

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE BILL NO. 760

BY REPRESENTATIVE ORTEGO

HIGHER EDUCATION: Provides relative to the TOPS-Tech Award

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:3048.1(A)(1)(a)(iii)(dd)(II), (B)(1), (2)(introductory

3 paragraph), (a), (b)(introductory paragraph), and (c)(introductory paragraph),

4 (3)(introductory paragraph), and (4)(a) and (b), (D)(2), (H)(2), (O)(1),

5 (P)(1)(introductory paragraph), (Q)(1)(introductory paragraph) and (5)(b)(i), and

6 (V)(1)(introductory paragraph) and (b) and (3)(b), 3048.2(C), 3048.5(A),

7 (B)(1)(introductory paragraph), (2), and (3), (C), (D)(introductory paragraph),

8 (E)(introductory paragraph), (F)(1), and (G), 3048.6(B)(1)(a), and

9 3048.7(B)(1)(a)(iv), relative to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students; to

10 provide relative to initial eligibility requirements for the TOPS-Tech Award; to

11 lower the minimum standardized test score required; to provide with respect to the

12 name of the TOPS-Tech Award; and to provide for related matters.

13 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

14 Section 1. R.S. 17:3048.1(A)(1)(a)(iii)(dd)(II), (B)(1), (2)(introductory paragraph),

15 (a), (b)(introductory paragraph), and (c)(introductory paragraph), (3)(introductory

16 paragraph), and (4)(a) and (b), (D)(2), (H)(2), (O)(1), (P)(1)(introductory paragraph),

17 (Q)(1)(introductory paragraph) and (5)(b)(i), and (V)(1)(introductory paragraph) and (b) and

18 (3)(b), 3048.2(C), 3048.5(A), (B)(1)(introductory paragraph), (2), and (3), (C),

1 (D)(introductory paragraph), (E)(introductory paragraph), (F)(1), and (G), 3048.6(B)(1)(a),
2 and 3048.7(B)(1)(a)(iv) are hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

3 §3048.1. Program awards; eligibility; amounts; limitations; funding; administration

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

- 15 (a)
- 16 * * *
- 17 (iii)
- 18 * * *
- 19 (dd)
- 20 * * *

21 (II) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Section to the contrary, a
22 displaced student who meets the residency requirement of this Subitem shall not be
23 required to have for the respective awards a higher minimum composite score on the
24 American College Test or on the Scholastic Aptitude Test than required for a student
25 who graduates from an eligible Louisiana high school provided such student has, for
26 ~~TOPS-Tech~~ TOPS-College and Opportunity awards, a cumulative high school grade
27 point average on all courses on the high school transcript of at least 2.50 calculated
28 on a 4.00 scale or, for Performance and Honors awards, a cumulative high school

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

1 grade point average on all courses on the high school transcript of at least 3.50
2 calculated on a 4.00 scale.

3 * * *

4 B.(1) A student who meets the requirements of this Subsection shall be the
5 recipient of a "~~TOPS-Tech~~ TOPS-College Award" for the purposes of this program.

6 (2) As part of the Louisiana Taylor Opportunity Program for Students, for
7 ~~students graduating from high school through the 1999-2000 school year the state~~
8 ~~shall award an amount determined by the administering agency to equal the actual~~
9 ~~cost of tuition of any student who enrolls on a full-time basis in a Louisiana public~~
10 ~~postsecondary institution to pursue skill or occupational training, including a~~
11 ~~vocational or technical education certificate or diploma program or a nonacademic~~
12 ~~undergraduate degree, and who meets the following qualifications and all other~~
13 ~~applicable qualifications of this Chapter and for students graduating from high~~
14 ~~school during the 2000-2001 school year and thereafter the state shall award an~~
15 ~~amount determined by the administering agency in accordance with the provisions~~
16 ~~of Subparagraph (f) of this Paragraph for any student who enrolls on a full-time basis~~
17 ~~in an eligible college or university as defined in Subsection A of this Section to~~
18 ~~pursue skill or occupational training as defined by the Board of Regents, including~~
19 ~~a vocational or technical education certificate or diploma program or a nonacademic~~
20 ~~undergraduate degree, and who meets the following qualifications and all other~~
21 ~~applicable qualifications of this Chapter:~~

22 (a)(i) ~~For any student graduating from high school through the 1999-2000~~
23 ~~school year, complies with the provisions of Subparagraphs (A)(1)(a) and (b) of this~~
24 ~~Section, except that enrollment shall be in a Louisiana public postsecondary~~
25 ~~institution and except that the student shall have a composite score on the specified~~
26 ~~American College Test of nineteen or higher or an equivalent concordant value on~~
27 ~~any enhanced or revised version of such test or on the Scholastic Aptitude Test.~~

28 (ii) ~~For any student graduating from high school during the 2000-2001~~
29 ~~school year and thereafter, complies Complies with the provisions of Subparagraphs~~

1 (A)(1)(a) and (b) of this Section, except that the student shall have a composite score
 2 on the specified American College Test of ~~seventeen~~ sixteen or higher or an
 3 equivalent concordant value on any enhanced or revised version of such test or on
 4 the Scholastic Aptitude Test. ~~For any student graduating from high school during~~
 5 ~~the 2010-2011 school year and thereafter, the~~ The student may, as an alternative
 6 requirement, have attained a silver level score on the assessments of the ACT
 7 WorkKeys system.

8 (b) Through the 2001-2002 school year and except as otherwise provided by
 9 this Section, has successfully completed at least sixteen and one-half units of high
 10 school course work, which constitutes a core curriculum, and meets standards for
 11 admission to the desired eligible college or university. Except as otherwise provided
 12 by this Section, a student may qualify for a ~~FOPS-Tech~~ Tops-College Award by
 13 meeting the core curriculum requirements of Subparagraph (A)(1)(e) or (B)(2)(c) of
 14 this Section or the core curriculum defined as follows:

15 * * *

16 (c) Except as otherwise provided by this Section, has successfully completed
 17 a core curriculum, and meets standards for admission to the desired eligible college
 18 or university. The core curriculum specified in Subparagraph (b) of this Paragraph
 19 shall be effective only for high school graduates through the 2001-2002 school year;
 20 thereafter, a student shall meet the core curriculum requirements as specified in this
 21 Subparagraph. Except as otherwise provided by this Section, a student may qualify
 22 for a ~~FOPS-Tech~~ TOPS-College Award by meeting the core curriculum
 23 requirements of Subparagraph (A)(1)(e) of this Section or the core curriculum
 24 defined as follows:

25 * * *

26 (3) To maintain continued state payment of an amount equal to tuition
 27 pursuant to a ~~FOPS-Tech~~ TOPS-College Award once enrolled in an institution, a
 28 student shall meet all of the following:

29 * * *

1 (b) Notwithstanding any provision of Subparagraph (1)(b) or (2)(b) of this
 2 Subsection to the contrary and effective for a student qualifying for an initial ~~TOPS-~~
 3 ~~Tech~~ TOPS-College or Opportunity award for the 2007-2008 award year or
 4 thereafter pursuant to this Subsection, the student, if a completer of a home study
 5 program approved by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, shall
 6 have a minimum composite score on the 1990 version of the American College Test
 7 which is at least two points higher than that otherwise required by this Section for
 8 a student graduating from a Louisiana public high school or nonpublic high school
 9 which has been approved by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
 10 or an equivalent concordant value on an enhanced or revised version of such test or
 11 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test.

12 * * *

13 §3048.2. Effectiveness of Chapter; continuance of certain tuition payments

14 * * *

15 C. Students graduating from high school or who have successfully completed
 16 at the twelfth grade level a home study program approved by the State Board of
 17 Elementary and Secondary Education during the 1997-1998 school year and
 18 thereafter may apply for and if otherwise qualified be eligible to receive the ~~TOPS-~~
 19 ~~Tech~~ TOPS-College Award as provided by this Chapter.

20 * * *

21 §3048.5. ~~TOPS-Tech~~ TOPS-College Early Start Award; purpose; eligibility; award
 22 amounts limitations; administration; implementation; reports

23 A. The ~~TOPS-Tech~~ TOPS-College Early Start Award is hereby established
 24 as part of the Louisiana Taylor Opportunity Program for Students for eligible
 25 eleventh and twelfth grade students attending Louisiana public high schools.

26 B.(1) A ~~TOPS-Tech~~ TOPS-College Early Start Award may be used at a
 27 Louisiana public postsecondary education institution for the purpose of pursuing an

1 industry-based occupational or vocational education credential as defined by the
2 Board of Regents when such credential also meets all of the following conditions:

3 * * *

4 (2) An eligible recipient may receive a ~~TOPS-Tech~~ TOPS-College Early
5 Start Award for two semesters during the eleventh grade and two semesters during
6 the twelfth grade, excluding summer sessions.

7 (3) The administering agency, on behalf of a ~~TOPS-Tech~~ TOPS-College
8 Early Start Award recipient, shall pay to the Louisiana postsecondary education
9 institution in which the student is enrolled in an eligible program of studies an
10 amount of one hundred fifty dollars for each three credit-hour or equivalent time
11 course taken by the student, not to exceed two such courses per high school semester
12 for an eleventh-grade student and two such courses per high school semester for a
13 twelfth-grade student.

14 * * *

15 C. An application for a ~~TOPS-Tech~~ TOPS-College Early Start Award shall
16 be required at a time and in a manner and form established by the administering
17 agency. At a minimum, information necessary to fully inform Louisiana public high
18 school students and their parents on the requirements of and procedures for applying
19 for the award shall be made available by the administering agency in the same
20 manner as required by law for other awards provided by the Taylor Opportunity
21 Program for Students.

22 D. To be eligible for an initial ~~TOPS-Tech~~ TOPS-College Early Start Award,
23 a student shall meet each of the following conditions and comply with other
24 applicable provisions of this Section and administering agency rules:

25 * * *

26 E. To maintain continuing eligibility for a ~~TOPS-Tech~~ TOPS-College Early
27 Start Award, a student must meet each of the following conditions and comply with
28 other applicable provisions of this Section and administering agency rules:

29 * * *

1 Opportunity Award, a cumulative high school grade point average on all courses on
2 the high school transcript of at least 2.50 calculated on a 4.00 scale or, for a
3 Performance or Honors award, a cumulative high school grade point average on all
4 courses on the high school transcript of at least 3.50 calculated on a 4.00 scale.

5 * * *

6 §3048.7. Continuing eligibility for program awards; students displaced by certain
7 natural disasters; waivers and exceptions; limitations

8 * * *

9 B.(1) Relative to continuing eligibility requirements for a Taylor
10 Opportunity Program for Students award applicable for the 2005-2006 academic year
11 to a student displaced during the 2005-2006 academic year, the Louisiana Student
12 Financial Assistance Commission, in accordance with the Administrative Procedure
13 Act, shall provide by rule as follows:

14 (a)

15 * * *

16 (iv) In addition to the provisions of R.S. 17:3048.1(B)(2) permitting a
17 recipient to use a ~~TOPS-Tech~~ TOPS-College Award at an eligible Louisiana college
18 or university to pursue skill or occupational training, as defined by the Board of
19 Regents, including a vocational or technical education certificate or diploma program
20 or a nonacademic degree, a ~~TOPS-Tech~~ TOPS-College Award also may be used
21 during the 2005-2006 academic year by a displaced student to enroll on a full-time
22 basis at an eligible Louisiana college or university granting academic undergraduate
23 degrees to take courses that contribute to the pursuit of a skill or occupation. In such
24 case, the award amount paid by the state on behalf of the student shall be at the
25 Opportunity Award level.

26 * * *

27 Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
28 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
29 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If

- 1 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
2 effective on the day following such approval.

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)]

Ortego

HB No. 760

Abstract: Lowers the minimum ACT score required for initial TOPS-Tech Award eligibility from 17 to 16 and changes name of the TOPS-Tech Award.

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 grade point average, ACT score, and core curriculum requirements and certain other qualifications. Provides for the TOPS-Tech Award for students who enroll in certain colleges and universities to pursue skill or occupational training, including vocational or technical education certificates or diploma programs or nonacademic undergraduate degrees. For initial eligibility for the TOPS-Tech Award, a student must have a composite ACT score (or equivalent SAT score) of at least 17 or attain a silver level score on the assessments of the ACT WorkKeys system.

Proposed law lowers the minimum ACT score (or equivalent SAT score) required for initial TOPS-Tech Award eligibility from 17 to 16. Also changes name of TOPS-Tech Award to TOPS-College Award; otherwise retains present law.

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

(Amends R.S. 17:3048.1(A)(1)(a)(iii)(dd)(II), (B)(1), (2)(intro. para.), (a), (b)(intro. para.), and (c)(intro. para.), (3)(intro. para.), and (4)(a) and (b), (D)(2), (H)(2), (O)(1), (P)(1)(intro. para.), (Q)(1)(intro. para.) and (5)(b)(i), and (V)(1)(intro. para.) and (b) and (3)(b), 3048.2(C), 3048.5(A), (B)(1)(intro. para.), (2), and (3), (C), (D)(intro. para.), (E)(intro. para.), (F)(1), and (G), 3048.6(B)(1)(a), and 3048.7(B)(1)(a)(iv))