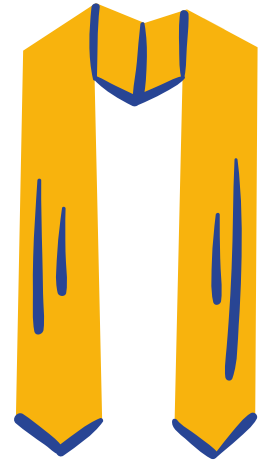




TOPS ADJUSTMENTS



HB 786 - REPRESENTATIVE GAROFALO

THE GOAL

This legislation will make necessary changes to TOPS program definitions and qualifications, codify exemptions necessitated by COVID-19.

THE CHALLENGE

The TOPS Award provides assistance to over 54,000 Louisiana students each year. Governor Edwards signed Proclamation No. 41 to ensure high school seniors and current postsecondary students are able to meet requirements to be eligible for TOPS, for the 2019-2020 academic year. When a declared emergency disrupts the normal processes for earning and maintaining a scholarship, there is a need for the Board of Regents and LOSFA to have the ability to act swiftly and appropriately in response.

THE FACTS



The bill seeks to address the following regarding TOPS for the 2019-2020 academic year:

- o Provides that students can have until September 30 to receive a qualifying ACT score for TOPS, without penalty.
- o Suspends the home study student timeline for TOPS eligibility, to address the move to remote learning.
- o Waives nine JumpStart TOPS Tech credits, if waived by the school, to remain TOPS eligible
- o Suspends the continuing eligibility requirements for the 2019-2020 academic year, due to COVID-19.