

2017 Regular Session

**Approved
5-24-17**

HOUSE STUDY REQUEST NO. 2

BY REPRESENTATIVE NANCY LANDRY

HIGHER EDUCATION: Provides for a study relative to postsecondary education services for current and former foster youth

1 A STUDY REQUEST

2 To the House Committee on Education to study issues relative to postsecondary education
3 services for current and former foster youth and to report its findings to the House
4 of Representatives prior to the convening of the 2018 Regular Session.

5 WHEREAS, as stated in the Constitution of Louisiana, it is the goal of the public
6 educational system to provide learning environments and experiences at all stages of human
7 development that are humane, just, and designed to promote excellence in order that every
8 individual may be afforded an equal opportunity to develop to his full potential; and

9 WHEREAS, foster youth often face significant challenges as they transition to
10 adulthood, and postsecondary education plays an essential role in improving their welfare;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, many young people "age out" of foster care without a legal, permanent
13 connection to an adult or family who might provide guidance as they endeavor to adjust to
14 independence and embark on a new chapter of life as college students; and

15 WHEREAS, challenges facing this unique student population include finding safe,
16 stable, and affordable housing and reliable transportation; these students also struggle with
17 the management of course loads and finances and are in urgent need of support services
18 related to academic and financial assistance; and

19 WHEREAS, these students may also grapple with identifying their strengths and
20 interests and finding a path leading to fulfilling and sustainable employment; and

1 WHEREAS, many are concerned that the challenges facing these unique students are
2 not being adequately addressed at the postsecondary level and feel that these students must
3 be afforded more assistance so that more of them achieve success in college and career
4 experiences and enjoy a productive adulthood; and

5 WHEREAS, in order to fulfill the state's constitutional duty of affording every
6 student an equal opportunity to develop to his full potential, it is imperative that
7 postsecondary education services for current and former foster youth receive a thorough
8 examination.

9 THEREFORE, the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana requests
10 the House Committee on Education to study issues relative to postsecondary education
11 services for current and former foster youth and to report its findings to the House of
12 Representatives prior to the convening of the 2018 Regular Session.

13 THEREFORE, the House of Representatives further requests that the study shall, at
14 a minimum, identify the following relative to students who are current or former foster
15 youth:

16 (1) Barriers that impede students' ability to be successful in college, including
17 challenges relative to academics, housing, financial aid, and transportation, and how they
18 can be overcome.

19 (2) Opportunities for supporting the implementation of the provisions of R.S.
20 17:3399.21 through 3399.24 as enacted by Act No. 306 of the 2016 Regular Session of the
21 Legislature, which require each public postsecondary education institution to provide certain
22 services for these students.

23 (3) Funding mechanisms for the tuition exemption for certain persons who have
24 been in foster care as provided in R.S. 17:1687.

25 (4) Methods of ensuring that students take advantage of the federal John H. Chafee
26 Foster Care Independence Program, which helps current and former foster youth through
27 educational and training vouchers.

28 (5) Mentorship and internship opportunities through which students can benefit from
29 meaningful relationships with caring adults and hands-on exposure to career options.

1 (6) Ways in which postsecondary education institutions can better help students
2 access all educational, financial, housing, transportation, and other resources for which they
3 are eligible at the local, state, and federal levels.

4 THEREFORE, the House of Representatives further requests that such study shall
5 include consideration of input from current or former foster youth; members of the
6 legislative Adoption and Foster Care Caucus; representatives of each public postsecondary
7 education management board; representatives of the Board of Regents; representatives of
8 the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance; representatives of the state Department
9 of Children and Family Services and the state Department of Education; representatives of
10 organizations that include but are not limited to the Louisiana Institute for Children in
11 Families, Louisiana Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children, Child Advocacy
12 Centers of Louisiana, Louisiana Association of Student Assistance Programs, and Louisiana
13 Progress; and other interested persons as the committee deems appropriate.

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)]

HSR 2 Original

2017 Regular Session

Nancy Landry

Requests the House Committee on Education to study issues relative to postsecondary education services for current and former foster youth. Provides for the committee to report findings and recommendations prior to the 2018 R.S.