

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 452

BY REPRESENTATIVES ST. BLANC, BRASS, EDMONSTON, FREIBERG, OWEN,
STAGNI, AND TAYLOR

TOPS: Provides for the termination of the TOPS-Tech Award beginning with the 2029-2030 award year

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:5002(A)(1) and (2) and (G)(1) and 5029(B)(3)(b)(ii) and

3 (C)(introductory paragraph), to enact R.S. 17:5123, and to repeal R.S. 17:5002(D)

4 and (E)(2), 5024(A)(1)(d) and (B)(1)(d), 5026, 5027(D)(1), and 5042, relative to the

5 Taylor Opportunity Program for Students; to provide for the termination of the

6 TOPS-Tech award; to provide for applicability and effectiveness; and to provide for

7 related matters.

8 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

9 Section 1. R.S. 17:5123 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 §5123. Termination of the TOPS-Tech award; transitional provisions

11 A. Notwithstanding any provision of this Chapter to the contrary, the TOPS-

12 Tech award shall terminate upon the completion of the 2028-2029 award year as

13 provided in this Subsection.

14 B.(1) Students who graduate from high school through the 2026-2027 school

15 year may qualify for a TOPS-Tech award pursuant to this Chapter.

16 (2) Students who enter high school in the 2024-2025 school year or thereafter

17 shall not qualify for a TOPS-Tech award.

18 (3) Beginning with the 2029-2030 award year, the only awards provided

19 pursuant to this Chapter shall be Opportunity, Performance, and Honors awards.

1 Section 2. R.S. 17:5002(A)(1) and (2) and (G)(1) and 5029(B)(3)(b)(ii) and
2 (C)(introductory paragraph) are hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

3 §5002. Awards and amounts

4 A.(1) A student shall be eligible for an Opportunity, Performance, or Honors;
5 ~~or TOPS-Tech~~ Award based on his academic achievement.

6 (2) The award amount shall be as provided in Subsection B ~~or D~~ of this
7 Section unless the legislature, by law, increases the award amount.

8 * * *

9 G. In lieu of the payment of tuition as provided in this Section, any student
10 participating in the program provided by R.S. 29:36.1 for persons serving in the
11 Louisiana National Guard shall receive the tuition exemption as provided therein.

12 In addition to any other payments provided for by R.S. 29:36.1:

13 (1) For any student who also meets the qualifications provided in this
14 Section for receipt of an Opportunity Award ~~or a TOPS-Tech Award~~, the state shall
15 pay on behalf of such student a sum of three hundred dollars per semester or six
16 hundred dollars per academic year to be applied toward the cost of books and other
17 instructional materials.

18 * * *

19 §5029. Alternative initial eligibility requirements

20 * * *

21 B. A student who completes a home study program shall be eligible to
22 receive an award pursuant to this Chapter if each of the following conditions is met:

23 * * *

24 (3)

25 * * *

26 (b)

27 * * *

28 (ii) For a student qualifying for an initial ~~TOPS-Tech~~ or Opportunity Award
29 for the 2008-2009 award year or thereafter pursuant to this Subsection, the student

1 shall have a composite score on the 1990 version of the ACT which is at least two
2 points higher than that required by R.S. 17:5024(B) for the particular award or an
3 equivalent concordant value on an enhanced or revised version of such test or on the
4 SAT.

5 * * *

6 C. A student who graduates from an out-of-country high school shall be
7 eligible to receive an Opportunity ~~or TOPS-Tech~~ Award pursuant to this Chapter if
8 each of the following conditions is met:

9 * * *

10 Section 3. R.S. 17:5002(D) and (E)(2), 5024(A)(1)(d) and (B)(1)(d), 5026,
11 5027(D)(1), and 5042 are hereby repealed in their entirety.

12 Section 4.(A) Section 1 and this Section of this Act shall become effective on July
13 1, 2024.

14 (B) Sections 2 and 3 of this Act shall become effective on July 1, 2029.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 452 Engrossed

2024 Regular Session

St. Blanc

Abstract: Provides for the termination of the TOPS-Tech award beginning with the 2029-2030 award year.

Present law provides for provides for the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) as a merit scholarship program. Provides for four award levels, one of which is TOPS-Tech, a two-year award.

Proposed law:

- (1) Terminates the TOPS-Tech award at the end of the 2028-2029 award year.
- (2) Provides that students graduating from high school through the 2026-2027 school year may qualify for a TOPS-Tech award.
- (3) Provides that students entering high school in the 2024-2025 school year or thereafter shall not qualify for a TOPS-Tech award.
- (4) Provides that beginning with the 2029-2030 award year, the only TOPS awards provided shall be Opportunity, Performance, and Honors awards.

Effective July 1, 2029, except for transitional provisions, which are effective July 1, 2024.

(Amends R.S. 17:5002(A)(1) and (2) and (G)(1) and 5029(B)(3)(b)(ii) and (C)(intro. para.); Adds R.S. 17:5123; Repeals R.S. 17:5002(D) and (E)(2), 5024(A)(1)(d), 5026, 5027(D)(1), and 5042)