

2016 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 104

BY REPRESENTATIVE MACK

STUDENT/LOANS-SCHOLARSHIP: Provides, under specified circumstances, for repayment of a Taylor Opportunity Program for Students scholarship award

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 17:5004, relative to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students; to require
3 that program award recipients repay award amounts under certain circumstances; to
4 require the Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission to promulgate rules
5 relative to such requirement; to specify that such rules shall provide for means of
6 collection and for exceptions; and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 17:5004 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

9 §5004. Failure to maintain eligibility or timely complete education; repayment;
10 rules; exceptions

11 A. A student shall repay all award amounts paid to a postsecondary
12 education institution on his behalf if he fails to meet the requirements provided in
13 R.S. 17:5041 and 5042 relative to maintaining eligibility or fails to complete the
14 academic degree or the skill or occupational training he is pursuing within the time
15 frame provided for his award in R.S. 17:5002(E).

16 B. The administering agency shall promulgate rules necessary to implement
17 the provisions of this Section. Such rules shall include the following:

18 (1) Provision for all available means of collecting amounts owed and interest
19 on unpaid amounts.

- 1 (2) Provision for circumstances under which a student shall be excepted from
 2 the repayment requirements provided in Subsection A of this Section. Such rules
 3 shall provide for the definition, certification requirements, and maximum duration
 4 of such circumstances, which shall be limited to the following:
- 5 (a) Permanent disability.
- 6 (b) Military service.

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)]

HB 104 Original

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Abstract: Requires a student to repay TOPS award amounts if he fails to meet the requirements for maintaining eligibility or fails to complete his academic degree or skill/occupational training within certain specified time frames.

Present law provides for the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS), a program of merit scholarships for students attending certain postsecondary education institutions who meet specific academic criteria and other requirements. Limits the duration of a student's tuition payment to eight semesters (or an equivalent number of units) for an Opportunity, Performance, or Honors Award and to two years for a TOPS-Tech Award. Requires that students meet certain requirements during these time frames in order to maintain continued eligibility. Such requirements include but are not limited to:

- (1) Making steady academic progress while earning enough credits to maintain full-time status.
- (2) Maintaining a minimum required grade point average, depending on the type of award received.
- (3) Having no criminal conviction, except for misdemeanor traffic violations.

Proposed law requires any student who fails to meet the requirements for maintaining eligibility or fails to complete his academic degree or skill or occupational training within the time frames specified in present law to repay all award amounts paid to a postsecondary education on his behalf.

Proposed law requires the administering agency (the La. Student Financial Assistance Commission) to promulgate rules necessary to implement proposed law, including provision for the following:

- (1) Collecting amounts owed and interest on unpaid amounts.
- (2) Circumstances under which a student shall be excepted from the proposed law repayment requirements; requires that these rules provide for the definition, certification requirements, and maximum duration of these circumstances, which shall be limited to permanent disability and military service.

(Adds R.S. 17:5004)