

ACT No. 152

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~~

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

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

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

* * *

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

* * *

(4) Meet one of the following:

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

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

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

* * *

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

Section 3. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature 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.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____