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FROM THE LOUISIANA OFFICE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Deadline for 2007 College Savings Tax Exemption is December 28
START Account Owners Can Exempt Up to \$4,800 in Deposits Per Account This Tax Year

BATON ROUGE, LA – December 28 is the deadline for Louisiana families to qualify for the 2007 tax benefits provided by START, the state's 529 college savings program.

Deposits to new and existing accounts must be *received* by December 28, 2007 to qualify for tax benefits and state matching contributions for the current calendar year.

START investors can exempt up to \$2,400 in deposits per account per year from income reported on their state tax returns. For married couples filing jointly, the exemption from income can be up to \$4,800 in deposits. If account owners are unable to make \$2,400 (or \$4,800) in deposits in one year, they can carry forward unused portions to subsequent years.

"START account owners should send in their deposits as early as possible, especially because of the holiday season," said Carol Fulco, START Director. "Deposits must be in by 4:30 p.m. on Friday, December 28 to qualify as exemptions to income on 2007 tax returns."

In addition to a \$2,400 or \$4,800 annual tax exemption, START benefits include a state-paid match on deposits ranging from 2 percent to 14 percent, depending on the account's classification and owner's adjusted gross income. Other benefits include a choice of investment options in fixed, variable and mixed portfolios; the flexibility to use funds at any accredited college or university for tuition, room and board, books, fees and more; and a tax exemption on earnings when used to pay these expenses.

START deposits can be made online at www.startsaving.la.gov or can be sent by overnight delivery to: START Saving Program, Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance, 1885 Wooddale Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70806. Postmarks or payments

mailed but not received by 4:30 p.m. on December 28, 2007, will not be credited until 2008 and will not be eligible for 2007 tax incentives.

Deposits will also be accepted in person at 1885 Wooddale Blvd., third floor until 4:30 p.m. on December 28. For more information, contact the Office of Student Financial Assistance toll-free at 1-800-259-5626, ext. 1012.

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