The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Jeanne C. Johnston.

DIGEST 2017 Regular Session

Donahue

<u>Present law</u> provides for the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS), a program of merit scholarships for students attending certain postsecondary education institutions who meet specific academic criteria and other requirements for initial eligibility.

<u>Present law</u> provides that the award amounts for a TOPS Opportunity, Performance, Honors, or TOPS-Tech award shall be equal to the award amount paid for a student enrolled in a public or nonpublic postsecondary institution during the 2016-2017 academic year.

<u>Present law</u> also provides that:

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- (1) A student enrolled in a public college or university shall be awarded an amount equal to the tuition charged by the public college or university during the 2016-2017 academic year.
- (2) A student enrolled in a nonpublic college or university, a school of Cosmetology, or an outof-state college or university specifically designed to accommodate deaf and hard-of-hearing students shall be awarded an amount equal to the weighted award amount paid to students attending a public postsecondary institution during the 2016-2017 academic year.

<u>Proposed law</u> resolves the inconsistent terminology in <u>present law</u> by providing that, unless increased by the legislature:

- (1) The amount of a TOPS award paid to a student enrolled in a public postsecondary institution shall be equal to the tuition amount charged by the public college or university during the 2016-2017 academic year.
- (2) The amount of a TOPS award paid to a student enrolled in an approved nonpublic college or university, a school of Cosmetology, or an out-of-state college or university specifically designed to accommodate deaf and hard-of-hearing students shall be equal to the weighted average of the tuition amounts charged to students attending public colleges and universities during the 2016-2017 academic year.

<u>Present law</u> (R.S. 17:5041 and 5042), with respect to maintaining TOPS eligibility, contains language that is inconsistent with other provisions of <u>present law</u> and which indicates that TOPS award amounts are equal to the current tuition charged, and not the tuition charged during the 2016-2017 academic year.

Proposed law deletes this inconsistent language.

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

(Amends R.S. 17:5002(A)(2), (B), (D)(1)(b) and (2)(b), 5041(intro para), and 5042(intro para))