

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 161

BY REPRESENTATIVE HUGHES

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:5002(D)(1) and 5081(B)(1) and (D)(4) and to enact R.S.  
3 17:3047.1(H), relative to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students; to provide  
4 relative to TOPS Tech and TOPS Tech Early Start; to provide for eligibility  
5 requirements; and to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 17:5002(D)(1) and 5081(B)(1) and (D)(4) are hereby amended and  
8 reenacted and R.S. 17:3047.1(H) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

9 §3047.1. Advisory council; membership; responsibilities

10 \* \* \*

11 H. The advisory council shall identify programs in which an eligible student  
12 may enroll to receive a TOPS-Tech or TOPS-Tech Early Start award. The council  
13 shall consider the qualifications for qualified programs for the M.J. Foster Promise  
14 Program when identifying such programs.

15 \* \* \*

16 §5002. Awards and amounts

17 \* \* \*

18 D.(1) Except as otherwise provided in this Subsection, a student who is  
19 eligible for a TOPS-Tech Award pursuant to this Chapter and who is enrolled:

20 (a) In an eligible public college or university that does not offer an academic  
21 undergraduate degree at the baccalaureate level in those associate's degree or other

1 shorter-term training and education programs ~~that are aligned to state workforce~~  
2 ~~priorities as determined by the Board of Regents and the Louisiana Workforce~~  
3 ~~Investment Council~~, as determined by the advisory council pursuant to R.S.  
4 17:3047.1, shall be awarded by the state an amount determined by the administering  
5 agency to equal the tuition charged by the college or university during the 2016-2017  
6 academic year. If ~~the Board of Regents and the Louisiana Workforce Investment~~  
7 ~~Council determine~~ such council determines that a program is no longer aligned with  
8 those priorities, an otherwise eligible student who had previously received an award  
9 and enrolled in that program may continue to use the award.

10 (b) In an eligible college or university other than as provided for in  
11 Subparagraph (a) of this Paragraph in those associate's degree or other shorter-term  
12 training education programs ~~that are aligned to state workforce priorities as~~  
13 ~~determined by the Board of Regents and the Louisiana Workforce Investment~~  
14 ~~Council~~, as determined by the advisory council pursuant to R.S. 17:3047.1, shall be  
15 awarded by the state an amount determined by the administering agency to equal the  
16 weighted average of the tuition amounts charged to students attending an eligible  
17 public college or university that does not offer an academic undergraduate degree at  
18 the baccalaureate level during the 2016-2017 academic year. If ~~the Board of Regents~~  
19 ~~and the Louisiana Workforce Investment Council determine~~ such council determines  
20 that a program is no longer aligned with those priorities, an otherwise eligible  
21 student who had previously received an award and enrolled in that program may  
22 continue to use the award.

23 \* \* \*

24 §5081. TOPS-Tech Early Start Award; purpose; eligibility; limitations;  
25 administration; implementation; reports

26 \* \* \*

27 B.(1) A TOPS-Tech Early Start Award may be used to fund any ~~technical~~  
28 ~~or applied course leading to an Industry-Based Certification, a Certificate of Applied~~  
29 ~~Science, and a Certificate of Technical Sciences offered at a Louisiana public or~~  
30 ~~nonpublic postsecondary education institution or by any Louisiana training provider~~

1       ~~recognized by the Louisiana Workforce Commission and approved by the State~~  
2       ~~Board of Elementary and Secondary Education as provided in Paragraph (4) of this~~  
3       ~~Subsection when such certification or certificate is approved by the Workforce~~  
4       ~~Investment Council as meeting the following requirements:~~ qualified program, as  
5       determined by the advisory council pursuant to R.S. 17:3047.1.

6               ~~(a) Is identified by the Occupation Forecasting Conference as a credential~~  
7       ~~for an occupation in top demand in Louisiana.~~

8               ~~(b) Is recognized by the State Industry-Based Certification Leadership~~  
9       ~~Council.~~

10                               \*       \*       \*

11               D. To be eligible for an initial TOPS-Tech Early Start Award, a student shall  
12       meet each of the following conditions and comply with other applicable provisions  
13       of this Section and administering agency rules:

14                               \*       \*       \*

15               (4) Meet one of the following:

16               (a) Score at least fifteen on the English subsection and fifteen on the  
17       mathematics subsection of the ACT PLAN assessment or a successor assessment  
18       administered as part of Louisiana's Educational Planning and Assessment System or  
19       the ACT or an equivalent concordant value of the SAT.

20               (b) ~~or have attained~~ Attain a silver level score on the assessments of the ACT  
21       WorkKeys system.

22               (c) Meet the eligibility requirements for technical dual enrollment courses  
23       as determined by the Board of Regents.

24                               \*       \*       \*

25       Section 2. The provisions of this Act shall apply to awards for the 2026-2027 school  
26       year and thereafter.

27       Section 3. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not  
28       signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature  
29       by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If

1 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become  
2 effective on the day following such approval.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_