BOBBY JINDAL
GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana

Post Office Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9004

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

June 19, 2015

The Honorable Glenn Koepp
Secretary of the Senate
State Capitol
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Re: Senate Bill No. 48 by Senator Jack Donahue

Dear Mr. Koepp:

Senate Bill No. 48 caps funding for the TOPS scholarship program. I made a promise to the students and families of this state that a TOPS scholarship would be available to every child who worked hard and met the performance criteria established by law—this legislation would renege on that promise. Every year, 34.4 percent of Louisiana first-time freshmen who attend college in Louisiana do so with a TOPS scholarship. Since TOPS was created, it has aided our state by sending nearly half a million students to college who may otherwise not have been able to go.

TOPS has been a great investment for the state:

- It has increased ACT scores, an indicator of college readiness. TOPS recipients' average score is 21.4, while non-TOPS recipients average 16.7.
- Only 43% of freshmen, who meet the high school course requirements for TOPS, require remediation, but 89% of freshmen who do not meet those course requirements, need remediation.
- TOPS has increased college student retention rates from first to second year and second to third year. While 89% of TOPS' recipients continue to their sophomore year, 72% of non-TOPS' recipients do. The disparity is even larger between sophomore and junior year: 82% of TOPS' recipients continue compared to 61% of non-TOPS recipients.
- Finally, TOPS encourages students to graduate. Sixty-two percent of TOPS recipients finish at four-year universities in six years versus only 32% of students who do not receive TOPS.

For these reasons, I have vetoed Senate Bill No. 48 and hereby return it to the Senate.

Sincerely,

Bobby Jindal
Governor

cc: Honorable Alfred Speer