

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Fifteenth Congress
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5186

Introduced by: **Hon. SIGFRIDO R. TINGA**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

School entrance exams have become a business in themselves. Many institutions treat this as a freebee and welcome as many examinees as are willing to fill their coffers. In many of these schools entrance exam fees go for P500.00 and upwards. Many elite schools earn upwards of P30 million each on entrance exams alone, even if only 20% or less of the applicants actually make it through.

P500.00 may not be a large amount, but for a family that is barely making ends meet these fees can be enough to convince a parent that college is much to large an undertaking for their children.

The bill does not question the fact that academic qualifications, general aptitudes and technical skills should serve as a measuring stick as to who gets accepted into specific schools; but entrance exam fees have created an economic barrier that has prevented many of our public school students from even applying for college. It has deprived those who have less in life from even attempting to dream.

Should a college or university require its own additional entrance exam, then it should do so at its own expense. If the college or university is truly committed to improving society, then this free examination should be the least of its concerns. Educational institutions have some of the lowest tax rates of any business in this country, in fact many of them are even tax exempt. Should it not stand to reason that these tax breaks were given so that the underprivileged would have a shot at a good education as well. Tax breaks do not make sense if educational institutions catered only the well heeled and well connected.

This is a great opportunity to destroy the twin evils of ignorance and apathy which bedevil Philippine society today. The proposed bill is an argument for meritocracy.

It does not reward connections or wealth, but it does reward persistence.

If individual schools still insist on having their own entrance exams, then a poor kid who wants to better himself can apply to as many schools as he wants – All he needs to do is to show up every time and give it his best shot.

Education is the greatest equalizer in life, but this can only be made true if everyone is granted equal access to quality education. Unfortunately in today's world the biases we have in society carry over to our educational system. Instead of providing dole outs and perpetuating the Philippine caste system, this bill is intended to address this greatest of inequities – Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime. Teach a man to share his talents and his catch and you feed the world.

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



SIGFRIDO R. TINGA
Representative
2nd District, Taguig City

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5186

Introduced by **Hon. SIGFRIDO R. TINGA**

AN ACT

**GRANTING FREE COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS TO
GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND COLLEGES
ENTRANTS OR TRANSFEREES.**

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 Entrance Exam Act.*”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared policy of the State to provide equal opportunity to students, particularly graduating high school students and college applicants or entrants, who are unable to apply to private colleges and universities, or institutions of higher education or degree-granting programs, due to the cost of the entrance examination, by abolishing the imposition of entrance examination fees and making tertiary education accessible to all.

SECTION 3. *Free Entrance Examinations.* – All colleges, universities or institutions of higher education or degree-granting programs, are hereby ordered to provide free entrance examinations to all graduating high school students and any college applicant or transferee, desiring to apply for and enroll into their institution.

SECTION 4. *Basis for Acceptance.* – All colleges, universities or institutions of higher education or degree-granting programs shall use the

applicant's National Career Assessment Exam results to allow said applicant to enroll in their respective institutions.

SECTION 5. *Additional Entrance Examination.* - Should any college, university or institution of higher education or degree granting program still require their own entrance examination to be taken, it shall conduct the activity at their own expense and shall not charge any fee on the applicant.

SECTION 6. *Non-Exemption of Foreign Applicants.* - Foreign applicants or those who have not been recognized as holders of dual citizenship shall not be entitled to the free entrance examinations and must pay the corresponding fee imposed by the institution they are applying at.

SECTION 7. *Test Administration.* - The Department of Education shall conduct the National Career Assessment Exam simultaneously nationwide through the National Education Testing and Research Center (NETRC).

SECTION 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The Secretary of the Department of Education shall, in consultation with the Commission on Higher Education, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules and regulations, and other issuances, or parts thereof,

which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 10. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved