

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE BILL NO. 385

BY REPRESENTATIVE HARRISON

STUDENT/LOANS-SCHOLARSHIP: Provides relative to Taylor Opportunity Program for Students

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:3048.1(A)(1)(b)(i) and to enact R.S. 17:3048.1(C)(6) and (Y),
3 relative to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students; to increase the ACT score
4 required for an Opportunity Award; to provide for the repayment by a student who
5 fails to meet certain requirements during the first two award years; to provide
6 maximum award amounts; and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 17:3048.1(A)(1)(b)(i) is hereby amended and reenacted and R.S.
9 17:3048.1(C)(6) and (Y) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 §3048.1. Program awards; eligibility; amounts; limitations; funding; administration

11 A.(1) As part of the Louisiana Taylor Opportunity Program for Students, the
12 state shall financially assist any student who enrolls on a full-time basis in a public
13 college or university in this state or a regionally accredited independent college or
14 university in the state that is a member of the Louisiana Association of Independent
15 Colleges and Universities, hereafter in this Chapter referred to collectively as
16 "eligible colleges and universities", to pursue an academic undergraduate degree or,
17 as provided by this Subsection, skill or occupational training as defined by the Board
18 of Regents, including a vocational or technical education certificate or diploma
19 program or a nonacademic undergraduate degree, and who meets the qualifications
20 of Subparagraph (b), (c), or (d) of this Paragraph and all of the applicable following
21 qualifications:

22 * * *

CODING: Words in ~~struck through~~ type are deletions from existing law; words underscored are additions.

1 (b)(i) Has been certified as provided in Subsection D of this Section to have
2 graduated from a public high school or a nonpublic high school which has been
3 approved by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, has a
4 minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.50 calculated on a 4.00 scale, has a
5 composite score on the 1990 version of the American College Test which is at least
6 equal to or higher than the state's average composite score, rounded to the nearest
7 whole number, reported for the prior year but never less than twenty for students
8 graduating during the 2016-2017 school year or before and never less than twenty-
9 two for students graduating during the 2017-2018 school year or thereafter, or an
10 equivalent concordant value on an enhanced or revised version of such test or on the
11 Scholastic Aptitude Test, and, unless granted an exception for cause by the
12 administering agency, has enrolled in an eligible college or university as a first-time
13 freshman not later than the semester, excluding summer semesters or sessions,
14 immediately following the first anniversary of the date that the student graduated
15 from high school or, if the student joins the United States Armed Forces within one
16 year after graduating from high school, has enrolled in an eligible college or
17 university as a first-time freshman not later than the semester, excluding summer
18 semesters or sessions, immediately following the fifth anniversary of the date that
19 the student graduated from high school; however, effective for the 1996-1997 school
20 year and thereafter, if, on or prior to the fifth anniversary of the date that the student
21 graduated from high school, the student reenlists in the United States Armed Forces
22 and maintains continuous active duty, the five-year period shall be extended to the
23 semester immediately following the one-year anniversary of the student's separation
24 from active duty service. As distinguished from all other students qualifying for this
25 program, a student who meets the requirements of this Subparagraph shall be the
26 recipient of an "Opportunity Award" for the purposes of this program.

* * *

C.

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1 Independent Colleges and Universities, the maximum tuition award amount shall not
2 exceed an amount determined by the administering agency to equal the weighted
3 average amounts awarded under this Section for students attending public colleges
4 or universities in the state or one thousand six hundred dollars per semester,
5 whichever is less.

6 (3) The maximum tuition award amount specified in this Subsection is
7 exclusive of any additional amounts awarded to students who qualify to receive a
8 Performance or Honors Award.

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)]

Harrison

HB No. 385

Abstract: Revises the TOPS program in three areas: increases required ACT scores for the TOPS Opportunities Award, requires TOPS repayment in certain cases, and caps TOPS awards.

Relative to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS):

Increases ACT Scores

Proposed law, beginning in 2017-2018, changes the requisite American College Test (ACT) score for the TOPS Opportunity Award by increasing the requisite ACT score from no less than 20 to no less than 22.

TOPS Repayment

Proposed law provides (notwithstanding any provision of present law to the contrary and in addition to any other eligibility requirements provided by present law for a student to initially receive and to continue to receive a program award) that for a student to be eligible to have an award payment during the first two award years, the student, for any particular semester or other applicable time period, shall agree to and be required to repay such award amount upon a determination by the agency that the student, during that particular semester or other applicable time period, failed to meet any of the requirements provided by present law (as may be applicable) relative to making steady academic progress or maintaining full-time standing for continuing in the program. Provides that proposed law provisions are applicable to those students who first qualify for a program award for the 2015-2016 award year and any award year thereafter.

Maximum TOPS Award

Proposed law specifies that beginning with the 2017-2018 award year and continuing through the 2021-2022 award year, the tuition award amount provided to a TOPS award recipient who enrolls in any public college or university in the state shall not exceed an amount determined by the La. Student Financial Assistance Commission (LSFAC) to equal the tuition charged by the public college or university attended or \$1,600 per semester, whichever is less. Proposed law also specifies that for the same period of time, the tuition

award amount provided to a TOPS award recipient who enrolls in a regionally accredited independent college or university in the state which is a member of the La. Association of Independent Colleges and Universities shall not exceed an amount determined by LSFAC to equal the weighted average amounts awarded for students attending public colleges or universities in the state or \$1,600 per semester, whichever is less. Provides that the maximum tuition award amount specified in proposed law is exclusive of any additional amounts awarded to students who qualify to receive a TOPS Performance or Honors Award.

(Amends R.S. 17:3048.1(A)(1)(b)(i); Adds R.S. 17:3048.1(C)(6) and (Y))