2016 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 906

BY REPRESENTATIVES ARMES AND BILLIOT

HIGHER EDUCATION: Provides relative to postsecondary education services for homeless and foster youth

AN ACT

To enact Part XIII of Chapter 26 of Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 17:3399.21 through 3399.24, relative to postsecondary education services for homeless youth and foster youth; to require each public postsecondary education institution to designate a homeless and foster student liaison and to provide for his responsibilities; to authorize the institutions to provide for these students with respect to residency status and housing; to provide for definitions; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. Part XIII of Chapter 26 of Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 17:3399.21 through 3399.24, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

PART XIII. HOMELESS AND FOSTER YOUTH

§3399.21. Definitions

As used in this Part, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

(1) "Homeless youth" means any individual under twenty-five years of age who has been verified, at any time during the six years prior to his enrollment in a public postsecondary education institution, as a homeless child or youth as defined in 42 U.S.C. 11434a(2) by at least one of the following:

(a) A governmental or nonprofit agency that receives federal, state, parish, or municipal funding to provide services to homeless persons or that is otherwise sanctioned to provide these services by a homeless continuum of care organization.

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(b) An attorney licensed to practice law in this state.

c) A local education agency liaison for homeless children and youth designated as such pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii) or a school social worker.

d) A human services provider or public social services provider funded by the state to provide services for homeless children and youth, including health services, mental or behavioral health services, substance use disorder services, or public assistance or employment services.

e) A law enforcement officer designated as a liaison to the homeless population by a law enforcement agency or department within the state.

f) The director of a federal TRIO program or his designee.

g) A court-appointed special advocate (CASA) employee or volunteer.

h) A financial aid administrator.

(2) "Foster youth" means any individual in the care, custody, or guardianship of the Department of Children and Family Services in the foster care program for any six of the seventy-two months immediately prior to his eighteenth birthday.

§3399.22. Homeless and foster student liaisons

Each public postsecondary education institution shall designate a homeless and foster student liaison within its financial aid office. This liaison shall be responsible for applying the provisions of the federal Higher Education Act pertaining to the independent student status and financial aid eligibility of current and former homeless and foster youth and shall assist these students, both current and prospective, in applying for federal and state financial aid and other assistance for which they may be eligible.

§3399.23. Residency status

Notwithstanding any provision of law or policy to the contrary, a public postsecondary education institution may grant resident status to a student who resides in Louisiana and is nineteen years of age or under at the time of enrollment.

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regardless of how long he has resided in the state, if he is determined to have been
homeless at any time during the two years immediately preceding his enrollment.
§3399.24.  Housing

In order to ensure that current and former homeless and foster youth have
access to stable housing, a public postsecondary education institution that offers
student housing may develop a plan to provide that these students have access to
housing resources as needed during and between academic terms. The plan may
grant them first priority for housing placement and provide that they be placed in the
institution's housing facility that remains open for occupation during the most days
in a calendar year.

Section 2. This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Success for Homeless
and Foster Youth in Higher Education Act".

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 906 Engrossed 2016 Regular Session Armes

Abstract: Provides for postsecondary education services for homeless and foster youth.

Proposed law defines "homeless youth" and "foster youth" and requires each public
postsecondary education institution to designate a homeless and foster student liaison within
its financial aid office who is responsible for applying the provisions of the federal Higher
Education Act pertaining to these youth and for assisting such students, both current and
prospective, in applying for financial aid and other assistance.

Proposed law authorizes each public postsecondary education institution to grant resident
status to a student who resides in La. and is 19 or younger at the time of enrollment,
regardless of how long he has resided in the state, if he is determined to have been homeless
at any time during the two years immediately preceding enrollment. Also authorizes each
institution that offers student housing to develop a plan to provide that current and former
homeless and foster youth have access to housing resources during and between academic
terms. Such plan may grant these students first priority for housing placement and provide
that they be placed in the institution's housing facility that remains open for occupation
during the most days in a calendar year.

(Adds R.S. 17:3399.21-3399.24)

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are additions.