

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 17

BY REPRESENTATIVE TURNER

A RESOLUTION

To authorize and direct the Board of Regents, Louisiana Works, and Louisiana Economic Development to jointly study, in collaboration with the Kathleen Babineaux Blanco Public Policy Center, the state's return on investment with respect to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students and submit a written report of findings and recommendations to the House Committee on Education, the House Committee on Appropriations, and the House Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations not later than February 15, 2027.

WHEREAS, the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) has enabled thousands of Louisiana students to pursue postsecondary education and served as a cornerstone of opportunity for nearly three decades; and

WHEREAS, TOPS represents one of Louisiana's most significant financial commitments to postsecondary education; and

WHEREAS, TOPS has increased college access and retention for Louisiana students, yet questions persist regarding the program's long-term return on investment for the state; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Regents, Louisiana Works, and Louisiana Economic Development each play a central role in aligning education and workforce needs to strengthen Louisiana's economic competitiveness; and

WHEREAS, the Kathleen Babineaux Blanco Public Policy Center at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette conducts objective, data-driven policy research on complex state programs; and

WHEREAS, a coordinated study among these agencies will enable the state to identify whether current investments in TOPS are producing sufficient workforce and economic outcomes and to determine how program funds could be better targeted to support Louisiana's future workforce needs; and

WHEREAS, ensuring that Louisiana taxpayers receive an optimal return on their investment in postsecondary education incentives is essential for the long-term fiscal health and prosperity of the state.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby authorize and direct the Board of Regents, Louisiana Works, and Louisiana Economic Development to jointly study the state's return on investment with respect to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) and submit a written report of findings and recommendations to the House Committee on Education, the House Committee on Appropriations, and the House Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations not later than February 15, 2027.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that these agencies shall use information provided by the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance when conducting the study.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that these agencies shall work collaboratively with the Kathleen Babineaux Blanco Public Policy Center to design the research framework, collect necessary data, and ensure transparency throughout the process.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study shall include, at a minimum, the following:

(1) An analysis of post-graduation outcomes for TOPS recipients, including workforce participation, in-state employment retention, and average earnings.

(2) A comparison of the economic and workforce outcomes of TOPS recipients versus nonrecipients.

(3) An assessment of whether the various award levels and institutional distribution maximize Louisiana's workforce needs and economic development priorities.

(4) Recommendations for policy adjustments needed to ensure TOPS funds are used in a manner aligned with Louisiana's long-term workforce needs, economic competitiveness, and the prosperity of its citizens.

(5) A comparative analysis of the largest state-funded financial assistance programs for students enrolled in postsecondary education institutions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report may be incorporated into the 2027 Launch Louisiana report developed and published by the Kathleen Babineaux Blanco Public

Policy Center for Louisiana's Foundational Integrated Research System for Transformation as provided in R.S. 17:3138.12(D)(1).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the purpose of this study is not to review individual TOPS eligibility criteria or award determinations but to examine long-term economic and workforce trends to inform future state competitiveness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the chairman of the Board of Regents, commissioner of higher education, secretary of Louisiana Works, secretary of Louisiana Economic Development, state superintendent of education, and presidents of the Louisiana State University System, Southern University System, University of Louisiana System, and Louisiana Community and Technical College System.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES