

2016 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 279

BY REPRESENTATIVE BROADWATER

STUDENT/LOANS-SCHOLARSHIP: Provides for differential Taylor Opportunity Program for Students award amounts for certain students based on their classification level

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:5002(B) and (D)(1)(introductory paragraph) and (2) and to

3 enact R.S. 17:5002.1, relative to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students; to

4 provide for differential program award amounts for certain students according to

5 their classification level; to provide relative to award payments for certain students

6 who elect to defer receipt of their awards; to provide with respect to funding for the

7 Louisiana GO Grant program; to provide for effectiveness; and to provide for related

8 matters.

9 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

10 Section 1. 17:5002(B) and (D)(1)(introductory paragraph) and (2) are hereby

11 amended and reenacted and R.S. 17:5002.1 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

12 §5002. Awards and amounts

13 * * *

14 B.(1) ~~Any~~ Except as provided in Paragraph (2) of this Subsection, any

15 student who is eligible for an Opportunity, Performance, or Honors Award pursuant

16 to this Chapter and who has enrolled:

17 ~~(+)~~(a) In any public college or university in this state, shall be awarded by

18 the state an amount determined by the administering agency to equal the tuition

19 charged by the public college or university.

1 ~~(2)~~(b) At any regionally accredited independent college or university in the
 2 state which is a member of the Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and
 3 Universities to pursue an academic undergraduate degree, shall be awarded by the
 4 state an amount to be determined by the administering agency to equal the weighted
 5 average of amounts paid under this Section for students attending public colleges and
 6 universities that offer academic undergraduate degrees at the baccalaureate level.

7 ~~(3)~~(c) In a school that has a valid and current certificate of registration issued
 8 by the Louisiana State Board of Cosmetology in accordance with law and that is
 9 accredited by an accrediting organization recognized by the United States
 10 Department of Education or in any proprietary school that has a valid and current
 11 license issued by the Board of Regents in accordance with law and that is accredited
 12 by an accrediting organization recognized by the United States Department of
 13 Education, shall be awarded by the state an amount determined by the administering
 14 agency to equal the weighted average of amounts paid under this Section for students
 15 attending public colleges and universities who are enrolled in the permitted skill or
 16 occupational training, as may be applicable.

17 ~~(4)~~(d) In an out-of-state college or university that is specifically designed to
 18 accommodate deaf and hard-of-hearing students under R.S. 17:5027(C), shall be
 19 awarded an amount determined by the administering agency to equal the weighted
 20 average of amounts paid under this Section for students attending Louisiana public
 21 colleges and universities that offer academic undergraduate degrees.

22 (2)(a) The award amount for a student classified as a freshman shall be
 23 eighty percent of the amount otherwise provided by Paragraph (1) of this Subsection,
 24 and the award amount for a student classified as a sophomore shall be ninety percent
 25 of the amount otherwise provided by Paragraph (1) of this Subsection.

26 (b) Notwithstanding Subparagraph (a) of this Paragraph, if a freshman or
 27 sophomore defers receipt of the award until the end of the award year, and, at the end
 28 of the award year, he has a grade point average of not less than 3.00 calculated on
 29 a 4.00 scale for the award year, the award amount shall be as provided in Paragraph

1 (1) of this Subsection. If such a student does not meet this grade point average
2 requirement but otherwise maintains award eligibility, his award amount shall be as
3 provided in Subparagraph (a) of this Paragraph. No award shall be paid to or for a
4 student who defers receipt of the award but fails to maintain award eligibility.
5 Notwithstanding the provisions of this Chapter regarding payment of awards, an
6 award for a student who defers receipt of an award until the end of the award year
7 and who, at the end of the award year, has maintained eligibility for future awards
8 shall be paid to the student.

9 * * *

10 D.(1) Except as ~~otherwise~~ provided in Paragraph (2) of this Subsection, a
11 student who is eligible for a TOPS-Tech Award pursuant to this Chapter and who is
12 enrolled:

13 * * *

14 ~~(2) A student who graduated prior to the 2016-2017 school year, who is~~
15 ~~eligible for a TOPS-Tech Award pursuant to this Chapter, and who is enrolled:~~

16 ~~(a) In an eligible college or university that does not offer an academic~~
17 ~~undergraduate degree at the baccalaureate level shall be awarded by the state an~~
18 ~~amount determined by the administering agency to equal the tuition charged by the~~
19 ~~college or university.~~

20 ~~(b) In an eligible college or university other than as provided for in~~
21 ~~Subparagraph (a) of this Paragraph shall be awarded by the state an amount~~
22 ~~determined by the administering agency to equal the weighted average of amounts~~
23 ~~paid to students attending an eligible public college or university that does not offer~~
24 ~~an academic undergraduate degree at the baccalaureate level.~~

25 (2)(a) The award amount for a student who has completed fewer than twelve
26 credit hours shall be eighty percent of the amount otherwise provided by Paragraph
27 (1) of this Subsection, and the award amount for a student who has completed at least
28 twelve credit hours but fewer than twenty-four credit hours shall be ninety percent
29 of the amount otherwise provided by Paragraph (1) of this Subsection.

1 (b) Notwithstanding Subparagraph (a) of this Paragraph, if a student who has
2 completed fewer than twenty-four hours of credit defers receipt of the award until
3 the end of the award year and, at the end of the award year, he has a grade point
4 average of not less than 3.00 calculated on a 4.00 scale for the award year, the award
5 amount shall be as otherwise provided in Paragraph (1) of this Subsection; however,
6 if he does not meet this grade point average requirement but otherwise maintains
7 award eligibility, his award amount shall be as provided in Subparagraph (a) of this
8 Paragraph. No award shall be paid to or for a student who defers receipt of the
9 award but fails to maintain award eligibility. Notwithstanding the provisions of this
10 Chapter regarding payment of awards, an award for a student who defers receipt of
11 an award until the end of the award year and who, at the end of the award year, has
12 maintained eligibility for future awards shall be paid to the student.

* * *

14 §5002.1. Awards and amounts; exceptions

15 A. The following provisions shall not be applicable to students who graduate
16 from high school prior to the 2019-2020 school year:

17 (1) R.S. 17:5002(B)(2).

18 (2) R.S. 17:5002(D)(2).

19 B. Notwithstanding the provisions of R.S. 17:5002(D), a student who
20 graduates from high school prior to the 2016-2017 school year, who is eligible for
21 a TOPS-Tech Award pursuant to this Chapter, and who is enrolled:

22 (1) In an eligible college or university that does not offer an academic
23 undergraduate degree at the baccalaureate level shall be awarded by the state an
24 amount determined by the administering agency to equal the tuition charged by the
25 college or university.

26 (2) In an eligible college or university other than as provided for in
27 Paragraph (1) of this Subsection shall be awarded by the state an amount determined
28 by the administering agency to equal the weighted average of amounts aid to

1 students attending an eligible public college or university that does not offer an
2 academic undergraduate degree at the baccalaureate level.

3 * * *

4 Section 2.(A) Beginning with the 2019-2020 fiscal year, the legislature shall
5 appropriate twenty-five percent of any savings attributable to the implementation of Section
6 1 of this Act for the purpose of increasing funding for the Louisiana GO Grant program.

7 (B) Beginning in 2019, the Legislative Fiscal Office shall issue a fiscal and
8 economic impact statement on December first of each year documenting the projected
9 savings as provided in Subsection (A) of this Section for the ensuing fiscal year. The
10 legislative fiscal officer shall forward this annual statement to the commissioner of
11 administration for use in developing the budgets for the Taylor Opportunity Program for
12 Students and the Louisiana GO Grant program.

13 (C) The monies appropriated by the legislature for the Louisiana GO Grant program
14 pursuant to this Section shall not displace, replace, or supplant the average amount of the
15 monies appropriated by the legislature for the program for the three most recent fiscal years.

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 279 Original

2016 Regular Session

Broadwater

Abstract: Provides for differential TOPS award amounts based on a student's classification level and requires that a percentage of generated savings be appropriated for the La. GO Grant program.

Present law provides for the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) as a program of merit scholarships for students attending certain postsecondary education institutions who meet specific initial eligibility requirements, including academic requirements pertaining to grade point average, ACT score, and core curricula. Provides for Opportunity, Performance, and Honors Awards and the TOPS-Tech Award and that award amounts vary depending on the award and the type of college or university in which a student enrolls.

Present law provides, relative to award amounts for Opportunity, Performance, or Honors Awards, that at a La. public institution, the award amount is equal to the tuition charged by the institution, and at a La. nonpublic institution, the award amount is equal to the weighted average of amounts paid for students attending La. institutions that offer academic undergraduate degrees at the baccalaureate level.

Proposed law retains present law for students graduating from high school prior to the 2019-2020 school year, but, applicable to students graduating during or after that school year, provides differential award amounts for freshmen and sophomores, as follows:

- (1) For freshmen, 80% of present law award amount.
- (2) For sophomores, 90% of present law award amount.

Present law provides, relative to TOPS-Tech Award amounts, that at a public institution that does not offer an academic undergraduate degree at the baccalaureate level, the amount is equal to the tuition charged by the institution. For other eligible institutions, the amount is equal to the weighted average of amounts paid to students attending an eligible public institution that does not offer an academic undergraduate degree at the baccalaureate level.

Proposed law retains present law for students graduating from high school prior to the 2019-2020 school year, but, applicable to students graduating during or after that school year, provides differential award amounts for students who have completed fewer than 24 credit hours, as follows:

- (1) For students who have completed fewer than 12 credit hours, 80% of present law award amount.
- (2) For students who have completed at least 12 but fewer than 24 credit hours, 90% of present law award amount.

Proposed law, notwithstanding the differential award amounts provided in proposed law, grants freshman and sophomore recipients of Opportunity, Performance, or Honors Awards and TOPS-Tech recipients who have completed fewer than 24 hours the option of deferring receipt of their awards. If such a student maintains TOPS eligibility, the award amount shall be paid to him at the end of the award year, and the award amount shall be as follows:

- (1) If he maintains a 3.00 GPA, the amount shall be as otherwise provided in present law.
- (2) If he fails to maintain a 3.00 GPA, the amount shall be the percentage based on his classification as provided in proposed law.

Proposed law further requires, beginning with the 2019-2020 fiscal year, the legislature to appropriate 25% of any savings attributable to proposed law implementation for the purpose of increasing funding for the La. GO Grant program. Requires, beginning in 2019, the Legislative Fiscal Office annually to issue a fiscal and economic impact statement on Dec. 1st documenting the projected savings for the ensuing fiscal year. Requires the Legislative Fiscal Officer to forward this annual statement to the commissioner of administration for use in developing the budgets for TOPS and the La. GO Grant program. Provides that the monies appropriated for the La. GO Grant program pursuant to proposed law shall not displace, replace, or supplant the average amount of the monies appropriated for the program for the three most recent fiscal years.

(Amends R.S. 17:5002(B) and (D)(1)(intro. para.) and (2); Adds R.S. 17:5002.1)