

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 395

BY REPRESENTATIVE BRASS

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

HIGHER EDUCATION: Expands eligible programs for M.J. Foster Promise Program funding to include those associated with LED projects

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:3047.1(C) and (D), to enact R.S. 17:3047.1(E)(4), (G)(3),  
3 (H), and (I), and to repeal R.S. 17:3047.2(A)(13), relative to the M.J. Foster Promise  
4 Program; to provide relative to qualified programs; to provide for initial eligibility  
5 requirements; to provide relative to the advisory council; to provide relative to duties  
6 of the secretaries of Louisiana Economic Development and the Louisiana Workforce  
7 Commission; and to provide for related matters.

8 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

9 Section 1. R.S. 17:3047.1(C) and (D) are hereby amended and reenacted and R.S.  
10 17:3047.1(E)(4), (G)(3), (H), and (I), are hereby enacted to read as follows:

11 §3047.1. Advisory council; membership; responsibilities

12 \* \* \*

13 C. The Louisiana Workforce Commission shall convene the advisory council  
14 annually for program updates, and as needed to review and respond to workforce  
15 needs associated with Louisiana Economic Development projects. At least once  
16 every three years, the advisory council shall review the workforce priorities of the  
17 state and each of its workforce regions and designate qualified programs. However,  
18 as needed, the council shall review the workforce priorities associated with Louisiana  
19 Economic Development projects.

1           D.~~(1)~~ The process for selecting qualified programs by the advisory council  
2 shall include:

3           ~~(1)~~ (a) The identification of not more than five industry sectors that are  
4 predominated by high-demand, high-wage jobs that are aligned to workforce  
5 priorities of the state and each of its workforce regions and identify high-demand,  
6 high-wage jobs in each of the sectors.

7           ~~(2)~~ (b) A review of the postsecondary education requirements of each job  
8 identified pursuant to ~~Paragraph (1)~~ Subparagraph (a) of this ~~Subsection~~ Paragraph.

9           ~~(3)~~ (c)(i) A review of the public postsecondary education and proprietary  
10 school programs, at the associate degree level or below, that offer credentials and  
11 degrees that are aligned to the identified jobs in each industry sector.

12           (ii) A review of the public postsecondary education and proprietary school  
13 programs, at the associate degree level and below, that offer credentials and degrees  
14 that are related to Louisiana Economic Development projects.

15           (aa) The council shall give priority to programs that are related to Louisiana  
16 Economic Development projects in the process for selecting qualified programs.

17           (bb) The administering agency shall implement an expedited review process  
18 taking no longer than forty-five days from the time the council is in receipt of  
19 notification and associated information about Louisiana Economic Development  
20 projects with urgent workforce needs from the secretary of Louisiana Economic  
21 Development.

22           ~~(4)~~ (d) The designation of programs that offer the credentials and degrees  
23 identified pursuant to Subparagraph (c) ~~Paragraph (3)~~ of this ~~Subsection~~ Paragraph  
24 as "qualified programs".

25           ~~(5)~~ (e) A review of the return on the state's investment in awards made to  
26 recipients who completed a qualified program.

27           (2)(a) The secretary of Louisiana Economic Development shall do the  
28 following:



1 purpose of the programs being eligible for designation as "qualified programs" as  
2 provided in Subsection D of this Section.

3 I. The Board of Regents may enter into data sharing agreements with  
4 Louisiana Economic Development and the Louisiana Workforce Commission as  
5 necessary to assist the council in its selection of qualified programs pursuant to  
6 Subsection D of this Section and the review process for the creation of new associate  
7 degree programs pursuant to Subsection H of this Section.

8 Section 2. R.S. 17:3047.2(A)(13) is hereby repealed in its entirety.

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#### DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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HB 395 Engrossed

2025 Regular Session

Brass

**Abstract:** Expands eligible programs for an M.J. Foster Promise Award.

Present law establishes the M.J. Foster Promise Award Program, which provides financial awards towards the costs of tuition and required fees to certain students pursuing an associate degree or shorter-term postsecondary credential required for certain high-demand, high-wage occupations aligned to the state's workforce priorities. Proposed law retains present law.

Present law provides for several initial eligibility requirements, including that an applicant meets one of the following:

- (1) Has a family income that does not exceed 300% of the applicable federal poverty guideline as published in the Federal Register by the United States Department of Health and Human Services.
- (2) Can certify unemployment or underemployment for at least six months prior to receiving the award.

Proposed law repeals present law.

Present law requires the La. Workforce Commission (LWC) to establish an advisory council to identify programs in which an eligible student may enroll to receive an award, which shall be designated as "qualified programs". Proposed law retains present law. Proposed law requires, as part of its process for selecting qualified programs, the council to conduct a review of the public postsecondary education and proprietary school programs, at the associate degree level and below, that offer credentials and degrees that are related to Louisiana Economic Development (LED) projects. Further requires the council to give priority to programs that are related to LED projects in such process. Requires the Bd. of Regents, as the administering agency of the program, to implement an expedited review process taking no longer than 45 days for LED projects with urgent workforce needs.

Present law requires the council to convene annually for program updates and every three years to review workforce priorities. Proposed law retains present law and further requires

the council to meet as needed to review and respond to workforce needs or priorities associated with LED projects, respectively.

Present law requires the secretaries of LED and LWC to serve as members on the council. Proposed law retains present law. Further requires the following of the LED secretary:

- (1) Maintain a list of priority programs, at the associate degree level and below, that support workforce needs for LED projects.
- (2) Notify the other members of the council and the commissioner of higher education when new LED projects are approved that will require workforce development support.
- (3) Annually report to the other members of the council on the effectiveness of LED programs in meeting workforce and economic development goals, as determined by LED.

Proposed law authorizes the Bd. of Regents to enter into data sharing agreements with LED and the LWC as necessary to assist the council in its selection of qualified postsecondary education programs for the M.J. Foster Promise Program, and the review process for the creation of new associate degree programs pursuant to proposed law.

(Amends R.S. 17:3047.1(C) and (D); Adds R.S. 17:3047.1(E)(4), (G)(3), (H), and (I); Repeals R.S. 17:3047.2(A)(13))

#### Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Education to the original bill:

1. Authorize the Bd. of Regents to enter into data sharing agreements with LED and the LWC to assist the M.J. Foster advisory council in its selection of qualified postsecondary education programs for the M.J. Foster Promise Program, and the review process for the creation of new associate degree programs pursuant to proposed law.
2. Require, as part of its process for selecting qualified programs, the council to conduct a review of the public postsecondary education and proprietary school programs, at the associate degree level and below, that offer credentials and degrees that are related to LED projects, instead of associate degree level or below.
3. Require the secretary of LED to maintain a list of priority programs, at the associate degree level and below, that support workforce needs for LED projects, instead of associate degree level or below.