S-2835.2

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**SENATE BILL 5946**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 2nd Special Session**

**By** Senator Fortunato

AN ACT Relating to transitioning The Evergreen State College to a private four-year institution of higher education; adding a new section to chapter 28B.40 RCW; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that it is incumbent upon public universities and colleges to foster an environment that is conducive to free, open, and rigorous dialogue. Because public universities and colleges are paid for with taxpayer dollars, they have a greater responsibility to be respectful and tolerant of all students regardless of geography, political affiliation, or personal values. When a public university or college fails to uphold those values, it is the responsibility of the legislature to transition that university or college from a public institution to a private institution.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28B.40 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The board of trustees of The Evergreen State College, in consultation with the office of financial management, shall develop a plan to transition The Evergreen State College to a private four-year institution of higher education over five years. The plan must include recommendations for legislative action during the 2019 legislative session to implement decisions and resolve issues, including creating a new tuition fee schedule and modifying current state requirements for The Evergreen State College. The plan is due to the governor and the relevant fiscal and policy committees of the legislature by December 1, 2018, in accordance with the reporting requirements in RCW 43.01.036.

(2) Beginning July 1, 2019, the board of trustees shall begin implementing the plan to transition the college to a private institution of higher education. During the transition, the legislature shall reduce state support by twenty percent per year for five years until state support is reduced to zero. At the end of the five years, the board of trustees shall have The Evergreen State College appraised and listed for sale at fair market value or above. As a condition of sale, the buyer must agree to run The Evergreen State College as a four-year institution of higher education, with the details of the condition of sale to be determined in the plan. If the buyer reneges on the condition of sale, The Evergreen State College shall revert back to the state's control.

(3) If The Evergreen State College fails to sell or reverts back to state control as provided for in subsection (2) of this section, then the college shall be placed under the governance of the board of trustees at Washington State University.

(4) Nothing in this section intends to disqualify students from receiving state financial aid they would otherwise be eligible to receive, provided that the institution meets the requirements to participate in the state's financial aid programs.

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