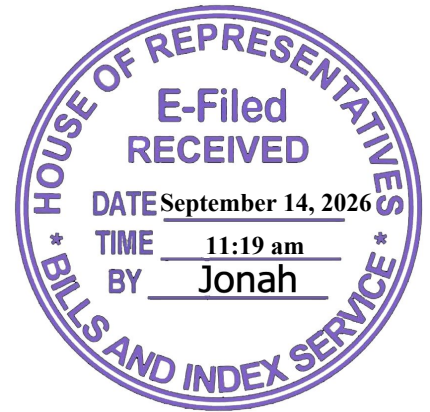


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. **11279**



Introduced by **Representative ERIC G. YAP**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to exempt qualified indigent Filipino graduates from paying review fees for their first board or bar examination. It helps remove what may prevent academically qualified graduates from obtaining the review preparation necessary to ace the exams.

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (2026)¹, eight hundred and eighty-one (881) out of one thousand six hundred eleven (1,611) cities and municipalities recorded poverty incidence levels of twenty percent (20%) or lower in 2023, while seven hundred and twenty two (722) localities continued to register poverty incidence above twenty percent (20%), including areas classified under higher poverty levels. Fresh graduates invest for review courses and examination materials after completing their degrees. For indigent graduates from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, these costs may delay their first attempt at the board or bar examination, thus limiting professional opportunities that their education would otherwise provide.

The proposed measure provides assistance to indigent graduates who are first-time license exam takers who have demonstrated academic excellence. It shall cover review courses and related preparatory materials for board and bar examinations.

Expanding opportunities for qualified indigent graduates to obtain professional licenses strengthens the country's human capital and allows more Filipinos to contribute their knowledge and expertise to national development. Behind every aspiring professional is a family that invests years of sacrifice, perseverance, and hope toward achieving a better future. This represents a

¹ Philippine Statistics Authority. (2026, February 6). 881 cities and municipalities recorded poverty incidence of 20 percent or lower in 2023 (Reference No. 2026-43). Philippine Statistics Authority. Accessed from: <https://psa.gov.ph/statistics/poverty>. Accessed on July 26, 2026.

commitment to building a more inclusive society where talent, discipline, and determination receive meaningful support regardless of economic background.

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



HON. ERIC G. YAP

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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House Bill No. **11279**

Introduced by **Representative ERIC G. YAP**

AN ACT
EXEMPTING THE PAYMENT OF REVIEW FEES FOR BOARD AND BAR
EXAMINATIONS FOR QUALIFIED INDIGENTS ON THEIR FIRST TAKE

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 “*Professional Advancement of Indigents Act*”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote equitable access to education and to provide opportunities for all, regardless of socio-economic status, to excel in their chosen fields. The State recognizes that the cost of review materials and fees for board and bar examinations can be a significant barrier for indigent families. Towards this end, the State shall remove this barrier and enable deserving students from disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue their dreams and contribute to the development of our nation.

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

a. Qualified indigents refer to persons who have no visible means of income or whose income is insufficient for the subsistence of his or her family as identified by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), or those who are legal dependents from families which have a combined annual income below the poverty threshold as determined by the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEPDev), and who meets the eligibility criteria set forth in Section 5 of this Act;

b. Bar Examination refers to the licensure examination administered by the Supreme Court of the Philippines, and is one (1) of the prerequisites for professional admission to the Philippine Bar;

c. Board Examinations refer to licensure examinations administered by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), including but not limited to examinations for nursing, engineering, medicine, and other regulated professions; and

d. Review fees refer to fees charged by review centers and educational institutions for review courses, whether offered in-person, online, or a combination of the same, for Board and Bar Examinations, including fees for review and exam preparatory materials separately offered by review centers for the course in which each qualified indigent is officially enrolled.

SEC. 4. *Exemption from Review Fees.* – Subject to the exceptions provided in Section 6 of this Act, qualified indigents shall be exempt from paying review fees for board and bar examinations; *Provided*, That they meet the criteria set forth in Section 5 of this Act; *Provided, further*, That in order to avail of the benefits under this Act, the certifications under the succeeding section shall be presented by qualified indigents to their respective review centers or educational institutions upon their enrollment therein.

SEC. 5. *Eligibility Criteria.* – To qualify for the exemption under Section 4, qualified indigents must meet the following criteria:

a. Must provide documentary evidence of their indigency, as determined by the DSWD;

b. Must be first-time board or bar examination takers, as certified by the Supreme Court of the Philippines or the PRC, as may be appropriate;

c. Must be Filipino citizens; and

d. Must either be:

1. Higher education graduates with Latin Honors; or

2. Academic Scholarship grantees, as certified by the applicants' higher educational institutions.

SEC. 6. *Exceptions.* – The exemption from review fees under this Act shall not include those charged in connection with the review for other examinations not specified herein such as, but not limited to, the Civil Service Commission Examination or the Career Service Examination for Foreign Service Officer.

SEC. 7. *Funding.* – The necessary funds for the implementation of this Act shall be allocated by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) in the General Appropriations Act (GAA).

SEC. 8. *Reporting.* – The PRC and the Supreme Court of the Philippines shall submit an annual report to Congress detailing the number of indigent students who benefited from this Act, the amount disbursed, and any other relevant information.

SEC. 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Supreme Court of the Philippines, PRC, DSWD, and other relevant government agencies shall formulate and promulgate necessary rules and regulations to effectively implement this Act within ninety (90) days from its effectivity.

SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.* – If any part, section, or provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, rules, and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 12. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,