

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE BILL NO. 1153

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), (2), (4)(introductory paragraph), and
3 (5)(b)(i), relative to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students; to provide relative
4 to Opportunity Award amounts; to provide relative to eligibility requirements for
5 Opportunity Awards; to provide an effective date; and to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 17:3048.1(A)(1)(b)(i), (2), (4)(introductory paragraph), and (5)(b)(i)
8 are hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

9 §3048.1. Program awards; eligibility; amounts; limitations; funding; administration

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

21 * * *

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 except for students graduating during the 2017-2018 school
12 year or thereafter who have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.00
13 calculated on a 4.00 scale in which case there is no required minimum American
14 College Test or Scholastic Aptitude Test score, and, unless granted an exception for
15 cause by the administering agency, has enrolled in an eligible college or university
16 as a first-time freshman not later than the semester, excluding summer semesters or
17 sessions, immediately following the first anniversary of the date that the student
18 graduated from high school or, if the student joins the United States Armed Forces
19 within one year after graduating from high school, has enrolled in an eligible college
20 or university as a first-time freshman not later than the semester, excluding summer
21 semesters or sessions, immediately following the fifth anniversary of the date that
22 the student graduated from high school; however, effective for the 1996-1997 school
23 year and thereafter, if, on or prior to the fifth anniversary of the date that the student
24 graduated from high school, the student reenlists in the United States Armed Forces
25 and maintains continuous active duty, the five-year period shall be extended to the
26 semester immediately following the one-year anniversary of the student's separation
27 from active duty service. As distinguished from all other students qualifying for this
28 program, a student who meets the requirements of this Subparagraph shall be the
29 recipient of an "Opportunity Award" for the purposes of this program.

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(2)(a) Any student who applies for an Opportunity Award in accordance with Subparagraph (A)(1)(b), who enrolled in any public college or university in the state to pursue an academic undergraduate degree or skill or occupational training, including a vocational or technical education certificate or diploma program or a nonacademic undergraduate degree, and who meets the qualifications enumerated in Subparagraphs (A)(1)(a), (e), and (f), shall be awarded by the state an amount determined by the administering agency to equal the following percentage of the tuition charged by the public college or university attended in the state:

(i) For students who commence full-time studies as a first-time freshman on or before June 30, 2018, an amount equal to one hundred percent of the tuition charged.

(ii) For students who commence full-time studies as a first-time freshman after June 30, 2018, an amount equal to eighty percent of the tuition charged during their first two semesters of studies, ninety percent of tuition charged during their third and fourth semesters of studies, one hundred percent of tuition charged during their fifth and sixth semesters of studies, and one hundred-twenty percent of tuition charged during their seventh and eighth semesters of studies, which amount in excess of tuition can be used to cover expenses including room and board, books, and other instructional materials.

(b) For any student who ~~meets such qualifications and~~ applies for an Opportunity Award in accordance with Subparagraph (A)(1)(b), who has enrolled at any regionally accredited independent college or university in the state which is a member of the Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and Universities to pursue an academic undergraduate degree or skill or occupational training, including a vocational or technical education certificate or diploma program or a nonacademic undergraduate degree, the state shall award an amount to be determined by the administering agency to equal the following percentage of the weighted average of amounts paid under this Section for students attending public colleges and

1 universities that offer academic undergraduate degrees at the baccalaureate level or
2 an amount to be determined by the administering agency to equal the following
3 percentage of the weighted average of amounts paid under this Section for students
4 attending public colleges and universities who are enrolled in the permitted skill or
5 occupational training, as may be applicable:

6 (i) For students who commence full-time studies as a first-time freshman on
7 or before June 30, 2018, an amount equal to one hundred percent of the weighted
8 average of amounts paid.

9 (ii) For students who commence full-time studies as a first-time freshman
10 after June 30, 2018, an amount equal to eighty percent of the weighted average of
11 amounts paid during their first two semesters of studies, ninety percent of the
12 average during their third and fourth semesters of studies, one hundred percent of the
13 average during their fifth and sixth semesters of studies, and one hundred-twenty
14 percent of the average during their seventh and eighth semesters of studies which
15 amount in excess of tuition can be used to cover expenses including room and board,
16 books, and other instructional materials.

17 * * *

18 (4) To maintain continued state payment of an amount equal to tuition or a
19 percentage of tuition as provided for an Opportunity Award and other amounts
20 pursuant to an award under this Chapter once enrolled in college a student shall meet
21 all of the following:

22 * * *

23 (5)

24 * * *

25 (b)(i) For any student who is the recipient of an Opportunity Award and who
26 is eligible to use the award at an out-of-state nonpublic college or university pursuant
27 to the provisions of Subparagraph (a) of this Paragraph, the award amount to pursue
28 an academic undergraduate degree shall be an amount determined by the
29 administering agency to equal the following percentage of the weighted average of

1 amounts paid under this Section for students attending Louisiana public colleges and
2 universities that offer academic undergraduate degrees;

3 (aa) For students who commence full-time studies as a first-time freshman
4 on or before June 30, 2018, an amount equal to one hundred percent of the weighted
5 average of amounts paid.

6 (bb) For students who commence full-time studies as a first-time freshman
7 after June 30, 2018, an amount equal to eighty percent of the weighted average of
8 amounts paid during their first two semesters of studies, ninety percent of the
9 average during their third and fourth semesters of studies, one hundred percent of the
10 average during their fifth and sixth semesters of studies, and one hundred-twenty
11 percent of the average during their seventh and eighth semesters of studies which
12 amount in excess of tuition can be used to cover expenses including room and board,
13 books, and other instructional materials.

14 * * *

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. 1153

Abstract: Relative to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students, provides relative to award amounts and eligibility requirements for the Opportunity Award.

Present law provides relative to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS). Provides with respect to certain qualifications for participation in the program and provides for scholarship awards and payments of awards.

Present law, relative to eligibility requirements to receive a TOPS Opportunity Award, requires that students have an American College Test (ACT) score equal to the state's average composite score, but never less than 20. Proposed law, effective for students graduating in the 2017-2018 school year and thereafter, increases the requisite ACT to a minimum of 22; however, eliminates the need for a minimum ACT score if the student's GPA is 3.0 or greater.

Present law provides that Opportunity Award recipients enrolled in a public institution or vocational program receive full tuition and Opportunity Award recipients enrolled in an independent institution or vocational program receive an amount equal to the weighted average of amounts paid by TOPS for students attending public institutional or vocational schools, as applicable. Proposed law retains present law for those students enrolling as a first-time freshman on or before June 20, 2018, but thereafter, provides for an award equal

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to a percentage of tuition as follows: 80% for first two semesters; 90% for third and fourth semesters; 100% for fifth and sixth semesters; and 120% for seventh and eighth semesters.

(Amends R.S. 17:3048.1(A)(1)(b)(i), (2), (4)(intro. para.), and (5)(b)(i))