

2016 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 914

BY REPRESENTATIVE ROBBY CARTER

STUDENT/LOANS-SCHOLARSHIP: Provides relative to institutions at which students may use a Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) award

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:5081(B)(1)(introductory paragraph) and (3) and (E)(3), to
3 enact R.S. 17:5002.1, 5027.1, and 5081.1, and to repeal R.S. 17:5002(B)(3) and
4 (D)(1)(b) and (2), 5027(C) and (D), and 5081(B)(4), relative to the Taylor
5 Opportunity Program for Students; to eliminate certain cosmetology and proprietary
6 schools as eligible institutions at which a student may use a program award; to
7 eliminate courses offered by training providers as those that may be funded by a
8 TOPS-Tech Early Start Award; to provide relative to applicability; and to provide
9 for related matters.

10 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

11 Section 1. R.S. 17:5081(B)(1)(introductory paragraph) and (3) and (E)(3) are hereby
12 amended and reenacted and R.S. 17:5002.1, 5027.1, and 5081.1 are hereby enacted to read
13 as follows:

14 §5002.1. Awards and amounts; exceptions

15 A. Notwithstanding R.S. 17:5002(B), any student who is eligible for an
16 Opportunity, Performance, or Honors Award pursuant to this Chapter, who graduates
17 from high school prior to the 2016-2017 school year, and who has enrolled in a
18 school that has a valid and current certificate of registration issued by the Louisiana
19 State Board of Cosmetology in accordance with law and that is accredited by an
20 accrediting organization recognized by the United States Department of Education

1 or in any proprietary school that has a valid and current license issued by the Board
2 of Regents in accordance with law and that is accredited by an accrediting
3 organization recognized by the United States Department of Education, shall be
4 awarded by the state an amount determined by the administering agency to equal the
5 weighted average of amounts paid under this Section for students attending public
6 colleges and universities who are enrolled in the permitted skill or occupational
7 training, as may be applicable.

8 B. Notwithstanding R.S. 17:5002(D), a student who graduated prior to the
9 2016-2017 school year, who is eligible for a TOPS-Tech Award pursuant to this
10 Chapter, and who is enrolled:

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

15 (2) In an eligible college or university other than as provided for in
16 Paragraph (1) of this Subsection shall be awarded by the state an amount determined
17 by the administering agency to equal the weighted average of amounts paid to
18 students attending an eligible public college or university that does not offer an
19 academic undergraduate degree at the baccalaureate level.

20 * * *

21 §5027.1. Postsecondary institution enrollment; exceptions

22 Notwithstanding R.S. 17:5027:

23 (1) Any student who meets all applicable initial and continuing program
24 eligibility requirements of this Chapter for an Opportunity, Performance, or Honors
25 Award may use such award at an out-of-state nonpublic college or university when
26 each of the following conditions is met:

27 (a) The college or university is accredited by a regional accrediting
28 organization recognized by the United States Department of Education.

1 (b) All programs and services at the college or university are specifically
2 designed to accommodate deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

3 (c) Deaf and hard-of-hearing students comprise the majority of students
4 enrolled at the college or university at the undergraduate level.

5 (d) The award recipient meets the admission requirements of the college or
6 university that are applicable to deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

7 (e) The initial program award is made to the student for the 2005-2006 award
8 year or thereafter.

9 (f) The college or university provides to the administering agency such
10 information as would otherwise be required by the agency for program
11 administration purposes from an eligible Louisiana college or university if the
12 student was enrolled in such Louisiana institution.

13 (2) For a student who graduates from high school during the 2009-2010
14 school year through 2016-2017 school year, for purposes of the TOPS-Tech Award
15 as provided by this Chapter, the term "eligible college or university" shall include
16 any school that has a valid and current certificate of registration issued by the
17 Louisiana State Board of Cosmetology in accordance with law and that is accredited
18 by an accrediting organization recognized by the United States Department of
19 Education and any proprietary school that has a valid and current license issued by
20 the Board of Regents in accordance with law and that is accredited by an accrediting
21 organization recognized by the United States Department of Education. Such a
22 school also shall comply with all other applicable provisions of this Chapter and
23 rules adopted by the administering agency relative to a college or university being
24 initially eligible and remaining eligible for program purposes.

25 (3) Applicable to students graduating from high school during the 2010-2011
26 school year through the 2016-2017 school year, a student who is the recipient of an
27 Opportunity, Performance, or Honors award and who pursues skill or occupational
28 training as defined by the administering agency, including a vocational or technical
29 education certificate or diploma program or a nonacademic undergraduate degree,

1 may use the award at any school that has a valid and current certificate of registration
 2 issued by the Louisiana State Board of Cosmetology in accordance with law and that
 3 is accredited by an accrediting organization recognized by the United States
 4 Department of Education and at any proprietary school that has a valid and current
 5 license issued by the Board of Regents in accordance with law and that is accredited
 6 by an accrediting organization recognized by the United States Department of
 7 Education. Such a school shall comply with all other applicable provisions of this
 8 Chapter and rules adopted by the administering agency relative to a college or
 9 university being initially eligible and remaining eligible for program purposes.

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11 §5081. TOPS-Tech Early Start Award; purpose; eligibility; limitations;
 12 administration; implementation; reports

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14 B.(1) A TOPS-Tech Early Start Award may be used to fund any technical
 15 or applied course leading to an Industry-Based Certification, a Certificate of Applied
 16 Science, and a Certificate of Technical Sciences offered at a Louisiana public
 17 postsecondary education institution or a nonpublic postsecondary education
 18 institution that is a member of the Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges
 19 and Universities ~~or by any Louisiana training provider recognized by the Louisiana~~
 20 ~~Workforce Commission and approved by the State Board of Elementary and~~
 21 ~~Secondary Education as provided in Paragraph (4) of this Subsection~~ when such
 22 certification or certificate is approved by the Workforce Investment Council as
 23 meeting the following requirements:

* * *

25 (3) The administering agency, on behalf of a TOPS-Tech Early Start Award
 26 recipient, shall pay to the Louisiana postsecondary education institution in which the
 27 student is enrolled in an eligible program of studies ~~or a training program provider~~
 28 an amount of one hundred fifty dollars for each three credit-hour or equivalent time
 29 course taken by the student, not to exceed two such courses per high school semester

1 for an eleventh-grade student and two such courses per high school semester for a
2 twelfth-grade student.

3 * * *

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

7 * * *

8 (3) Be a student in good standing while enrolled in a Louisiana public or
9 nonpublic postsecondary education institution ~~or training program~~ and continue to
10 pursue one or more courses leading to an industry-based credential.

11 * * *

12 §5081.1. TOPS-Tech Early Start Award; exceptions

13 A. Notwithstanding R.S. 17:5081(B), for a student graduating from high
14 school prior to the 2017-2018 school year, a TOPS-Tech Early Start Award may be
15 used to fund any technical or applied course leading to an Industry-Based
16 Certification, a Certificate of Applied Science, and a Certificate of Technical
17 Sciences offered at a Louisiana public or nonpublic postsecondary education
18 institution or by any Louisiana training provider recognized by the Louisiana
19 Workforce Commission and approved by the State Board of Elementary and
20 Secondary Education as provided in Subsection D of this Section when such
21 certification or certificate is approved by the Workforce Investment Council as
22 meeting the following requirements:

23 (1) Is identified by the Occupation Forecasting Conference as a credential
24 for an occupation in top demand in Louisiana.

25 (2) Is recognized by the State Industry-Based Certification Leadership
26 Council.

27 B. An eligible recipient may receive a TOPS-Tech Early Start Award for two
28 semesters during the eleventh grade and two semesters during the twelfth grade,
29 excluding summer sessions.

1 C. The administering agency, on behalf of a TOPS-Tech Early Start Award
 2 recipient, shall pay to the Louisiana postsecondary education institution in which the
 3 student is enrolled in an eligible program of studies or a training program provider
 4 an amount of one hundred fifty dollars for each three credit-hour or equivalent time
 5 course taken by the student, not to exceed two such courses per high school semester
 6 for an eleventh-grade student and two such courses per high school semester for a
 7 twelfth-grade student.

8 D.(1) By January thirty-first annually, the State Board of Elementary and
 9 Secondary Education shall determine which training program providers it approves
 10 for the academic year that begins in the fall of that year. Such requirement shall be
 11 null and void after January 31, 2017.

12 (2) The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall
 13 promulgate rules and regulations in accordance with the Administrative Procedure
 14 Act to implement the provisions of this Subsection.

15 E. Implementation of the provisions of this Section shall be subject to the
 16 appropriation of funds for this purpose.

17 Section 2. R.S. 17:5002(B)(3) and (D)(1)(b) and (2), 5027(C) and (D), and
 18 5081(B)(4) are hereby repealed in their entirety.

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 914 Original

2016 Regular Session

Robby Carter

Abstract: Provides that a Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) award may no longer be used at cosmetology and proprietary schools and that a TOPS-Tech Early Start Award may no longer be used to fund courses offered by training providers.

Taylor Opportunity Program for Students, generally

Present law provides for the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) as a program of merit scholarships for students attending "eligible colleges and universities" who meet specific grade point average, ACT score, and core curriculum requirements and certain other qualifications. Provides for Opportunity, Performance and Honors Awards (eight semesters) and TOPS-Tech Awards (two years), as well as TOPS-Tech Early Start Awards for certain high school students.

Present law defines an "eligible college or university" generally as a La. college or university that is either (1) public or (2) a member of the La. Assoc. of Independent Colleges and Universities (LAICU). Present law, for students pursuing skill or occupational training, broadens the definition of "eligible college or university" to include certain cosmetology and proprietary schools.

Proposed law, applicable to students graduating from high school during or after the 2016-2017 school year, eliminates the option of using a TOPS award at a cosmetology or proprietary school.

Present law also allows a student to use an award at an out-of-state institution that serves primarily deaf and hard-of-hearing students. Proposed law retains present law.

TOPS-Tech Early Start Award

Present law establishes the TOPS-Tech Early Start Award for eligible 11th and 12th grade public school students and authorizes its use to fund, subject to the appropriation of funds for this purpose, any technical or applied course leading to specified certificates offered by the following La. entities:

- (1) Public postsecondary education institutions.
- (2) Nonpublic postsecondary education institutions.
- (3) Training providers.

Proposed law, applicable to students graduating from high school during or after the 2017-2018 school year, limits the nonpublic institutions at which this award may be used to fund such courses to LAICU member institutions and eliminates the authority to use this award to fund courses offered by training providers.

(Amends R.S. 17:5081(B)(1)(intro. para.) and (3) and (E)(3); Adds R.S. 17:5002.1, 5027.1, and 5081.1; Repeals R.S. 17:5002(B)(3) and (D)(1)(b) and (2), 5027(C) and (D), and 5081(B)(4))