

Regular Session, 2012

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 110

BY REPRESENTATIVE ARMES

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Board of Regents, in consultation with the Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission and certain others, to study the residency requirements established by state law and commission policy for a student to qualify for a Taylor Opportunity Program for Students award when the student has a parent or court-ordered custodian who is a member of the United States Armed Forces and who is transferred by the military to Louisiana under permanent change of station orders and such parent or custodian is not a Louisiana resident; to determine if such laws and policies are fair, equitable, and consistent with residency requirements imposed by other states having merit-based postsecondary education scholarship programs for state residents; and to report in writing on study findings, conclusions, and recommendations to the legislature as provided by law and to the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education not later than ninety days prior to the start of the 2013 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

WHEREAS, the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students, originally known as the Tuition Opportunity Program for Students and generally referred to as "TOPS", was established by the legislature in 1997; and

WHEREAS, the residency requirements established by state law and policies of the program's administering agency, the Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission, that provide for a student to qualify for a TOPS award when the student has a parent or court-ordered custodian who is a member of the United States Armed Forces and who is transferred by the military to Louisiana under permanent change of station orders and such parent or custodian is not a Louisiana resident have been in place for a number of years and have remained basically unchanged; and

WHEREAS, concerns have been raised to Louisiana legislators by some in military service that such residency requirements and policies may not be fair, equitable, and consistent with residency requirements imposed by other states having merit-based postsecondary education scholarship programs for state residents, and further that Louisiana's current practices on this issue do not operate in the best interest of military families living in our state.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Board of Regents, in consultation with the Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission and others, to study the residency requirements established by state law and commission policy for a student to qualify for a Taylor Opportunity Program for Students award when the student has a parent or court-ordered custodian who is a member of the United States Armed Forces and who is transferred by the military to Louisiana under permanent change of station orders and such parent or custodian is not a Louisiana resident; to determine if such laws and policies are fair, equitable, and consistent with residency requirements imposed by other states having merit-based postsecondary education scholarship programs for state residents; and to report in writing on study findings, conclusions, and recommendations to the legislature as provided by R.S. 24:771 and 772 and to the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education not later than ninety days prior to the start of the 2013 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Regents, in conducting the study, shall notify appropriate persons in charge of military bases located in Louisiana, state legislators in whose legislative districts such bases are located, and others as deemed appropriate by the board of the study and actively solicit their comments, concerns, and recommendations relative to the current residency requirements and any changes needed thereto.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the presiding officer of the Board of Regents, the commissioner of higher education, the presiding officer of the Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission, and the executive director of the office of student financial assistance.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES