

ACT No. 445

2022 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 196

BY REPRESENTATIVES NELSON, GLOVER, AND THOMPSON

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 17:3138.10, relative to postsecondary education; to create the Stimulating
3 More Advanced Research and Technology Program for the purpose of awarding
4 grants to support research in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics at
5 certain postsecondary education institutions; to provide for program administration
6 by the Board of Regents; to specify the purposes for which grants are awarded; to
7 create the Stimulating More Advanced Research and Technology Fund for the
8 purpose of funding the program; to require the Board of Regents to report annually
9 relative to the program; to require the Board of Regents to adopt rules relative to the
10 program; and to provide for related matters.

11 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

12 Section 1. R.S. 17:3138.10 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

13 §3138.10. Stimulating More Advanced Research and Technology (SMART)
14 Program and Fund

15 A.(1) The Stimulating More Advanced Research and Technology Program,
16 referred to in this Section as the "SMART Program" or the "program", is hereby
17 established for the purpose of awarding grants to support research in the fields of
18 science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, collectively referred to in this
19 Section as "STEM", at public postsecondary education institutions.

20 (2) For purposes of this Section, STEM does not include psychology or other
21 behavioral sciences but does include biomedical science and agricultural science.

22 B. The SMART Program shall be administered by the Board of Regents,
23 referred to in this Section as the "board", which shall provide for application
24 requirements, evaluation criteria, and selection.

1 C. Grants awarded through the program shall be used to support STEM
2 disciplines for the following purposes:

3 (1) Matching research grants from federal agencies and other sources.

4 (2) Awarding hiring bonuses and startup packages for the purpose of
5 attracting distinguished faculty.

6 (3) Construction, improvement, or procurement of research facilities,
7 laboratories, equipment, and supplies.

8 (4) Scholarships and stipends for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.

9 D.(1) As funding allows, the board shall award grants on a competitive basis
10 among the four purposes provided for in Subsection C of this Section with a
11 preference for those purposes related to research that has the opportunity for
12 commercialization.

13 (2)(a) At least twenty percent of the total amount of grants shall be awarded
14 to public postsecondary education institutions outside of the Baton Rouge and New
15 Orleans metropolitan regions.

16 (b) The board shall award grants such that the percentage of all grant
17 amounts in a year that is awarded to historically black colleges and universities is
18 approximately equal to the percentage of all students enrolled in postsecondary
19 education institutions who are enrolled at historically black colleges and universities.

20 (3) The board shall not use more than one and one-half percent of the
21 funding available for the program for costs associated with administering the
22 program.

23 E.(1) The "Stimulating More Advanced Research and Technology Fund",
24 referred to in this Section as the "SMART fund" or the "fund", is hereby created
25 within the state treasury for the purpose of providing funding for the SMART
26 program.

27 (2) Monies in the fund shall be subject to appropriation by the legislature and
28 shall be available exclusively for use by the board for purposes of the SMART
29 program.

1 (3) All unexpended and unencumbered monies in the fund at the end of the
 2 fiscal year shall remain in the fund and be available for appropriation the next fiscal
 3 year. The monies shall be invested by the treasurer in the same manner as monies
 4 in the state general fund, and all interest earned shall be credited to the fund
 5 following compliance with the requirements of Article VII, Section 9(B) of the
 6 Constitution of Louisiana, relative to the Bond Security and Redemption Fund.

7 F. The board shall annually conduct a return on investment analysis for the
 8 program and shall submit a written report relative to this analysis to the House
 9 Committee on Education, the Senate Committee on Education, the House Committee
 10 on Appropriations, and the Senate Committee on Finance not later than January
 11 thirty-first annually.

12 G. The board shall adopt rules and regulations for the implementation of this
 13 Section.

14 H. Implementation of the provisions of this Section shall be subject to the
 15 appropriation of sufficient funds by the legislature for such purposes.

16 Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
 17 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
 18 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
 19 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
 20 effective on the day following such approval.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____