileged graduating high school students and high school graduates belonging
7 to the top ten of their graduating class.

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

9 (a) *College entrance examinations* —refer to the examinations required and
10 administered by higher education institutions on college entrants that is a
11 criterion for determining admission to a college degree program;

12 (b) *Higher education institution* — refers to an educational institution
13 recognized by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and is legally
14 authorized to offer a program of education leading to the conferment of a
15 degree;

1 (c) *Private Higher Education Institution* — refers to a higher education
2 institution not owned or controlled by the government or its
3 instrumentalities and may be sectarian (usually non-stock, non-profit, duly
4 incorporated, owned and operated by a religious organization) or non-
5 sectarian (not affiliated to any religious organization, duly incorporated,
6 owned and operated by private entities); and

7 (d) Underprivileged graduating high school students and graduates - refer to
8 graduating high school students or high school graduates entering college,
9 whose parents have a combined income that falls below the poverty
10 threshold, as determined by the National Economic and Development
11 Authority (NEDA) and the National Household Targeting System of the
12 Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

13 **SEC. 4. *Waiver of Fees.*** – All private higher education institutions are hereby
14 mandated to waive college entrance examination fees to underprivileged graduating
15 high school students and high school graduates belonging to the academic top ten of
16 the graduating class who are applying for college admission.

17 **SEC. 5. *Qualification Requirements.*** - A student shall become eligible as
18 beneficiary under this Act when the following qualifications are met:

19 (a) Must be a natural-born Filipino citizen;

20 (b) Must be a graduating high school student or a high school graduate who
21 belongs to the academic top ten of their graduating class and seeks to be
22 admitted to a private higher education institution within the country, as certified
23 by the educational institution; and

24 (c) Must belong to a family whose combined income falls below the poverty
25 threshold, as determined by the NEDA and the DSWD.

26 **SEC. 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** - Within ninety (90) days from
27 the effectivity of this Act, the CHED shall, in coordination with the Department of
28 Education and the Coordinating Council of Private Educational Associations of the

1 Philippines, issue the rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

2

3 **SEC. 7. *Separability Clause.*** - If, for any reason, any part or provision of this Act
4 is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected
5 shall remain in full force and effect.

6

7 **SEC. 8. *Repealing Clause.*** - All laws, decrees, orders, rules, and regulations or
8 other issuances or parts inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby
9 repealed or modified accordingly.

10

11 **SEC. 9. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
12 in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,