
The original instrument was prepared by Jeanne Johnston. The following digest, which does not constitute a part of the legislative instrument, was prepared by Martha Hess.

SB 318 Reengrossed

DIGEST
2020 Regular Session

Cathey

Present law provides for Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) as a program of merit scholarships for students attending certain postsecondary educational institutions who meet specific initial eligibility requirements pertaining to grade point average (GPA), ACT score, and core curriculum requirements and certain other qualifications. The initial award eligibility for a TOPS-Tech Award requires a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 on the core curriculum and a minimum ACT score of 17 or attainment of a silver level score on the ACT WorkKeys system of assessments. Present law further requires the recipient to be a La. resident and a U.S. citizen, and generally requires the student to enroll in an eligible postsecondary institution within one year of graduating from high school.

Proposed law provides for alternative initial eligibility requirements for veterans who were honorably discharged from the United States Armed Forces from a military installation in Louisiana as follows:

- (1) Had at least three years of military service prior to discharge.
- (2) Is a citizen of the United States.
- (3) Established Louisiana residency within one year after discharge from military service, provided residency is established on or after January 1, 2020.
- (4) Earned a 17 or higher score on the ACT or an equivalent concordant value on the SAT, or attained a silver level score or higher on the ACT WorkKeys system of assessments.
- (5) Enrolls in an eligible college or university within one year after notification of eligibility for the award.

Present law limits the duration of a student's tuition payment 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 retains present law.

Proposed law applies to the 2020-2021, 2021-2022, and 2022-2023 academic years.

Effective upon signature of the governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 17:5029(E))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Committee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Education to the original bill

1. Removes repayment provisions.

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Committee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Finance to the engrossed bill

1. Makes effective only for the 2020-2021, 2021-2022, and 2022-2023 academic years.
2. Requires the individual to be honorably discharged from a military installation in Louisiana.
3. Requires residency to be established on or after January 1, 2020.