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## DIGEST

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HB 870 Original

2020 Regular Session

Garofalo

**Abstract:** Modifies TOPS eligibility provisions in response to the public health emergency caused by the COVID-19.

Proposed law makes the following modifications to initial eligibility requirements for a Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) award:

- (1) The deadline for taking the ACT or SAT test is Sept. 30, 2020. (The deadline is normally April as provided by rule.)

Present law provides that a student loses a semester of eligibility if he is late qualifying. Proposed law provides that present law shall not be applied to a student who qualifies under the extended deadline.

- (2) Provides that if any Jump Start graduation requirement was waived by a high school for graduation purposes, the requirement shall also be waived for TOPS-Tech eligibility purposes.
- (3) Authorizes the administering agency to waive the home study requirements of present law if it determines that the student's failure to meet those requirements was, more likely than not, due solely to consequences of measures taken to limit the spread of COVID-19.

Proposed law makes the following modifications to continuing eligibility requirements for a TOPS award with respect to the 2019-2020 academic year:

- (1) Waives requirements for steady academic progress.
- (2) Waives requirements for the achievement of certain cumulative grade point averages.
- (3) Extends the time a student has to recover an award that was suspended because of a low grade point average or failure to make steady academic progress.
- (4) Authorizes the administering agency to waive other provisions of present law if the agency determines that a failure to comply with the provision is, more likely than not, due solely to a consequence of measures taken to limit the spread of COVID-19.

(Adds R.S. 17:5103)